

Divided Ideals: Exploring the Relationship Between Political Color and the Importance of Core Political Values in Butuan City, Philippines

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Abstract

The theory of values by Shalom H. Schwartz posits that people's values serve as the foundation and guiding principle when making decisions. This has been applied in many contexts to aid in the explanation of the various and unique values influencing political behavior including voting. However, studies also claim that an individual's values may change over time depending on the context or the people's experiences. While considered generally stable, studies would say that outside factors such as political color can impact voters as they serve as a "visual shorthand" that helps voters quickly identify the party or candidate that best aligns with their beliefs and values. The objective of this paper is to know if political color influences the importance of core political values of the Butuanon voters. A simple linear regression was employed to determine how the two variables used in the study – political color as the independent variable and core political values as the dependent variable – were related to each other. The result showed a statistically significant and positive relationship between the two variables. Political color does affect the importance of core political values which implies that voters in Butuan City who support certain political colors are more likely to give high importance to their identified core political values. Future research may explore longitudinal dynamics and comparative analyses to further elucidate the complex relationship between political color preferences and value prioritization.

Keywords: political color, core political values, voting

I. Introduction

Schwartz (2012) mentioned that the standards and preferences of the citizens are reflected in their values, thus values are crucial in society. Bernardo (2017) has likewise articulated that values have been proven to be significant during elections because voters essentially base their choices on their values.

However, the existence of political color attracts and draws voters more (Palatino & Kuo, 2022). During elections, especially in the Philippines, the use of color during election campaigns is important. Given that non-verbal cues as well as verbal one influence voters, political color has become crucial in the modern era of electoral campaigns. Marini (2017) attested that one aspect of politics is now centered on non-verbal elements of electoral campaigns and representation, demonstrating the amount of influence of visual aspects of campaigns on the choice of the voters. Different candidates or parties use political color as their medium to incorporate their context and brand identity. According to Palmer and Schloss (2010), political color enhances the ability to identify, distinguish, and recognize parties or candidates. Palatino (2022) has

presented, on the other hand, the usage of certain colors of the current presidential race as a component of their political branding. Additionally, Labrecque and Milne (2012) predicted that color is significant in the field of politics.

Researchers like Karlsen & Ardel (2016) and Oscarsson et al. (1997) have talked about how political values affect vote choice because people tend to be loyal and commit to their values for a long time. Since political values are considered important in the voter's voting behavior, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the use of political color during election campaigns has also become a crucial factor that affects the choices of the voters, direct or indirect.

Efforts were undertaken to underscore the significance of unity in the 2022 Philippine national election when electing leaders who embody the values of the people, particularly in response to the divisive policies of the Duterte administration (Heydarian, 2022). The importance that values place on political decisions is emphasized in scholarly works by Schwartz (2012), Schwartz et al. (2010), and Bernardo (2017). This observation is consistent with the study at hand, which looks into the correlation between the importance of core political values and political color. A comprehensive grasp of this correlation is essential for enlightening the populace and bolstering engagement in democratic processes.

Political Values

The attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes of individuals in the political domain are significantly influenced by political values. Numerous core political values that surpass cultural boundaries have been identified by scholars. These include but are not limited to traditional morality, blind patriotism, law and order, free enterprise, equality, civil liberties, foreign military intervention, and the acceptance of immigrants (Schwartz et al., 2014). These values are the result of significantly held principles regarding the functions of the government, the citizenry, society, and the global community. Traditional morality, for example, places significant emphasis on the maintenance of religious and societal values; conversely, blind patriotism advocates for steadfast allegiance to one's country. By adhering to these values, individuals can interpret political events and arrive at decisions that are consistent with their values.

Scholars have examined the influence of specific cultural contexts on political value systems, in addition to universal standards. Scholars in the Philippines, for instance, have investigated distinctive values including *kalayaan* (freedom), *karangalan* (dignity), *katarungan* (justice), and *pakikibaka* (resistance) (Enriquez, 1992; 1994). As a result of their historical and social experiences, these values shape the Filipino people's perspectives on national identity, social justice, and governance. One needs to understand these culturally distinct values to analyze political behavior and the processes by which decisions are made in various societies.

