

# Students' Leadership Conceptions and Political Engagement: Implications to Teaching Philippine Politics and Governance

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## Abstract

This study focused on the concept of leadership and political engagement of students. Thus, it determined the respondents' conceptions of leadership and knew their current political engagement. Further, it determined the gaps between the notions about leadership and current political engagement of the respondents, which served as the basis for identifying the implications of the conceptions of leadership and current political engagement in teaching Philippine Politics and Governance. The study used an open-ended survey questionnaire, and the data gathered was analyzed with topical and thematic analysis. The students have knowledge and conceptions about leadership and the qualities and characteristics attributed to it. It was found that most of the students are engaged in elections, digital platforms, political discussion, and civic matters. Furthermore, gaps show that their political engagement does not reflect their conceptions of leadership and vice versa. What the students view, and think is not the same as what they are doing or actualizing. Their concepts negate what they are engaged in. The existing gaps show that leadership conceptions and political engagement can be further improved by incorporating varying teaching-learning approaches aligned to the Philippine Politics and Governance curriculum.

**Keywords:** civic competence, education, gaps, social studies

## 1. Introduction

Leadership is one of the most talked-about concepts. Due to the need for better leadership across many contexts, there is an existing lack of common understanding or consensus on the concept of leadership and how leadership should be practiced (Haber, 2012). Scholars have defined leadership in various ways throughout the years; some see it as an innate feature, while others see it as a collection of abilities or behaviors, and others as a process or relationship. As a result, the concept of leadership is interpreted and evaluated in various ways.

In the educational landscape, Philippine Politics and Governance are one of the main drivers of cultivating leadership among students, wherein as mentioned in the DepEd Philippine Politics and Governance curriculum guide (2016), which presents to the students the basic concepts and vital elements of politics and governance from a historical-institutional perspective. The PPG course will assist learners in developing their civic competency. Thus, to strengthen or build their civic competence, they have to look at their conceptions of leadership as it will guide them in participating and engaging in civic activities. Civic competence is made up of components relating to knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, civic participation in school, state, and international arenas, and upholding one's rights and responsibilities as a citizen, as well as the ability to engage in political discussion and participate in a variety of socially essential activities (Jurs, 2014). These factors, as seen, have a direct relationship to political engagement, which is also known as political participation or political involvement in this study and is used interchangeably.

In various parts of the world, students' political engagement from secondary to tertiary levels is apparent. Based on various international and national studies, the most common engagement in political activities by students are electoral participation (voting, campaigning, etc.), volunteerism in the community, protest activities, and contacting public officials. Beside from traditional political interactions, the growth of digital platforms via the Internet to engage in political activities is also frequently used, with social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter among the most popular tools. Aside from the activities mentioned above, school-based participation as a form of political engagement is also significant. Dolipas (2021) determined that students' political participation in school is in the form of being a member of a student council, having a function as a speaker for the class, attending a students' meeting, taking an active role in such a meeting, participating in a protest movement at school and organizing a political event at school.

However, there are gaps between an individual's perceptions, views, and conceptions and their engagement in a specific matter. Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) stated that individuals' ideals do not often match their actions. Thus, in this study, besides determining the conceptions of the respondents about leadership and knowing their current political engagement, the researchers also aimed to determine the gaps between the notions about leadership and current political engagement of the respondents, which was the basis for identifying the implications of the conceptions on leadership and current political engagement in teaching Philippine Politics and Governance.

## 2. Literature Review

Leadership and political engagement are core elements of civic education, especially in the study of Philippine Politics and Governance. Leadership, as a concept, has been long debated, with no single definition universally accepted. Some scholars view leadership as an innate trait, while others believe it is a set of learned behaviors or skills, and others see it as a relational and inclusive process (Haber, 2012). These varying perspectives have made leadership an elusive and complex concept. Traditional definitions tend to associate leadership with power, hierarchy, and formal positions of authority. However, post-industrial views emphasize collaboration, shared vision, and the ability to inspire and empower others (Northouse, 2007, as cited in Haber, 2012). This evolving view of leadership has encouraged a more democratic and inclusive understanding, especially in education where every learner is seen as a potential leader.

