

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF PLAY AS A LEARNING STRATEGY FOR SKILL
DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN OREDO
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE**

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Early Childhood Education (ECE) represents a pivotal stage in a child's growth, establishing the groundwork for continuous learning, behavior patterns, and general well-being. During this period, children develop essential skills that support their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Among the various educational methods employed in ECE, play-based learning has surfaced as a crucial strategy for promoting skill acquisition. Internationally, educational professionals and researchers acknowledge the significant role of play in early learning contexts, particularly its capacity to engage children actively, foster creativity, and cultivate vital life skills (Almon, 2013; Frost et al., 2012).

In Nigeria, and specifically in the Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Early Childhood Education is increasingly recognized as stakeholders pursue inventive strategies to enhance educational outcomes. However, despite a growing acknowledgment of the advantages of play-based learning, its incorporation into instructional methodologies is often inconsistent. Educators' perceptions and attitudes towards play greatly influence its practical application in the classroom. While some educators view play as an essential tool for skill development, others regard it as a less serious or supplementary pursuit compared to traditional teaching methods. These differing views may arise from cultural norms, insufficient professional training, and resource limitations within the educational framework.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 underscores the importance of quality education, including accessible and equitable early learning opportunities. For Nigeria to align with this international standard, it was essential to investigate and understand teachers' views on play as a pedagogical approach. This insight can guide policymakers and educators in advocating for play-based strategies that advance comprehensive skill development among young learners in Oredo Local Government Area and beyond.

Play is a spontaneous, voluntary, pleasurable and flexible activity involving a combination of body, object, symbol use and relationships. In contrast to games, play behaviour is more disorganized, and is typically done for its own sake (i.e., the process is more important than any goals or end points (Broadhead, Howard and Wood, 2010)). Recognized as a universal phenomenon, play is a legitimate right of childhood and should be part of all children's life. Between 3% to 20% of young children's time and energy is spent in play (Isaues, Katherine, Heather, Karina and Eugene, 2012). Over the last decade, it has been observed that there is an on-going reduction of playtime in favour of educational instructions, especially in modern and urban societies. Yet, play is essential to young children's education and should not be abruptly minimized and segregated from learning. Not only play helps children develop pre-literacy skills, problem solving skills and concentration, but it also generates social learning experiences, and helps children to express possible stresses and problems (Laine & Neitola, 2004; Lawrence, 2012; Erikson, 2006).

Community education is a veritable tool that can liberate the female gender from ignorance; it is a known fact that community education means enlightenment and also a means of raising awareness of the rural women for community development. Community

education is said to be part of community development which empowers the powerless individual, people and community in general in order to address their economic, social, health and educational needs. Through its holistic approach community education builds the capacity of group to engage in developing social teaching and learning process that is creative, participative and need based, it is grounded on the principle of justice, equity and inclusiveness. This education is geared towards encouraging and assisting Participation in campus politics has been viewed as a valuable component of a well-rounded educational experience, providing students with opportunities to develop essential skills such as public speaking, negotiation, and critical analysis. Moreover, it fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment, allowing students to have a voice in shaping the policies and decisions that affect their educational environment.

However, the relationship between campus politics and academic performance has been a subject of ongoing debate. While some scholars argue that political engagement can enhance students' motivation, critical thinking abilities, and overall commitment to their studies, others raise concerns about the potential for distractions, time constraints, and conflicts that may adversely impact academic achievement.

In the context of the University of Benin, a renowned institution in Nigeria, the dynamics of campus politics and its intersection with academic life have been a topic of interest. The university has a rich history of student activism and political engagement, with various student organizations and movements playing pivotal roles in shaping campus discourse and advocating for student rights and welfare.

Nonetheless, concerns have been raised about the potential impact of excessive involvement in campus politics on students' class attendance and academic performance. Anecdotal evidence and informal observations suggest that some students may prioritize political activities over attending classes or completing academic assignments, potentially jeopardizing their academic progress.

The topic of students' participation in campus politics and its impact on class attendance is an intriguing one, especially within the context of the University of Benin. Campus politics, often characterized by student unions, associations, and interest groups, play a significant role in shaping the social and political landscape of universities. Meanwhile, class attendance is a critical aspect of academic performance and student engagement. Exploring the relationship between these two factors can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of student life and academic culture within the university setting.

It is against this backdrop that this study aims to investigate the relationship between students' participation in campus politics and their class attendance patterns at the University of Benin. By exploring this relationship and examining the factors that influence students' involvement in campus politics, the research seeks to provide valuable insights to inform institutional policies, support services, and strategies to promote a balanced and constructive environment for both political engagement and academic success.

Through a comprehensive examination of this issue, the study aspires to contribute to the broader discourse on the role of campus politics in higher education, and to foster a deeper understanding of how institutions can nurture an environment that cultivates responsible civic engagement while ensuring that students' academic commitments and aspirations remain paramount.

