

Political Awareness Among Residents of Select Barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Political awareness stands as a critical foundation of democratic societies. It equips individuals with the knowledge and capacity to engage meaningfully in governance, understand their civic rights and duties, and actively participate in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives. When citizens are politically informed, they are more likely to vote conscientiously, monitor government accountability, participate in civic discussions, and advocate for community development. Thus, political awareness not only empowers individual agency but also strengthens the collective functioning of democratic institutions.

While discussions on civic engagement have gained prominence in policy and academic spheres, they often focus on urban or more politically active sectors of society. In contrast, rural and geographically isolated areas, such as GIDAs (Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas), continue to receive minimal attention in both research and programmatic interventions. According to Moreno and Del Rosario (2021), political marginalization in rural Philippines is exacerbated by structural limitations such as inaccessibility, limited communication channels, and the absence of sustained civic education. These constraints often result in a cycle where rural residents remain politically passive, not due to apathy, but due to a lack of opportunity and exposure.

Claveria, a municipality in Misamis Oriental, provides a pertinent context for examining this phenomenon. Many of its barangays are categorized as GIDAs—characterized by mountainous terrain, poor road connectivity, and limited access to social services. In such settings, access to political discourse, civic training, or reliable news sources becomes difficult. A study by Reyes and Bautista (2022) emphasized that rural communities in Mindanao often rely on second-hand or informal sources of political information, which can lead to misinformation or a limited understanding of key issues. Moreover, socio-economic challenges such as poverty and limited formal education further hinder consistent participation in governance-related activities.

The importance of political awareness in such disadvantaged areas is underscored by legal mandates and policy frameworks. The 1987 Philippine Constitution (Article II, Section 13) enshrines the responsibility of the State to promote civic consciousness and patriotism through education. The Local Government Code of 1991 (RA 7160) institutionalizes participatory governance at the barangay level, affirming that citizens should play active roles in shaping local development. More recently, efforts under the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (RA 10931) have aimed to make higher education more accessible, recognizing its role in forming critical, informed citizens. Despite these initiatives, gaps remain in ensuring political awareness reaches the country's most remote communities.

In the digital era, technological access has become a determining factor in civic engagement. However, many GIDAs remain digitally excluded due to limited signal coverage and internet infrastructure. This creates what Alcantara et al. (2023) refer to as a “civic information divide,” where remote populations lack access to platforms that provide timely, credible, and diverse political content. Their study shows that while urban youth are often exposed to civic discourse through social media and digital campaigns, their rural counterparts remain largely detached from these platforms, further widening the gap in political understanding and participation.

Community-based interventions, though well-intentioned, often fail to address the structural and contextual realities of GIDAs. De Guzman and Torres (2021) found that while some local governments organize political forums and barangay assemblies, attendance and engagement levels are low in remote areas due to scheduling conflicts, logistical challenges, and a perceived disconnect between discussions and real-life concerns. These findings highlight the need for localized, culturally sensitive, and inclusive approaches to political education that account for the lived realities of rural residents.

Against this backdrop, the current study seeks to assess the level of political awareness among residents of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental. Specifically, it aims to identify the factors that influence or hinder political engagement in these communities. By focusing on GIDAs, the study contributes to filling a critical research gap and provides empirical evidence that can inform education, governance, and communication strategies tailored to marginalized populations. Understanding how residents perceive and engage with political issues is essential to designing interventions that promote inclusive governance and meaningful civic participation.

In essence, while urban-centric political education has shown positive outcomes, its impact has not been equitably distributed across geographic regions. This study responds to the urgent need to recognize and uplift the political voices of rural and remote populations. Its findings are expected to support policy development, inform grassroots civic education efforts, and reinforce the democratic ideal that every citizen, regardless of location, has the right and responsibility to participate fully in public life.

2. Literature and Related Studies

This section covers literature and related studies drawn from books, periodicals, and relevant journals to the present study. It includes the respondents' characteristics, such as age, sex, number of years as residents of the barangay, and occupation, as well as their political awareness based on news and information, civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy.

Respondents' Characteristics

The following are studies related to how respondents' characteristics, specifically age, sex, number of years as residents of the barangay, and occupation, affect their political awareness.

Age

Age plays a significant role in political awareness. Research indicates that older individuals tend to have a higher level of political awareness, likely due to their more prolonged exposure to political events, historical changes, and governance systems. Their experiences in political participation often include policy successes, leaving a legacy, and personal growth (Serrat et al., 2021). Additionally, older

adults view civic and political participation as learning opportunities, allowing them to gain new knowledge and skills while fostering intergenerational connections (Martins et al., 2022).

As people age, they develop a deeper understanding of governance, policies, and electoral processes, which enhances their political awareness and engagement. The aging population also influences voting behavior, social policies, and public spending, which can have economic implications (Vlandas, 2021).

On the other hand, younger individuals are often more engaged with emerging political issues through digital platforms. In the Philippines, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok play a crucial role in encouraging youth political participation (Velasco, 2024).

The generational gap in political engagement suggests the need for age-specific approaches to enhance political awareness. Differences in political attitudes are shaped by social and historical contexts, which contribute to the current political landscape and ideological divides (Gonyea & Hudson, 2020).

Sex

Sex differences play a significant role in political awareness, often shaped by societal norms and cultural expectations. Historically, men have shown higher levels of political participation, mainly due to greater access to education, leadership positions, and public spaces. Additionally, women are less likely to attend small-group political discussions compared to men, though ethnicity plays a bigger role in participation than factors like poverty or having young children (Beauvais, 2020).

However, recent trends indicate a growing political awareness among women, mainly due to global efforts promoting gender equality and increasing female representation in politics. Research suggests that women's participation in politics contributes to better public services, greater political empowerment, and stronger institutions (Kumari et al., 2024).

While men may have a broader knowledge of political systems and structures, women often demonstrate a greater interest in community-based and social justice issues, particularly at the local level.

These findings highlight the importance of addressing gender disparities in political education and engagement opportunities. Promoting inclusive political discussions, equitable access to information, and gender-sensitive policies can help bridge the gap in political awareness between men and women.

Number of Years as Resident in the Barangay

The number of years a resident has lived in a barangay has a significant influence on their political awareness, particularly at the local level. Long-term residents tend to have a deeper understanding of barangay governance, community concerns, and key political figures, as they have witnessed policy changes and leadership transitions over time (Verba et al., 1995). Their extended engagement allows them to participate more actively in barangay assemblies, elections, and civic activities, contributing to their political knowledge.

However, studies highlight specific governance challenges in barangays. For instance, low satisfaction with VAWC Desk services in Barangay Pili suggests the need for better prioritization of programs and policies (Udanga & Cuevas, 2023). Additionally, while the barangay system in the Philippines promotes democracy, decentralization, and community resilience, improvements in local governance training remain necessary (Turok & Scheba, 2020). In Northeast Catanduanes, barangay

captains require additional training in governance to address issues of incompetence, lack of cooperation, and local administrative concerns (Floranza, 2021).

Newer residents, on the other hand, may struggle to integrate into the community, which can limit their awareness of local political issues and decision-making processes. Studies indicate that barangay assemblies serve as the most effective way for residents to receive information, particularly on community programs such as environmental initiatives (Joanino & Vargas, 2021). Additionally, political knowledge among leaders in Zamboanga del Norte varies depending on residency length, gender, and education, showing how different factors shape local political awareness.

3. Highest Educational Attainment

The relationship between a person's highest educational attainment and their level of political awareness has been a central theme in recent political and educational research. Multiple studies confirm that education positively correlates with political interest and knowledge. For instance, a cross-national study using instrumental variables found that an additional year of schooling significantly increases political interest by 6.7 percentage points and self-assessed political knowledge by 8.5 percentage points, though it does not necessarily increase actual voting behavior (Zingher, 2023). Similarly, Achour and Alghambi (2022) reported that among Saudi university students, those more engaged in historical studies exhibited a stronger sense of political awareness, suggesting that academic exposure can shape students' political understanding.

However, the causal relationship between education and political awareness remains debated. While higher education levels are often associated with greater political engagement, some studies argue that early-life factors confound these findings. Burden et al. (2020), using sibling comparison models, found that although educational attainment strongly correlates with political participation, such as voting, much of this effect may stem from pre-existing family or social influences rather than from education alone. Highton (2020) echoed this view, asserting that disparities in political awareness often emerge before individuals enter college, thereby questioning the direct influence of post-secondary education on political sophistication.

Despite these complexities, there is growing recognition of education's role in shaping certain ideological beliefs. Rasmussen et al. (2023), through a discordant twin design in Denmark, concluded that education causally affects economic ideology but has limited influence on social ideology. This suggests that formal education might promote critical thinking and economic literacy, while values tied to social issues may be less malleable. Within the Philippines, several studies enrich this global narrative. Edera et al. (2023) surveyed 320 college students at St. Paul University Surigao and found that while students scored high on political knowledge, this did not necessarily translate into active political participation; voting, forum attendance, and activism remained low. This finding suggests that knowledge alone may not be sufficient to drive civic engagement. Similarly, Daanoy et al. (2021), through qualitative interviews with youth in Tacurong City, identified various educational factors influencing political identity formation, including exposure to societal issues, access to information, peer relationships, and school influence. These findings underscore the importance of institutional, familial, and media environments in shaping political awareness.

Further supporting this relationship, a study conducted at Laguna State Polytechnic University found that students with higher education levels showed greater political awareness—measured through knowledge of public policies, political leaders, and current issues—and that this awareness positively

correlated with political participation, including voting and public discourse involvement (Hermosa, 2021). These results affirm that in the Philippine context, educational attainment contributes meaningfully to both political understanding and engagement, although the degree of influence can vary depending on other contextual factors.

Occupation

An individual's occupation plays a key role in shaping their exposure to political information and opportunities for engagement. Professionals and those in white-collar jobs often have greater access to news media, social networks, and forums, which help them stay informed about political issues. These individuals are typically more aware of policy decisions and governance issues that impact their industries. In contrast, those working in blue-collar or informal sector jobs may face challenges such as limited access to information, time constraints, and fewer opportunities for civic engagement. However, creating targeted programs, group activities, and incentives can help improve participation among blue-collar workers in community and political initiatives (Damen et al., 2023).

Certain occupations, particularly those in public service, education, and community organizing, naturally foster higher levels of political awareness. These fields often involve direct interaction with governance processes and civic responsibilities, encouraging active engagement in political discussions and decision-making.

Hence, the relationship between occupation and political awareness highlights the importance of inclusive civic engagement strategies. Ensuring that individuals across different job sectors have equitable access to political information and opportunities for participation can help create a more politically informed and engaged society.

Political Awareness

Political awareness is a critical component of civic engagement, particularly in marginalized communities. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between political awareness and civic participation, underscoring the significance of informed citizens in democratic processes. The following studies, reviewed by the researcher from various scholarly journal articles, support the proposed study.

News and Information The accessibility of reliable news and information remains a pivotal factor in shaping political awareness, especially in rural and geographically isolated communities. The digital era has transformed how individuals interact with political content, yet disparities in media access and literacy persist across socioeconomic and geographic divides. In rural Philippines, such as the selected barangays in Claveria, residents often rely on traditional media like radio and television, which may limit the depth and interactivity of political discourse they receive (Castro & Vibar, 2022). This reliance may restrict opportunities for critical engagement with political developments and reduce the potential for active participation in governance.

This means that although news is available, the mode and depth of delivery affect how people absorb and interpret political events. According to Narisma and Garcia (2023), while radio remains the most accessible medium for rural Filipinos, it often lacks contextualized analysis and does not promote deliberative political dialogue. This suggests a continued need to diversify political information channels in ways that engage local audiences meaningfully.

Moreover, the digital divide continues to influence how political information is consumed. A study by Santos and Mendoza (2021) highlighted that lower digital literacy among rural populations hinders their ability to critically evaluate online political content. This further signifies a vulnerability to misinformation, especially on social media platforms, where unchecked content circulates rapidly. The 2022 Philippine elections revealed that digital misinformation significantly affected public opinion in remote communities with limited access to alternative news sources (David et al., 2022).

Community-based information channels, however, show promise. Gonzales and Carandang (2021) found that local government units that utilized barangay-based Facebook pages and community bulletin boards had higher levels of political knowledge dissemination, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when in-person assemblies were restricted. This implies that digital tools, when localized and made accessible, can support rural political awareness initiatives.

On the other hand, bias in local media remains a concern. As emphasized by Reyes and Mendoza (2020), ownership structures and political affiliations of local media outlets can lead to selective coverage, limiting the spectrum of political views presented to rural residents. This supports the notion that while the media may be present, its role in promoting genuine political literacy and democratic values remains inconsistent.

Furthermore, the growing role of influencers and non-journalistic voices on platforms like TikTok and YouTube poses both challenges and opportunities. According to Velasco (2024), youth in rural Mindanao increasingly access political content via these platforms. This opens new avenues for engagement but also risks exposing them to unvetted or biased content. This implies that strengthening media literacy, particularly among the youth, is essential to foster discerning political engagement.

Overall, while rural residents in GIDAs such as Claveria show interest in political affairs, their access to and understanding of political information remain limited by structural, digital, and content-related barriers. To address these gaps, efforts must include expanding localized digital infrastructure, integrating media literacy in barangay-level education programs, and supporting community-managed information platforms that are independent, inclusive, and relevant to local contexts.

4. Civic Participation

Civic participation is a foundational element of democratic governance, yet numerous structural, cultural, and informational barriers hinder its full realization in rural and geographically isolated areas. In the Philippine context, civic participation includes voting, attending barangay assemblies, volunteering, and voicing concerns about community development. However, these activities remain limited among rural populations due to persistent issues such as economic hardship, gender norms, and access to civic education.

