College Experience Survey

INSIGHTS ON **CIVIC PARTICIPATION**
OF **COLLEGE STUDENTS**

GENERAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Far Eastern University
Public Policy Center

Greetings,

Since its inception in 2014, the College Experience Survey (CES) has been driven by a simple yet powerful mission — to understand the lives of Filipino students in their own voices. On this momentous 10th anniversary, we are proud to continue this tradition with the CES 2024, made possible with your partnership and the support of The Asia Foundation.

The CES 2024 provides insights at a critical time - against a backdrop of global democratic backsliding, understanding the values and civic engagement of our youth is more important than ever. The CES 2024 is especially focused on this theme, exploring the drivers of civic apathy and engagement, the consequences of civic apathy on civic behavior, and the role of higher education in shaping conscientious citizens.

This report is structured in two parts:

- Part I offers a deep dive into the civic engagement of students, providing crucial insights for strengthening civic consciousness and democratic values.
- Part II continues our annual core analysis of the broader college experience — from academic engagement and concerns to student well-being — offering a unique opportunity to understand students through their own voices.

To capture these insights with greater precision and efficiency, we have introduced significant innovations to this year's CES. By implementing cutting-edge survey design methodologies, such as split questionnaire designs, we reduced the time it takes for a student to answer the questionnaire by a third. We also leveraged supercomputing power to dramatically accelerate our data analysis, turning months of computing time into just a matter of days.

Furthermore, as part of our commitment to empower our partners, we have, for the first time, provided each partner institution with their respective cleaned raw data sets along with the aggregate and individual school reports. We believe that enabling partner institutions to uncover even more granular insights relevant to each institution will amplify the CES' impact on each partner school's decision and policymaking processes.

Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. We are confident that the findings within this report can serve as a critical tool for dialogue, evidence-based policymaking, and, ultimately, the continuous improvement of higher education in the Philippines.

We look forward to our continued collaboration in the upcoming CES 2025.

Warmly,
FEU Public Policy Center

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We also wish to acknowledge the leadership and direction provided by the FEU Public Policy Center Board of Trustees and Executive Director — Mr. Juan Miguel R. Montinola (President, FEU), Dr. Maria Teresa Trinidad P. Tinio (Senior Vice President, FEU), Dr. Edilberto C. de Jesus (Chairperson), Dr. Michael M. Alba (President), Atty. Gianna R. Montinola (Treasurer), Dr. Emmanuel S. de Dios (Trustee), Dr. Arturo Corpuz (Trustee), Atty. Enrique Hosaka (Corporate Secretary), Atty. Jose Marlon Pabiton (Former Corporate Secretary), and Ms. Julia Abad (Executive Director).

This report would not have been possible without the dedication and tireless work of the FPPC Executive and CES Teams.

Finally, to our CES HEI partners and to the Filipino college students themselves, we extend our deepest appreciation for your active and continued support. Your voices are the foundation of this work.

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This report is an **Executive Summary** version of the CES 2024 General Report. This version provides a high-level overview of the full General Report's most critical findings and strategic recommendations on student civic engagement and the broader college experience.

The full CES 2024 General Report, which contains the complete data analysis, detailed methodology, and a full set of figures, is available upon request.

To request a copy of the full report, please email the FEU Public Policy Center at fppc@feu.edu.ph.

Introduction to the College Experience Survey (CES)

The College Experience Survey (CES) is an annual survey of students in various colleges and universities across the Philippines that aims to understand the college experience from the viewpoint of the students themselves. Administered and published by the FEU Public Policy Center in cooperation with The Asia Foundation (for the CES 2024 round), partner universities and colleges, the survey hopes to inform school administrators, students, their families, and other stakeholders about issues and conditions confronting Filipino tertiary students.

The CES plays a unique role in higher education research as the only annual representative survey of college students across the Philippines. Since the first survey round in 2014, the probability sampling design of the CES has ensured that the results are representative of the student population of the participating colleges and universities.

In line with FPPC's commitment in ethical and evidence-based research, the CES 2024 was granted approval for implementation by the FEU-NRMF Institutional Ethics Review Board (FEU-NRMF IERC) under study protocol code, FEU-NRMF IERC 2024-0088.