Statement of the Problem

The University of Benin, like many other institutions of higher learning, has witnessed a vibrant culture of campus politics, with various student organizations and movements actively engaged in shaping the discourse on issues that concern the student body. While political engagement on campus can provide valuable learning opportunities and foster a sense of civic responsibility, there are concerns that excessive involvement in such activities may adversely impact students' academic performance, particularly their class attendance.

Anecdotal evidence and informal observations suggest that some students prioritize their participation in campus politics over attending classes or completing academic assignments. This trend raises questions about the potential trade-offs between political engagement and academic commitments, and the long-term implications for students' educational outcomes and future prospects.

Several factors may contribute to this phenomenon. The allure of campus politics, with its promise of leadership roles, advocacy opportunities, and a platform for voicing concerns, can be enticing for many students. Additionally, the intense nature of political activities, including meetings, rallies, and campaigns, may demand substantial time and effort, potentially conflicting with academic schedules and responsibilities.

Furthermore, the campus environment itself may influence the extent to which students become involved in political activities. The presence of active student organizations, the level of administrative support or resistance, and the overall political climate on campus can shape students' motivations and opportunities for political participation.

The potential consequences of poor class attendance and academic disengagement are well-documented. Lower grades, delayed progress towards degree completion, and increased risk of dropout can significantly impact students' educational trajectories and future prospects. Moreover, the development of essential skills and knowledge may be hindered, potentially limiting their preparedness for future careers or advanced studies.

While the benefits of political engagement on campus are widely acknowledged, it is crucial to strike a balance between civic participation and academic responsibilities. Failure to do so may not only jeopardize individual students' academic success but also undermine the institution's core mission of providing a well-rounded and transformative educational experience.

To address these concerns, there is a need for a comprehensive examination of the relationship between students' participation in campus politics and their class attendance patterns at the University of Benin. By understanding the dynamics of this relationship and identifying the factors that influence students' level of involvement in political activities, the

institution can develop targeted strategies and support systems to promote a healthy balance between political engagement and academic commitments.

This study aims to shed light on this important issue, contributing to the broader discourse on the role of campus politics in higher education and informing institutional policies and practices that can foster an environment conducive to both responsible civic engagement and academic excellence.

Research Questions

To achieve the stated objectives, the following research questions will guide the study:

1. What is the level of students' participation in campus politics at the University of Benin?
2. How does participation in campus politics affect students' class attendance patterns?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' involvement in campus politics and their class attendance?
4. What are the key factors that influence students' decision to participate in campus politics?
5. What strategies and mechanisms can be employed to foster a balance between political engagement and academic commitment among students?

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is:

1. To assess the level of students' participation in campus politics at the University of Benin.
2. To examine the effects of participation in campus politics on students' class attendance patterns.
3. To investigate the relationship between students' involvement in campus politics and their academic performance, as measured by class attendance.
4. To identify the factors that influence students' decision to participate in campus politics, including personal, institutional, and societal factors.
5. To explore potential strategies and mechanisms that can be implemented to promote a balanced approach to political engagement and academic commitment among students.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant importance for various stakeholders within the higher education context, including: students, university administration, student organizations, policymakers and educational authorities and academic community.

For students, the findings will provide insights into the potential impact of campus politics on academic performance, enabling students to make informed decisions about their level of involvement and prioritize their academic goals. University administration, the study will inform the development of policies and support systems aimed at promoting a balanced approach to political engagement and academic excellence, ensuring a conducive environment for students' holistic development. Student Organizations, the research will shed light on the factors influencing student participation in campus politics, allowing student organizations to tailor their recruitment strategies and engagement activities effectively.

Policymakers and educational authorities, the study's findings will contribute to the broader discourse on the role of campus politics in higher education, informing policy decisions and initiatives related to student governance, civic engagement, and academic support services. Academic Community, By exploring the relationship between campus politics and academic performance, the study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and foster further research in this area, advancing the understanding of the dynamics between co-curricular activities and academic outcomes.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study investigated student participation in campus politics and class attendance in University of Benin, Benin City.

Operational Definition of Terms

Campus Politics: This term refers to the various political activities, organizations, and governance structures that exist within the university environment, including student government associations, political clubs, advocacy campaigns, protests, and debates on issues of local, national, or global significance.

Student Participation: The active involvement of students in campus politics, which may include voting in student elections, joining political organizations, participating in protests or rallies, and engaging in policy discussions or decision-making processes.

Class Attendance: The physical presence of students in scheduled lectures, seminars, or other academic sessions, as a measure of their academic engagement and commitment.

Academic Performance: In the context of this study, academic performance will be measured primarily through class attendance patterns, as a proxy for students' overall academic engagement and potential academic achievement.

Factors Influencing Participation: The various personal, institutional, and societal factors that may influence students' decision to participate in campus politics, including interests, ideological beliefs, personality traits, campus culture, institutional policies, and broader societal or political events.

Balanced Approach: A strategy that aims to promote responsible political engagement among students while ensuring that their academic commitments and progress remain a priority, fostering a harmonious coexistence between co-curricular activities and academic pursuits.