One persistent barrier is gender inequality, which significantly affects participation levels. A recent study by Dacalos and Aquino (2023) emphasized that traditional gender roles continue to suppress women's civic engagement in rural barangays. Even when information is made available, gender norms influence who receives it and how it is acted upon. This means that increasing access to information alone is insufficient—it must be accompanied by efforts to challenge and change the socio-cultural expectations that inhibit participation, particularly for women.

Youth participation has shown notable potential in transforming civic life in remote areas. According to Velasco (2024), digital civic education tools—including TikTok and Facebook-based barangay discussions—have allowed younger rural residents to become more aware of and vocal about political and community issues. This suggests that civic education, when designed with local context and digital accessibility in mind, can significantly enhance youth engagement. This further signifies the need to integrate formal and informal civic education into rural school curricula and community programs to cultivate long-term participation habits.

Addressing geographic barriers has also proven effective. Arandia and Morales (2022) found that once physical barriers such as poor road access or lack of public spaces were reduced, civic participation rates in rural communities increased substantially. This implies that infrastructure development must be coupled with civic outreach programs to maximize public involvement.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) remain instrumental in bridging the participation gap. For example, Villarico et al. (2021) documented how barangay-led livelihood projects doubled as civic engagement platforms, where community members contributed to decision-making processes. CBOs facilitate inclusive workshops, information drives, and barangay consultations that cultivate a deeper sense of agency and political efficacy among residents. These findings reinforce the importance of supporting CBOs not just as service providers but as civic educators and political facilitators.

Community organizing also plays a crucial role in sustaining engagement. Recent findings by Flores and Angeles (2023) demonstrated that long-term organizing in GIDAs resulted in increased voter turnout and community attendance at barangay budget hearings. Organizing efforts that focus on empowering residents psychologically by validating their lived experiences and connecting these to policy discussions encourage sustained involvement. This implies that emotional and identity-based connections to community life are just as critical as knowledge of political structures.

Finally, neighborhood-based governance structures such as barangay councils serve as important entry points for civic learning and participation. De Vera and Constantino (2021) noted that barangay initiatives that included participatory budgeting and open consultation platforms saw improved trust and increased civic turnout. This suggests that institutional transparency and consistent community feedback mechanisms foster stronger democratic practices at the grassroots level.

Political Challenges

Despite the importance of political awareness and civic participation, numerous challenges persist in rural areas that hinder effective engagement. Geographic isolation is a significant barrier, often exacerbating socioeconomic disparities and making it difficult for residents to access essential services and information (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2020). While removing geographic access-related barriers can lead to similar participation rates across urban and rural populations, forms of

engagement such as protesting remain less common in rural areas (Lin & Trujillo, 2022). Interestingly, research indicated that geographic proximity to individuals with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds can decrease civic engagement in urban settings, highlighting the complex dynamics of community interaction (Andriani et al., 2023).

A lack of access to relevant political information and educational resources often compounds this ignorance. Group cognition has been proposed as a valuable tool for managing and overcoming political ignorance, as it can help defuse the threat this ignorance poses to public discourse (Lepoutre, 2021). Furthermore, modeled democracy offers a potential solution to public ignorance by filtering electoral input through statistical models that simulate informed political preferences, allowing for broader participation without restricting the franchise (Ahlstrom-Vij, 2020).

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies that consider the unique contexts of rural communities while enhancing both political awareness and civic engagement. One promising approach is the use of public narrative to increase social, cultural, and political capital within these communities. Lauer and Sanderson (2022) emphasized that fostering a shared narrative can sustain civic engagement by creating a sense of belonging and collective purpose among residents. This approach not only empowers individuals but also strengthens community ties, encouraging active participation in local governance.

5. Political Literacy

Political literacy is foundational for fostering an informed citizenry capable of engaging in democratic processes. It encompasses not only knowledge of political systems but also the critical skills necessary to analyze and interpret political information effectively (Landig & Landig, 2024). This multifaceted concept is increasingly recognized as essential for empowering individuals to participate meaningfully in civic life. Research has shown that targeted educational interventions can significantly enhance political literacy among marginalized groups, resulting in increased civic engagement (Arriagada et al., 2022). For instance, initiatives that focus on educating residents about their rights and local governance structures have proven effective in empowering communities and enhancing their ability to advocate for their needs.

Engaging youth in discussions about governance and civic responsibilities is particularly vital for cultivating a culture of active citizenship. The urgency of developing political literacy has been underscored by recent reports, which emphasize the need for educational frameworks that equip young people with the skills to critically evaluate information and engage in civil discourse (Education Scotland, 2018).

The role of community-based organizations (CBOs) in promoting political literacy is not to be understated. CBOs facilitate discussions and workshops that enhance political awareness and encourage active participation in civic life. Through engaging with local communities, these organizations help bridge the gap between citizens and their governments, fostering a sense of ownership over local governance processes. Additionally, grassroots movements and social initiatives can serve as platforms for political learning and mobilization, further reinforcing the importance of community engagement in cultivating political literacy.

6. Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to examine the level of political awareness among residents

of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental for the School Year 2024–2025. In pursuit of this, the study aimed first to describe the respondents' demographic characteristics, specifically their age, sex, length of residency in the barangay, educational attainment, and occupation. It also sought to assess their level of political awareness by exploring four major dimensions: exposure to news and information, engagement in civic participation, understanding of political challenges, and degree of political literacy. Furthermore, the study intended to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in political awareness when the respondents are grouped according to their demographic profiles. By achieving these objectives, the research endeavors to contribute valuable insights that can help strengthen community-based political education initiatives and promote informed civic engagement at the local level.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Civic Engagement Theory by Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995). This served as the foundation for this study. The Civic Engagement Theory explains how and why people take part in political and community activities. This theory suggests that for individuals to participate actively in governance and decision-making. They must first be aware of the political processes, issues, and their rights. In other words, political awareness is a crucial first step that enables people to understand how they can contribute to improving their communities and influencing decisions that affect their lives.

Further, the theory emphasizes three (3) key factors that influence civic engagement. First, the resources include time, money, and skills that individuals can utilize to participate in activities such as voting, attending meetings, or joining organizations. Second, the engagement states that people need to feel motivated or interested in political and community issues to take action. Third, recruitment, which often includes opportunities to participate, frequently comes from invitations or encouragement by others, such as community leaders, friends, or organizations.

This theory aligns with this study, which aimed to measure the political awareness of residents in selected barangays in Claveria. According to the Civic Engagement Theory, people are more likely to get involved in their community when they are informed about their rights, the issues affecting their area, and the governance processes in place. Without this awareness, they may feel disconnected or unable to participate.

According to the theory, the importance of providing resources and opportunities for people to learn more about politics. For example, a suggested development plan to be created based on this study could include programs such as workshops, forums, or educational campaigns. These programs help residents gain the knowledge and confidence they need to participate actively in their barangays.

Hence, the Civic Engagement Theory helps explain why knowing about politics is so important. It shows that when people understand how the system works and their role in it, they are more likely to step up, get involved, and help make their communities better places to live. This was the guiding idea behind this study, which aimed to create a plan that increases political awareness in Claveria.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study, as shown in Figure 1, was based on the Independent Variable-Dependent Variable (IV-DV) model, which systematically organized the investigation of

political awareness among residents of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental.

The input represented the respondents' demographic profile, including age, sex, number of years as residents in the barangay, and occupation. These variables served as the foundational data for understanding the characteristics that may influence political awareness.

Age plays a significant role in political awareness. Older individuals tend to be more interested in political news and rely on traditional media sources such as newspapers, television, and radio to stay informed. They are more likely to follow political discussions and government programs as they have had more exposure to governance structures over time. In contrast, younger individuals are more active in online platforms and social media, where they engage with political content through posts, discussions, and digital activism. While older people are more likely to vote in elections and participate in barangay meetings, younger individuals often express their political opinions through social movements, protests, or digital campaigns. However, younger people may also struggle with misinformation due to their reliance on social media, whereas older individuals are more accustomed to verifying information from traditional sources.

Sex also influences political engagement and awareness. Historically, men have been more politically active, particularly in governance and decision-making roles. They are more likely to participate in political discussions, run for office, and attend political gatherings. However, studies show that women are increasingly involved in community-based initiatives and advocacy efforts. Women tend to engage in issues related to education, health, and social welfare, which directly impact their families and communities. Gender-based barriers, such as cultural norms and limited representation in leadership roles, can hinder the full political participation of some women. However, with growing awareness and empowerment efforts, more women are actively voting, joining organizations, and advocating for policy changes.

The number of years a resident has lived in the barangay significantly affects their political awareness and participation. Long-term residents have a deeper understanding of their local governance, barangay officials, and community issues. They are more likely to attend barangay assemblies, be aware of regional policies, and engage in governance-related discussions. Conversely, newer residents may be less involved in community matters due to unfamiliarity with the political landscape, limited social networks, or lack of awareness about local issues. However, those who actively seek to integrate into the community can become more politically engaged over time.

Educational attainment is one of the strongest predictors of political awareness. Individuals with higher education tend to have a better understanding of political systems, government policies, and their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They are more likely to seek out reliable news sources, critically analyze political issues, and engage in discussions about governance. Education enhances political literacy, enabling individuals to recognize misinformation, understand laws, and make informed decisions in elections. Individuals with lower educational levels may struggle to access political information, which can lead to lower engagement in civic activities. However, efforts such as voter education programs and community workshops can help bridge this gap.

Occupation also plays a crucial role in shaping political awareness. Professionals, government employees, and educators often have greater access to political information due to their work environment, where they engage in discussions on policies, governance, and public affairs. These individuals are more likely to participate in political decision-making, attend meetings, and understand the implications of government actions. In contrast, blue-collar workers, farmers, and those in informal

employment may have limited exposure to political discussions due to long working hours, a lack of access to information, or economic concerns that take priority over civic engagement. However, initiatives that bring political education to workplaces or community centers can increase awareness among these groups.

The process of this study focused on four key aspects of political awareness: news and information, civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy. Access to news and information varies based on demographic factors. Older individuals tend to consume traditional media, while younger people rely more on digital sources. Men tend to engage in political debates, whereas women often focus on community-centered issues. Education and occupation influence whether individuals actively seek and critically assess political news.

Civic participation is affected by factors such as age, residency, and occupation. Older residents tend to vote regularly and attend barangay meetings, whereas younger residents often engage in digital activism and participate in advocacy campaigns. Long-term residents have a more substantial presence in community affairs, whereas newcomers take time to become fully integrated. Professionals and government workers are more involved in governance, while those in informal jobs may have fewer opportunities for participation.

Political challenges include obstacles such as misinformation, lack of access to education, and distrust in government. Older individuals may struggle with adapting to digital information sources, while younger individuals may face difficulties verifying online political content. Women may encounter barriers in political leadership due to societal expectations. Residents with lower educational levels and those in low-income occupations may lack access to political knowledge and opportunities for civic engagement.

Political literacy involves understanding governance structures, laws, and the rights of citizens. Higher education and professional exposure contribute to greater political literacy. Older individuals with years of experience in governance may possess more profound political knowledge, while younger individuals often require educational programs to develop informed perspectives. Long-term residents generally have more knowledge about barangay affairs than newcomers.

This study was based on the assumption that a person's political awareness is influenced by factors such as age, sex, education, occupation, and length of residency. It assumes that residents with higher political awareness are more likely to engage in community activities and that targeted efforts to educate residents can help increase their understanding and participation. Additionally, the study assumes that residents in selected geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs) may face unique challenges, such as limited access to information, which affects their political awareness.

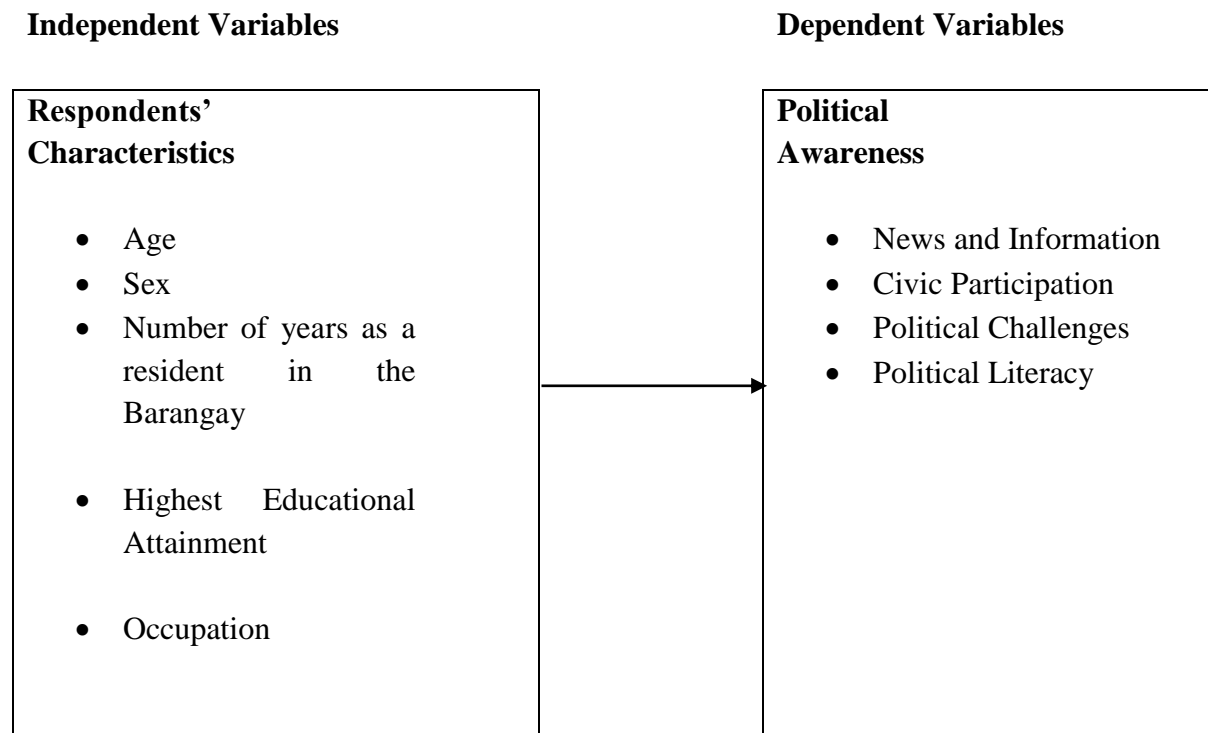


Figure 1. The Schematic Presentation on the Interplay between the Independent Variables and Dependent Variables in the Study

The study attempted to determine the level of political awareness among residents of select Barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, during the School Year 2024-2025.