This latest round, CES 2024, marks a significant expansion, with 11,174 respondents gathered through our expanded network of 43 partner higher education institutions (HEIs) — an increase in scope compared to the previous round with 3,318 respondents across 15 partner HEIs. The CES 2024 was conducted from November 2024 to May 2025 and has a ± 4% average actual margin of error at a 95% confidence level for the aggregate first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year student populations across the participating colleges and universities. Sampling was stratified by college degree and sex at birth. Year levels and partner institutions were treated as separate sampling domains. Post-stratification using raking and non-response adjustment through propensity score matching was applied to the design weights to improve precision and minimize sampling bias (Heeringa, West, and Berglund, 2017).

Due to the random probability sampling design, the 11,174 respondents for the CES 2024 are representative of the entire student population of the participating HEIs. As such, inferences in this report are not limited to the respondents but rather describes all students in the participating institutions.

Though, we note that not all of the 43 partner HEIs reached the sufficient response rate to allow for a representative sample — 12 HEIs did not reach the sufficient response rate and as such, were excluded in the aggregated data. A comprehensive discussion of the sampling methodology will be found in the Appendix.

For the CES 2024, the 43 partner institutions were:

1. Alitagtag College, Inc.
2. Antipolo Institute of Technology (AiTECH)
3. Baliuag University
4. Cebu Institute of Technology (CIT) - University
5. Centro Escolar University (CEU) Makati
6. Centro Escolar University (CEU) Manila
7. Centro Escolar University (CEU) Malolos
8. Far Eastern University (FEU) Alabang
9. Far Eastern University (FEU) Cavite
10. Far Eastern University (FEU) Diliman
11. Far Eastern University (FEU) Institute of Technology
12. Far Eastern University (FEU) Manila
13. Far Eastern University – Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation (FEU-NRMF)
14. Far Eastern University (FEU) Roosevelt Cainta
15. Far Eastern University (FEU) Roosevelt Marikina
16. Iloilo City Community College
17. John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod (JBLCF-B)
18. Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) Manila
19. Philippine Normal University (PNU) Manila
20. Philippine Women's University
21. PHINMA Araullo University (AU)
22. PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College (COC)
23. PHINMA Republican College (RC)
24. PHINMA Rizal College of Laguna (RCL)
25. PHINMA Southwestern University
26. PHINMA Saint Jude College (SJC)
27. PHINMA Union College of Laguna
28. PHINMA University of Iloilo
29. PHINMA University of Pangasinan (UPANG)
30. PHINMA University of Pangasinan (UPANG) Urdaneta
31. Saint Louise De Marillac College of Bogo (SLMCB)
32. Saint Louis University (SLU)
33. Sorsogon State University (SorSU) Bulan
34. Sorsogon State University (SorSU) Castilla
35. Sorsogon State University (SorSU) Magallanes
36. Sorsogon State University (SorSU) Sorsogon City
37. Tangub City Global College

38. University of Nueva Caceres – Bataan (UNC-Bataan)
39. University of San Carlos (USC)
40. University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV)
41. University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD) Calamba
42. University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD) Las Pinas
43. University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD) Molino

Part I:

Insights on Civic Participation of College Students

Executive Summary (Part I)

Part I of the CES 2024 General Report provides an analysis of civic engagement in Filipino college students, moving beyond a monolithic view of the youth (specifically college students) to offer a more nuanced understanding of their civic values and actions. Through latent class analysis (LCA), the study identifies four types of students in terms of their civic engagement and apathy — **Active Advocates (8%); Reliable Supporters (11%); Drawable Crowds (38%);** and **Disengaged Youth (43%).** The fact that 81% of students fall into the less-engaged clusters presents both a challenge and an opportunity for policymakers and academic leaders.