Political psychologists have utilized diverse theoretical frameworks to examine the impact of political values on the process of decision-making. Schwartz et al. (2012) assert that his theory of fundamental human values has had a significant impact on this matter. This theory proposes ten basic human values that function as governing principles for the attitudes and actions of individuals. Political attitudes, ideologies, and voting behavior are influenced by values including universalism, benevolence, power, and

achievement, according to research (Stattin & Amna, 2022). Those who place a higher value on power and accomplishments may exhibit a preference for conservative ideologies, whereas those who prioritize principles of equality and social welfare may be more inclined to endorse progressive policies and political candidates.

Furthermore, political values are vulnerable to change over time due to developments in the social, economic, and political spheres. The People Power Revolution that transpired in the Philippines in 1986 is a profound illustration of how societal value transformation can be triggered by political events (Romero, 2013). To reinstate democracy and overthrow a dictatorship, the revolution resulted in the incorporation of democratic principles into the nation's constitution, including civil liberties, decentralization, and popular participation. Since then, these new values have impacted political discourse and decision-making processes in the Philippines.

Nevertheless, a complex and multifaceted relationship exists between political values and the process of decision-making. While certain individuals may base their decision-making process on their core political values, others may give precedence to realistic factors or external influences. Sociological, psychological, and rational choice are the three primary approaches to comprehending political decision-making, according to Turan & Tiras (2017). The sociological approach places significant emphasis on the impact of social determinants, including socioeconomic status, religion, and familial status, on political attitudes and behaviors. As an analogy to sports fandom, the psychological approach emphasizes the emotive connections and identification that individuals develop with political structures. In contrast, the rational choice approach asserts that individuals evaluate the capacity of political actors to satisfy their interests in the process of decision-making.

To comprehend democratic processes and political engagement, it is critical to explore the intricate relationship between political values and the decision-making process. Political values are essential to the identities and worldviews of individuals, influencing their political attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes.

Political Color

Historical origins trace the use of colors as political symbols back to the French Revolution; over time, this practice has developed into an integral component of contemporary political communication (Marini, 2017). Political parties utilize colors for the dual purpose of differentiation and communication of ideological messages, thereby developing support and unity among their supporters (Marini, 2017). This phenomenon transcends common symbolic significance and exerts an impact on the formation of party identities and brands, thereby molding how individuals interact with and perceive political organizations (Marini, 2017). In addition to cultural and historical implications, strategic considerations that seek to appeal to voter sentiments and values also influence the selection of colors (Marini, 2017).

Colors have developed distinct political connotations that have varied across cultures and historical periods. These connotations frequently correspond to ideological stances and societal values (Sawer, 2007). To illustrate, the color red has historically been linked to radicalism and defiance, whereas green has been associated with environmentalism and optimism (Sawer, 2007). Political colors such as yellow

and red hold profound symbolic importance in the Philippines, serving as symbols of opposition movements and democratic ideals (Dadia, 2020). According to Dadia (2020), these colors elicit affective reactions and function as focal points for political mobilization, mirroring the desires and ideals of the general public.

The correlation between colors and political ideologies transcends party branding and encompasses identities and societal divisions at large (Baldassarri & Gelman, 2008). In the United States, for instance, the classification of states as "red states" or "blue states" serves as an illustration of the polarization of political debate and the emergence of unique political identities (Baldassarri & Gelman, 2008). In the same way, colors such as yellow and red have acquired symbolic significance in the Philippines, representing conflicting political narratives and influencing public opinion and decision-making (Baldassarri & Gelman, 2008).

The impact of color on human emotions and behavior is underscored by psychological research, which posits that a particular color can elicit particular sentiments and dispositions (Palmer & Schloss, 2010). Political actors utilize this comprehension to attract particular emotional reactions from voters and bolster ideological assertions (Palmer & Schloss, 2010). As an illustration, in the election for president of the Philippines, Leni Robredo selected pink as her campaign color to convey a message of inclusiveness and resistance against the prevailing regime (Lazaro, 2022). Politicians utilize color strategy as a means to establish a connection with the values and aspirations of the electorate, thereby exerting an impact on their decision-making processes (Lazaro, 2022).

