

POLITICAL DYNASTY AS PERCEIVED BY RESIDENTS OF SELECTED VILLAGES IN BADIAN, CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The Philippines is full of dynastic families that are the elites of the country, as what the people perceived of it. Political dynasty is very common in our country for the people tend to vote the families that are very influential and are rich. It is a problem in politics that is still present nowadays and that no law prohibiting political dynasty has been passed. Badian, Cebu is one of the towns that is being influenced by dynastic families, the Agravante and the Librando, now, being influenced by the Librando clan. Badian as a third class municipality, needs to improve economically as it is facing a lot of problems in its way to urbanization. The study aims to discover the local resident's perception of political dynasty, why political dynasty continues to exist and how political dynasty shapes the political landscape of the town in order to find answers toward the attitude of the respondents of four selected barangays in Badian of political dynasty. As the researchers finished the conducting of surveys, the researcher interpreted the results and discovered that the local residents are voting Librando family for they trust them. Majority of the respondents put much of the members of one family in the positions for they think that the family can give attentions to their personal interests. The respondents are still voting the same members or relatives of the family even though there's a prohibition from the Constitution because they still want to vote for them. The researchers recommend that residents should vote wisely for their future.

Keywords: political dynasty, dynastic families, political landscape, political patronage, Badian

I. INTRODUCTION

Way back from the old Kings, Masters to present-day Prime Ministers and Presidents, leaders belonging to dynasties is a common feature of the political Landscape. As in the case of family-run Norms, the existence of dynastic leaders raises the question of whether they are good for economic performance at the country level or bad as (Besley and Querol, 2014) said. In Political dynasty, it defined as a family group

that remains in position or power in a country for many generations or has a succession of leaders from the same family (Sue Nyathi, 2014). This is really an interesting topic for this problem as the researcher calls it, had been rooted way back the ancient generations. History is painted with many colorful examples of dynasties. The Bourbons were a European dynasty that ruled in France from 1589 to 1793. However, the 20th Century has its own illustrious examples of dynasties. The Kennedy family

is arguably one political dynasty who dominated and romanticized American Politics. The biggest argument against political dynasties has largely been that power ought to be dispersed as opposed to being concentrated in one family since it limits those eligible for office. They found that the helpless in the community were the most vulnerable to political patronage and as such political dynasties thrived in cultivating extensive networks of political patronage in their area. As it is often said, politics of patronage will make people loyal to a leader or family that delivers on that patronage. There is a general feeling that leadership should be earned and political dynasties seem to maintain its entitlement. Moreover, it is often felt dynasties promote politics of self-serving interests and non-equitable distribution of resources and opportunities as said by Sue Nyathi (2014).

Political dynasty is a common ground of politics here in the Philippines. It is normal for a politician's wife, son, daughter or any member of his family to run for the same or other government position in a certain place where his family is influential. They tend to monopolize the power of the government. Political dynasties (Paterno, 2014) present a greater threat to democracy when much of them control the majority of power in the country. As in the Philippines, a study estimated that 70% of the last Philippine Congress is being comprised by political dynasties. People tend to vote the same family because of poverty and lack of information, patron-client relations; they vote them for money without thinking the bright future if they choose another. Others tend to vote the same family members because of their personality, their social class, forgetting the right one to choose and vote for that position and cut the equal opportunity to run in the elective position. She (Paterno, 2014) said that various members of the same family often cycle through the same political positions in their provinces, cities and other political areas. It is not unusual to see an electoral race putting two members or more

of the same family against each other. In many ways, the dynastic culture of politics has taken the meaningful choice from the voters, and worsens the pervasiveness of corruption in government.