Gap between Civic Values and Action

One of the main findings of the report is a gap between civic values and actions of college students across the four types. Despite differences in their civic actions, students across all four clusters share a consensus on core Filipino and democratic values. Students, regardless of their cluster, believe in solidarity, equality, and freedom of expression — even the rate of Disengaged Students who report a desire to improve their communities is similar to those of the more active clusters. Their inaction, therefore, seems to not stem from a lack of principles but rather from a lack of self-efficacy and practical community connections. While theoretical civic knowledge is similar across all groups, the less engaged students report a lower sense of self-efficacy and a lower level of practical knowledge in community organizing. This relatively lower sense of self-efficacy, coupled with a distrust of political institutions, a negative perception of online political discourse, and a lack of connection to institutional programs, could foster a cycle of inaction.

Drivers of Civic Apathy and Engagement

In terms of demographics, the most active students, Active Advocates, are more likely to be younger, with 76% from the 1st and 2nd years, and predominantly male (66%). They also show a significantly higher proportion of students from lower-income households (44% reporting ₱20,000 or below monthly family income), although this income data is self-reported by the students themselves and should be interpreted with caution. The distribution across college degrees shows that students from Information and Communications Technology (ICT) comprise the highest proportion of Active Advocates (27%), exceeding those from Social Science and Humanities (11%). Conversely, Health Sciences students make up the largest portion of the Disengaged Youth (27%). However, this aggregated finding should be interpreted with caution, as the distribution of degrees across clusters may be influenced by the academic specializations of the partner institutions.

The college experience itself is a driver, with the National Service Training Program (NSTP), particularly the Literacy Training Service (LTS) and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) components, being linked with higher civic engagement — perhaps, they offer more effective pedagogical approaches in instilling civic values and fostering engagement. The quality and depth of the NSTP experience also play a role, with Active Advocates and Reliable Supporters reporting significantly higher levels of NSTP influence on their civic consciousness compared to less engaged groups.

Furthermore, external forces also shape civic apathy and engagement. Professors and other academic leaders are shown to be more influential, or at least equally influential, on students' political thinking compared to political leaders and significantly more influential than current elected officials across nearly all clusters. This underscores the immense responsibility of educators in strengthening civic consciousness and engagement among college students. This influence is particularly relevant given a reliance on social media as a primary source of information in understanding electoral candidates for all clusters, and notably, as one of the most significant influences on political thinking for the Disengaged Youth. This reliance on digital sources, despite a significant portion of less active clusters viewing the internet's influence on politics negatively, highlights the urgent need for digital literacy programs — such as frameworks that emerged from FPPC’s multi-stakeholder roundtable discussion, last June 2025, on the spread of disinformation on social media platforms.

Consequences of Apathy and Engagement

Apathy and engagement have significant consequences. For the engaged, participation is linked to the development of leadership skills and a stronger desire for careers in public service, though it may come at the cost of their mental well-being, as they report higher rates of loneliness. For the disengaged, their apathy extends to a low level of interest in government and civil society careers, which could impact the future civil service labor force. Interestingly, a majority of Disengaged Youth believe that more young people should run for office, though they have no personal desire to run for office themselves. Further, the non-participation of less engaged students in elections might signify disillusionment with the political system itself, as they also possess a strong sense of civic duty similar to the more active clusters, but with a higher dislike and distrust towards electoral candidates and politicians. Interestingly, when asked to select their ideal leader, students across clusters signified that they want an “inclusive, open, and participative” leader. Though, the proportion of Active Advocates who would want a “visionary” leader was significantly higher, perhaps suggesting they want a leader who is forward-thinking and could push their plans forward.

Bridging the Gap

The findings point to actionable strategies for school administrators and policymakers. The report identifies key levers for change — ensure that the NSTP is not a mere compliance exercise but rather, a high-impact, formative experience in civic engagement; investigate potential pedagogical advantages of the LTS and ROTC in encouraging civic action and integrate such advantages; and empower academic leaders by leveraging the trust placed in them to embed civic discourse across all fields of study.

Another key strategy is to offer accessible and low-barrier entry points for community involvement (such as exposure to Barangay Assemblies) that build hands-on community organizing skills and exposure, directly addressing the lack of practical community organizing knowledge — these low barrier activities could also be integrated with the NSTP. Thus, it is crucial to strengthen partnerships between HEIs and LGUs (such as barangays, city and municipal offices, Sangguniang Kabataan councils, and the National Youth Commission) to harness the higher trust placed in local government and leverage these partnerships to expose students to more accessible opportunities for local community involvement.