It specifically answered the following questions:

1. How are the respondents characterized in terms of Age, Sex, Number of Years as Resident in the Barangay, Highest Educational Attainment, and Occupation?
2. What is the respondents' level of political awareness based on News and Information, Civic Participation, Political Challenges, and Political Literacy?
3. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' political awareness when grouped according to their characteristics?

Hypothesis

Problems 1 and 2 are hypothesis-free. Based on Problem 3, the null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

H₀: There is no significant difference in the respondents' political awareness when grouped according to their characteristics.

Significance of the Study

This study on the political awareness among residents in select barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, is beneficial to the following:

The findings of the study benefit the residents of the selected barangays. Through assessing their level of political awareness and understanding their needs, the study aims to empower them with the

knowledge and skills necessary to engage in local governance and advocate for their rights. A greater political awareness leads to increased civic involvement and thus an improved quality of life.

The information that may be taken from the study can also provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers involved in community development and educational programs.

Moreover, non-governmental organizations and community groups working in rural and disadvantaged areas can utilize the study's findings to develop programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing political awareness and participation. This research can serve as a foundation for collaborative efforts to empower marginalized communities.

The academic community and the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines-Claveria also benefit from this study. The work adds to existing literature on political awareness and civic engagement, especially among rural populations. Outcomes, including a suggested educational extension program will be communicated to the College of Arts and Sciences for utilized support of the results from academic research as curriculum or outreach intervention ideas.

Further, local government officials and agencies can benefit from the insights gained through this research. Understanding the political awareness of their constituents can help LGUs tailor their outreach and engagement strategies, ensuring they effectively communicate with and involve residents in governance processes.

Lastly, this study lays the groundwork for future research on political awareness and civic engagement research, particularly in geographically isolated communities. It highlights the importance of continued exploration into the awareness faced by GIDAs and encourages subsequent studies to build upon its findings, further enriching the academic discourse.

Scope and Limitations This study primarily focused on assessing the level of political awareness among residents of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental for the School Year 2024–2025. The research concentrated on three geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), namely Barangay Aposkahoy, Barangay Mat-i, and Barangay Sta. Cruz. These areas were purposely selected due to their geographical isolation, which often results in limited access to political education and engagement opportunities.

The study involved a total of 300 respondents drawn from the three barangays. While Slovin's formula initially estimated a required sample size of 385 to ensure a 5% margin of error, only 300 valid responses were collected due to accessibility constraints and respondent availability. In Barangay Aposkahoy, 87 individuals responded out of the projected 111; in Barangay Mat-i, 166 responded from the expected 213; and in Barangay Sta. Cruz, only 47 individuals participated out of 61. Despite the shortfall in the ideal sample size, the collected data were deemed sufficient to provide valuable insights into the political awareness levels of the target population.

The scope of the study was delimited to investigating the relationship between selected demographic characteristics—namely age, sex, length of residency in the barangay, highest educational attainment, and occupation—and the respondents' level of political awareness. Political awareness, the dependent variable, was examined through four dimensions: access to news and information, civic participation,

political challenges, and political literacy.

The study did not cover other possible factors such as religious beliefs, media consumption habits, or political affiliations, which might also influence political awareness. Furthermore, the research relied primarily on self-reported data gathered through survey questionnaires, which may be subject to personal bias or recall limitations.

Despite these limitations, the findings of the study serve as a meaningful contribution to the limited body of literature on civic awareness in rural and geographically isolated communities. It aims to bridge the knowledge gap by highlighting the current state of political engagement in the selected barangays. The results offer practical implications for local government units, particularly barangay officials, by providing a basis for designing community-based political education programs. Ultimately, the study sought to support initiatives that promote more informed, responsible, and participative citizenry in underserved rural areas.

Definition of Terms

For a better understanding of the study, the following terminologies were defined conceptually and operationally.

Age. This refers to the number of years a respondent has lived, which can influence their political awareness and engagement. Different age groups may have varying levels of experience and exposure to political processes.

Civic Participation. This refers to one of the dimensions of political awareness, which denotes the involvement of individuals in activities that promote the common good and contribute to the democratic process, such as voting, attending community meetings, or engaging in advocacy.

GIDAs. This refers to the (Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas). The present study focused only on the three GIDAs in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, which are Aposkahoy, Mat-I, and Sta. Cruz.

Highest Educational Attainment. This refers to the highest level of education that a respondent has completed, such as primary, secondary, or tertiary education. Educational attainment is often linked to an individual's ability to understand political issues and engage in civic activities.

News and Information. This refers to one of the dimensions of political awareness, which relates to the sources and types of political news and information that residents consume, including traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio, and digital platforms such as social media.

Number of Years as Resident in the Barangay. This refers to how long a respondent has lived in their specific community or barangay. Longevity in a community may correlate with a deeper understanding of local political issues and governance.

Occupation. This refers to the type of work or profession that respondents are engaged in. Occupation can impact political awareness, as different jobs may provide varying levels of access to

information and opportunities for civic engagement.

Political Awareness. This refers not only to the residents' factual knowledge but also to a sense of how political issues relate to one's personal life and society. It also involves having feelings and opinions about political matters. In this study, it is subdivided into four (4) dimensions: News and Information, Civic Participation, Political Challenges, and Political Literacy.

Political Challenges. This refers to the aspect of political awareness that includes the challenges and impediments that locals encounter when participating in political processes, such as a lack of information, socioeconomic limitations, or political indifference.

Political Literacy. This refers to one of the dimensions of political awareness which refers to the knowledge and skills necessary for individuals to understand political systems and issues.

METHODOLOGY

This section deals with the methods and procedures employed in the study: research design, study setting, research respondents, sampling techniques, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, categorization of variables and system of scoring, data gathering procedure, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-comparative research design, appropriate for assessing the current levels of political awareness and identifying group differences based on demographic characteristics. The descriptive component captured how residents of selected GIDA barangays in Claveria engage with political information, civic participation, and governance issues. This approach is widely used to document social patterns in natural settings (Estrada et al., 2021).

The comparative aspect examined differences in political awareness across variables such as age, sex, length of residency, educational attainment, and occupation. This method allowed for the identification of disparities in civic engagement, which is essential in analyzing marginalized communities (Ramirez & Silva, 2022).

Overall, the design enabled a structured analysis of political awareness, aligning with contemporary research practices that emphasize context-based and equity-oriented civic studies (Yap & Garcia, 2023).

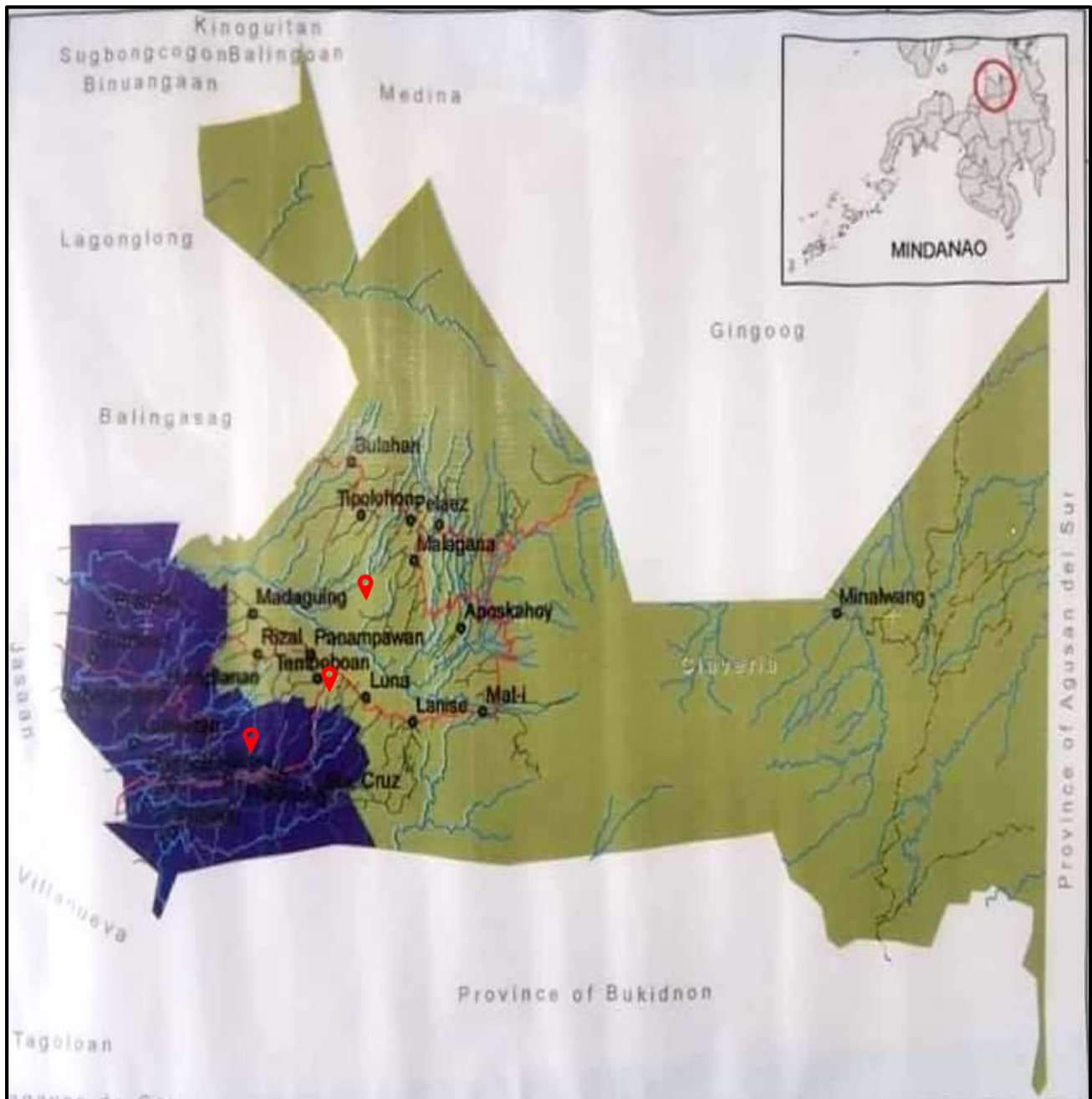
Study Setting

The study was conducted in the selected Barangays of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, focusing on three barangays: Aposkahoy, Mat-I, and Sta. Cruz. These Barangays were selected because they are categorized as Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs). They have been identified as GIDAs due to their significant distance from the central barangay, Poblacion, and the challenges

posed by difficult road conditions, which limit access to essential services and resources. Aposkahoy is located approximately 26 kilometers from Poblacion and is characterized by rugged terrain and limited infrastructure, affecting residents' access to information and civic resources. Sta. Cruz, situated about 5.9 kilometers from Poblacion, faces similar challenges, with its remote location contributing to the residents' isolation from mainstream political discourse and engagement opportunities. Mat-i, approximately 16 kilometers away from Poblacion, shares common issues of geographical isolation and socio-economic disadvantage, impacting the political awareness of its residents.

Economically, the select barangays—Aposkahoy, Mat-I, and Sta. Cruz—are predominantly reliant on agriculture, with many residents engaged in farming, livestock raising, and small-scale trading. However, income from these activities is often unstable and insufficient, contributing to economic vulnerability. In 2023, Misamis Oriental reported a poverty incidence of 18.1%, highlighting the economic challenges faced by the province's residents (Philippine Statistics Authority [2024], 2024). Claveria, being the only landlocked municipality in Misamis Oriental, has a population density of 91 inhabitants per square kilometer, indicating a relatively dispersed population across its vast land area (PhilAtlas, nd.). The local economy is primarily agricultural, with income derived from crop production, livestock, and poultry. Despite the presence of educational institutions, such as the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines - Claveria Campus, access to higher education and skills training remains limited for many residents (USTP, n.d). This economic hardship often translates to limited engagement in civic and political affairs, as residents prioritize meeting daily subsistence needs over participation in governance processes.

The residents of these barangays represent a diverse demographic profile, including variations in age, gender, education level, and socio-economic status. This diversity is crucial for understanding the different factors that influence political awareness and engagement within the community. The GIDAs in Claveria are marked by limited access to educational and economic opportunities, which can hinder residents' political participation. Additionally, the cultural dynamics within these barangays play a significant role in shaping residents' political awareness, as traditional practices, community values, and local leadership structures may influence how residents perceive and engage with political issues.