Despite this inclusive vision, leadership development is still hindered by inconsistent understandings among students. Marcketti and Kadolph (2010) noted that educational institutions often promote leadership through mission statements and programs, but a lack of consensus on what leadership really means affects the depth of student participation. Astin and Astin (2000) emphasized that some students' narrow views on leadership can discourage them from getting involved, especially when they do not see themselves fitting the traditional mold of a "leader." Furthermore, research by Komives et al. (2011) revealed that student leadership development is a shared responsibility among educators and institutions. When students see leadership as inclusive and value-driven, they are more likely to participate and engage in meaningful civic work.

Gender and experience also shape how students view leadership. Wielkiewicz et al. (2012) found that males often hold hierarchical conceptions of leadership, while females tend to adopt more collaborative views. Students in formal leadership roles often embrace traditional and trait-based definitions, while those outside such roles are more likely to see leadership as fluid and contextual (Schertzer & Schuh, 2004). Additionally, Avolio (2010) found that many students still believe leadership is a rare ability possessed by only a few exceptional individuals. However, this belief contradicts the growing body of evidence that leadership can be developed through learning and experience. Reche, Diaz, and Sanchez (2013) emphasized that effective leaders are not born but are shaped through communication, mediation, and the capacity to understand group needs.

In the Philippine context, Social Studies plays a vital role in developing civic competencies, which include both leadership and political engagement. The Araling Panlipunan curriculum, aligned with the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2013), seeks to promote critical thinking, democratic values, and active citizenship. Social Studies is seen not only as a subject area but as a platform where leadership qualities are cultivated. It emphasizes that every learner, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background, has the potential to become a leader (Planas, 2020). The subject of Philippine Politics and Governance specifically aims to expose students to the country's political structures, processes, and institutions, helping them understand their civic rights and responsibilities (DepEd Curriculum Guide, 2016).

Political engagement, also referred to as political participation or involvement, is another essential outcome of civic education. Van Deth (2016) defined political engagement as voluntary, non-professional actions aimed at influencing political decisions. These can range from traditional activities such as voting and campaigning to newer forms like digital activism and social media participation. Amna and Ekman (2012) further classified political participation into conventional and unconventional categories, each involving both individual and collective actions. Examples include voting, joining school clubs, signing petitions, joining rallies, or expressing political opinions online.

Modern political engagement has evolved significantly due to the rise of digital platforms. Amin and Mahmud (2017) emphasized that platforms like Facebook and Twitter allow students to express their political opinions, organize events, and participate in national conversations. DeHart and Yang (2016) also found that the political use of social media is a strong predictor of online political engagement among college students. These platforms help increase awareness, mobilize actions, and foster political consciousness among the youth. David, San Pascual, and Torres (2019) supported this by showing that following political figures or institutions on social media is correlated with higher political engagement. Additionally, Conroy, Feezell, and Guerrero (2012) demonstrated that online groups are just as effective as traditional groups in fostering civic participation.

Despite the multiple avenues for participation, several studies highlight persistent gaps between students' political beliefs and their actual engagement. Chen et al. (2019) argued that individuals often hold beliefs about learning or leadership that are not reflected in their actions. Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) similarly observed that knowledge and beliefs don't always translate into behavior. Walter (2016) further explained that while personal insights may grow, they don't automatically lead to committed civic action. These gaps between conception and execution underline the importance of intentional educational approaches that bridge theory with practice.

School-based political participation remains a significant venue for youth engagement. Saha and Print (2010) asserted that involvement in student councils, school clubs, and elections can predict future political behavior. Exposito (2013) outlined five domains where students engage in school politics: decision-making, conflict resolution, knowledge construction, problem-solving, and identity formation. These activities not only develop civic skills but also empower students to express themselves and contribute to community development. According to Williams (2020), campus-based organizations also shape students' political views and encourage them to take part in wider social movements. Even non-academic events like intramurals, community outreach, and school-led advocacies contribute to a student's political socialization (Ablang et al., 2005).

Family and school-based support also influence students' civic behavior. In the modular learning setup, Maslang et al. (2021) emphasized that infrequent face-to-face interactions and limited feedback between students and teachers can hinder student motivation and satisfaction. They underscored how emotional support from families and instructors can counteract the challenges of distance education and foster more positive learning behaviors. Additionally, Maslang (2023) found that among pre-service teachers, academic performance is predicted not only by cognitive ability but also by motivation, interest, and external support wherein all of which are linked to how students engage and lead both in and out of class.