A particularly salient model for this accessible, low-barrier, and local community activity is FPPC and Galing Pook Foundation's Public Innovation Field Lab. The Field Lab allowed FEU students, such as those from ICT, to be interns in select LGUs. In their internship, these students applied their knowledge to solve challenges faced by LGUs — while simultaneously exposing students to their communities and allowing them to improve their communities through their own knowledge and skills.

Ultimately, the transformation from apathy to action requires a two-pronged strategy — present the Drawable Crowd with compelling causes that activate their potential, and dismantle the barriers of disillusionment and apathy for the Disengaged Youth. Further, we need to explore the forms of civic engagement that are appealing to the less engaged students and increase interactions with community leaders who they deem to be ideal. The onus then, as school administrators and policymakers, is to use these levers and ensure that our college students are actively involved in their communities.

Part II:

Deep Dive into College Experience

Executive Summary (Part II)

Demographics

In Part 2 of the CES 2024 General Report, we explored the various dimensions that define the college experience of Filipino students. The CES 2024 captured responses from students with a mean age of 20.5 years and a predominantly female composition (56%), most students (79%) identify as straight, with female students showing greater diversity in sexual orientation compared to male students. Filipino college students begin their journey already shaped by significant economic stratification. Among families earning below ₱20,000 monthly, only 36% of students attended private senior high schools, compared to 87% from families earning above ₱80,000. This income-based pattern shapes educational pathways that follow students throughout their college experience.

Economic patterns directly influence where students live during college, revealing clear socioeconomic stratification. Students in shared rented accommodations, the most economically vulnerable group, represent 5% of the population but have the highest concentration of low-income families at 66%. Meanwhile, those in rented apartments show the lowest representation from low-income families at 21%, suggesting these arrangements remain accessible primarily to middle-income families.

Overall College Experience Satisfaction

Student satisfaction follows a distinctive U-shaped pattern that provides insight into the college experience timeline. First-year students report the highest satisfaction (62%), likely reflecting initial enthusiasm and successful college entry. Satisfaction drops during the middle years as reality sets in. Second and third-year students show higher neutral responses (36% and 32% respectively), suggesting a period of adjustment and disillusionment.

By fourth year, satisfaction recovers significantly, with 19% reporting being "very satisfied," likely reflecting perspective gained as graduation approaches and career prospects become concrete. However, the consistent 13% to 14% dissatisfaction rate across all years signals that roughly one in seven students experiences persistent challenges throughout their journey.

Satisfaction varies significantly across degree programs. Students in Science, Math, and Agriculture programs demonstrate the strongest satisfaction at 70%, while ICT students report only 36% satisfaction with nearly half remaining neutral. Engineering, Maritime, and Architecture students show concerning patterns with 50% satisfaction but the highest dissatisfaction rate at 18%.

School and Academic Preferences

Students approach college with clear, pragmatic goals. Getting a good job ranks highest (88% important), followed by earning higher income and learning new things (both 82%). But their college selection process reveals surprising conservatism: 70% apply to only one or two schools, and while 68% gain admission to their first choice, only 50% actually enroll there. Financial barriers and other constraints prevent nearly one in five accepted students from attending their preferred institution.

The gap between aspiration and access becomes clear in enrollment patterns. While 68% of students gain admission to their first-choice institution, only 50% actually enroll there. This 18-percentage-point drop represents thousands of students whose educational paths are altered not by academic merit but by financial and logistical barriers, a systemic inefficiency that undermines the meritocratic ideals of higher education.

Students demonstrate different decision-making patterns based on family income. Higher-income students (80%) use a program-first approach, choosing colleges based on desired degrees, while lower-income students are split more evenly (56% program-first vs. 44% college-first), forced to consider multiple factors like cost and location alongside academic preferences.

College or University Financing

Financial anxiety affects the entire college experience, with nearly half of all students (48%) reporting major concerns, peaking among second-year students (52%). The financing structure itself creates systemic vulnerability: 83% of students rely primarily on family resources, with only 13% receiving school scholarships and 11% government assistance. This heavy dependence on family funding means that household economic crises directly threaten educational continuity.