Source: Municipal Planning and Development Office of the Local Government Unit of Claveria

Figure 2. Location Map of the Study

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the 300 residents of the select barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental. They are currently residents in Barangays Aposkahoy, Mat-I, and Sta. Cruz.

The distribution of respondents by barangay is shown in Table A.

Table A

Distribution of Respondents

Barangay	Population	Respondents
A	2,937	87
B	5,620	166
C	1,595	47
TOTAL	10,152	300

Sampling Technique

The researcher used Slovin's formula to determine the required sample size of 385 respondents, based on a total population of 10,152 from the three (3) selected barangays and a 5% margin of error. However, during the data collection, only 300 individuals participated. These 300 respondents were ultimately considered as the sample for the study. Further, the stratified sampling procedure was used to get the approximate number of respondents for every barangay. This was done by dividing the computed sample size by its population.

This technique is particularly important in research focused on political awareness, as it helps create a representative sample that reflects the diverse characteristics of the community being studied. The first step involved clearly defining the population, which consisted of residents from three selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, identified as Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs). A comprehensive list of all residents in these barangays was obtained from local barangay officials, serving as the sampling frame essential for ensuring that all eligible individuals are accounted for and have an equal opportunity to be selected. The actual selection of participants is conducted using a random sampling method, which can be achieved through techniques such as random number generators or drawing names from a hat. This process is designed to be free from bias, ensuring that every individual in the sampling frame has an equal chance of being chosen.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in gathering the data was a researcher-made questionnaire composed of two (2) parts. Part I dealt with the respondents' characteristics, specifically their age, sex, number of years as residents in the barangay, highest educational attainment, and occupation.

Part II measured the various dimensions of political awareness, which were news and information, civic participation, political literacy, and political challenges. This patterned and modified 10 questions in a 4-point Likert scale format, rated from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. These questionnaires are researcher-made and were subjected to validity and reliability testing.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The credibility and precision of the researcher-made questionnaire were ensured through systematic content validation and reliability testing. Content validation was undertaken with Dr. Emma A. Zalsos, Research Coordinator at St. Peter's College, and four expert validators, using the Graduate School's standardized validation tool to evaluate clarity, relevance, grammar, and alignment with the study's variables. Each expert reviewed the instrument independently, and their consolidated feedback guided revisions for improved phrasing and conceptual alignment. Items deemed appropriate were retained, and a Certificate of Content Validity was issued, affirming the instrument's suitability for the study Political Awareness Among Residents of Selected Barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental.

A pilot test was then conducted with thirty (30) residents of Barangay Lanise, excluded from the main study to maintain sample independence. This process assessed item clarity, comprehension, and potential ambiguities. The results were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding coefficients from 0.818 to 0.910, meeting accepted standards for good to excellent reliability. Per dimension, alpha values were: News and Information (0.967), Civic Participation (0.966), Political Challenges (0.965), and Political Literacy (0.965). Following Hair et al. (2016), values above 0.90 indicate excellent internal consistency, confirming that items within each construct consistently measure the intended concept.

Categorization of Variables and System of Scoring

Part I. Respondents' Characteristics

- Age
 - 61 years old and above
 - 55- 69 years old
 - 50- 54 years old
 - 45- 49 years old
 - 40- 44 years old
 - 35 – 39 years old
 - 34 years old and below
- Sex
 - Male
 - Female
- Number of years as a resident in the barangay
 - 10 years and above
 - 9 years
 - 8 years
 - 7 years
 - 6 years and below
- Highest Educational Attainment
 - College Graduate
 - College Level
 - High School Graduate
 - High School Level

- Elementary Graduate
- Elementary Level
- Occupation
 - Farmer
 - Carpenter
 - Laborer
 - Small Business
 - Others, please specify

Part II. Political Awareness

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.51- 4.0	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
3	2.51- 3.50	Agree	Aware
2	1.51- 2.50	Disagree	Slightly Aware
1	1.0-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Aware

Data Gathering Procedure

The data-gathering procedure for this study was conducted systematically and ethically to ensure the integrity of the research process. Initially, the researcher wrote a letter to the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College, for the permit to conduct the study and sought permission from the respective Barangay Captains of Aposkahoy, Mat-i, and Sta. Cruz, the selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental. This step was crucial for establishing rapport and gaining the trust of the community, as well as ensuring compliance with local regulations.

A comprehensive list of residents was obtained from the barangay officials, from which 300 resident-respondents were chosen through stratified sampling. This method aims to ensure a representative sample that reflects the diverse demographic characteristics of the community.

Data collection involved administering the validated questionnaire to the selected participants, allowing them to express their levels of political awareness. Moreover, the in-depth interview questionnaire, which was validated by a panel of experts, was given to the ten (10) respondents involved in the study. They were interviewed one at a time at different schedules with the researcher's agreement. The researcher chose ten (10) respondents for the in-depth interview because responses might be repetitive and new information will not be heard. For this reason, additional participants were unnecessary. The researcher also considered time constraints and necessary analysis. Another reason to consider is the availability of the respondents, the researcher had to face challenges in participants' recruitment, considering the area is geographically isolated. Lastly, for ethical consideration, the participants might be limited in number willing to engage in a lengthy conversation, and they might feel uncomfortable sharing their views and opinions.

Throughout the data-gathering process, the researcher adhered to ethical considerations, including obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring the confidentiality of their

responses.

Statistical Treatment of Data

To address the objectives of the study, appropriate statistical tools were employed to ensure a thorough and meaningful analysis of the data gathered. For Problem 1 which aimed to describe the respondents' characteristics in terms of age, sex, number of years as residents in the barangay, highest educational attainment, and occupation, the researcher utilized descriptive statistics specifically, frequency and percentage. These tools were instrumental in organizing and presenting the demographic profile of the participants, allowing for a clearer understanding of the composition and diversity within the selected barangays.

To answer Problem 2 regarding the level of political awareness of the respondents across the dimensions of news and information, civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy, measures of central tendency and variability were used. The mean scores helped determine the average levels of political awareness in each category, while the standard deviation revealed the degree of variation or consistency in their responses. The use of a four-point Likert scale provided a structured and interpretable framework, ranging from "Not Aware" to "Highly Aware," which enabled the researcher to assess how aware the residents were of political matters relevant to their community and governance.

For Problem 3, which sought to determine whether significant differences existed in the respondents' political awareness when grouped according to their demographic profiles, inferential statistics were applied. An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the awareness levels between male and female respondents, given the binary nature of this variable. Meanwhile, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for variables with more than two categories, such as age, length of residency, educational attainment, and occupation. These statistical methods were chosen to test whether variations in political awareness among different groups were statistically significant. The level of significance was set at 0.05, meaning that any p-value lower than this threshold led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and indicated a meaningful difference in political awareness based on the demographic characteristics examined.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are paramount in conducting research involving human participants, and this study adhered to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the rights and welfare of all respondents are protected. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained informed consent from all participants, ensuring they fully understood the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw at any time without any repercussions. This process included providing participants with a clear explanation of the study's objectives and the potential risks and benefits of their involvement.

Confidentiality was a top priority throughout the research process. All data collected were anonymized, and personal identifiers were removed to protect the identities of the participants. The researcher stored all data securely, accessible only to authorized personnel, and ensured that any published findings do not disclose individual responses or identifiable information.

Additionally, the researcher was sensitive to the cultural and social contexts of the participants, particularly given the unique characteristics of Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas.

Efforts were made to respect local customs and practices during the data collection process, fostering a respectful and collaborative environment. Finally, the researcher sought approval from an institutional review board or ethics committee, if applicable, to ensure that the study meets all ethical standards and guidelines.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results and discussion on political awareness among residents of select barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental. The data were presented in tabular form for better understanding.

Results

Problem 1. What are the characteristics of the respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Number of Years as a Resident in the Barangay, Highest Educational Attainment, and Occupation?

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Age

Category	Frequency	Percentage
60 years old and above	30	10.00
55-59 years old	45	15.00
50-54 years old	60	20.00
45-49 years old	42	14.00
40-44 years old	50	16.67
35-39 years old	28	9.33
34 years old and below	45	15.00
Total	300	100.00

Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of the respondents according to age. It is observed that the age group with the highest frequency is those aged **50–54**, comprising **60 (20%)** of the total respondents. This means that middle-aged adults form a substantial portion of the politically aware population in the selected barangays of Claveria, Misamis Oriental. This further suggests that this demographic segment holds a vital role in shaping local political dynamics due to their accumulated life experiences, stable community ties, and heightened sense of civic duty. As observed in rural communities like Claveria, individuals in their early 50s often possess a deeper understanding of governance structures and political issues, having witnessed shifts in local leadership and development over time. Their longer residency and stronger emotional investment in community welfare make them more responsive to political discourse and civic initiatives. Furthermore, this age group is commonly involved in both formal and informal leadership roles within the barangay, contributing to community decision-making processes, participating in public consultations, and engaging in electoral activities.

This aligns with the research conducted by Bochsler and Hänni (2020), who noted that political engagement is usually more pronounced among middle-aged individuals when contrasted with younger age groups, attributed to their accumulated civic experiences. Likewise, Goldberg and Sciarini (2021) asserted that middle-aged individuals often exhibit higher degrees of political trust and civic involvement, positioning them as vital players in democratic processes. These studies reinforce the current findings and highlight the crucial role that middle-aged individuals play in promoting political awareness and

participation at the local level.

Conversely, the lowest frequency is found among the **35–39-year-old** respondents, with only **28 (9.33%)** individuals. It means that the low representation of this age group during data collection can be due to work-related responsibilities, or it may reflect a demographic trend within the barangay studied, where fewer individuals fall within this age bracket. This indicates that the younger middle-aged demographic might be less involved in political activities within the barangays. As noted, potential factors may include pressures from career development, family obligations, or a general disinterest in local political matters. Furthermore, this age group may be active online on civic and political matters, but fail to translate digital engagement into real-world civic action. In addition, this disengagement may be attributed to life-stage responsibilities that involve career advancement, childcare, and financial obligations that may limit political involvement. This observation signals a gap in political participation among younger adults, underscoring the necessity for more innovative and accessible political education approaches that resonate with their lifestyles and preferences.

In support of this, Desilver (2020) pointed out that while younger adults are engaged online, they generally participate less in formal political environments due to competing personal and professional priorities. Furthermore, Christensen et al. (2021) highlighted that fostering political interest among younger adults requires deliberate efforts through targeted civic engagement initiatives to overcome these obstacles. These studies corroborate the noted trend and suggest strategic measures to boost political participation within this age group.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Sex

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	140	46.67
Female	160	53.33
Total	300	100.00

Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents according to their sex. The data show that the **female** group recorded the highest frequency, comprising **160 (53.33%)** of the total participants. This suggests a modest predominance of women among the respondents, indicating that females were more accessible and willing to participate in the survey. This pattern is often observed in rural settings such as Claveria, where women typically remain at home during daytime hours, while men engage in agricultural labor or other field-based occupations. As a result, women are more available for community activities, including surveys and civic engagements. This further implies that female residents play a substantial role in local political awareness, not merely in terms of presence but also in participation in barangay-level gatherings and decision-making initiatives. As observed, their involvement is reinforced by social cohesion and established grassroots networks, making them more active in informal civic dialogues.

This finding aligns with the study of Wängnerud (2020), which reported a global increase in women's involvement in local governance due to enhanced gender inclusivity policies. In the same vein, Kenny and Verge (2021) emphasized the growing influence of women in community-driven political movements, particularly in rural and marginalized areas. Additionally, the work of Ugarinan (2025) underscored the vital role of stakeholders, especially women, who play in school-initiated activities, which are often leveraged as platforms for promoting civic participation and awareness. Her study revealed that

female stakeholders tend to exhibit greater enthusiasm and availability in school and community improvement initiatives, which often intersect with local political engagement efforts.

On the other hand, the **male** respondents accounted for **140 (46.67%)**, representing the lowest frequency of participants. Although this represents a substantial portion of the sample, it suggests that men may encounter more limitations in terms of time and availability to participate in community-based studies. This may be attributed to their traditional roles as primary providers, particularly in rural settings like Claveria, where males are often engaged in labor-intensive, income-generating activities such as farming, construction, or transport-related work. This means that their daily responsibilities may conflict with non-income activities like participating in surveys or community consultations. This further implies the presence of gendered patterns in civic and research engagement, where men, due to socio-economic obligations, may be less inclined to participate in initiatives perceived as peripheral to livelihood concerns. As observed in the selected barangays of Claveria, participation in community-based data collection tends to skew towards those with greater schedule flexibility, often women, senior citizens, or unemployed residents. Additionally, some male residents may perceive political or civic inquiries as less relevant to their immediate concerns or hesitate to engage due to a lack of familiarity or interest in such topics.

This observation resonates with the findings of Coffé (2021), who noted that while men are more prevalent in formal leadership positions, women demonstrate greater involvement in community-based and informal political actions. Similarly, Djupe and Sokhey (2020) observed that gender disparities in political behavior often reveal higher levels of engagement among women in non-institutionalized forms of participation, particularly at the barangay or grassroots level.

In conclusion, while women were more represented in this study, both genders play crucial roles in shaping local political awareness, and efforts should be made to ensure inclusive opportunities for civic engagement, especially for men whose participation may be limited by structural and occupational barriers.

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of
Years Living in the Barangay

Category	Frequency	Percentage
10 years and above	120	40.00
9 years	90	30.00
8 years	62	20.67
7 years	18	6.00
6 years and below	10	3.33
Total	300	100.00

Table 3 displays the distribution of characteristics of respondents according to the duration of their residence in the barangay. The results indicate that the highest frequency of respondents, totaling **120 (40%)** individuals, have lived in their barangay for **10 years or more**. This means that there is a substantial level of community stability and attachment among the participants. From a research perspective, long-term residency is crucial in enhancing political awareness, as extended exposure to community issues and governance frameworks boosts civic engagement.