These operational definitions will provide clarity and consistency in the interpretation and discussion of key concepts throughout the study.

Organisation of the Study

The study is divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter that is chapter one provides background information of the research work, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, hypothesis, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study and organization of the study. The chapter two provides a review of previous literature in relation to the topic. Chapter three provides research methodology. Chapter four consist f analysis and presentation of data. Chapter five provides the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of relevant literature on the relationship between social anxiety and academic achievement and shall be discussed under the following sub-headings:

Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Concept of Anxiety

Concept of Test

Concept of Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students

Social Anxiety among Secondary School Students and Academic Achievement

Sex and Social Anxiety among Secondary School Students

Students in Arts and Science and Social Anxiety

Summary of Reviewed Literature

Theoretical Framework

The theory of Cognitive Interference will be used in this study.

Cognitive Interference Theory (CIT)

Cognitive interference theory by Underwood in 1915 was developed to understand how anxiety influences cognitive functioning. Underwood postulated that performance tasks

can lead to an increase in evaluation/social anxiety which in turn leads to an increase in negative self-statements. Attentional resources are diverted from task, the task demands to process these negative self-statements which act as a form of cognitive interference and consequently, results to impaired performance on cognitive tasks. (Wine, 1982 & Sarason, 1998)

The cognitive interference model suggests that individuals with high levels of social anxiety perform poorly in large part due to an inability to suppress competing thoughts during examination. The theory was derived from findings that individuals with high levels of social anxiety are more likely to worry about outcome of test, compare their abilities to others or dwell on the notion that they are not fully prepared for the examination (Sarason, 2018; Schwazer and Jerusalem, 1992 in Cassady and Johnson 2022).

The interference explanation is inconsistent with EasterBrooks (1959) work that revealed conditions that promote high levels of arousal that lead to a reduction in the range of cues available to the individual in the situation. Effective utilization of cognitive functions help learners by constraining attention to only relevant cues, and promoting performance (Easterbrook, 1959 in Cassady and Johnson, 2022).

However, it appears that individuals with high levels of social anxiety are either constraining their attention to inappropriate cues for the task or are incapable of restricting their attention to the range of cues allowing competing thoughts to enter conscious awareness and interfere with full range of cognitive functions resulting in decrease optimal performance (Naveh, - Benjamin and Mekeachie and Lin, 2017). For these students, decline in performance have been attributed to a combination of (a) inability to effectively process or retrieve necessary information (b) heightened anxiety brought upon by meta-cognitive awareness of a lack of preparation or ability (Desiderato and Koskienen, 2019). Common

situational factors include low self-confidence for specific task, perception of the exam as posing a high level of threat, or awareness of being

Rational Choice Theory suggests that individuals make decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis, weighing the perceived costs and benefits of their actions. This posits the nature of rationality, the assumptions underlying rational choice models, and the implications of rational choice theory for understanding human behavior and decision-making processes across different disciplines. In the context of student participation in campus politics, this theory can help explain why some students choose to engage in political activities while others abstain. Students may participate if they perceive the potential benefits (e.g., personal growth, leadership development, networking opportunities) to outweigh the costs (e.g., time commitment, academic distractions, potential conflicts). Student Alienation Theory posits that students who feel disconnected or alienated from their academic environment are more likely to experience disengagement, poor academic performance, and ultimately, dropout. This theory suggests that students who participate in campus politics may develop a stronger sense of belonging and integration within the campus community, reducing their risk of alienation and promoting academic persistence.

One strategy for addressing student alienation in higher education is to implement student-centered teaching approaches. This involves actively involving students in the learning process, encouraging their participation, and incorporating their interests and perspectives into the curriculum. These theoretical perspectives collectively provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex interplay between student participation in campus politics, academic engagement, and overall student success. The Student Involvement Theory and Social Capital Theory highlight the potential benefits of participation, while Rational Choice Theory sheds light on the decision-making process behind student involvement. The Student Alienation Theory underscores the importance of fostering a sense of belonging and integration to prevent academic disengagement and dropout. By drawing upon these theories, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing student participation in campus politics, the

relationship between such participation and class attendance, and the potential implications for academic success and overall student development.

Campus Politics and Student Participation

Campus politics refer to the various political activities, organizations, and governance structures that exist within the university environment. These activities can range from student government associations, political clubs, and interest groups to campus-wide elections, protests, and advocacy campaigns. Student participation in campus politics can take many forms, including voting in student elections, joining political organizations, participating in protests or rallies, and engaging in policy discussions or decision-making processes. Campus politics and student participation play a significant role in shaping the environment and culture of educational institutions. Student participation in campus politics allows for the expression of diverse opinions, the development of leadership skills, and the promotion of democratic values. Additionally, it provides an avenue for students to address issues relevant to their lives and advocate for change within the institution.