Political dynasties are no strangers to democratic systems. This long dynastic cases of families is a common thing in the Philippines and dates all the way back to the founding of democracy by the US. In the first elections the US organized, to be eligible to run from a political position, you had to come from a family of elites recognized by the Americans, called the principalia (Acemoglu and Robinson). According to them (Acemoglu et.al.) it existed for the influential families want the power inside the government. They use the power to manipulate the people within its territory or jurisdiction, and to control much of the resources in the area for them to be benefited. Marcos had tried to smash the long line of oligarchy, but he did not succeed and the line of oligarchy was even more powerful than ever. Two of the influential families existed in the Philippines are the Agravante Family and the Librando Family of Badian, Cebu. But the family reigning now is the Librando Family. They started to take control of the place when the first Librando mayor won its full term and tenure. Every next election, his family members also run and won the other government positions. They began to take control of the place and manipulated the local badianganons. For how many years, the positions were just exchanged or alternately handled among the family members of same blood.

Badian, is one of the third class municipality in the province of Cebu, Philippines. As often is the case in areas of great beauty around the world, the town is now in the early stage for nice tourist accommodations and resorts. It is naturally gifted with breath-taking landscapes and natural attractions that have amazed and endeared both local and foreign visitors for the waterfalls, and underwater life. Badian is

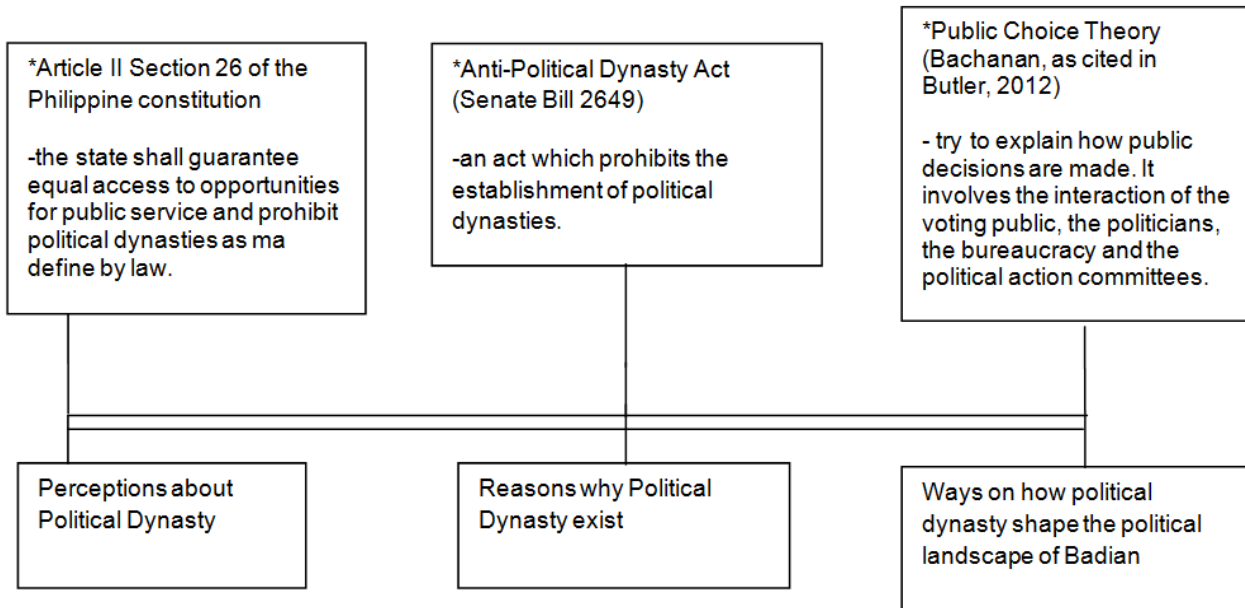


Fig. 1 Schema of the conceptual framework of the study

a town that has a potential to be a highly urbanized municipality. However, because of the fear that the Librando’s business interest might lose, they manipulated every business transactions and didn’t allow big companies to enter the town. Many establishments wanted to operate in the place, to modernize and to beautify the place; it’s that they don’t have the chance to get a mayor’s permit. That’s one of the advantages of political dynasty, if you have the power and able to control your place, your family’s personal interest can be a priority. Using up their current positions to get whatever they want - a negative and positive.