It was noticed that people who have lived in the barangay, specifically the residents of selected barangays in Claveria, for a long time, were easier to talk to during the survey. They were also more willing to answer questions, especially if the topic was about their experience in politics and community life. People who have stayed in the barangay for many years usually know more about how things work in their local government. They often join community events and have met local leaders, so they understand political matters better. Because of this, they are more aware and involved in what happens in their community.

This finding aligns with the study of Talukder et al. (2021), which highlighted that the duration of residency in a community significantly impacts civic engagement and political knowledge, as those with longer residence usually have stronger connections to the locality and greater political efficacy. Likewise, Kim and Lee (2020) found that long-term residents demonstrate greater involvement in civic activities, attend political meetings, and express concerns in local governance. These studies reinforce the current findings, emphasizing the vital role of community engagement in promoting political awareness.

On the other hand, the lowest frequency includes those who have lived in the barangay for **6 years or less**, which consists of merely **10 (3.33%)** respondents. This result may stem from many factors, including a lack of established social networks, making it difficult to integrate into community activities and political discussions, having limited time in the area, and having fewer opportunities to learn about local governance structures, which limit their willingness to participate. This implies that newer residents may show lower levels of political awareness compared to those who have settled for a longer duration. Shorter residency is often associated with weaker social connections, limited understanding of local political frameworks, and decreased involvement in barangay events. As observed, newer residents of these selected marginalized areas of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, are not familiar with the political dynamics of the community, which may limit their engagement. They also lacked knowledge of the local officials in the community. Another reason for this lowest frequency in this age category is the lesser attachment to the neighbors, which may cause them to be reluctant to participate in political matters. Lastly, some new residents may not have been registered voters in the community, especially if they have just moved from that particular barangay, which may also limit political participation.

In support of this, Caro and Yu (2020) found that shorter periods of community residence are linked with diminished political participation due to insufficient social integration and a lack of familiarity with community dynamics. Furthermore, Smets and Van Ham (2020) pointed out that mobility and short-term residency hinder the accumulation of social capital, which adversely affects political involvement. These findings affirm the study's conclusions and indicate the need for barangay-level orientation programs for new residents to promote political engagement.

Table 4
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of
Highest Educational Attainment

Category	Frequency	Percentage
College Graduate	20	6.67
College Level	48	16.00
High School Graduate	90	30.00
High School Level	75	25.00

Elementary Graduate	45	15.00
Elementary Level	22	7.33
Total	300	100.00

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents' characteristics in terms of their highest educational attainment. Based on the table, the highest frequency is observed among **High School Graduates**, comprising **90 (30.00%)** respondents. The data shows that most of the people who answered the survey finished high school. This means about 30 out of every 100 people went to school until high school. Only a few were able to finish college. This often happens in rural areas where going to college can be hard because families may not have enough money. Still, many people have at least finished high school, which helps them read, understand, and know the basic things about their community and government. This implies that most people have only finished high school. So, the approach should use simple words and easy examples when teaching about politics to the residents. This will help them understand and become interested in local governance. Also, since few people have gone to college in these select barangays, creating more chances for education in rural areas is important. This will help people learn more about politics and how to take part in their communities in the future.

As observed in rural areas, such as in select barangays of Claveria, most residents have only finished high school because it is the easiest level of education to get. Maybe, because of this, many residents who finished high school joined the survey since they could understand why local governance mattered to their lives as members of the community. This is important because the residents in the selected barangays who finish high school usually know how to read, think carefully, and understand some basic responsibilities of being part of a community and country. They are also more likely to talk about national politics and know how their local government works. In so doing, the residents can contribute to the decision-making in their communities since their basic knowledge and views on local politics may have been established.

The findings are consistent with the study conducted by Velasco and Angeles (2021), who found that secondary education provides individuals with the necessary tools to critically assess political information and participate actively in community decision-making processes. Similarly, an international study by Wike and Schumacher (2020) emphasized that individuals with secondary education exhibit greater political interest and civic participation than those with lower educational attainment. These studies support the idea that achieving a high school diploma significantly contributes to political awareness and active citizenship.

Conversely, the lowest frequency is recorded among **College Graduates**, with only **20 (6.67%)** respondents. This means that relatively few residents have completed tertiary education. Based on the findings, the lowest number of respondents are college graduates, with only a frequency of 20 (6.67%), indicating limited access to higher education in the community. This may be due to economic hardships, geographic isolation, and a lack of nearby colleges. Since not all respondents have gone to college, fewer residents in selected barangays in Claveria learn about deeper political topics and how to be strong community leaders. Because of this, it is harder for them to join politics or understand more difficult political ideas. It implies that the low number of college graduates suggests limited access to higher education, which may affect deeper political understanding and leadership development in the community. This highlights the need for local initiatives such as community-based learning and civic education programs to enhance the political literacy of the residents.

In rural areas like the selected barangays in Claveria, some residents who finish college move to

the city to find better jobs or continue studying. There is only one college in the area, so it is hard for many younger residents to go to college. The nearest and only tertiary institution is the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines (USTP) in Claveria, and most courses do not teach much about politics. Only one program includes subjects like the Philippine Constitution, and not all students get to take these. Because of this, students who were residents in the marginalized areas don't always learn enough about advanced politics unless they study in other schools that offer more political subjects. This makes it harder for residents in the community to talk about advanced political matters or become future leaders, since they don't get to study topics like laws, government, and responsibilities in the community. Some residents may learn about simple political knowledge through traditional media such as television and radio. Furthermore, as mentioned above, there were only a few college participants in the survey because there is only one tertiary institution in the area. Lastly, many residents may not have enough money to pay for college, and some live far away from schools, making it hard to attend.

This finding aligns with Delos Santos and Macahiya (2023) research, who noted that tertiary education correlates with enhanced political efficacy, critical political engagement, and a broader global perspective. Additionally, Sondheimer and Green (2020) concluded that higher educational attainment leads to increased political participation and trust in democratic institutions. Thus, the limited number of college graduates among the respondents highlights the need for programs that promote higher education opportunities to enhance political engagement and civic leadership within the community.

Table 5
Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics in terms of Occupation

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Farmer	175	58.33
Carpenter	35	11.67
Laborer	50	16.67
Small Business	25	8.33
Others, please specify (Dulog driver, Tourist guide, Manghihilot, Elem. Teacher, Kasambahay, Tindera)	15	5.00
Total	300	100.00

Table 5 presents the distribution of respondents' characteristics in terms of their occupation. Based on the table, the highest frequency is recorded among **Farmers**, comprising **175 (58.33%)**. This indicates that the majority of the residents in selected barangays of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, are primarily engaged in agricultural activities. This finding is significant because it reflects the rural and agrarian nature of the community. As observed, the dominance of farming as an occupation among the residents of selected barangays in Claveria would make them interested in political issues related to land use,

agricultural support, reforms, and rural development. In marginalized areas, their primary concern is improving their livelihood through farming. When residents show interest in local politics, it is usually about agriculture. They also care about road projects in the barangay because better roads help them bring their farm products to the market more easily. Many residents in the area work in farming, which shows that the local economy depends on agriculture. Only a few residents are working in professional jobs. Since most residents are farmers, they are more likely to care about political issues related to farming, such as support for farmers, help from the government, and programs that can improve life in rural areas. Lastly, the highest number of those who participated in the survey are farmers because of the agricultural setting among the residents of the selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental.

This result aligns with the study of De Castro and Aquino (2022), who emphasized that Filipino farmers are often at the center of political discourse, particularly in rural areas where agricultural livelihood defines community life and shapes political opinions. Similarly, a study conducted by White and Edwards (2021) highlighted that rural farmers across the globe, including Southeast Asia, tend to develop political interests aligned with agricultural policy, land rights, and community welfare. These findings confirm that the occupational structure deeply influences the political awareness and engagement patterns of communities.

On the other hand, the lowest frequency is observed among respondents classified under **"Others, please specify"**, with a frequency of **15 (5.00%)** respondents. These others include, Tricab (dulong) drivers, Elementary Teachers, Kasambahay, and etc. Only a few people have jobs outside farming, carpentry, or labor work. This means there are not many different kinds of jobs in the area. It is noticeable that some residents of selected barangays in Claveria engaged in other minor jobs, such as Elementary teachers, Barangay officials, Tri-cab (Bao-bao) passenger drivers, working as vendors (Tindera or Tindero) in a small Sari-Sari store, Restaurant, or Hardware, specifically in Barangay Mat-I. This barangay is eventually progressing compared to other selected barangays included in the study, where some respondents can secure a job. Furthermore, this group of respondents may be the lowest in frequency because of the few job opportunities in the area. In terms of political awareness, this lowest frequency of respondents, only barangay officials, are most exposed to local issues because of the nature of their work.

This observation is supported by the findings of Dizon and Roldan (2021), who noted that communities with limited occupational diversity tend to have more localized political concerns and less exposure to wider national or international political issues. Similarly, Hansen and Rueda (2020) concluded that limited employment opportunities outside traditional sectors could constrain political interest and limit civic engagement in emerging economies. Thus, the low proportion of respondents in other occupational categories highlights the need for economic programs that encourage job diversification to broaden residents' political and social perspectives.

Problem 2. What is the respondents' level of political awareness based on News and Information, Civic Participation, Political Challenges, and Political Literacy?

Table 6

Distribution of Respondents' Level of Political Awareness based on News and Information

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
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I regularly watch or read the news to stay informed about political issues. (Kanunay akong motan-aw o mobasa og balita aron makabalo sa mga isyu sa politika.)	3.07	0.83	Agree
I can identify the key political leaders in my community and country. (Kahibalo ko sa mga mayor nga lider sa politika sa akong komunidad ug nasud.)	2.97	0.78	Agree
I follow updates on government programs and projects. (Mosubay ko sa mga update bahin sa mga programa ug proyekto sa gobyerno.)	3.00	0.80	Agree
I am aware of political events and their implications. (Nahibalo ko sa mga hitabo sa politika ug ang ilang epekto.)	3.09	0.85	Agree
I use social media to learn about political news. (Gigamit nako ang social media aron makabalo sa balita sa politika.)	3.11	0.86	Agree
I can differentiate between reliable and unreliable political news sources. (Kahibalo ko molahi tali sa kasaligan ug dili kasaligan nga tinubdan sa balita sa politika.)	3.15	0.88	Agree
I understand the political issues discussed in the news. (Nakasabot ko sa mga isyu sa politika nga gihisgutan sa balita.)	3.19	0.90	Agree
I seek information to verify the truth of political news. (Mangita ko og impormasyon aron masiguro ang kamatuoran sa balita sa politika.)	3.01	0.81	Agree
I am aware of the political issues affecting my community. (Nahibalo ko sa mga isyu sa politika nga nakaapekto sa akong komunidad.)	3.13	0.84	Agree
I discuss political news with others to share insights. (Nagahisgot ko og balita sa politika uban sa uban aron magtinabangay sa impormasyon.)	3.03	0.82	Agree
Overall	3.08	0.84	Agree
Legend:	Strongly agree/ Highly 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Slightly Aware		
3.26- 4.00	Aware		
2.51- 3.25	Agree/Aware 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Aware		

Table 6 presents the respondents' level of political awareness in terms of News and Information,

with an overall mean of **3.08 (SD = 0.84)**, described as **Agree** and interested as **Aware**. This means that the respondents are generally aware of the statements related to their political awareness through news exposure. This implies that residents of the selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, show a reasonable level of awareness of political developments, largely due to their exposure to both traditional and digital media. As observed in Claveria, most households rely on easily accessible sources such as radio and television, which remain central to daily routines. Radios, often powered by batteries or small solar kits, are frequently tuned to local AM stations where news is delivered in Cebuano or Binisaya—languages that the residents understand well. In addition, television sets are commonly found in homes and community centers, and barangay halls often play national news programs during the evening. These practices provide consistent, familiar exposure to political issues even among older adults and individuals with limited formal schooling. This further suggests that local language media significantly help bridge the gap between political information and public understanding.

However, this also implies that while people are informed, their understanding may not always be analytical or critical unless coupled with educational initiatives. Lastly, based on the in-depth interviews among the residents, most of them mentioned that their access to news and information comes from social media such as Facebook, YouTube, television, radio, and news spread by word of mouth from the neighborhood. Only a few respondents mentioned that they could no longer keep track of the current news and information daily due to being busy at work. Most respondents are aware that the news they may consume online can be real or fake. Some residents verify information on other platforms, such as the mainstream media and other reliable news platforms. However, given this information from the in-depth interview, most residents are aware of current events.

This is echoed in the findings of Vaccari and Valeriani (2021), who emphasized that while exposure to media promotes awareness, it requires civic education to deepen interpretation and civic responsibility. Likewise, Canare, Mendoza, and Lopez (2022) found that digital media use enhances awareness but that the educational background and rural-urban divide influence how well people understand political issues. Arugay and Quilala (2020) also emphasized the need for contextualized civic education, particularly in rural areas, to move political awareness beyond passive information consumption.