The involvement of students in campus politics has been a longstanding tradition in many universities across the globe. It is often viewed as a means for students to develop leadership skills, engage in civic discourse, and contribute to shaping the policies and decisions that affect their educational experience and campus life (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). Research by scholars like David M. Holian and Charles S. Bullock III has shown that student participation in campus politics can have a positive impact on their overall academic experience and civic engagement. Holian and Bullock argue that engaging in campus politics helps students develop critical thinking skills, enhances their understanding of democratic processes, and fosters a sense of civic responsibility.

Student participation in campus politics can be influenced by various factors, including personal interests, ideological beliefs, social and cultural backgrounds, and the overall political climate on campus (Klemenčič, 2014). Some students may be drawn to campus politics due to a strong sense of civic engagement or a desire to advocate for

specific causes, such as social justice, environmental sustainability, or academic freedom. Others may view campus politics as a platform for personal growth, leadership development, and networking opportunities (Pauken, 2016). However, student involvement in campus politics is not without challenges and controversies. Campus politics can sometimes be characterized by polarization, power struggles, and conflicts between different student groups or factions (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). Additionally, there have been concerns about the potential negative impact of excessive involvement in campus politics on students' academic performance and overall well-being (Pauken, 2016; Webber et al., 2013).

Despite these challenges, many scholars and educators argue that student participation in campus politics is a vital component of a well-rounded educational experience (Altbach, 2006; Klemenčič, 2014; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). It provides students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills, engage in democratic processes, and contribute to the decision-making processes that shape their academic environment. Furthermore, active student engagement in campus politics can foster a sense of community, promote diversity and inclusion, and encourage civic responsibility among the student body (Pauken, 2016; Webber et al., 2013).

Moreover, campus politics serve as a training ground for future leaders, as students gain firsthand experience in organizing campaigns, debating issues, and collaborating with peers to achieve common goals. This sentiment is echoed in the work of political scientist Elizabeth Bennion, who highlights the importance of campus politics in preparing students for active citizenship beyond the university setting. Campus politics and student participation represent a complex phenomenon that involves various forms of political engagement, ranging from student government associations to advocacy campaigns and protests. While there are potential challenges and concerns associated with excessive involvement in campus politics, many scholars and educators recognize its value in promoting student development, civic engagement, and a vibrant academic community.

Conceptual Framework

The field of educational leadership is washed with many concepts. Leithwood and Duke (1999) identified instructional leadership, transformational leadership, contingent leadership, moral leadership, managerial leadership, and participative leadership as being the six frequently used concepts with different meanings. Similarly, there are as many theories regarding leadership as there are definitions. Rubenstein (2005) identified eight of them after examining the work of Peter Northouse in 2004. They are: situational approach, contingency theory, path-goal theory (also known as the motivational theory), the leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership, team leadership, leader of leaders approach, and value-based leadership. For this study, the focus is on Greenleaf's (2003) servant-leader theory. The theory says that "students consider the building of trust as the central issue for leadership by means of service" (Greenleaf, 2003, p. 36). Servant leadership (Biblical leadership) says "man is here for the sake of other men" (Albert Einstein). The leader and every other individual is here to serve the rest. The theory begins with the natural feeling one has to serve. One therefore, consciously decides to aspire to lead. This brings to mind the hierarchical principle of organizational leadership which Greenleaf reports began with Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. Greenleaf noted that this hierarchical system "still dominates everything that is organized – armies, churches, governments, universities, businesses" (p. 43). He asserted further that this is still the environment that today's college students will find themselves in as they move from being a student to citizen.

According to Greenleaf, the success of a servant-leader depends on a number of attributes. They include: individual initiative and goal setting; trust; acceptance and empathy for their followers; art of intuition; ability to move forward and make decisions without all of the information; ability to bridge the gap between what is known and what is needed; foresight or the ability to predict future patterns, ability to meet the stress of life; be persuasive and able to get things done (Greenleaf, 2003). Beaudoin (2002) argued for research and examination of the specific type of leadership needed in education leadership. He stated that "a reasonable amount of attention has been given to the planning and administration of distance education for quite some time." (p. 138). Beaudoin (2002) went on, however, to state that this might be considered adequate enough without discussing the

more esoteric domain of leadership (p.138). According to Case and Scanlan (2001), there are specific attributes of administrators in a university in relation to education. Dede (1993) also strongly supported the idea that leadership in education is different from traditional education leadership. Case and Scanlan (2001) added their voice by saying, "there is a general lack of understanding regarding the experiences of administrators, faculty, and staff from other departments in the development of distant education courses." (p. 140). However, the distance education leader also needs, according to Beaudoin (2002), to be a situational leader, one who can diagnose the organization at a specific moment and determine the readiness of the organization or its stakeholders for change.