The impact of this financial stress appears in measurable ways. Over one-third of students (36%) miss school days due to financial challenges, with 14% missing more than a week annually. Despite 75% expressing willingness to work part-time, only 10% actually do so, indicating structural barriers to combining work and study. Among those who do work, the motivation is survival rather than enrichment: 66% mention personal expenses and 54% tuition costs as primary reasons.

Counterintuitively, financial stress does not significantly impact graduation timeline projections. Students with financial concerns actually show slightly higher confidence in early graduation (6.0%) compared to financially secure peers (3.1%), suggesting economic pressure may motivate accelerated completion to reduce overall costs.

Traits and Abilities

The CES 2024 reveals a concerning pattern in skills development that has direct implications for workforce readiness. Students demonstrate strong confidence in interpersonal capabilities, 71% rate themselves highly on open-mindedness and 64% on empathy, yet show markedly lower confidence in technical competencies. Only 26% rate their mathematical skills highly, with similar low confidence in programming and coding (27%).

This soft-hard skills paradox extends across all degree categories, with no field achieving even 35% confidence in technical competencies. Most strikingly, Science, Math, and Agriculture students, traditionally STEM-oriented, demonstrate the highest interpersonal skills confidence (64%) yet show weak technical capabilities (26%). Health Sciences students follow with strong interpersonal skills (59%) and highest leadership confidence (57%), but critically low technical skills (19%).

Career and Future Plans

Majority of the students (86%) plan to work abroad, driven by better pay (77%) and career opportunities (70%). This intention remains consistent across year levels, but fourth-year students increasingly cite "the Philippines situation" (37%) as a reason to leave. Family and friends serve as primary career information sources (58-72%), while formal channels like government publications reach only 20-38% of students.

Students prepare for a job market they view with considerable skepticism. The perception that employers hire people they know is shared by 60% of respondents, while 64% believe requirements for fresh graduates are unrealistic. These concerns about nepotism and excessive entry-level requirements persist across all year levels, suggesting these are not temporary anxieties but sustained observations about the employment environment. Students also identify structural barriers: lack of good jobs (38-45% see as major obstacle), skills mismatch (29% major obstacle for third-years), and the belief that employers only hire from prestigious schools (38-46% major obstacle).

Despite these challenges, students maintain practical priorities for employment: protection of employee rights, salary, and growth opportunities consistently rank highest. They explicitly reject the notion of an "easy job," with up to 22% calling this unimportant, indicating they seek challenge and purpose alongside security. This combination of factors: high abroad migration intent, reliance on informal information networks, and perception of a connection-driven job market—suggests students see international employment as a necessary response to local labor market conditions rather than merely an attractive option.

Student Engagement

Collaborative work sees high participation among students (75% engage frequently), compared to 30% who frequently seek faculty advice outside class. Digital learning patterns vary: 56% use online courseware frequently, while 31% regularly use AI tools like large language models. Nearly half (45%) never watch class recordings instead of attending live sessions, suggesting strong preference for synchronous learning.

Social engagement shows clear priorities: 63% frequently study with peers and 56% socialize with friends, but civic engagement remains low, only 30% volunteer regularly. Students spend most of their time on required activities (88% frequently attend classes) but show less engagement with extracurriculars (45% frequent participation), revealing a focus on core requirements over broader campus life.

Health and Well-being

The emotional reality of Filipino college students reveals a population under sustained psychological pressure. Three out of five students (61%) frequently feel overwhelmed, a rate that remains consistently high across all academic years. This stress rarely exists alone: 37% frequently feel alone, and 30% experience persistent depression, creating interconnected patterns of psychological distress.

Sleep deprivation compounds these challenges systematically. Students average only 6.4-7.5 hours of sleep on weekdays, well below recommended minimums, with third-years experiencing the lowest duration (6.4 hours). The Sleep Risk Priority Matrix identifies fourth-year students as facing "Critical" levels of sleep disruption, while second and third-years show "High" risk across multiple indicators.