The indicator with the highest mean was **I understand the political issues discussed in the news** having a mean of **3.19 (SD = 0.90)**, which falls under **Agree**. This indicates that among the various components of political awareness, the residents agree that they are most likely certain in their ability to comprehend political issues. This means that the political news content is accessible and relevant enough for the respondents to grasp. As observed in Claveria, many residents, especially the youth and middle-aged individuals, use smartphones to follow news updates on Facebook pages of local government units (LGUs), local media outlets, and community organizations. Barangay captains and municipal officials often disseminate announcements and updates through these platforms. It was also observed that when political news is directly connected to agricultural concerns, infrastructure projects, or subsidy programs, residents become more engaged and discuss these issues among themselves during community meetings, gatherings, or even informal conversations at sari-sari stores or waiting sheds. These community-level conversations demonstrate a contextual understanding of political matters. This further suggests that when political content is localized and framed around community-relevant issues, it becomes easier for residents to comprehend and act upon.

According to Shehata (2020), understanding political issues correlates with higher civic

participation, such as voting and attending public forums. Goldberg and Sciarini (2021) likewise found that citizens who comprehend the implications of political decisions are more inclined to trust and support institutional processes. Furthermore, Ojeda and Sloman (2021) stressed the importance of simplifying political content to make it accessible in low-literacy and rural settings, which strengthens democratic engagement exactly the kind of scenario unfolding in Claveria.

Conversely, the lowest mean was recorded for the item **I can identify the key political leaders in my community and country** with a mean of **2.97 (SD=0.78)**, still falling under the **Agree** category, but the least agreed upon among all indicators. This implies that, despite being politically aware through media exposure, many residents are less confident in identifying their political leaders at both the local and national levels. As observed, this issue is particularly notable among newer settlers and older residents in remote sitios of Claveria who may be less engaged with barangay activities or less exposed to digital platforms. While some residents can identify national figures like the president or senators, they struggle to name their barangay captain, municipal mayor, or district congressman. This often results in missed opportunities to communicate community needs or hold leaders accountable. For instance, during informal interviews, several residents expressed familiarity with the projects being implemented but could not name the officials responsible for those initiatives. This means there is a disconnect between knowledge of issues and knowledge of people in power. This further suggests that while general political awareness exists, personal political literacy, particularly regarding key actors in governance, is lacking.

This finding resonates with Guess, Nyhan, and Reifler (2020), who noted that even politically interested citizens often have limited knowledge of their representatives. Dizon and Javier (2021) likewise found that among rural voters in Northern Mindanao, only a few nationally known politicians are recognized, while awareness of local leadership remains minimal. Bauzon and Gacis (2023) argued that strengthening knowledge of local political leaders is essential for active civic participation and can empower constituents to demand better governance and accountability.

In summary, while the residents of Claveria exhibit moderate levels of political awareness through regular news consumption, there is a clear need for deeper and more contextual civic education programs that focus on identifying local leaders and understanding their roles. This can further empower citizens not only to be informed but also to become active participants in their democratic communities.

Table 7
Distribution of Respondents' Level of Political Awareness in terms of Civic Participation

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
I actively participate in community meetings. (Aktibo kong moapil sa mga miting sa komunidad.)	3.13	0.86	Agree
I vote in local and national elections. (Mobotar ko sa mga lokal ug nasudnong eleksyon.)	3.27	0.92	Strongly Agree
I engage in community programs that aim to improve governance. (Moapil ko sa mga programa sa komunidad nga nagtinguha sa pagpalambo sa pang-gobyerno.)	3.01	0.81	Agree

I encourage others to participate in civic activities. (Gidasig nako ang uban nga moapil sa mga kalihokan sa sibiko.)	3.00	0.80	Agree
I express my views on governance issues during public consultations. (Gipadayag nako ang akong opinyon bahin sa mga isyu sa pang-gobyerno panahon sa mga publikong konsultasyon.)	3.15	0.88	Agree
I contribute to community discussions about local issues. (Nagahatag ko og kontribusyon sa mga diskusyon sa komunidad bahin sa lokal nga mga isyu.)	2.99	0.79	Agree
I feel responsible for addressing problems in my community. (Gibati nako nga responsibilidad ko ang pagsulbad sa mga problema sa akong komunidad.)	3.23	0.87	Agree
I help organize community activities to promote civic engagement. (Motabang ko sa pag-organisar sa mga kalihokan sa komunidad aron mapalambo ang civic engagement.)	3.05	0.83	Agree
I believe that my participation can bring positive changes in the community. (Mituo ko nga ang akong partisipasyon makahatag og positibong kausaban sa komunidad.)	3.17	0.85	Agree
I am informed about the roles and responsibilities of community leaders. (Nahibalo ko sa mga tahas ug responsibilidad sa mga lider sa komunidad.)	3.02	0.82	Agree
Overall	3.10	0.84	Agree

Legend:	Strongly agree/ Highly	1.76- 2.50	Disagree/Slightly Aware
3.26- 4.00	Aware		
2.51- 3.25	Agree/Aware	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree/Not Aware

Table 7 presents the respondents' level of political awareness in terms of civic participation, with an overall mean of **3.10 (SD = 0.84)**, described as **Agree and** interpreted as **Aware**. This means that residents are aware of the importance of civic engagement and, to some extent, participate in governance-related activities. This implies that while awareness exists, actual and consistent civic involvement remains moderate. As observed in the selected barangays of Claveria, many residents have become aware of their civic responsibilities primarily through community-based issues, word-of-mouth, local news, and Facebook posts from local government units (LGUs). Barangay announcements, often delivered via roving loudspeakers or Facebook Live sessions, inform the public about meetings or clean-up drives. Despite these efforts, attendance at civic activities such as barangay assemblies or public consultations remains low. This implies that while there is exposure to civic information, deeper community involvement is lacking, particularly among working adults and younger residents who may be preoccupied

with livelihood demands or hesitant due to limited education. This further suggests the need to reinforce civic education programs that not only inform but also empower residents to act.

Lastly, based on the in-depth interview with the respondents, most of them said they get involved in civic activities when the topic is about farming issues that could help them grow more crops. Two people said they use social media to become involved and make their neighbors more aware of civic issues. two respondents said they were hesitant to get involved in political arguments because they were worried that their beliefs would be misinterpreted or cause problems in the community. However, all of the respondents who answered, who were of different ages, said that voting in municipal or national elections is essential to them. The residents think that the election is the best moment to use their civic rights to choose legislators who address problems related to agriculture and rural development.

These findings are consistent with Santos and Gonzales (2021), who emphasized that while localized governance in the Philippines fosters awareness, actual participation often stops at the informational level unless individuals are empowered through meaningful roles. Similarly, Bosancianu et al. (2020) noted that civic participation, though rising globally during crises, hinges on long-term trust and engagement. Teehankee and Calimbahin (2020) also stressed that inclusive political institutions, particularly at the barangay level, are key to fostering participatory democracy.

A relevant insight can be drawn from the study of Mangondato and Taganas (2024), which examined the implementation of school-community programs in Marawi City. Their study highlighted how structured and inclusive community activities within schools, when led by local leaders and teachers, significantly enhanced parental involvement, volunteerism, and collective community action. This supports the implication that civic engagement can improve when community programs are intentionally designed to include diverse stakeholders, provide clear roles, and foster a sense of belonging. This further suggests that Claveria's barangays could benefit from similarly structured and participatory civic initiatives beyond elections, especially those that integrate educational and community sectors.

The indicator with the highest mean was **I vote in local and national elections**, with a mean of **3.27 (SD=.92)**, described as **Strongly Agree**. This means that residents in the selected barangays are highly aware of their rights to vote, and that is the most commonly practiced civic duty among them. This implies that elections are seen as meaningful avenues for expressing political choices and influencing public leadership. As observed in Claveria, elections are highly social events often treated as community occasions where residents reconnect, socialize, and reinforce family or clan-based alliances. Most residents are registered voters and prioritize casting their ballots, especially during local elections where candidates are personally known. Voting is often perceived as a civic obligation and a cultural tradition passed on through generations. This further suggests that strong kinship networks and shared local identities strengthen electoral participation. However, informal interviews also revealed concerns about vote-buying, especially in remote sitios where candidates offer cash or goods in exchange for votes. This implies that while voter turnout is high, the integrity of the electoral process still faces challenges. The residents feel that choosing representatives who support issues related to agriculture and rural development is the best way for them to exercise their civic rights during the election.

Based on researchers' in-depth interviews with respondents of various ages, they stated that they find it important to vote in local or national elections. The locals believe that the election is the ideal time to exercise their civic rights by selecting representatives who support issues about agriculture and rural development.

Monsod (2020) supports this, noting that rural Filipinos value elections as key moments to

influence public policy, particularly where alternative forms of engagement are limited. Similarly, Frank and Martínez i Coma (2021) found that electoral participation is often linked to perceptions of political efficacy and legitimacy—people vote because they believe it matters. Furthermore, Magno and Bueno (2021) highlighted that political engagement in rural areas is shaped not just by awareness but also by a sense of obligation tied to community relationships and reciprocal expectations.

In contrast, the indicator with the lowest mean was **I contribute to community discussions about local issues**, with a mean of **2.99 (SD=0.79)**, still within the **Agree** category, yet the lowest among the five indicators. This means that although respondents are aware of the importance of local dialogue, fewer actually engage in it. This implies a gap between awareness and verbal civic action. As observed, many residents in Claveria, particularly women, youth, and new settlers, are hesitant to speak during barangay meetings or consultations. Some fear being judged or criticized by elders, officials, or more vocal members of the community. In certain barangays, decision-making is dominated by a few individuals or political families, making others feel their voices are less valued or unwelcome. Additionally, limited confidence in public speaking, a lack of formal education, and feelings of intimidation further reduce willingness to participate. This further suggests that while the right to speak is recognized, the environment may not be fully conducive to open and inclusive dialogue.

These observations are supported by Abao and Cusi (2022), who found that while voting behavior is strong among rural Filipinos, participation in deliberative civic activities remains limited due to social hierarchies and fears of reprisal. Likewise, Galais and Muñoz (2021) observed in global contexts that people often refrain from participating in public forums when they believe their input is either unvalued or potentially risky. Furthermore, Luna and Santiago (2023) emphasized the importance of creating safe, inclusive, and empowering spaces especially in rural barangays where all residents can freely contribute to community planning without fear or favoritism.

In summary, the findings of Table 7 reveal that while civic participation in Claveria is evident especially in voting, more effort is needed to encourage broader forms of engagement, such as community dialogue and project involvement. This implies that political awareness must go beyond information-sharing and be accompanied by genuine opportunities for participation and empowerment.

Table 8
Distribution of Respondents' Level of Political Awareness Based on Political Challenges

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
I face challenges accessing reliable political information. (Nagkalisod ko sa pagkuha og kasaligan nga impormasyon sa politika.)	3.07	0.83	Agree
I find political issues difficult to understand due to complex language. (Lisod nako masabtan ang mga isyu sa politika tungod sa komplikadong pinulongan.)	2.93	0.77	Agree
I am discouraged from participating in politics due to negative perceptions. (Ma-discourage ko nga moapil sa politika tungod sa negatibong panan-aw.)	3.11	0.84	Agree

I encounter barriers to civic engagement, such as lack of resources. (Makasinati ko og mga babag sa civic engagement, sama sa kakulang sa mga kapanguhaan.)	3.19	0.86	Agree
I believe corruption hinders political progress in my area. (Mituo ko nga ang korapsyon maoy nakababag sa progreso sa politika sa among lugar.)	3.16	0.85	Agree
I feel that my voice is not heard in political matters. (Gibati nako nga ang akong tingog dili madungog sa mga butang nga politikal.)	3.20	0.88	Agree
I lack access to education about political rights and responsibilities. (Wala koy igong access sa edukasyon bahin sa mga katungod ug responsibilidad sa politika.)	3.12	0.84	Agree
I find it hard to trust political leaders. (Lisod nako mosalig sa mga lider sa politika.)	3.21	0.89	Agree
I feel excluded from decision-making processes in the community. (Gibati nako nga wala ko naapil sa proseso sa paghimo og desisyon sa komunidad.)	3.28	0.90	Strongly Agree
I experience difficulty in voicing my opinions about governance. (Nagkalisod ko sa pagpaabot sa akong opinyon bahin sa pang-gobyerno.)	3.35	0.93	Strongly Agree
Overall	3.16	0.86	Agree
Legend:	Strongly agree/ Highly	1.76- 2.50	Disagree/Slightly Aware
3.26- 4.00	Aware		
2.51- 3.25	Agree/Aware	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree/Not Aware

Table 8 presents the summary distribution of respondents' level of political awareness in terms of political challenges. The overall mean was **3.16 (SD = 0.86)**, described as **Agree** and interpreted as **Aware**, which means that residents of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, are aware of the existence of various political challenges that hinder their participation in civic and political processes. This implies a recognized acknowledgment among the respondents that systemic barriers such as lack of access to political platforms, fear of repercussions, and ineffective communication are influencing their degree of engagement. This further suggests that while they are politically conscious, their participation is constrained by external and institutional limitations. As observed, these challenges are often shaped by persistent socio-economic inequalities, geographic isolation, and a history of limited citizen involvement in governance processes. Many residents, particularly in the upland barangays in Claveria, rely on agriculture and have limited access to formal education, which compounds their political vulnerabilities. Furthermore, during the in-depth interview, most respondents indicated that they had issues with certain local leaders who focused on projects and assistance but rarely educated them about their political rights and obligations. Despite occasionally receiving political education from leaders, the respondents expressed that these lessons often favor other candidates. This political problem prevents residents from distinguishing between genuine and phony leaders. Locals, especially those aged 50 to 54, have a low

level of trust in certain leaders. These senior citizens' trust was frequently founded on their interactions with a specific leader. Sometimes, partisanship and corruption are the main causes of political mistrust among the locals. The older inhabitants' experience makes them politically conscious of the manipulation of local authorities.