From the time that political dynasty began to flourish in Badian, there’s no big improvement in the place, much of the barangay roads are still not cemented, the market place is not yet organized, the town gym still needs improvement and locals are suffering from poverty. However, though there were years that their ruling was excellent to their subordinates, the town and the people who contributed much more for their hand in fame, but there were also times that they have overused their power. Because of the personal interest of a single family that is ruling much of the positions in

the local government, much of the projects in improving the town are still sleeping and needs to be awakened. Many locals is still blind of the reality that the family who dominates the local government positions are abusing them. Lots of great opportunities have been wasted because of the “mañana habit” that they have and that they are still suffering from poverty. The local badianganon take deep hopes that high quality government bureaucracy is what they deserve and should motivate them not to vote dynastic politicians into the public office. Indeed, Filipinos can give life to the constitutional proscription by simply exercising his or her right of suffrage. But because of the lack of knowledge of their right of suffrage and the manipulative influential family, they just vote the same family time to time. Although they have different perceptions, they still need to know what political dynasty means and its effects.

The residents should be more cautious in choosing a candidate, a candidate from a dynastic family.

1.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Background

This study has its primary legal basis on section 26 of Article II of the Philippines

Constitution, which the State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for any public services, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law. The constitution states that freedom to run for government positions should be granted to everyone and not to only one family. Another Act supporting the study is the Senate Bill 2649, also known as The Anti-Political Dynasty Act, an act which prohibits the establishment of political dynasties.

This study developed a conceptual framework to analyze the reason behind the existence of political dynasty, how the local residents of the four barangays perceived political dynasty and how it shape the political landscape of the town as perceived by the respondents of the four barangays. Below are the legal basis which prohibits political dynasty to exist and a supporting theory, the Public Choice Theory which is trying to explain the interaction of the voting public to the politicians (influential or non-influential) and connect to the three variables to see the output of the study.

This study investigated the attitudes of the local residents towards political dynasty in Badian, Cebu, Philippines. Specifically, it determined how the local residents of four selected barangays perceived political dynasty; Why political dynasties continue to exist; and how does political dynasty shape the political landscape of Badian, Cebu.

1.2 Literature Review

Political dynasties are just symptoms and not a disease like pimples in a body politic afflicted with the plague, lancing them will do little good (De Dios, 2012). To start with, political dynasties are by no means unique to the examples are the Kennedys and the Bushes, also the Rockefellers, the Tafts, and lots of families. In Japan, previous prime ministers Koizumi, Fukuda, and Abe and as many other less influential names are associated with political dynasties. India has

the Nehru-Gandhis. And the well-entrenched tradition of “princelings” in China. The disgraced Bo Xilai was a prime example (being the son of Bo Yibo, one of the “eight immortals” in Chinese politics). The new incoming Chinese president, Xi Jinping, is himself a “princeling”, son of the politician, Xi Zhongxun. There are a lot of political dynasties around the globe which is common in world politics.

In short, “dynasties” live in all states and nations around the globe, where their presence is regarded as at times inquiring and annoying aspect of modern-politics. Seldom are they regarded as the main obstacle to the political development, as the primordial cause of political immaturity. The Philippine politics, in short, is like this, dynasties are tough because politics is broken. People tend to vote the same family from time to time for there is no one implementing the laws prohibiting the political dynasty, making the politics broken. However, far less attention has been given to the mirror representation of income inequality in the political sphere, the political dynasties. The rise of elected persons with extensive familial links to present, the previous politicians’ influential leads to inequality in access to power and political influence. It could also affect the prevalence and persistence of social and economic divides (Ronald Mendoza, 2012). Prohibiting dynasties prevents some organizations from participating in the political arena.