Overall, the literature shows that while leadership and political engagement are both essential components of civic development, they do not always align in practice. Many students express strong beliefs about what leadership should be, but their actual political participation remains inconsistent. Recognizing and addressing these gaps is necessary in improving how leadership and engagement are taught. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' conceptions of leadership, their actual political engagement, and the relationship between the two. It also seeks to identify practical implications for teaching Philippine Politics and Governance in a way that bridges the gap between what students believe and how they act.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative narrative research design to explore students' conceptions of leadership and their current political engagement. It was conducted during the first semester of Academic Year 2021–2022 at Saint Mary's University Senior High School in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. The participants were 20 purposively selected Grade 12 students from the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand.

Data were gathered through an adapted and contextualized open-ended questionnaire consisting of three parts: student profile, leadership conception questions based on Aminitehrani (2017), and political engagement questions grounded on the dimensions identified by Owen and Soule (2015). The instrument was validated by research panelists and distributed via Google Forms through the school's research coordinator and classroom advisers.

Informed consent was obtained, and all ethical protocols were strictly observed. Thematic analysis using the inductive method was applied to group and interpret student responses. The salient findings served as the basis for drawing implications in teaching Philippine Politics and Governance.

### **4. Findings and Discussion**

#### *4.1 Students' Leadership Conceptions*

Leadership has been the subject of research in various areas in the field of social sciences, and consensus regarding its definition has not been reached; one of the reasons for this lack of consensus originates from the differences in the reflection and priority of leadership in different areas-on how the concept of leadership is being looked at (Kolzow, 2014). In other words, leadership is an elusive concept. Depending on the angle from

which one views it, it has been variously defined.

The respondents defined leadership as influencing other people. Their responses imply that most of the respondents believed that leadership is concerned with influencing other people to accomplish the goals of an organization. This is similar to Moguel's (2015) findings, which emphasized the connectedness of leadership and influence. The youth leaders in their study claimed that rather than relying on power and position to lead, leadership should be concerned with influencing or creating an impact on one's constituents.

Furthermore, respondents perceived leadership with modeling traits. People typically follow leaders who demonstrate these traits or look at them as their models in life. These agree with Gallagher (2014), who opined that leadership is concerned with having leaders who "model the way" in which leaders model or display desirable behaviors such as "demonstrating effective time management, showing the ability to set goals, building positive relationships, and promoting understanding and respect across racial and ethnic groups" for their followers to follow, thus leading by example.

Meanwhile, respondents also believed that leadership entails serving people, as reflected in their responses which state that leadership is to be of service to your fellow people and be a servant. This is consistent with the study of Summer (2012), wherein he found that the students perceived leadership as being of service to the people by helping, supporting, or giving assistance to an individual.

On the other hand, when the students were asked about the importance of leadership, they mentioned that leadership is essential in goal achievement wherein they highlighted that leadership is key to goal achievement in any organization or group endeavor. In other words, leadership serves as the instrument to guide and direct individuals in achieving a common goal into a reality. As Beato (2020) reiterated, it is through leadership that a society can create a vision and motivate people to make it a reality.

Furthermore, the respondents also shared that leadership is important because it helps build an organized, peaceful, and progressive society. As Alain (2022) emphasized, leadership is instrumental in achieving social progress. It mobilizes the people and ignites that passion for working together to improve society.

Moving forward, the respondents had various conceptions of the traits of a good leader and what traits they value most. Data showed that the respondents said that the qualities or traits of a good leader include being kind, understanding, and humble. The idea of good leaders being understanding and humble was highlighted by Fabian (2021), stating that it is one of the essential characteristics of a successful leader.

Furthermore, the respondents mentioned that the qualities or traits of a good leader are being creative, critical thinker, transparent, accountable, and fair. This is supported by Kasowski (2020), who mentioned that critical thinking is a skill that must be developed in leaders since it allows leaders at every level to evaluate their decision-making and how these decisions ultimately impact results.

In addition, other qualities of a good leader are transparency, accountability, and fairness. The respondents believe that leaders should be equal and clear in their actions. Edith (2015) said that the fairness of an ethical leader is highly sought among senior executives.

Another characteristic of a good leader valued the most is goal-orientedness. This is consistent with what Espinoza (2021) has stated regarding influential leaders' comprehension of the execution of long-term goals that should be achieved.

Moreover, respondents also value the passion of a good leader. Ray (2019) pointed out that good leaders are passionate in that they are fully engaged and committed to achieving their goals while helping others achieve theirs.

