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Abstract

Educational attainment significantly influences voting behaviour in presidential elections, particularly in Jambi City. This study investigates the effect of formal education on voter behaviour during the 2024 presidential election and explores the behavioural patterns adopted by voters, including sociological, psychological, and rational approaches. It also assesses how education influences voter preferences and participation and its broader implications for local political dynamics. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to voters in Jambi City. The findings reveal that higher levels of education are strongly associated with more informed and rational voting decisions. Formal and informal educational experiences enhance voters' political awareness and engagement. Moreover, voter behaviour in Jambi City reflects a combination of sociological influences, psychological dispositions, and rational considerations. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between education and electoral behaviour, offering insights into the nature of democratic participation in regional contexts. The study also provides policy-relevant recommendations to promote inclusive voter engagement across all educational backgrounds.

Keywords: General elections, Jambi, Level of education, Voter Behaviour.

Introduction

General elections play a central role in modern democratic systems by realising popular sovereignty and establishing legitimate governments that reflect the electorate's aspirations and interests (Couture, 2014; Denver, 2014; Makarenko, 2015). The electorate consists of diverse societal groups, including individuals with varying levels of education—from those still in school to those who have completed secondary or tertiary education. Eldersveld and Walton (2000) found that individuals with higher educational attainment tend to demonstrate greater motivation to participate in elections.

Education shapes citizens' critical thinking and understanding of political systems (Berdahl et al., 2021). It influences how voters perceive political issues, form values, and develop knowledge about their electoral choices and democratic participation (Berkowitz, 2007; Guérin et al., 2013; Sellars et al., 2018). Although many studies have examined the relationship between education and voter behaviour, few have focused on how education levels influence voting patterns at the local level, such as in Jambi City. This gap highlights the need to investigate presidential elections through the lens of public education (Sarofah, 2023).

Researchers can uncover how education shapes political engagement and decision-making by analysing elections concerning educational attainment. This perspective also reveals that a candidate's support from voters across educational backgrounds does not necessarily reflect leadership competence. Understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehensively analysing the political and sociological forces driving electoral behaviour.

Table 1.

Permanent Voter List in President and Vice President Election in Jambi Province

Num	District/City	Num of Sub District	Num of Villages	Polling Place	Total of Voters M	F	MF
1	Kerinci	16	287	621	95.721	97.463	193.184
2	Merangin	24	215	926	126.324	123.039	249.363
3	Sarolangun	10	158	737	100.612	98.656	199.268
4	Batanghari	8	124	664	99.001	95.928	194.929
5	Muaro Jambi	11	155	926	142.358	136.067	278.425
6	Tanjung Jabung Barat	13	134	670	109.340	102.283	211.623
7	Tanjung Jabung Timur	11	93	615	83.252	79.918	163.170
8	Tebo	17	153	799	118.500	117.593	236.093
9	Bungo	12	112	744	117.741	113.338	231.079
10	Kota Jambi	11	62	1.334	192.438	197.835	390.273
11	Kota Sungai Penuh	8	69	200	33.401	34.696	68.097
	Sum	141	1.562	8.236	1.218.688	1.197.174	2.415.862

Reference: Processed by Researcher, 2024.

Data from the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia showed that the voter turnout rate in Jambi City in the 2024 elections was 78.29% or 353,675 people. Jambi City is one of the districts/cities in Jambi Province with relatively large voter participation compared to surrounding districts/cities in Jambi Province. Based on the data, Jambi City is one of the regencies/cities with the highest number of Permanent Voter Lists, reaching 390,273 people, and East Tanjung Jabung is the regency with the lowest level of Permanent Voter Lists with 163,170 people, based on the table above.

According to Denver, education affects political participation in many countries. Higher education significantly affects political participation because it can provide information about politics, develop analytical skills, and create interest and ability in politics. Educated people are more aware of the influence of government on their lives, pay more attention to political life, obtain more information about political processes and are more competent in their political behaviour. Education is the most potent factor in determining voters. Education increases the sense of participation and abstract intellectual desires, causing one to follow political news and feel involved in politics.

In 2023, the population with formal education in Jambi City reached 566,791 individuals across 11 sub-districts. The Sub-District of Alam Barajo recorded the highest number, totalling

65,788 educated residents, while the Sub-District of Pelayangan recorded the lowest. This data reflects the significant variation in educational attainment across the city.