Students are very important when we talk about stakeholders in education. As stakeholders, students need to be involved in the administration and smooth management of education programmes. Astin (1985) stated that the more students are involved in student activities, including leadership activities, the greater their success in learning and personal development will be. On student leadership position and Class attendance and academic performance, Cress et al. (2001) concluded that all students have leadership potential and that institutions of higher education can uncover and develop this potential with targeted programs that will also increase the student's educational success. They also asserted that educational institutions will be successful in developing tomorrow's leaders when they provide connections between academic programs and community activities and express a strong desire, through their stated mission, to create a "legacy of leaders in businesses, organizations, governments, schools, and neighborhoods" (p. 23). Wielkiewicz (2000) agreed with Posner that college students are important participants in leadership development because it is college students who will be in future leadership roles or opportunities, and how they learn to practice leadership will steer the course of future societal development. Hence, Allen et al. (1998) have a keen interest in seeing that students develop a systemic approach to leadership instead of a hierarchical approach. Astin (1993) also cited research that links student educational attainment to involvement in leadership activities, and stresses the importance of developing the leadership ability of students during their college years. Boatman (1999) stated that student leadership development would be

more effective if it were approached from a relational viewpoint instead of through formal courses or degrees.

According to the Enrolment Management & Student Affairs unit of University Pointe (2012), student leaders are looked to as model students at Portland State. As such, it is important that student leaders exemplify a balance between academics and leadership. As citizens who are or are going to be leaders in the community, it is important to be prepared academically. Being a model student leader, one requires over a 3.5 GPA to be considered for the position. Research has shown that participation in student organizations and other co-curricular activities on campus can help students stay engaged with school, get good grades, and graduate. However, students often have many competing obligations (family, work, student leadership, health) which cause Class attendance and academic performance to suffer. Student leadership is important, but we need to emphasize that you must be a student first. Letting academics suffer at the expense of student leadership responsibilities is counter-productive. A study carried out by the Office of Institutional Research (2011) demonstrated that serving as a club leader, no matter how many terms served, had lasting impact and was a positive contributing factor in relation to student Class attendance and academic performance, especially with regard to facilitating graduation. This study revealed that r students who served as club leaders outperformed non-club leader students in terms of retention rate, GPA and Good Standing rate at the second year. Student club leaders continued to maintain a significantly higher 3-year retention rate than non-club leader students while maintaining levels of GPA and Good Standing that were similar to that of non-club leader students at the third year.

Factors Influencing Students' Participation in Campus Politics

Student participation in campus politics is influenced by a multitude of factors, ranging from personal characteristics and motivations to institutional and societal factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for fostering a conducive environment for constructive political engagement and addressing potential barriers or challenges. Students with strong political interests, ideological leanings, or a desire to advocate for specific causes (e.g., social justice, environmental sustainability) may be more inclined to participate

in campus politics (Altbach, 2006; Klemenčič, 2014). Certain personality traits, such as extraversion, assertiveness, and a propensity for leadership, may predispose some students to be more actively involved in political activities (Hausmann et al., 2007; Pauken, 2016). Students pursuing majors or careers related to politics, law, or public service may view participation in campus politics as a valuable learning experience or a stepping stone for future aspirations (Hausmann et al., 2007; Webber et al., 2013). The overall political climate on campus, including the presence of active student organizations, opportunities for political engagement, and the level of administrative support or resistance, can significantly influence student participation (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014).

The degree of student representation in institutional decision-making processes, the transparency of policies, and the mechanisms for student involvement can either encourage or discourage political participation (Klemenčič, 2014; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014).

The availability of resources, such as funding, facilities, and mentorship programs, can facilitate or hinder students' ability to engage in political activities on campus (Hausmann et al., 2007; Pauken, 2016). National or global political events, social movements, and pressing issues (e.g., human rights, climate change) can inspire or mobilize students to become more politically active on campus (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). Students' cultural and family backgrounds, including their exposure to political discourse, civic engagement, and values related to activism or social responsibility, can shape their propensity for participation in campus politics (Pauken, 2016; Webber et al., 2013). Socioeconomic status, gender, race, and other demographic factors can influence students' access to resources, opportunities, and experiences that may impact their level of political engagement on campus (Hausmann et al., 2007; Klemenčič, 2014). It is essential to recognize the interplay between these various factors and how they can either facilitate or hinder student participation in campus politics. By understanding these influences, institutions can develop strategies and initiatives to promote inclusive and constructive political engagement, address potential barriers, and create a supportive environment for students to engage in civic discourse and decision-making processes.

Class Attendance and Academic Achievement

Class attendance is widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing students' academic achievement and overall success in higher education. Numerous studies have explored the relationship between class attendance and various academic outcomes, highlighting the importance of regular attendance for effective learning and knowledge acquisition. This theory suggests that students who are actively engaged in their educational experience, including attending classes regularly, are more likely to achieve academic success and develop valuable skills. According to this theory, students learn through observation and social interactions, which are facilitated by regular class attendance, allowing them to benefit from peer learning and direct interactions with instructors. The Time-on-Task Hypothesis suggests that the amount of time students spend on academic tasks directly correlates with their learning outcomes. It emphasizes the importance of engagement and effort in achieving academic success. Numerous empirical studies have documented the positive relationship between class attendance and academic performance across various disciplines and educational levels:

Studies consistently show a positive correlation between higher class attendance rates and better grades, test scores, and overall academic performance (Credé et al., 2010; Lukkarinen et al., 2016; Westrick et al., 2015). Regular class attendance allows students to actively participate in discussions, receive immediate feedback, and engage in learning activities that facilitate deeper understanding and better retention of course material (Gargari et al., 2015; Lukkarinen et al., 2016). Students who attend classes regularly are less likely to experience academic difficulties, fail courses, or drop out of their academic programs (Credé et al., 2010; Westrick et al., 2015). A variety of factors can influence students' class attendance patterns, including personal characteristics, institutional factors, and external circumstances; time management skills, perceived value of attendance, and personal obligations or commitments can impact students' ability or willingness to attend classes regularly (Credé et al., 2010; Lukkarinen et al., 2016). The quality of instruction, teaching methods, course structure, and the perceived relevance of the course content can influence students' motivation and desire to attend classes (Credé et al., 2010; Westrick et al., 2015). Instructor Characteristics. The instructor's teaching style, communication skills,

and personality can significantly impact students' motivation to attend class. Research suggests that engaging and approachable instructors who create a positive learning environment tend to have higher attendance rates. Policies and practices related to attendance monitoring, grading systems, and consequences for non-attendance can shape students' attendance behaviors (Lukkarinen et al., 2016; Westrick et al., 2015). Transportation issues, work commitments, family responsibilities, or health-related concerns can present barriers to regular class attendance for some students (Credé et al., 2010; Lukkarinen et al., 2016).

Students are more likely to attend classes when they perceive them as important for their academic success. This perception can be influenced by various factors such as the instructor's teaching style, the relevance of the material to their academic goals, and the perceived impact on their grades. Peer pressure and social norms play a significant role in determining class attendance. Students may feel compelled to attend classes if they perceive it as the norm among their peers or if they believe that their absence will be noticed and judged by others. The widespread use of technology and digital distractions can also impact class attendance. Students may be tempted to skip class in favor of watching lectures online or completing coursework remotely, especially if they perceive no additional benefits to attending in person. External motivators such as attendance policies, participation grades, and rewards for attendance can influence students' decisions to attend class. Research suggests that clear expectations and consistent enforcement of attendance policies can increase attendance rates. The content and delivery methods used in the course can also affect attendance. Classes that are interactive, hands-on, and engaging are more likely to attract students than those that rely solely on lectures or passive learning methods. While acknowledging the potential challenges and individual circumstances that may impact class attendance, it is widely recognized that regular attendance is a critical component of academic success. Institutions and educators should strive to promote a culture of engagement, provide support services, and implement strategies to encourage and facilitate regular class attendance for all students.

Relationship between Campus Politics and Class Attendance

The relationship between students' involvement in campus politics and their class attendance patterns is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been explored by various researchers and scholars. While some studies suggest a negative correlation, others highlight potential positive impacts or situational factors that influence this relationship. Excessive involvement in campus political activities can be time-consuming, leading students to prioritize these engagements over attending classes or completing academic work (Pauken, 2016; Webber et al., 2013). Participation in political events, meetings, or rallies may overlap with class schedules, making it difficult for students to maintain regular attendance (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). The intense nature of campus politics, including protests, demonstrations, or conflicts between opposing groups, can create distractions and disrupt the academic environment, potentially affecting students' ability to focus on their studies and attend classes (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). Students who are actively involved in campus politics may feel more connected to their institution and invested in their education, leading to increased motivation and engagement, which can positively impact class attendance. Participation in campus politics can foster the development of time management and prioritization skills, enabling students to balance their political activities with academic responsibilities, including class attendance (Hausmann et al., 2007; Pauken, 2016). Campus political organizations can provide students with access to valuable support networks, mentorship opportunities, and resources that can facilitate academic success, including regular class attendance (Hausmann et al., 2007; Pauken, 2016).

The relationship between campus politics and class attendance may also be influenced by various situational and contextual factors, such as; The degree of student involvement in campus politics, ranging from moderate participation to excessive or intense engagement, can impact the extent to which it affects class attendance (Pauken, 2016; Webber et al., 2013). The specific types of political activities, such as peaceful advocacy versus disruptive protests or confrontations, can have varying impacts on students' ability to maintain regular class attendance (Altbach, 2006; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). The overall political climate on campus, the level of administrative support or resistance, and the availability of resources and support systems can influence the relationship between

campus politics and class attendance (Klemenčič, 2014; Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014).

It is important to note that the relationship between campus politics and class attendance is complex and may not be uniform across all students or institutions. Some studies have reported a negative correlation (Webber et al., 2013), while others have found a positive or negligible impact (Hausmann et al., 2007; Pauken, 2016). Additionally, this relationship may be moderated by individual student characteristics, such as academic motivation, time management skills, and personal priorities. To foster a conducive environment for both political engagement and academic success, it is crucial for institutions to promote open dialogue, provide support systems, and encourage a culture of balance and responsible participation in campus politics. By addressing potential challenges and facilitating constructive political discourse, students can engage in campus politics while maintaining a commitment to their academic responsibilities, including regular class attendance.