Academic anxiety further intensifies this stress environment. Over half of all students (51%) report frequent exam-related anxiety, with rates peaking among second-years (57%). The combination of overwhelming stress, chronic sleep loss, academic anxiety, and social isolation creates conditions that systematically undermine student success and well-being.

New College Environment

Students show different patterns of adaptation to college-level learning from the SHS learning environment. While 52% say they are better at figuring things out in college than in SHS, only 38% improved at ignoring distractions with 14% actually getting worse in college compared to SHS. This shows that a significant proportion of students face challenges in the face of the radically different learning environment in college compared to their previous SHS environment.

The shift in academic expectations becomes clearly visible when comparing Senior High School performance with college projections. Students who rated themselves as

"Excellent" in SHS (14%) expect only 6% to maintain this level in college, while "Above Average" performers drop from 31% to 24%, a combined 15-percentage-point decrease among top performers. This adjustment flows primarily into the "Average" category, indicating realistic expectation management as students anticipate increased academic rigor.

However, this expectation adjustment occurs within an institutional context where students identify systematic gaps between importance and satisfaction. Faculty feedback on requirements shows a 22-point gap between importance (83%) and satisfaction (61%), while quality of teaching demonstrates an equally concerning 22-point difference (86% importance vs 64% satisfaction).

The transition challenges become more complex when examined through educational pathway alignment. Academic Track students demonstrate strong alignment between their preparation and college programs (74%), while Technical-Vocational-Livelihood students report only 54% alignment, with 42% experiencing clear misalignment. This gap between student's senior high school background and their college programs reveals challenges in creating smooth transitions from secondary to higher education.

Moving Forward

The findings from CES 2024 point toward three essential directions for Philippine higher education. First, financial support systems must evolve beyond family dependence to include expanded scholarships, functional work-study programs, and accessible loans that provide real alternatives for students across income levels. Second, institutions need accountability measures that close the documented gaps in core academic services, ensuring that quality teaching and timely support become consistent realities rather than aspirations. Third, comprehensive well-being initiatives must address the interconnected challenges of financial stress, insufficient sleep, academic pressure, and social disconnection through coordinated campus policies and services.

The students documented in this report demonstrate readiness to learn, willingness to work, and clear understanding of education's value. What they encounter, however, are systems that often cannot provide the support necessary for them to achieve those goals. The choice facing Philippine higher education is whether to address these documented gaps or continue producing graduates who seek opportunities abroad because domestic institutions could not provide the foundation they needed. The evidence in this report provides the basis for informed action. What remains is the commitment to transform these findings into policies and practices that enable student success, institutional accountability, and outcomes aligned with both individual aspirations and national development needs.

Appendix

Sampling Design

To ensure that the findings can be generalized to the broader student population of the partner HEIs, a probability sampling approach was drawn from the student populations of the participating HEIs. The sampling design used stratified sampling with proportional allocation, where the strata were based on gender-degree combinations within each participating institution. This stratification allows for more precise and unbiased estimates compared to simple random sampling. The target margin of error (moe) for each institution's sample was ±6%, ensuring reliable results. In addition, post-stratification using raking and non-response adjustment through propensity score matching was applied to the design weights to improve precision and minimize sampling bias (Heeringa, West, and Berglund, 2017).

Following the stratified sampling design with proportional allocation with a target moe of ±6% for proportions, the sample size, n, formula was (Valliant, Dever, Kreuter, 2013, pp. 37-40):

$$n = \frac{z^2{}_{1-\alpha/2}(pq)}{e^2}$$

where,
n = sample size
e = margin of error such that $Pr(|\bar{y}_{sample} - \bar{y}_{population}| \leq e) = 1 - \alpha$
α = 0.05
p = q = proportion of category A and proportion of non-category B, respectively, for every study variable

In addition, we set p = q = 0.50, since setting p=q=0.50 allows for the largest sample size and as such, a conservative sample size was obtained (Valliant, Dever, Kreuter, 2013, pp. 35). Since the stratified allocation is proportional allocation, for every stratum H, the sample size per stratum, $n_h = nW_h$ such that $W_h = N_h / N$ (Valliant, Dever, Kreuter, 2013, pp. 42). Each of the CES HEIs were treated as study domains.