The data gathered also reveal that self-confidence is also one of the qualities or traits of a good leader, as shown in the respondents' responses. According to them, a good leader is someone confident or with self-confidence. This suggests that good leadership is coupled with confidence. While Bregman (2018) asserted that self-confidence, knowing what they want to become and how they work towards the future and strategically and wisely contributing one's energy strategically and wisely are qualities of an effective leader.

Concerning healthy communication, respondents also mentioned that leaders should have good communication skills. Dewan and Myatt (2008) stated that a critical quality of a good leader is the ability to convey ideas demonstrated by a clear communication style. As highlighted by Kapur (2020), promoting healthy communication is regarded as the fundamental quality in leadership wherein when leaders integrate effective communication processes, they will be able to impart instructions, ideas, and viewpoints to their constituents efficiently and effectively.

The respondents' responses regarding the traits or qualities of a good leader are consistent with the findings of Mortenson et.al. (2014) wherein students do not put emphasis on power, authority, and specific traits in characterizing a good leader observed in adult leadership theories.

Instead, the students' conceptions of the traits of a good leader focused more on the commitment of character, dedication, and a firm belief in what is right and good for everybody.

Conversely, this study also looked into how people become leaders. The respondents conceived that people become leaders because they aspire to bring change and have accepted the challenge of leading others. This is affirmed by the study of Kapur (2020), which noted that the desire to lead enables the leaders to provide adequate knowledge and understanding to their subordinates.

Meanwhile, the students also conceptualized that people become leaders through their leadership potential, qualities, and skills. They become leaders by having the leadership skills such as good influence on other people and acting with dignity and accountability.

Lastly, the students answered that people become leaders through their experiences. They mentioned that people become leaders with so much process and experience. They do not simply become leaders; people do not dictate who the leaders are. This connotes that leadership is not a one-shot process; instead, it entails incidents for someone to activate their leadership potential. Grimard and Pellerin (2018) emphasized leadership development through action learning which leaders develop through experiences.

The respondents also answered why people become leaders. The respondents indicated in their response that one of the motivations why people become leaders is because they want to make a difference. This is similar to the findings of Rice (2019), who articulated those leaders who derive from individuals the distinctive skills and passion for making a difference. Moreover, the respondents shared that people become leaders because they possess leadership skills. In the study conducted by Kiefer (2021), he found that people become leaders because they see a dynamic and integrity, which are some of the leadership qualities that motivate them to become leaders.

Lastly, respondents said that leaders are destined to lead. This makes individuals become leaders. In consonance with McKeown (2013), people are meant to become leaders if they possess the signs such as: leading when they have to, seeing much more than they do, changing people, and achieving outcomes. Data also show that people become leaders for popularity. The respondents think that leaders do the task and responsibilities of a leader for fame and recognition. Apart from this, as underscored by Kua (2020), leaders want to lead so they can be in the spotlight and network with people from throughout the company.

However, some respondents also stated that leadership is innate and natural among individuals. Blass and Haraida (2019) stated that everyone is born a leader. However, the idea that leaders are made is supported by Swaroop and Prasad & Swaroop (2013). They articulated that leaders are made, not born, wherein it is through the people's desire and willpower that makes them leaders. Thus, leadership does not come naturally. Instead, it develops through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience.

Overall, the students conceived leadership as modeling traits, serving people, and influencing others to benefit people in an organization. They also perceived that leadership is important in achieving the goals of an organization and building a better society. The respondents believe that the traits of a leader include humility, critical thinking and creativity, transparency, accountability, and fairness. In addition, the other characteristics identified by the students include dedication, goal-orientedness, good communication skills, and, lastly, self-confidence. Meanwhile, according to the students, the most valued traits of a leader are humility, self-confidence, and good communication skills.

Furthermore, people become leaders to bring change and accept the challenge of leading others. They also believe that leadership requires potential, qualities, and skills, including experience leading people. There are different motivations of leaders in leading other people. The identified major reason people become leaders is that they want to make a difference in our society, considering their capabilities and skills. They also believe that leadership requires potential, qualities, and abilities, including experience leading people. Indeed, leadership is innate and natural within a person, but it is learned through experiences.

#### *4.2 Students' Current Political Engagement*

In terms of the political activities present in the community of the students, the upcoming 2022 national and local elections mainly were observed. This implies that election is one of the most observed political activities in the community due to the incoming 2022 national and local elections in the Philippines.

Another political activity observed in the respondents' community is their awareness of corruption. This manifests that the respondents are aware of the corruption in their respective communities as it was rampant and constantly happening. As Batalla (2015) mentioned in his study, the issue of corruption in the Philippines is prevalent in the political arena.