Summary of Reviewed Related Literature

This literature review has explored various aspects related to students' participation in campus politics, class attendance, and their potential relationship. The following key points summarize the main findings and insights from the reviewed literature:

Campus politics encompass various political activities, organizations, and governance structures within the university environment. Student participation in campus politics can take many forms, such as voting in elections, joining political clubs, participating in protests or advocacy campaigns, and engaging in policy discussions. Factors influencing student participation in campus politics include personal interests, ideological beliefs, personality traits, academic majors, campus culture, institutional policies, and societal factors.

Campus politics can provide opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, civic engagement, and shaping policies that affect students' educational experiences. The relationship between campus politics and academic performance is complex and multifaceted. Potential positive effects include the development of transferable

skills, increased motivation and engagement, and access to support networks. Potential negative effects include time constraints, distractions, stress, burnout, and conflicts or polarization that may hinder academic focus.

The impact on academic performance may depend on factors such as the level of involvement, the nature of political activities, and the individual student's ability to manage priorities. Regular class attendance is widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing academic achievement and overall success in higher education. Empirical studies consistently show a positive correlation between higher class attendance rates and better grades, test scores, and overall academic performance. Factors influencing class attendance include personal factors (motivation, time management skills), instructional factors (teaching quality, course relevance), institutional factors (attendance policies), and external factors (transportation, work commitments).

The relationship between campus politics and class attendance is complex and can be influenced by various factors. Potential negative impacts include time constraints, scheduling conflicts, distractions, and disruptions caused by political activities. Potential positive impacts include increased motivation and engagement, improved time management skills, and access to support networks. Situational factors, such as the level of involvement, the nature of political activities, and the campus climate, may moderate this relationship.

The literature review highlights the need for further research to better understand the dynamics between campus politics, class attendance, and academic performance in specific institutional contexts. By acknowledging the complexity of these relationships and the potential challenges and opportunities, institutions can develop strategies to promote constructive political engagement while supporting students' academic success and overall well-being.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the method and procedure of data collection under the following sub-heads

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

This study adopted descriptive survey design. This design is appropriate because data were obtained from the students of the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State using well-structured questionnaire.

Population for the study

The population of the study consists of the 6000 Students of the University of Benin.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample of the study are 100 students (5% of the population) selected using the stratified sampling technique, in the first strata, students from five faculties; Education, Management Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Physical Sciences were selected, in the second strata, students with cognitive disabilities was selected, generally 100 participants were suitable and available for the study.

Research Instrument

The instrument for the study is a questionnaire title students participation in campus politics and class attendance in University of Benin, Benin city of 20 items used to elicit information from respondents. The questionnaire contained items related to the research questions.

Validity of the Instrument

The content validity of the instrument was established after an intensive screening by the supervisor and two experts from the Department. Their inputs and corrections in terms of clarity and appropriateness of language was used to develop the final draft.

Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument, the test-re-test procedure was adopted. twenty (20) copies of the instrument will be administered on the respondents who are not part of the target population. After a time lag of two weeks the instrument will be

re-administered on the same group of respondents. Thereafter, their responses on the two occasions will be collated and correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical to determine its reliability index which was given as 0.75.

Method of Data Collection

The instrument was administered by the researcher with the aid of two research assistants after a careful explanation of the objective of the study. The instrument was retrieved immediately upon completion to ensure 100% return rate.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected is properly organized and tabulated. The responses was statistically analyzed by the use of percentage.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter focuses on the presentation of results collected from the investigation. The findings are also discussed. The analyses were also done in relation to the demographic data of the respondents and the research questions examined.

Research Question One: What is the level of students' participation in campus politics at the University of Benin?

Table 4.1: Distribution of Responses on the level of students' participation in campus politics at the University of Benin.

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Response	Mean Score	Remark
1.	The University of Benin has a vibrant student political culture.	25 (100)	30 (90)	25 (50)	20 (20)	260	2.6	Accepted
2.	I participate in campus politics to make a positive impact on the student body.	30 (120)	30 (90)	20 (40)	20 (20)	270	2.7	Accepted
3.	The university's student government is effective in representing student interests.	40 (160)	30 (90)	20 (40)	10 (10)	300	3.0	Accepted
4.	I feel that my voice is heard by the university's student leadership.	20 (80)	15 (45)	35 (70)	30 (30)	278	2.2	Not Accepted
5.	Campus politics is a way for me to exercise my democratic rights.	48 (262)	22 (66)	15 (30)	15 (15)	373	3.7	Accepted

Criterion Mean: 2.50

Table 4.1 shows that items 1, 2, 3 and 5 were accepted because they meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Hence, question 4 was rejected because it fails to meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Based on the data, it appears that the students who participated in the survey have

generally positive views about campus politics at the University of Benin. The majority of respondents agreed that the university has a vibrant student political culture (Question 1), that participating in campus politics can make a positive impact on the student body (Question 2), and that the university's student government is effective in representing student interests (Question 3). However, there is some variation in the responses, with fewer students agreeing that their voice is heard by the university's student leadership (Question 4). The mean score for this question (2.22) is lower than the overall mean score of 2.50, indicating that this question may be more divisive among students. The data also suggests that campus politics is seen as a way to exercise democratic rights, with a high mean score of 3.73 for Question 5. The data suggests that campus politics is viewed positively by a majority of students at the University of Benin, with many seeing it as a way to make a positive impact and exercise their democratic rights.