Researchers observe that education broadens individuals' perspectives on political life. People with higher levels of education tend to demonstrate distinct attitudes and behaviours compared to those with lower educational backgrounds. Education increases individuals' confidence in engaging with political processes and empowers them to influence public policy, ultimately fostering higher levels of political participation.

Table 2.

Data on the education level of sub-districts in Jambi City in 2023

Num	District/City	Junior High School	Senior High School	Diploma I-IV	Bachelor	Master	Doctor	Total
1	Alam Barajo	12.707	34.338	4.728	12.541	1.355	119	65.788
2	Telanaipura	6.013	14.839	2.211	6.599	898	76	30.636
3	Danau Sipin	3.272	7.539	1.883	3.248	240	12	16.194
4	Danau Teluk	1.824	3.902	320	824	47	5	6.922
5	Jambi Selatan	7.589	20.817	2.068	5.295	386	27	36.182
6	Jambi Timur	10.682	22.550	1.139	2.876	124	10	37.381
7	Paal Merah	15.595	36.693	3.219	6.967	368	22	62.867
8	Pasar Jambi	1.783	3.878	301	857	62	9	6.890
9	Pelayangan	2.152	3.724	212	586	31	3	6.708
10	Kota Baru	10.182	27.521	3.267	8.100	671	42	49.783
11	Jelutung	8.654	20.301	1.871	4.879	390	26	36.121
	Sum	80.453	196.102	6.599	48.283	4.572	351	566.791

Reference: Processed by Researcher, 2024.

To explain voter behaviour, scholars commonly apply three theoretical approaches: sociological, psychological, and rational (Olii, 2018). The sociological approach examines voting as a function of social context, where factors such as gender, place of residence, occupation, education, social class, income, and religion shape voter preferences. The psychological approach centres on party identification, where voters align with political parties based on emotional attachment or long-standing loyalty, often irrespective of other considerations. The rational approach interprets voting as a strategic decision based on cost-benefit calculations. Voters evaluate whether their vote will influence outcomes, compare alternatives, and consider personal or collective benefits before choosing (Berelson & Steiner, 1964).

Given the complexity of factors shaping electoral decisions, this research examines how education influences voter behaviour in the 2024 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections in Jambi City. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) determine the influence of education level on voting behaviour and (2) identify the prevailing behavioural patterns among voters in the city. Through this research, the authors aim to strengthen citizens' capacity for systematic political thinking and contribute theoretically by advancing knowledge on voting behaviour and the socio-political factors that inform it. Furthermore, this study intends to enhance public understanding of how education impacts political decision-making and voter engagement.

Method

The type of research used is quantitative research. The location of this research is in Jambi City, Jambi Province. The reason researchers chose a research location in Jambi City is based on the results of observations made by researchers, which show that most people in Jambi City have varying levels of education. In this study, the authors collected data in several ways,

namely: First, a questionnaire containing questions then given to respondents to be answered in writing; the results of the questionnaire will be poured into numbers and coding, tables, and statistical analysis, as well as research conclusions. The questionnaire is used to collect the information needed to determine the effect of education level on voter behaviour. Second, Content Analysis of Documents and Local Media: Documents such as political activity reports, news articles, and local social media will be analysed to understand the dominant political narratives and how these issues influence people's perceptions Hasan et al. (2023). This analysis will provide insights into how education is reflected in local political discussions (Sugiyono (2006).

The sampling technique used in this research is simple random sampling, where each element has the same opportunity to be known and selected as a randomly selected sample. The sample withdrawal formula uses the Slovin approach as follows Tashakkori & Teddlie (2010):

$$n = \frac{N}{Nd^2 + 1}$$

Note:

n = Sample Quantity

N = Total Population

d2 = The sampling error rate is set at 10% = 0.1

In this study, the community to be studied is 390.273 people. Researchers here take a level of confidence in the success of research. This is 92%, and there will be an error of 8%. The author uses the simple random sampling technique because taking sample members from the population is done randomly without paying attention to the strata in the population.

Results and Discussion

Formal education can give people a broad view of the political world; the difference between high and low education can be seen from their attitudes and behaviour. Education will provide confidence for the community to influence government political policies, ultimately leading the community to a high level of political participation. This research shows that education influences voting behaviour in the presidential and vice president elections in Jambi City.