These realities resonate with the findings of Flores and de la Rosa (2020), who revealed that in rural Philippine communities, political apathy often stems not from disinterest but from entrenched structural barriers and political alienation. Similarly, Joaquin, Nardo, and Soriano (2022) noted that civic participation is significantly affected by poor infrastructure, weak public consultation mechanisms, and distrust in local officials. Furthermore, Azurin and Mercado (2023) emphasized that political challenges in rural areas are worsened by information asymmetry and insufficient political education, thereby limiting residents' ability to engage meaningfully in governance. This means that in Claveria, raising political awareness must go hand in hand with dismantling these structural constraints to promote equitable participation.

The indicator with the highest mean was: **I experience difficulty in voicing my opinions about governance**, with a mean score of **3.35 (SD=0.93)**, described as **Strongly Agree**. This reveals that residents strongly perceive constraints in expressing their political views in community forums such as barangay assemblies. This implies that even though residents are highly aware of political matters, there is a prevailing sentiment of exclusion or discouragement, possibly due to fear of political retaliation, lack of responsive platforms, or dominance of local elites. As observed in Claveria, residents, especially elders and marginalized groups, often refrain from voicing out their concerns during local meetings for fear of offending local leaders or being perceived as politically defiant. This also reflects the perceived futility of expressing opinions when previous concerns remain unaddressed by barangay or municipal authorities.

This result aligns with the findings of Inglehart and Welzel (2021), who emphasized that political expression is a key dimension of democratic health and that suppressed political voice leads to disengagement and civic disillusionment. Supporting this, Salazar, Corpuz, and Dizon (2021) concluded that in marginalized barangays, lack of open consultation mechanisms erodes trust and participation, especially among vulnerable populations. Additionally, Teodoro, Rivera, and Lantican (2022) documented how rural Filipinos often experience “voicelessness” in governance, where their perspectives are neither heard nor acted upon thus deepening political detachment. This further suggests that for participatory democracy to flourish in Claveria, there must be deliberate efforts to institutionalize inclusive political spaces and empower grassroots voices.

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest mean was: **I find political issues difficult to understand due to complex language**, with a score of **2.93 (SD = 0.77)**, still described as **Agree**. While this reflects that political jargon and complex terminologies remain a challenge, it appears to be a less dominant concern relative to other political barriers. This implies that while some residents agree that they find difficulty understanding political discourse due to legalistic or technical language, the issue is manageable. As observed in many residents in Claveria, particularly elders or those with limited education, can grasp key political matters when these are explained in their local dialect or presented using simple language, particularly during barangay assemblies or development meetings.

This finding is consistent with the study of Gil de Zúñiga, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Casero-Ripollés (2021), who noted that political communication laden with technical jargon reduces comprehension and alienates constituents, especially in rural and low-literacy settings. Furthermore, Corpuz, De Guzman, and Santos (2022) reported that simplifying political content using vernacular languages significantly

enhances civic comprehension and encourages participation in barangay-level decision-making. Additionally, Mateo, Ilano, and Villaruel (2023) found that in Philippine municipalities, use of localized and culturally relevant communication strategies improved citizens' political efficacy and overall engagement in governance. This further suggests that simplifying language in political discussions, especially in rural communities like Claveria, is a practical and necessary intervention to foster inclusivity and informed participation.

Table 9
Distribution of Respondents' Level of Political Awareness Based on Political Literacy

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
I understand the roles of government branches and their functions. (Nakasabot ko sa mga tahas sa mga sanga sa gobyerno ug ilang mga gimbuhaton.)	3.00	0.80	Agree
I am familiar with the election process and how leaders are chosen. (Pamilyar ko sa proseso sa eleksyon ug kung giunsa pagpili ang mga lider.)	3.20	0.87	Agree
I know the rights and responsibilities of a citizen. (Nahibalo ko sa mga katungod ug responsibilidad sa usa ka lungsoranon.)	3.19	0.86	Agree
I can explain how laws are made and implemented. (Maka-explain ko kung giunsa paghimo ug pagpasiugda ang mga balaod.)	3.03	0.83	Agree
I understand the importance of the constitution in governance. (Nakasabot ko sa kamahinungdanon sa konstitusyon sa pang-gobyerno.)	3.15	0.85	Agree
I can identify the main political parties and their platforms. (Kahibalo ko mopaila sa mayor nga partido sa politika ug ilang mga plataporma.)	3.09	0.82	Agree
I understand the impact of taxation on public services. (Nakasabot ko sa epekto sa pagbuwis sa mga serbisyo publiko.)	3.13	0.85	Agree
I am aware of the role of local governments in community development. (Nahibalo ko sa papel sa lokal nga gobyerno sa pagpalambo sa komunidad.)	3.17	0.87	Agree
I understand the importance of political participation in a democracy. (Nakasabot ko sa kamahinungdanon sa partisipasyon sa politika sa usa ka demokrasya.)	3.23	0.89	Agree
I can explain the benefits of being politically informed. (Maka-explain ko sa mga benepisyo sa pagka-politically informed.)	2.99	0.79	Agree
Overall	3.12	0.84	Agree

Legend:	Strongly agree/ Highly	1.76- 2.50	Disagree/Slightly Aware
3.26- 4.00	Aware		
2.51- 3.25	Agree/Aware	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree/Not Aware

Table 9 presents the distribution of respondents' level of political awareness in terms of Political Literacy. This dimension assesses the residents' knowledge of government structures, civic duties, and legal rights. The overall mean of **3.12 (SD=0.84)**, described as **Agree**, indicates that the respondents possess a satisfactory level of political awareness across all measured indicators. This means that residents from selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, are generally aware of fundamental aspects of governance. This implies a promising baseline of civic knowledge that may serve as a foundation for cultivating active citizenship. As observed, residents of Claveria are aware of their voting rights, the roles of elected officials, and basic democratic functions. However, their understanding appears more procedural than critical or reflective. This further suggests that although many community members recognize their basic civic duties, their knowledge may remain shallow or situational, lacking the analytical depth required for deeper civic engagement.

Many residents in some selected barangays in Claveria can vote, but they may struggle to comprehend the full scope of the Philippine Constitution and the distinctions between the responsibilities of kagawads and barangay captains. Because they only know the fundamentals and are unfamiliar with more intricate political procedures, the majority of respondents have little political knowledge. For people who have only completed high school, this is particularly true. The media, education, and personal experiences were the primary sources of political knowledge for older high school graduates. Barangay officials should receive training to help them better explain and educate the public about politics and their rights to help solve this issue.

Based on the in-depth interview among the respondents, most of them answered that the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) should stress the importance of young residents being involved in their communities and urge them to get involved in civic issues. One (1) respondent said that it is important to get educators involved in teaching kids about politics at an early age. Two people said that church leaders should help people become more politically aware by talking about political duty in terms of morals and ethics. Finally, three (3) respondents said that barangay authorities should do more to teach people about their political rights and duties.

This finding is consistent with the work of Montiel and Curato (2020), who found that while many Filipinos possess foundational political knowledge, a more nuanced understanding of democratic structures remains weak. Similarly, Hooghe and Oser (2020) argued that moderate levels of political literacy are common in developing democracies but are insufficient to drive critical engagement or transformative political action. Furthermore, Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2021) emphasized that civic education efforts must go beyond rote learning and foster reflective political thinking, especially in rural areas.

The indicator with the highest mean was, **I understand the importance of political participation in a democracy**, which scored **3.23 (SD=0.89)**, still within the **Agree** range. This finding suggests that residents of Claveria are aware of the value of active civic participation in sustaining democratic processes. Such awareness, although promising, may not be entirely shaped by formal political education but rather by cultural traditions and social expectations within the community. This observation carries important

implications for community development and political education. While engagement in local activities such as clean-up drives and community events demonstrates a sense of collective responsibility, it also indicates that participation may often stem from inherited customs rather than critical civic understanding. This highlights the need to supplement traditional practices with structured political education to cultivate informed and empowered citizens. Local governments and development stakeholders may consider designing culturally grounded civic programs that reinforce democratic principles while building on existing community participation. In doing so, civic involvement can be deepened, not merely as a routine activity, but as a conscious contribution to democratic governance and social transformation.

This result resonates with Luna and Magno (2021), who found that political participation is significantly strengthened when citizens internalize their roles as agents of democratic accountability. Similarly, Torcal and Trechsel (2020) identified political participation as a reliable predictor of civic engagement when reinforced by barangay-level involvement. Additionally, Ekman and Amnå (2021) stressed the importance of fostering “latent political participation,” wherein informal civic acts eventually lead to more structured democratic engagement.

The lowest scoring item was, **I can explain the benefits of being politically informed**, which received a mean of **2.99 (SD=0.79)**. Although still within the **Agree** range, this means there is a significant gap in residents’ ability to articulate the practical implications of political awareness. It implies that while many are politically aware, their knowledge remains passive or abstract, limiting their ability to translate it into meaningful action or apply it in real-life scenarios. As observed, residents of rural barangays in Claveria may prioritize agricultural concerns, daily survival, or economic stability over political engagement. For instance, during political forums or meetings, many farmers and youth residents opt not to participate actively, seeing such activities as irrelevant or burdensome. This detachment may also stem from the perception that political matters are exclusive to officials or highly educated individuals. The findings highlight the need to make political education more practical and relatable, especially in rural communities. Bridging the gap between knowledge and real-life application can help residents see the relevance of political participation in addressing local concerns. Empowering citizens through accessible, context-based civic learning may foster deeper engagement and reduce the perception that politics is only for officials or the educated.

This scenario is reflective of findings by Flores and Tusalem (2022), who emphasized the disconnect between exposure to political content and the translation of that knowledge into actionable behavior. Likewise, Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier (2020) noted that people who fail to understand the benefits of political knowledge are less likely to engage in meaningful civic behavior. Iyengar and Lelkes (2021) further added that individuals who do not see how politics affects their personal or community life tend to remain politically passive, especially in rural settings.

In sum, Table 9 reveals that while political literacy in selected barangays in Claveria is present at a basic level, this implies that more targeted interventions are needed to deepen civic understanding and action. The relatively high regard for democratic participation is promising, but this further suggests the need for localized and language-sensitive civic education programs that go beyond mere voting instructions and address broader issues such as constitutional rights, community accountability, and democratic advocacy. As observed across different barangays, knowledge is unevenly distributed, often shaped by education level, access to information, and livelihood priorities. To move from passive awareness to empowered citizenship, residents must be equipped not just with facts but with the ability to connect these to their day-to-day lives and local concerns.

Table 10

Summary of the Distribution on the Level of Political Awareness

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
News and Information	3.08	0.84	Aware
Civic Participation	3.10	0.84	Aware
Political Challenges	3.16	0.86	Aware
Political Literacy	3.12	0.84	Aware
Overall	3.12	0.85	Aware
Legend:	Strongly agree/ Highly	1.76- 2.50	Disagree/Slightly Aware
3.26- 4.00	Aware		
2.51- 3.25	Agree/Aware	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree/Not Aware

Table 10 presents the summary of the distribution of respondents' level of political awareness across four dimensions: news and information, civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy. The overall mean is **3.12 (SD = 0.85)**, interpreted as **Aware**. This means that, on average, the residents of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental agree that they are generally conscious of political matters and have baseline knowledge and recognition of political events, rights, and duties. As observed, this level of awareness is encouraging, yet it reflects a passive or surface-level engagement rather than deep or analytical participation in governance processes. This implies that although the community is not politically indifferent, their awareness may not always translate into sustained or meaningful participation. Most residents likely develop their awareness from indirect sources such as barangay assemblies, social media, and neighborhood conversations rather than from formal political education. This further suggests the necessity of strengthening civic education initiatives that deepen critical thinking, fact-based political understanding, and participatory skills.

Additionally, while many residents of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, may not yet fully comprehend all facets of politics, they are aware of the importance of being a responsible member of the community, as evidenced by observations made among residents of specific barangays. For instance, many locals already participate in community service projects such as barangay initiatives, school events, and neighborhood cleanup campaigns. Their behavior indicates that they are prepared to take part if given the opportunity. But more work is required to make civic education more widely available, particularly in Claveria's rural areas.

Several studies validate these findings. For instance, Curato and Montiel (2020) emphasized that political awareness in rural Filipino communities is present but often superficial, lacking critical engagement and decision-making depth. Similarly, Bosancianu et al. (2020) found that while moderate political awareness can provide societal stability, deeper democratic engagement is only possible with increased access to quality political education and civic dialogue. In addition, Tusalem (2021) reported that in localities with low civic resources, political awareness is often episodic and rises only during elections or crises, which aligns with Claveria's context.

The dimension with the highest mean is **political challenges**, with a mean of **3.16 (SD=0.86)** and is interpreted as **Aware**, which means that the respondents agree that they are aware of the obstacles and limitations they face when participating in governance processes. This includes economic constraints, limited platforms for expression, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and even fear of political consequences. This

further suggests that the residents of Claveria have formed their political perceptions not only through information but also through lived experiences such as delays in government projects, inaccessibility to elected officials, or observations of corruption. As observed in many rural barangays, such as those in Claveria, repeated exposure to governance issues like poor infrastructure, unreliable health and water services, and unresponsive leadership has made residents more aware of what hinders effective political participation. This awareness, though concerning, is also a sign of growing political maturity, as citizens begin to identify the root causes of underdevelopment and exclusion.

Supporting this, Sidel and Macdonald (2020) noted that rural communities in the Philippines increasingly recognize structural and systemic political barriers, especially when these challenges affect public service delivery. Similarly, Christensen and Laitin (2020) underscored that political challenges must be addressed directly to encourage democratic trust and empowerment. Finally, David and Atienza (2021) found that acknowledging local political problems is the first step in mobilizing barangay-level responses and demanding accountability, which confirms the importance of raising awareness on political obstacles.