Questionnaire Development and Implementation

The CES survey instrument was developed to capture the diverse aspects of the student experience in higher education. To establish validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by five college students who represent the target population and were not included in the main study sample. These students were selected across different year levels to ensure comprehensive representation. Cognitive interviews were employed using a hybrid approach that combines think-aloud and probing techniques (US Census Bureau, 2021; Ryan, Gannon-Slater, and Culbertson, 2012). This process was used to identify any ambiguities, misunderstandings, or difficulties students encountered when responding to the questions. Feedback from these interviews was used to refine the survey instrument, ensuring that questions were clear, concise, and accurately captured the intended constructs.

The list of sampled students, with the links to their assigned Google Forms, was given to the school administrators. The school administrators contacted the sampled students through their learning management systems (LMS) and/or email.

Split Questionnaire Designs

The survey was administered through Google Forms. Further, to improve survey quality and reduce respondent burden, a three-form split questionnaire design was implemented for the survey. In this approach, the complete set of survey questions were divided into four modules: Core, A, B, and C.

Each respondent answered all questions in the Core module, which contains essential questions relevant to the study's primary objectives, as well as the two additional modules — for example, students in form 1 answered modules {Core, A, B}, while those in form 2 answered modules {Core, B, C}, and those in form 3 answered modules {Core, A, C}. The three-form split questionnaire design is particularly effective for large-scale surveys, as it reduces the cognitive load on respondents and enhances the quality of their responses (Axenfeld et al., 2022; Imbriano & Raghunathan, 2020; Raghunathan & Grizzle, 1995). To impute the modules in each of the forms, multiple imputation with chained equations (mice) was used through the mice R package (Van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011).

LCA Modeling

As mentioned, students were clustered through LCA across 24 civic actions — see Table A1. The method used to group students based on their civic engagement was latent class analysis (LCA). Like other clustering methods, the type of data is crucial for analysis, as certain clustering algorithms are suited to specific data types — numerical, categorical, or mixed (Preud'homme et al., 2021). All 24 clustering variables in this study were Likert-scale items, which are ordinal (categorical) variables with five response levels: (1) "I have not done this and I would not do it regardless of the situation," (2) "I have not done this, but I might do it if something important happens in the future," (3) "Once in the past year," (4) "2-3 times in the past year," and (5) "More than 3 times in the past year."

As discussed by Linzer and Lewis (2011), LCA is a finite mixture model suitable for clustering categorical variables (Nylund-Gibson and Choi, 2018). Unlike factor analysis, which groups variables, LCA groups similar individuals based on their responses. LCA assumes the existence of an unobserved latent variable determined by the observed variables, serving as an emergent grouping variable with subgroup membership designated by the latent classes (Linzer and Lewis, 2011; Nylund-Gibson and Choi, 2018). For this study, the latent civic engagement clusters in the CES 2024 sample were identified using LCA, with the R package poLCA employed for the analysis (Linzer and Lewis, 2011).

A crucial element of LCA is determining the number of groups present in the data, as LCA requires specifying the number of latent classes before model estimation, similar to other clustering algorithms like k-prototypes (Huang, 1998). Linzer and Lewis (2011) and Nylund-Gibson and Choi (2018) advocated using the scree plot approach to select the optimal number of clusters based on fit indices such as the Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Bayesian information criterion (BIC). This approach, which involves identifying the "elbow point" in the fit indices, was used to determine the number of clusters while ensuring parsimony.

Another challenge with LCA was the risk of finding only the local maxima instead of the global maxima during likelihood estimation (Linzer and Lewis, 2011), an inherent issue with the EM algorithm underlying LCA (Casella and Berger, 2001). To address this, multiple random starts were used for the EM algorithm to increase the likelihood of finding the global maxima (Linzer and Lewis, 2011; Nylund-Gibson and Choi, 2018). For the models used for the fit indices, 100 random starts were used, and 5000 random starts were applied to the final model selected from the fit indices.