Overview of the Jambi City Community

The people of Jambi City have a diversity of characteristics. Starting from the type of education, occupation and age group, these characteristics influence the choice of president and vice president in 2024. The following is the participation data for the president and vice president elections 2024 in Jambi City.

Table 3.

Voter Participation Data of Sub-districts in Jambi City in the President and Vice President Elections 2024 in Jambi City

Num	District/City	Voter Data	Who exercised the right to vote	Community Voter Participation (%)
1	Alam Barajo	67.231	41.713	62,04
2	Telanaipura	32.696	20.981	64,17
3	Danau Sipin	28.916	19.838	68.61
4	Danau Teluk	9.174	6.711	73,15
5	Jambi Selatan	38.201	24.656	64,54

Num	District/City	Voter Data	Who exercised the right to vote	Community Voter Participation (%)
6	Jambi Timur	44.518	29.998	67,38
7	Paal Merah	67.124	43.710	65,12
8	Pasar Jambi	8.268	4.733	57,24
9	Pelayangan	9.175	6.632	72,28
10	Kota Baru	51.025	32.703	64,09
11	Jelutung	39.248	25.866	65,90

Reference: Jambi Central Bureau of Statistics 2024.

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Gender

From the 100 respondents studied based on gender, it can be seen that female respondents who participated in the presidential and vice presidential elections in 2024 were 55 people with a percentage of 55% compared to the male gender, namely 45 people with a rate of 45%.

Table 4.

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Gender

Num	Gender	Amount	Percentage (%)
1	Female	55	55%
2	Male	45	45%
	Total	100	100%

Reference: Research Questionnaire 2024.

Characteristics of Respondents by Age Group

From the 100 respondents studied based on age group, it is known that the age group of respondents who most voted for the president and vice president in 2024 was between the ages of 25 - 34 years as many as 30 respondents with a percentage of 30% and the age group of respondents who least voted for the president and vice president was between the ages of 55 - 64 years as many as five respondents with a percentage of 5%. This shows that the participation rate of productive-age voters is relatively high.

Table 5.

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Age Group

Num	Age Group (years)	Amount	Percentage (%)
1	17 - 24	20	20%
2	25 - 34	30	30%
3	35 - 44	28	28%
4	45 -54	15	15%
5	55 - 64	5	5%
6	Above 65	2	2%
	Total	100	100%

Reference: Research Questionnaire 2024.

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Occupation

Among a diverse group of 100 respondents, a compelling landscape of voting preferences emerged based on occupation for the upcoming 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. The cohort of government employees stood out prominently, with 30 individuals—30% of the total—casting their ballots to support the candidates. Their participation reflects the unique perspectives and responsibilities tied to their roles in public service. In contrast, the voices of farmers, fishermen, and other occupations were represented by a smaller but equally important group of 10 respondents each, translating to 10% of the overall votes. This snapshot

encapsulates the varied tapestry of our electorate, illustrating the distinct influences and priorities that shape their choices.

Table 6.

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Occupation

Num	Types of Work	Amount	Percentage (%)
1	Government Employee	30	30
2	Students	20	20
3	Teacher/Lecturer	15	15
4	Farmer/Fisherman	10	10
5	Housewife	15	15
6	Other	10	10
	Total	100	100

Reference: Research Questionnaire 2024

The Effect of Political Education Level on Voter Behaviour in Jambi City

To determine the forms of voter behaviour found in Jambi City in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. Then, it can be seen based on several question items in the questionnaire, which this question can represent because it is based on understanding the forms of voter behaviour.

Table 7.

The Influence of Education Level on Voter Behaviour

Voter Behaviour	Answer Options	Level of Education H	A	S	Total	Percentage (%)
Sociological	Not Considered	0	0	0	0	0
	Not Always	0	0	0	0	0
	Considered	0	15	5	20	20
	Be Taken into Consideration	10	42	28	80	80
	Total	10	57	33	100	100
Psychological	No Effect	0	0	0	0	0
	Less Influential	0	20	30	50	50
	Very Influential	0	25	25	50	50
	Total	0	45	55	100	100
Rational	No Effect at All	0	0	0	0	0
	Influential as a consideration	0	21	34	55	55
	Very Influential	0	25	15	45	45
	Total	0	46	49	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software, 2024.

Note:

H= Hesitant

A= Agree

S= Strongly Agree

Influence of Education Level Based on Reasons for Using Voting Rights

To find out the forms of voter behaviour found in Jambi City in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. Then, it can be seen based on several reasons for using voting rights from table 8.