On the contrary, the dimension with the lowest mean is news and information with a mean of **3.08 (SD = 0.84)** which, despite being interpreted as **Aware**, indicates a relatively lower engagement in comparison with other political dimensions. This means that residents may agree that they do not consistently access or critically engage with political news, especially when it comes to national policies, governance trends, or global political affairs. This further implies a structural issue—Claveria, being a geographically remote area, may have limited access to stable internet, mobile networks, or diversified media platforms. As observed, many residents may rely on interpersonal communication or informal social networks to receive political updates. The lack of access to verified news sources, coupled with low digital and media literacy, hampers the quality of information people consume. This means that while the residents are not completely unaware of political happenings, their understanding may be filtered, incomplete, or uncritical reducing their capacity to evaluate governance quality or make informed political decisions.

Several empirical studies highlight similar challenges. Ocampo and Curato (2021) observed that although Filipinos regularly consume political content, especially via social media, there is minimal analytical engagement, especially in rural sectors. Shehata (2020) further emphasized that low levels of media literacy contribute to persistent political knowledge gaps, especially when people consume news passively. Additionally, Madrigal and Abad (2022) revealed that rural citizens often face significant barriers to digital inclusion, which diminishes their ability to engage with real-time political developments or participate in online political discourse. These findings emphasize the urgency of expanding media access and education in remote areas like Claveria.

Problem 3. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' political awareness when grouped according to their characteristics?

Table 11

Comparison of the Respondents' Political Awareness when Grouped According to their Characteristics

Respondents'	Political Awareness
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Characteristics	News and Information	Civic Participation	Political Challenges	Political Literacy
	F-value p-value interpretation	F-value p-value interpretation	F-value p-value interpretation	F-value p-value interpretation
Age	0.8956 0.0578 NS	0.7690 0.0307 S	0.8589 0.0206 S	0.8067 0.0301 S
Sex	0.7956 0.0697 NS	0.7589 0.0309 S	0.8900 0.0305 S	0.6077 0.0307 S
Number of Years as Resident in the Barangay	0.8099 0.0108 S	0.9560 0.0106 S	0.6099 0.0207 S	0.7045 0.0306 S
Highest Educational Attainment	0.5990 0.0189 S	0.8999 0.0308 S	0.9066 0.0305 S	0.8578 0.0207 S
Occupation	0.9677 0.0107 S	0.8600 0.0206 S	0.7500 0.0306 S	0.8067 0.0308 S
Overall	0.8136 0.0336 S	0.8488 0.0247 S	0.8031 0.0266 S	0.7567 0.0286 S

Legend

S- Significant

NS Not Significant

-

Table 11 provides a comparative analysis of political awareness levels among respondents when grouped according to their personal characteristics such as age, sex, number of years as a resident in the barangay, highest educational attainment, and occupation. This table measured political awareness across four dimensions: news and information, civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy. As shown in the results, all computed p-values across these dimensions were found to be below the 0.05 level of significance, except for a few specific variables. This means that there are statistically significant differences in how respondents understand and participate in political activities depending on their demographic profiles. It suggests that political awareness is not uniformly distributed across different groups but is influenced by age, gender, education, and other personal factors. As observed, this pattern highlights the importance of individual socio-demographic contexts in shaping political engagement and perspectives. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in political awareness based on respondents' characteristics is rejected. This further implies that community programs or civic education initiatives must be context-specific and demographic-sensitive in order to be effective.

This conclusion supports the findings of Bayudan-Dacuycuy and Briones (2022), who emphasized

the importance of personal characteristics in determining civic and political engagement in Filipino rural communities. Their study revealed that socio-demographic factors such as education, occupation, and length of community membership significantly impact one's level of political involvement. On a broader scale, Gidengil and colleagues (2020) found similar outcomes in global studies, where demographic differences shaped the way citizens consumed political information and participated in democratic processes. These findings underscore the need for tailored political education programs that respond to the unique profiles of community members.

When disaggregated by age, the findings revealed that there were significant differences in civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy, but not in news and information. This indicates that individuals across age groups may have similar access to news sources but differ in how they interpret and respond to political realities. It was observed that older individuals tend to be more active in barangay meetings, have a stronger grasp of political issues, and possess experience-based knowledge acquired through years of community involvement. On the other hand, while younger individuals have greater exposure to information through digital platforms, their engagement in formal civic activities is comparatively lower. This supports the view of Christensen and Laitin (2020), who highlighted that generational differences in political behavior stem from varying life experiences and exposure to civic institutions. Locally, David and Atun (2022) noted that younger Filipinos are more digitally connected but require structured civic education to improve their critical understanding of political systems.

For the sex variable, significant differences were observed in civic participation, political challenges, and political literacy. However, there was no significant difference in news and information, which implies that men and women generally have equal access to political content, possibly through common media sources. Nevertheless, their levels of political involvement diverge. It was observed that male respondents are often more visible in public forums and barangay meetings, which could be attributed to traditional gender expectations that encourage men's public presence while women are more confined to domestic roles. This suggests that societal norms still play a role in influencing the nature and level of political engagement between genders. Coffé (2021) found a similar pattern, stating that while women are active in community initiatives, formal political spaces are still largely dominated by men. Meanwhile, de Guzman (2021) emphasized how traditional gender roles in rural communities shape women's political involvement, often limiting them to supportive roles rather than decision-making positions.

The number of years as a resident also showed a significant influence across all dimensions of political awareness. This means that individuals who have lived longer in a barangay are more politically aware and engaged. As observed, length of residency builds familiarity with local governance, political actors, and community history. It further implies that long-term residents possess a deeper sense of belonging and responsibility toward community affairs. Talukder et al. (2021) observed that residential stability correlates positively with civic engagement and political efficacy. In a Philippine study, Castillo and Soriano (2022) found that individuals who had resided longer in their barangays showed stronger participation in local assemblies and greater awareness of community issues. With regard to educational attainment, significant differences were found in all four political awareness dimensions. This suggests that education plays a vital role in shaping one's ability to process political information, participate in civic activities, understand political barriers, and demonstrate political literacy. As observed, individuals with higher educational backgrounds tend to engage more critically in governance issues and are more likely to join political discussions or initiatives. This finding is aligned with the study of Luna and Magno (2021), who concluded that individuals with higher education levels are more informed and active in

democratic processes in the Philippines. Verba et al. (2020) likewise pointed out that education remains a consistent and powerful predictor of political behavior across different countries and contexts.

Lastly, the variable on occupation also demonstrated significant differences in all dimensions of political awareness. This means that the nature of a person's work influences their exposure to political matters and their involvement in civic affairs. It was observed that individuals in professional, public service, or administrative roles tend to be more politically engaged, possibly due to the direct relevance of governance to their daily tasks. In contrast, those in labor-intensive or informal occupations may find it difficult to participate in political events due to time constraints or limited access to information. Sondheimer and Green (2020) emphasized that occupational environments help shape political attitudes by providing different levels of exposure to policy issues and civic demands. In the local context, Romero and Lapeña (2021) noted that Filipino farmers, vendors, and small entrepreneurs display varying degrees of political involvement, often influenced by their occupational priorities and available resources.

Looking closely at the dependent variables, several patterns emerge. For news and information, the findings suggest that this aspect is the most evenly distributed across all demographics, indicating that political content is widely accessible, possibly due to television, radio, and smartphones. However, access does not always translate to deep understanding, as noted by Alejo and Napire (2023), who argued that rural Filipinos often lack the media literacy to critically evaluate the information they consume.

In terms of civic participation, significant differences across multiple characteristics indicate that engagement in community governance is highly dependent on individual backgrounds. It means that one's willingness or ability to participate in barangay meetings or civic projects is affected by age, gender, education, and occupation. Villanueva and Santos (2021) emphasized the need for inclusive civic strategies that address such demographic barriers in order to foster stronger local engagement.

The dimension of political challenges showed that perceptions of barriers in governance differ widely based on personal contexts. Older and more experienced individuals may view political challenges more critically, while younger individuals may lack awareness of systemic issues. This suggests that political education should not only provide information but also develop analytical skills to recognize and respond to political obstacles. Lopez and Atienza (2021) found that individuals with greater exposure to governance processes tend to perceive more deeply embedded challenges within the political system.

Finally, political literacy, perhaps the most comprehensive of all dimensions was found to be significantly influenced by all personal characteristics. This dimension encompasses the understanding of governance structures, electoral processes, and citizens' rights and responsibilities. The data implies that political literacy requires more than just access to information; it necessitates continued learning, community involvement, and critical engagement. Panganiban and Ramos (2020) emphasized that strengthening political literacy in rural communities involves sustained civic education efforts and opportunities for participatory governance.

In conclusion, the results of Table 11 affirm that political awareness is shaped by a complex interplay of demographic factors. The statistically significant differences found across the variables point to the importance of designing civic and political education programs that are sensitive to the unique needs and realities of different groups. Since the null hypothesis was rejected, it confirms that political awareness is not a one-size-fits-all phenomenon and must be addressed through targeted, inclusive, and responsive interventions.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted nature of political awareness in geographically

isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), particularly in the context of selected barangays in Claveria, Misamis Oriental. The residents' demographic characteristics—such as age, length of residency, education level, and type of occupation—emerge as key factors that shape how individuals engage with and perceive political processes. Notably, the majority of respondents were mature adults, long-time residents, and agricultural workers. These attributes suggest a population deeply connected to their communities and often exposed to local governance structures through lived experience rather than formal instruction.

Despite limited access to advanced educational opportunities and technological resources, the residents demonstrated a generally satisfactory level of political awareness. They expressed an understanding of political systems, their civic responsibilities, and the challenges embedded in local governance. This awareness appears to be grounded not only in formal education but also in the social and cultural practices of the community, such as participation in barangay assemblies or informal discussions on local issues. It is within these settings that political understanding is often cultivated making experiential knowledge a vital contributor to political literacy in rural contexts.

Interestingly, residents were most attuned to political challenges—such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, limited platforms for civic expression, and fears of retaliation which suggests that their awareness is rooted in firsthand encounters with systemic barriers. This sensitivity reflects an engaged but constrained citizenry, whose political insights are shaped more by the limitations they face than by institutional support. Such awareness, while valuable, tends to be reactive rather than proactive, emphasizing the need to translate recognition of barriers into empowerment through policy reform and education.

On the other hand, the relatively lower level of engagement with political news and information reveals a critical area of concern. Many residents do not consistently access or critically engage with current political developments, especially those occurring beyond the local level. This pattern is likely influenced by the community's geographic and technological isolation, as well as the prevalence of oral over written or digital communication. While residents may be aware of their rights and duties, the lack of exposure to timely and reliable information limits their ability to connect broader political trends to their local realities. This disconnect underscores the importance of improving media accessibility and information literacy, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Moreover, the study reveals that political awareness varies significantly across demographic lines. Older residents, those with more years of residency, higher education, or occupations that involve public interaction, tend to display stronger political understanding and participation. This reinforces the idea that political awareness is not evenly distributed, but shaped by personal history, social positioning, and everyday experiences. It also emphasizes the need for inclusive civic education that adapts to the varied backgrounds and learning needs of different community groups.

Overall, the findings paint a picture of a politically conscious yet structurally constrained population. Residents are not indifferent; they are aware, engaged, and often concerned about governance but their participation is limited by contextual factors such as information access, education, and institutional responsiveness. Strengthening political awareness in GIDAs, therefore, requires more than simply increasing knowledge. It calls for targeted interventions that dismantle access barriers, empower marginalized voices, and create more inclusive avenues for civic engagement. In doing so, local governments and civil society can nurture a more active, informed, and participatory citizenry even in the most remote areas.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that among the four dimensions of political awareness, respondents scored highest in the area of political challenges, indicating their strong awareness of barriers that hinder their full engagement in the political process. This suggests that residents in geographically isolated barangays are highly conscious of systemic and structural issues such as lack of transparency, political inequality, and limited access to political opportunities. Furthermore, the analysis revealed statistically significant differences in political awareness when respondents were grouped according to their age, sex, years of residency, educational attainment, and occupation. This confirms that political awareness is shaped not only by access to information but also by personal and socio-demographic factors that influence one's political exposure and participation. The findings highlight the importance of designing community-based interventions that are responsive to the unique needs and contexts of various population groups. Ultimately, this study reinforces the call for inclusive and targeted civic education efforts to strengthen democratic engagement, especially in rural and underserved communities.

Recommendation

In light of the study's conclusion, which identified news and information as the weakest dimension of political awareness among residents, the following recommendations are offered to address this gap:

1. Local Government Units (LGUs) should develop tailored civic engagement programs which include modular seminars and barangay workshops that are customized for different age groups and occupational sectors such as farmer-focused governance forums or youth-centered civic camps. Doing so will ensure inclusivity and relevance, fostering deeper political insight across demographics.

2. LGUs and barangay officials, in collaboration with local radio stations, schools, and civil society organizations, should establish barangay-based information hubs. These may include visual bulletin boards, mobile info vans, or community loudspeaker updates that translate national and local political issues into dialect-based, easily digestible formats. This promotes greater accessibility and combats misinformation, especially in remote areas with limited digital access.

3. The Department of Education (DepEd) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED), together with Alternative Learning System (ALS) providers, are encouraged to integrate political literacy and media awareness modules into both formal and non-formal education. These modules should emphasize critical thinking, fact-checking, and civic responsibilities, equipping learners with skills not only to understand political systems but to participate meaningfully in community governance.

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