Numerous politicians have since taken over the power from their family members notably so that a few families dominate the top echelons of power in many democracies. President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner in Argentina, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in Thailand, former President George W Bush in the United States, Prime Minister Najib Razak in Malaysia, and former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the Philippines. Indeed, a lot of dynastic families are ruling the

government not only in the country, but also in other states or countries.

Many Aquinos and Cojuangcos, the family name of former president Corazon Aquino, have been elected in Congress and local government offices, making them political flavours for several years, best described as a big political dynasty in the making, the ending of which is not easily foreseen in the future. One of the Aquinos, former Senator Tessie Aquino-Oreta has also spawned a new dynastic line of the Oretas meant to perpetuate the family in politics in Metro Manila's southern suburban Malabon. The President of the Philippines, Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino, III, is the descendant of the Aquino clan. The president's mother is the very popular former President Corazon Aquino former Senator Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino, Jr. is his father. Political dynasty is more common in local government units in the provinces where a wife, a daughter, or a son can replace a family member who died during a campaign period.

The former Senate president Juan Ponce Enrile, the Congressman Jack Enrile, Senator Edgardo Angara and Congressman Sonny Angara and siblings Pia and Alan Peter Cayetano at the Senate are now symbols of political dynasties in the Philippines. "This is really a clear and serious case of political dynasty being repeated in the halls of the 15th Congress and in various parts of the country." "Out of 17 million families in the Philippines, only 100 families have ruled Philippine politics and economy," said columnist Antonio Lopez of the Manila Times. Also political dynasty is a sure sign that only a few can secure a large income and thereby create a wide social inequity, in the process. It's like giving more power for the elite families, leaving the millions of poor families behind, that's how dirty politics is. "In 50 years in the Philippines, seven presidents just came from just four families -- two Aquinos, two Macapagals, two cousins

Fidel Ramos and Ferdinand Marcos who ruled from 1992 to 1998, and an actor, Joseph Estrada who has built his dynasty in San Juan and in the Congress," Lopez observed. There are lots of influential families are ruling their town municipalities. For dynastic families governing throughout the country politics is just a hobby, a game that is just for them for they are the elites of the society.

II. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goal of this investigation, this study made use of the descriptive quantitative research with a survey of the respondents and further analysis of documents gathered through the response of the respondents being surveyed about their perception of political dynasty in their town, why political dynasties continue to exist, and the political landscape of the town under a dynastic rule.

The researchers conducted a survey to the local residents of four selected barangays in Badian, Cebu in regards with how they perceived and react to political dynasty in their town. The researcher surveyed 200 registered voters of the selected barangays and each one of them was given survey questionnaires to get their perspective with the said order. The respondent which is being represented largely by working residents are, for the researcher, contributed almost seventy percent of the survey that was being conducted.

A survey questionnaire was given to the residents of each selected barangay to answer questions that are related to the objective of the study. Each survey questionnaire has the basic questions of information and 13 questions to support the objectives of the study. The researcher used a list of the number of voters from the COMELEC to randomly select the barangays to be surveyed. The survey questionnaires were given by the researcher to the local residents of the four selected

barangays, barangay Poblacion, Banhigan, Taytay, Malhiao which is being permitted by their Barangay Chief. The researchers were assisted by a barangay police in conducting the survey of their barangay. The researchers also asked the election officer of the COMELEC the official number of registered voters of the town to know the number of registered voters of the selected barangays. The researchers used questionnaires in order to make graphs and charts to represent the analysis. As the researcher got the list of registered voters from the COMELEC he started to conduct the survey. The respondents from the selected barangays were 200.