Table 8.
Influence of Education Level Based on Reasons for Voting

Num	Reasons for Using the Right to Vote	Level of Education			Total	Percentage (%)
		Low	Midle	High		
1	Get Rewards	0	0	0	0	0
2	Invited by friend or family	0	4	0	0	4
3	Aware of the rights as a citizen	13	36	47	96	96
Total		13	40	47	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software

The Influence of Education Level and Choice of Relatives Can Influence Making Choices

To find out the forms of voter behaviour found in Jambi City in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. Then, as shown in the table below, it can be seen from the influence of the level of education and the choice of relatives who can influence their choice.

Table 9.
Influence of Education Level and Choice of Relatives Can Influence Making Choices

Num	Choices from Family	Level of Education			Total	Percentage (%)
		Low	Midle	High		
1	No Effect at All	0	13	27	40	40
2	Influential as a Consideration	39	1	0	40	40
3	Very Influential	13	7	0	20	20
	Total	52	21	27	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software

The Influence between Level of Education and the Influence of Vision / Mission Delivery in Making Choices

To find out the forms of voter behaviour found in Jambi City in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. Then, it can be seen from the table below that the influence of the level of education and the influence of the delivery of the vision/mission can influence their choice.

Table 10.
Relationship between Level of Education and the Influence of Vision/Mission Delivery in Making Choices

Num	The Influence of Delivering the Vision/Mission	Level of Education			Total	Percentage (%)
		Low	Currently	High		
1	No Effect	0	0	0	0	0
2	Less Influential	0	0	0	0	0
3	Very Influential	24	36	40	100	0
	Total	24	36	40	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software, 2024.

The Influence of Education Level and the Role of Charisma in Making Choices

The objective is to explore the various patterns of voter behavior observed in Jambi City during the highly anticipated 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. This analysis will delve into how educational attainment and the compelling presence of charismatic leaders shape the decision-making processes of voters. Insights can be drawn from the data presented in Table 11, revealing the nuanced influences that guide citizens in determining their electoral choices.

Table 11.

Relationship between Education Level and the Role of Charisma in Making Choices

Num	The Role of Charisma	Level of Education			Total	Percentage (%)
		Low	Currently	High		
1	No Role	0	0	0	0	0
2	Less Role	0	0	0	0	0
3	Very Instrumental	24	36	40	100	0
	Total	24	36	40	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software, 2024.

Influence of Education Level and Track Record as Considerations in Making Choices

To find out the forms of voter behaviour found in Jambi City in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections. Then, as shown in the table below, the influence of the level of education and track record can be seen as a consideration in determining them.

Table 12.

Relationship between Education Level and Track Record as Considerations in Making Choices

Num	Track Record Considerations	Level of Education			Total	Percentage (%)
		Low	Currently	High		
1	Not Considered	0	0	0	0	0
2	Not Always Considered	4	10	6	20	20
3	To Consider	25	25	30	80	80
	Total	29	35	36	100	100

Reference: Process Data Using SPSS Software, 2024.

Forms of Voter Behavior Approach

Voter behaviour can be analysed using three approaches, namely the first sociological approach. This approach explains that social characteristics and groupings significantly influence a person's voting behaviour. Second, the Psychological Approach uses and develops psychological concepts, especially the concepts of socialisation and attitudes, to explain voter behaviour. Third, the rational approach, which is the rational approach used by political scientists to explain voter behaviour, is adapted from economics Oorschot et al. (2006).

From the results of the analysis that has been carried out, it can be seen that the voter behaviour of the Jambi City community in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections, which has a middle to lower education level, tends to be rational, psychological and sociological behaviour in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections.

Sociological Behavioral Approach

This behavioural approach suggests that voter behaviour patterns show a close relationship between voters and the more dominant social structural aspects, including socio-economic status, religion, ethnicity, and region of residence. Although methodologically, the sociological approach is considered difficult to measure, such as precisely measuring several indicators of social class, education level, religion, and so on. It also differs from the psychological approach, emphasising psychological factors in determining political behaviour. This approach uses and develops psychological concepts, especially the concepts of attitudes and socialisation, to explain voter behaviour Budiardjo (2008).