Additional insights into the influence of colors on voter perceptions and electoral results are provided by political marketing theories (Bigi, 2017). Organizations utilize branding tactics derived from commercial marketing to communicate value propositions and distinguish themselves from competitors (Bigi, 2017). Colors play a crucial role in political branding by enabling the transmission of policy positions and messaging (Bigi, 2017). Furthermore, this broader trend toward marketization in politics is reflected in the strategic use of colors in political campaigns, where parties vie for voter support and attention in a manner comparable to that of businesses (Bischof, 2017). The convergence of marketing and political strategies highlights the significance of colors in influencing political values and the processes by which decisions are made (Bischof, 2017).

As a result, the incorporation of colors into political discourse affects the formation of party identities, voter perceptions, and electoral results, surpassing mere symbolism. Colors generate historical and cultural implications, serving as symbols of societal values and ideological stances. Furthermore, they function as influential instruments for political discourse, provoking affective reactions and molding the perspectives of voters. With the growing similarity between political marketing strategies and commercial branding, the utilization of colors becomes a crucial element in communicating value propositions and distinguishing political actors from their rivals. In essence, the calculated application of hues mirrors and fortifies political ideologies, thereby influencing how individuals and societies arrive at decisions.

II. Methods

The objective of this study was to explore whether there was an influence of political color on individuals'

core political values. Simple Linear Regression Analysis was employed to accomplish this. To examine the correlation between core political values (the dependent variable) and political color (the independent variable), this approach was selected. A positive coefficient signifies a direct correlation between the significance of respondents' core political values and political color.

A preliminary survey was carried out in 27 urban barangays of Butuan City to identify six fundamental political values. The research methodology employed was the same as that of Bernardo (2017) and Schwartz et al. (2014). The following values were derived through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with oblique Promax rotation: Nationalism, Stability, Social Justice, Conservative, and Egalitarianism. This approach was taken to assure interpretability and account for potential correlations among the factors.

The study was conducted in Butuan City, Philippines, with 150 respondents selected from 29 barangays using data tools adapted from the Citizen’s Satisfaction Index Survey (CSIS) of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). By utilizing a multi-stage probability sampling procedure, the selection process guaranteed the inclusion of a representative sample with an error margin of +/- 8% and a confidence level of 95%. The utilization of the CSIS method ensured the fair representation of voters in Butuan City, aligning with the local governments' delivery of performance feedback (DILG-BLGS, 2021). Since the CSIS aimed to gather data on the overall population, the sample size was drawn from barangays with higher population densities. This meant that barangays with larger proportions of the population had more spots and respondents assigned to them. However, for this study, the sample size was drawn from barangays with high voter turnout as provided by the Commission on Elections of Butuan City.

III. Results & Discussion

The figure below shows the influencing relationship of political color on core political values. The shown figure reflects the overall result.

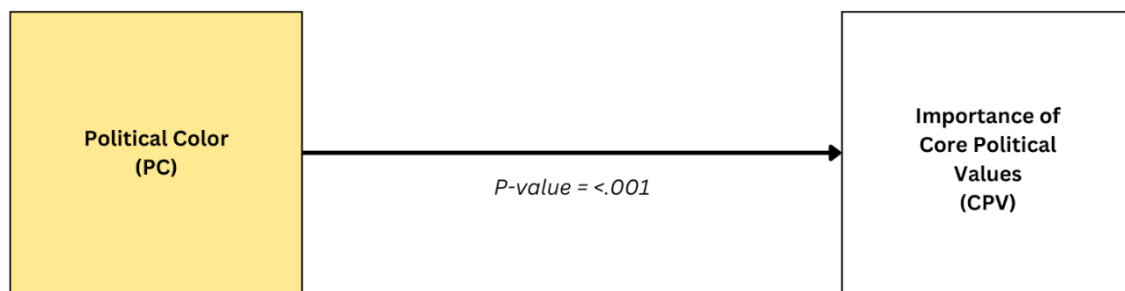


Figure 1. Path (a) showing the influence of (PC) on (CPV)

The results of the model indicate that political color has a statistically significant positive relationship with the importance of core political values with a P-value of <.001 and an estimate of 0.665. This result implies that political color does appear to influence the importance individuals place on their core values like stability, social justice, conservatism, egalitarianism, foreign cooperation, and nationalism.

In line with the discussion above, Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009) found in a sample of over 130,000 people that conservatives valued loyalty, authority, and sanctity more highly than liberals. These foundations relate to stability, order, and nationalism. Liberals valued care and fairness more highly, connecting to social justice and egalitarianism. Similarly, Caprara and Zimbardo (2004) discovered

conservatives prioritized order, conformity, and security, while liberals favored equality, social justice, and autonomy.