Moreover, respondents also stated that social media use is one of the political activities present in the community. The study by Loader, Vromen, and Xenos (2015) found political engagement among young people

in three countries. Their research also showed a strong and positive relationship between political engagement and social media use among young students. Furthermore, the students also observed political education in their community as one of the political activities. This shows that HUMSS learners are involved in political education by educating themselves and other people with legitimate facts and information. In the study of Cabo (2018), she mentioned that youths focus on seeking correct information and learning more about politics, such as participating in simulations of political processes, attending training or learning at school, and engaging in youth activities.

Also, the students mentioned that community engagement is a present political activity in their community. According to Boulianne & Brailey (2014), community attachment and the related notions of integration, embeddedness, belonging, and feeling of the community have long been used to predict civic and political engagement. Concerning the issues and activities present in their community, the students' current political engagement are political education, electoral participation, and civic participation. The study of Ekman and Amna (2012) on political participation typology is instructive of how political education is now construed as a new form of political engagement among young people, and this is manifested by taking their interest in educating themselves about politics and society, discussing politics and societal issues with friends as well as educating others with regards to political issues in the society.

Moreover, electoral participation is also one of the current political engagements of the respondents. Owen and Soules (2015) have emphasized the huge involvement of students in electoral participation, such as voting in presidential elections regularly, voting in local elections regularly, working on a candidate's political campaign, and working as a canvasser for a political or social group or candidate. Lastly, the respondents are also currently engaged in civic matters. According to Owen and Soules (2015), students are likely to participate in community issues such as getting involved with issues like health and safety that affect one's community and working with a group to solve a problem in the community where you live. The discovered engagement among the respondents shows that they are engaged in their community by helping with community problems and even national issues.

Most of the students stated that election was one of the main political activities present in their community. In terms of political issues, some of them mentioned corruption as one of the political issues prevalent in their community. Aside from election and corruption as political issues or activities prevalent in the community of the respondents, they also mentioned political education and community engagement. On the other hand, most of the students' current political engagement is engaged in political education, followed by electoral participation and civic participation.

#### *4.3 Gaps Between Students' Leadership Conceptions and Political Engagement*

The researchers found a gap between the students' leadership conceptions and their current political engagement from the students' responses.

##### *a. The difference between Leadership Views and Disengagement*

One of the visible gaps is their idealistic and theoretical view of leadership and its non-observance when it comes to their political engagement. For instance, they view that leadership is a collaborative task that involves the participation of both the leaders and members of the community but when they were asked on their current political engagement, they said they do not engage themselves in any political activities. According to Cabo (2018), the traditional perception that the Filipino youths are uninterested, if not apathetic, to politics remains unchallenged.

##### *b. The gap in the Conceptions of Leadership Qualities and Personal Experience*

There is also a gap in their conceptions of the qualities of a leader and their personal experiences with the political leaders. To illustrate, they view a leader that is transparent and dignified, however, they have encountered and participated in political activities such as vote selling. According to Shaul (2019), the results of her study were in contrast to the hypothesis that high knowledge of politics among individuals will more likely trust the government because of a greater understanding of the government process. This study showed the same results.

In connection to voting selling, there is also a gap in their conception of leaders that are honest and with integrity to what they are experiencing in their community. Students have experienced corruption happening in their place and it is conflicting to what they have viewed that those leaders are honest and possess integrity. As cited by Brillantes and Fernandes (2011), a review of recent literature suggests that all levels of corruption, from petty bribery to grand corruption, patronage, and state capture, exist in the Philippines at a considerable scale and scope. Furthermore, the respondents' conception of leaders being open to communication and listening to their fellow people is contrary to what they have experienced. Respondents experienced that students are powerless regarding expressing their views on political activities and issues happening in their community. This is in contrast with what Qadri (2016) highlighted, which states that open communication is crucial in leadership, open

communication is still needed wherein communication should be two ways in the sense that the members of the community should also be given the right to share their opinions of feedback regarding the policies set or decided on by the political leader.

Concerning the gaps above, the respondents have viewed those leaders as role models with a heart. However, there is a gap in the engagement of the students in political activities as the leader that was trusted and elected by the people are the one involved in negative political issues and activities such as bribery and corruption. This implies a difference in their conceptions of a trustworthy leader to what they have experienced in their community as the leaders are involved in activities that destroy the trust of their people.