Judging from the political participation of the Jambi City community in the 2024 presidential and vice presidential elections, there are still those who choose the president and vice president based on the candidate's image alone or because there is emotional or familial closeness. They consider anything said by a candidate or political party to be the truth that cannot be negotiated anymore Asfar (2006). The results showed that they knew the information or figures of the candidates from their closest family. In addition, deciding to vote

for the president and vice president is based on recommendations from the nearest relatives. From the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen that at a low level of education, there are 42 people with a percentage of 52% who behave based on a sociological approach, 21 people with a percentage of 21%, and 27 people with a percentage of 27% who have a high level of education.

Psychological Behavioral Approach

Psychologically, a person's emotional connection with others will influence their choices Dewi (2016). This attachment to voters is a perfect weapon candidates use to gain support. Voters will vote based on closeness to a candidate; in other words, voters will make their choices because they know or are close to the candidate and then vote because of the attractiveness (charisma) of the candidate. Voters make choices based on emotional closeness. In the psychological approach, the existence of voters who idolise a candidate is the result of an evaluation of the candidate Soetjipto & Timur (2011). The candidate's history and experience strongly influence the evaluation of the candidate in the state and society. Some indicators commonly used by voters to evaluate a candidate include the candidate's quality, competence and integrity.

Based on the research data found, most voters are psychological voters. From the results of the research questionnaire, the most important thing for this type of voter is the image/charisma/vision and mission of the candidate as a leader Asfar (2006). It was also found that some voters see the candidate's vision/mission as equally important because it must truly represent the people's aspirations. Meanwhile, from the questionnaire results, it can also be seen that at a low level of education, there are 48 people with a percentage of 48%. At a medium level of education, there are 36 people, with a percentage of 36%. Those with higher education are 40 people, with a percentage of 40%.

Rational Behavior Approach

This rational approach is very influential in the democratic system in Indonesia Casey (2009). Unfortunately, the rational approach currently developing is a negative one. Where rationality tends to give rise to money politics. The voting public has been acutely contaminated with this negative rational system. However, in this case, the author examines this rational behaviour approach by the actual approach, which looks at voter behaviour, one of which is the candidate's track record.

This study found that most voters are rational; the most important thing for this type of voter is what a party or candidate can and has done. Through the questionnaires that have been distributed, it was found that in choosing the president and vice president in 2024, some choose based on their own choices without being influenced by others by looking at the track record or experience of the figure. From the data obtained, at a low level of education, there were 29 people with a percentage of 29% who behaved rationally, while at a medium level of education, there were 35 people with a percentage of 35% and those with higher education amounted to 36 people with a percentage of 36%.

According to the study's results, there is an influence between the level of education and voter behaviour in the president and vice president elections in Jambi City in 2024. Of the three forms of voter behaviour approaches (Sociological Approach, Psychological Approach and Rational Approach), the sociological approach is very much found in Jambi City, followed by a rational approach and finally, a psychological approach. This is by the statement that education is a factor that can influence a person's political choice, where education is an important factor as a tool to make specific considerations towards a president and vice president candidate or a political party so that in the end, the person can determine his choice.

Conclusion

Based on the above research results, the author can conclude that 100 respondents have various education levels such as diploma, bachelor, master, and doctoral background. The magnitude of the influence of education on voter behaviour is 62%, based on the table data. At the same time, the other 38% is the influence of other variables. These show that the level of education is closely related and very influential on individual political awareness and the creation of rational voters; the higher the level of public education, the higher the political awareness, and vice versa, the lower the level of public education, the lower the rational behaviour. In addition, it was found that voter behaviour in the Jambi City community in the president and vice president elections with a middle to lower education level was more dominant in sociological behaviour. The advice to the public is to be more active in digging up information about the candidates / political parties that they will choose so that the results of future elections will be people who are genuinely competent and have integrity. While creating models of socialisation that embody the level of public trust in candidates and elections on a large scale. Do not pollute the democratic party with various acts of deviation such as money politics etc., The suggestions should present matters that will subsequently be conducted about the research's ensuing concepts.

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Authors' contributions

Cholillah Suci conducted the studies, participated in the sequence alignment, drafted the manuscript, and carried out the immunoassays. Hatta Abdi participated in the sequence alignment. Sutri Destemi participated in the study's design and performed the statistical analysis. Muhammad Vicky conceived the study, participated in its design and coordination, and helped draft the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors have declared no competing interests.