The survey questionnaires had 13 suitable questions that fit the objectives of the study. The questionnaires were distributed to the 200 local residents in the four selected barangays in the town. The researchers assured the confidentiality of the survey sheets. The researchers also understood that people's consciousness may affect their honesty and effectiveness in answering the survey. The researchers gave the respondent an option of being anonymous, and asked permission to the respondents before the answering of the survey questionnaire started. Different answers that correspond to each question were grouped together depending on their likeness and similarities of their answers. After the data has been classified, the researchers ranked them as the most common answers in each question.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data collected were processed, analyzed, interpreted, and treated with different statistical tools. Tables and percentage graphs were the tools being used in interpreting the data collected. The researchers implemented the survey in four randomly selected villages to a total of 200 respondents. Majority of the respondents were females since many male residents of the four barangays don't want to answer

the survey questionnaire. Majority of the respondents were aged 30-50 years and they lived in the town since their birth. Majority of the respondents of the four barangays were not aware of political dynasty in their town. Some of them argued to the researcher that there is no dynastic family running the government. However some of the respondents said that they are not just aware that political dynasty is present in their town. Only the minority of the respondents were aware of political dynasty in their town.

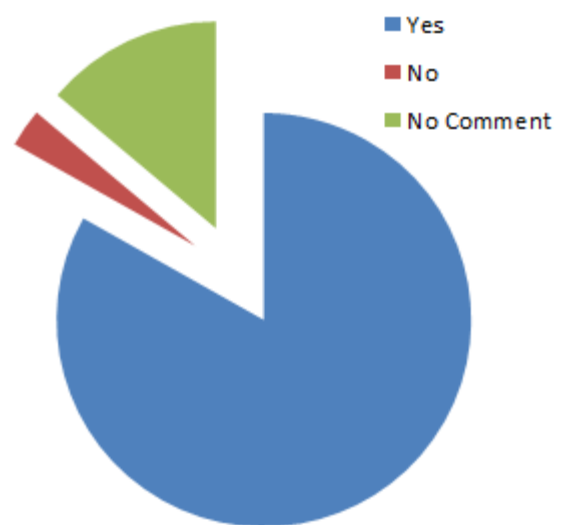


Figure 2. Awareness of political dynasty among Badian residents

The researchers found out that majority of the respondents perceived political dynasty as the positions of the government occupied mostly by one family or clan (1st Choice). They tend to check the first choice for that is what they perceived it. They might have seen or heard it on the television or on the radio. Some respondents perceived political dynasty as those whose family members have also served for the same position in the past, occupy a sizable portion of political offices (3rd Choice). Minority of the respondents have no comments in perceiving political dynasty maybe because they just don't want to answer this part of the

survey (NC). This findings connects to the first specific objective of the study.

Table 1
Perception on Political Dynasty

Perception	Frequency	%
1st Choice	81	40.50
2nd Choice	18	9.00
3rd Choice	49	24.50
NC	45	22.50
More than One	7	3.50
Total	200	100.00

Of the two rival clans of Badian in the field of politics, majority of the respondents voted the Librando clan as they gave their trust to the members of that family who run leaving the other family behind. The residents of the four barangays were having mixed emotions when they answered this question, some of them asked if this is really necessary to be answered and the researcher told them that this survey question is just for the purpose of the academic requirement and that this has no connection to the upcoming elections.

Table 2
Perception on Political Dynasty

Reasons behind their voting	Respondent's ID
Money	1
Debt of gratitude	25
They are popular	12
A fan	2
Trust	144
Others	2
NC	14
Total	200

The majority of the residents of the four selected barangays voted most of the

Librando family because they trust them. The respondents think that this family will help them get their personal interest. However some of the respondents looks like they don't know what to answer, some of the respondents voted the members or the same family because they are popular. The researcher wants to connect this finding to the second specific objective of the study.