From the respondents' conception of leadership and their current political engagement, there exists a gap between these two aspects wherein there is a gap between students' perception of leadership about their current political engagement. Another gap that prevailed was the gap in the students' personal experiences with their leaders in connection to their leadership conceptions, specifically on the characteristics of leadership and qualities of leaders.

#### *4.4 Implications in Teaching Philippine Politics and Governance*

Philippine Politics and Governance is one of the specialized subjects in Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS). From a historical-institutional perspective, it introduces the students to the basic concepts and vital elements of politics and governance.

##### *a. Widening leadership conceptions among students*

First, students have defined leadership characteristics and qualities based on their community's observed characteristics. Other leadership attributes aside from what they have mentioned can be seen in other communities or settings. These may also be attributed to the lack of leadership topics in the Philippine Politics and Governance curriculum. Leadership among the governmental institutions and its leader is a core skill and value worthy of discussion. Thus, to expand their knowledge regarding leadership, teachers can let their students' interface with various political leaders to have the experience of assessing leadership qualities. With leadership topics highlighted in the curriculum, students can widen their conceptions of leaders theoretically and realistically.

##### *b. Voters' Education in PPG classes*

Since elections are part and parcel of the Philippine political landscape and most of the major political engagement of students is related to the upcoming national and local elections, this shows that the students are well aware of their civic roles, specifically in electoral participation.

Thus, teachers must integrate voters' education in teaching Philippine Politics and Governance. In other words, teachers should enlighten students about the mechanics and specifics of the voting process during elections to develop the voters' awareness and participation in using their suffrage. Moreover, teachers should also explain to the students their responsibilities as voters so that they will become wise, responsible, and rational voters.

##### *c. Disengagement to active engagement*

One problem with students' participation is their derisory political engagement or even disengagement in political activities. This may be attributed to the teacher's teaching style, or it could also be because of the environment that the students are into. Thus, teachers should strategize to encourage the students to be involved in political activities starting in their respective communities. For instance, in the classroom setting, teachers can integrate enrichment activities like debates, group discussions on political issues, developing reflection papers on political topics, and simulation in connection to political activities to encourage the learners to be involved or engaged in political activities. Furthermore, one mechanism to encourage the students to be actively involved is to employ service learning. This educational approach integrates meaningful community service into the curriculum. Service-learning contains two main elements: engagement within the community (service) and reflection on that engagement (Preradovic, 2015). By applying service-learning, students will be given a chance to participate in some community volunteerism. These experiences will lead to greater engagement in politics (Evans, 2015).

Overall, the study found that the students have leadership conceptions based on their experiences within their community and the lack of focus on leadership topics within the Philippine Politics and Governance curriculum. Moreover, most of the students have experience in engaging in political activities. Still, they are not quite rich, while others have none, which can be attributed to limited opportunities to participate in school and the community. Lastly, the teacher's job is crucial to forming a concrete and meaningful political self by implementing various activities and strategies such as service-learning.

## **5. Conclusions**

The students are conscious of what leadership is based on their individual experiences. They are also critical in pointing out the qualities and traits of a leader. Students are engaged in political activities such as in elections, on digital platforms, and in their communities. They are also involved in political discussions and civic matters. Most of the students are engaged in political activities in various ways, physically and virtually. Still, a few of them are not actively involved in political activities. There are gaps between the leadership conceptions and political engagement of the students wherein their political engagement is not reflective of their conceptions of leadership and vice versa. What the students view and think is not the same as what they are doing or actualizing. Their conceptions negate what they are engaged in. The existing gaps show that leadership conceptions and political engagement can be further improved by incorporating varying teaching and learning approaches aligned to the Philippine Politics and Governance curriculum.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the summary of findings and conclusions derived in this study, this study recommends that students should attend or organize future seminars and workshops related to different theories and perspectives on leadership may be conducted to enhance further and widen their knowledge of students regarding leadership. Moreover, the students can strengthen their active engagement in political activities by joining political activities in school, their communities, and in the national and international political landscape. This study also recommends that teachers integrate the study's results and implications into the teaching and learning process, such as conducting voters' education, interface with leaders, and service-learning. They can apply innovative strategies to engage students in political issues and have a holistic view of leadership. Lastly, this study recommends that future researchers include other strands and tracks in Senior High school as respondents, such as ABM, STEM, Arts, Design, and others. Future research can also be conducted focusing on student leaders of organizations in the school.

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