In Table A2 and Figure A1, the elbow point seems to be at the 3-model with the 4- and 5-models as possible optimal models. The 4- and 5- models were considered by examining the results of the likelihood ratio tests of the model fit between the 3-model vs the 4-model and the 4-model vs the 5-model. The likelihood ratio tests show that the model fit improved by adding 4 and 5 classes, sequentially.

The 3-model creates three classes, from Disengaged, Drawable Crowds, and a class of more active students. On the other hand, the 4-model splits the active class in the 3-model into two, a more active class with responses from at least twice to more than thrice and a class with once responses. The classes obtained through the 5-model were similar to that of the 4-class but the drawable class was split further into two, a class of a homogenous drawable students and a separate class of less homogenous students with response between “have never done and never will” to “have not done but might consider”.

As such, the 4-model was chosen as the optimal number of clusters for parsimony. The 3-model was not chosen since the conditional item probabilities for the active class were not homogeneous across the top three response options while the 5-model was not chosen since the newly created class from the drawable class was not homogeneous for the bottom two response options. On the other hand, the classes created through the 4-model had compact conditional item probabilities within each class.

Table A1. Civic actions for the LCA model

Civic Actions from YouthLed's State of the Filipino Youth Survey
Followed a politician, political commentator and/or political account on social media
Liked or shared political/social posts on social media
Wrote about political or social issues on a blog or website
Posted on social media your own thoughts/comments on political/social issues
Wrote a letter to the editor or contributed to an opinion article to a newspaper or online news website
Discussed politics and societal issues on the internet
Sought out news about political issues
Discussed politics and societal issues in person
Donated money/in-kind to a charity
Contacted an elected government official regarding an issue or concern
Ran for and/or held public office
Joined a political group on social media
Joined or volunteered for a political party
Joined a union or work-based group in filing a labor complaint
Participated in a movement for social change
Took part in a demonstration or strike
Formed a group focused on a specific advocacy (e.g. environment, youth empowerment, human rights, etc.
Received a grant to implement programs and activities in the community
Have been part of project implementation under a civil society organization, academic institution, etc.
Donated money/in-kind to a political cause, political party, or politician
Requested any technical, logistical, and/or financial support from government offices and/or public officials
Attended public hearings or consultations with government agencies
Wrote and submitted a position paper to a legislator

Table A2. Fit indices of the LCA models with 2 to 7 classes

Cluster	LL	BIC	AIC	Npar	L2	df
2	-211815	425380.2	424016.2	193	304764.1	8473
3	-173991	350610.7	348561.2	290	229115.1	8376
4	-159069	321646.6	318911.6	387	199271.5	8279
5	-149830	304048.7	300628.2	484	180794.1	8182
6	-144782	294831.9	290725.8	581	170697.7	8085
7	-139838	285823.2	281031.7	678	160809.6	7988

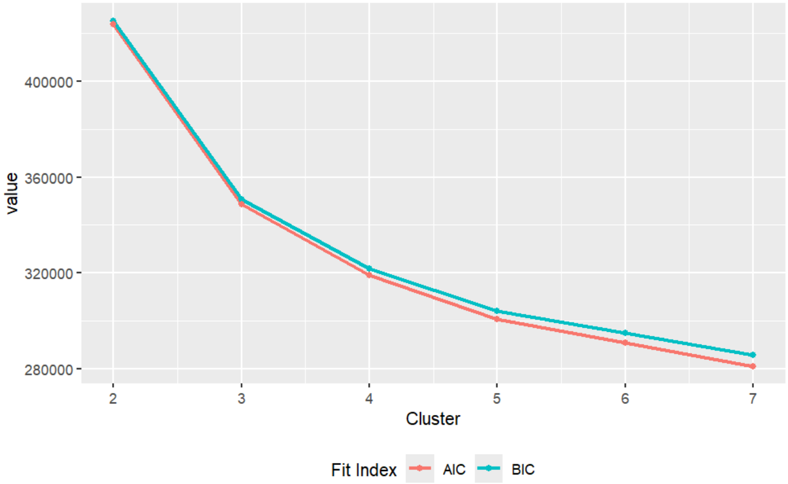

Figure A1. Scree Plot of the AIC and BIC across LCA models with 2 to 7 classes

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