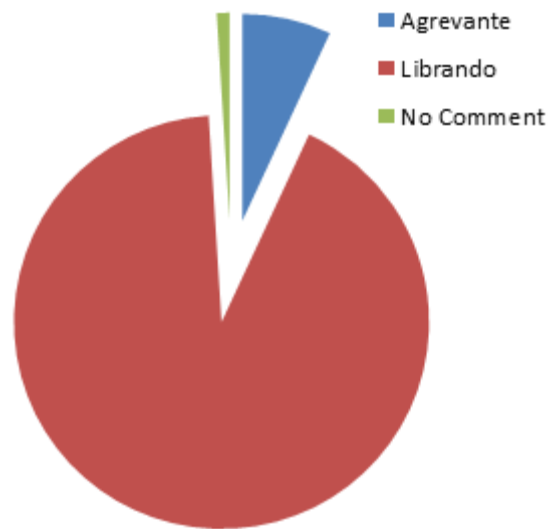


Figure 3. Two Most Influential Families in Badian Cebu

Table 3
Why Political Dynasty Continue to Exist

Reason	Frequency	%
Didn't Know	23	11.50
A fan	1	0.50
Money	2	1.00
Want to	101	50.50
Debt of gratitude	35	17.50
Popular	16	8.00
Others	3	1.50
NC	19	9.50
Total	200	100.00

About half of the voters selected their candidates because they want them to lead. Despite the widespread votebuying, this was not the main reason why they have voted for them, infact only 1% have said so. Far second in their reasons is because the voters are endebted to them and voting for them is a sort of paying back.

Table 4
Town Condition Since Dynastic Rule

Reason	Frequency	%
Economically Booming	14	7.00
Much improved Infrastructure	75	37.50
Much developed tourist destination	11	5.50
Crime worsened	3	1.50
Economically down	5	2.50
corruption worsened	3	1.50
nothing at all	89	44.50
Total	200	100.00

Table 4 shows that there is nothing change at all as respondents observes it. The majority of the residents did not see any big changes in their town although there are some who said that there is much improved infrastruuture, however that changes come from the provincial government as their project, there’s no big project coming from their municipal government. The residents voted much of the people from the same family for a long time and no big changes and improvements was made.

Based on this finding, majority of the respondents will vote wisely in order to help stop the political dynasty in their town. However much of the candidates comes from only one family and that they don’t

have more choices in choosing the right person to be voted.

Table 5
Perceieved Ways Of Stopping Political Dynasty

Perceived Ways	Frequency	%
Vote wisely	134	67.00
Vote wisely/right of suffrage	24	12.00
Right of suffrage	11	5.50
Push a coalition	4	2.00
Attend seminars/fora	4	2.00
Vote wisely/push a coalition	2	1.00
Vote wisely/attend seminars	1	0.50
No Response	20	10.00
Total	200	100.00

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Residents of the four selected barangays gave similar views of political dynasty and that they voted them for they trust. Due to same perception about political dynasty, they want the elected ones to give attentions to their personal interests. Majority of the residents still wants them to rule, even though they haven’t seen improvements in their town, always depending on the projects of the provincial government and the national government, only minding their own interests to be prioritized, not minding that a much better interest will be realized if they try other persons to lead. They still want the same family to rule for they want to trust them further and they still want the same family to rule them. They’ve got used to the family’s ruling and handling the town even if it is not that good. However, in order to help stop or prevent political dynasty, the residents, most of them will vote wisely, some will make some coalitions to support

the anti-political dynasty, some will practice their rights of suffrage properly and with dignity.

In overall perspective, the researchers concluded that the residents of the four selected barangays still vote the members of the same family for they trust them, that their interest might give a favor to show. Although, political dynasty is prohibited, the respondents are still choosing them for they still want to be heard by the members of the family whom they voted. The researchers then implied a pattern that the respondents decide to trust the same family even though there is nothing that much improvement in the town. Hence, this argument would support the notion of Public Choice Theory which is trying to explain the interaction of the voting public to the politicians (influential or non-influential). Likewise, as what the result has showed, the researcher conclude that the respondents interaction with the dynastic politicians in voting is because of trust and that has also minded their self-interest, even if there's not much improvement.

The researchers recommend that the government must conduct a seminar that focus on stopping political dynasty. Lastly, residents of the town should vote wisely for their future, for their tomorrow.

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