These results imply that an individual's political values fundamentally orient them towards certain values over others. Conservatives appear motivated by security, conformity, and in-group loyalty concerns. Liberals are motivated more by equality, fairness, and reciprocity (Graham et al, 2009). The value priorities revealed through one's political affiliation represent deeply held moral intuitions and motivations. Moreover, the data analysis shows political color significantly influences which core political values an individual sees as most important. Schwartz's Value Theory provides a framework for understanding the motivational goals connected to conservative versus liberal moral intuitions and value systems. An individual's political color or leanings represent a shorthand for their underlying motivations and value priorities in the political domain.

The following table shows each result of core political values added with political color. The following discussion refers to the table.

Table 4. Result of Core Political Values with Political Color

Model Coefficients-POLITICAL VALUES					
Predictor	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>		<i>P</i>
Stability with Color	0.506	0.0468	10.8	<.001	Significant
Social Justice with Color	0.281	0.0558	5.03	<.001	Significant
Conservative with Color	0.185	0.0335	5.52	<.001	Significant
Egalitarian with Color	0.213	0.0367	5.79	<.001	Significant
Foreign Cooperation with Color	0.133	0.0346	3.86	<.001	Significant
Nationalism with Color	0.118	0.0289	4.08	<.001	Significant

The regression results reveal political color has a statistically significant positive relationship with all six core political values. This indicates that identifying with a particular color does substantially shape an individual's value priorities and attitudes. The strongest effects emerged for stability (E=0.506) and social justice (E=0.281), though all principles showed meaningful links to color affiliation.

This aligns with research finding party identification consistently predicts policy perspectives and ideologies. For example, one study showed Democrat and Republican loyalists in the U.S. hold contrasting views on various issues from immigration to climate change (Pew Research Center, 2017). Shared color bonds individuals around common values and interests. In the Philippines, yellow voters exhibit more liberal attitudes, while red voters tend conservative. Color provides cues that activate latent value hierarchies (Inglehart, 2014).

However, the coefficients imply partial rather than absolute influence. The largest coefficient of 0.506 for stability suggests even full-color solidarity explains only around half of the variation in that value. Individual differences and local conditions mediate the coloring effect. One comparative study found party identity shaped but did not determine political attitudes, with cross-national variations in the degree of polarization (Lupu, 2014). Butuan City likewise shows color-linked values coexisting with independence. This aligns with the Schwartz Value Theory (1992) balancing social embeddedness and autonomy. Further, the partisan identities coloring values are not necessarily fixed. Values may bend colors rather than just the reverse. Values and colors thus shape each other. Butuan City confirms color's significant but incomplete role in value priorities.

In summary, political color substantially predicts the importance of core political values, but individuals ultimately integrate multiple influences when forming their values. Color affiliation provides a social anchor for values, but one open to interpretation based on personal context. This agrees with Schloss & Palmer (2014) who argued that the relationship between political affiliation and color preferences is more dynamic and context-dependent. This interplay elucidates how shared identities symbiotically evolve with individual value priorities. Butuan City offers empirical evidence that colors and values maintain a dynamic, reciprocal relationship.

IV. Conclusion

Political color and the importance that individuals attribute to their core political values are found to have a substantial correlation in the study. The statistical analysis demonstrates a robust positive correlation, underscoring the significant effect that political color has on attitudes and value priorities. This finding is consistent with prior studies that demonstrate the correlation between political views and the prediction of policy perspectives and ideologies, highlighting the significance of social connections in influencing the values and interests of individuals.

However, it is important to recognize that the impact of political color on core political values is not absolute, but rather part. This relationship is mediated by context and individual differences, highlighting the complexity of value prioritization and political identity formation. The reciprocal relationship between colors and values implies a process of mutual shaping, in which values may potentially change colors to the same extent that colors affect values.

To examine the evolution of political color and fundamental political values over time, future research may want to explore longitudinal dynamics. Furthermore, conducting comparative analyses within diverse cultural and political environments may provide further insight into whether these findings are universal or contingent on specific contexts. Further investigation into the influence of social networks and media on political color preferences and the subsequent effect they have on value priorities would contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding this phenomenon.

V. References

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