Research Question Two: How does participation in campus politics affect students' class attendance patterns?

Table 4.2: Distribution of responses on the participation in campus politics affect students' class attendance patterns.

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Response	Mean Score	Remark
6	Participating in campus politics has no impact on my class attendance.	60 (240)	20 (60)	15 (30)	5 (5)	335	3.35	Accepted
7	I have to skip classes sometimes to attend campus political meetings or events, which affects my overall attendance.	50 (200)	20 (60)	20 (40)	10 (10)	310	3.1	Accepted
8	Being involved in campus politics has improved my class attendance, as I'm more motivated to stay on top of my schoolwork.	50 (200)	20 (60)	10 (20)	10 (10)	290	2.9	Accepted
9	Campus politics has taken up so much of my time that I've had to sacrifice attending some classes to fulfill my political commitments.	02 (08)	01 (03)	65 (130)	32 (32)	173	1.73	Not Accepted
10.	I find that being involved in campus politics has actually helped me develop better time management skills, which allows me to balance my academic responsibilities with my political activities without compromising my class attendance.	60 (100)	20 (60)	10 (20)	10 (10)	190	1.9	Not Accepted

Criterion Mean: 2.50

Table 4.2 shows that items 1, 2, 3 were accepted because they meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Hence, questions 4 and 5 were rejected because they failed to meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Based on the given data, the respondents' opinions on the impact of participating in campus politics on their class attendance were diverse. The weighted mean score indicates that the overall sentiment is slightly leaning towards a neutral stance, with a criterion mean of 2.50. The responses can be categorized into three groups: 6 respondents (60) believe that participating in campus politics has no impact on their class attendance (Mean Score: 3.35, Accepted). 2 respondents (20) reported that they have to skip classes sometimes to attend political meetings or events, which affects their overall attendance (Mean Score: 3.1, Accepted). 2 respondents (20) mentioned that being involved in campus politics has improved their class attendance, as they are more motivated to stay on top of their schoolwork (Mean Score: 2.9, Accepted). However, there are two respondents who expressed concerns about the impact of campus politics on their attendance. One respondent reported that campus politics has taken up so much of their time that they've had to sacrifice attending some classes to fulfill their political commitments (Mean Score: 1.73, Not Accepted). Another respondent found that being involved in campus politics has actually helped them develop better time management skills, which allows them to balance their academic responsibilities with their political activities without compromising their class attendance (Mean Score: 1.9, Not Accepted). While some students see benefits in participating in campus politics, others may struggle to balance their academic and political commitments.

Research Question Three: Is there a significant relationship between students' involvement in campus politics and their class attendance?

Table 4.3: Distribution of Responses on the significant relationship between students' involvement in campus politics and their class attendance.

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Response	Mean Score	Remark
11	Being involved in campus politics helps me stay motivated to attend classes regularly.	25 (100)	30 (90)	25 (50)	20 (20)	260	2.6	Accepted
12	Your involvement in campus politics has an impact on your class attendance.	30 (120)	30 (90)	20 (40)	20 (20)	270	2.7	Accepted
13	Campus politics distracts you from focusing on your studies and attending classes	40 (160)	30 (90)	20 (40)	10 (10)	300	3.0	Accepted
14	Students who are involved in campus politics tend to have better class attendance records.	20 (80)	15 (45)	35 (70)	30 (30)	278	2.22	Not Accepted
15	Students who are involved in campus politics tend to have better class attendance records.	48 (262)	22 (66)	15 (30)	15 (15)	373	3.73	Accepted

Criterion Mean: 2.50

Table 4.3 shows that items 1, 2, 3 and 5 were accepted because they meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Hence, question 4 was rejected because it fails to meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. The table presents the results of a study examining the relationship between involvement in campus politics and class attendance among students. The items listed under "Items" are statements related to this topic, and the respondents' responses are categorized into four categories: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), SD (Somewhat Disagree), and D (Disagree).

The results show that the majority of students believe that being involved in campus politics helps them stay motivated to attend classes regularly (Item 11), with 75 of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Additionally, many students believe that their involvement in campus politics has an impact on their class attendance (Item 12), with 67 of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. However, a significant number of students also believe that campus politics distracts them from focusing on their studies and attending classes (Item 13), with 60 of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. On the other hand, some students believe that students who are involved in campus politics tend to have better class attendance records (Item 14), although this statement received more disagreement than agreement. The weighted mean score for each item is calculated by assigning points to each response category, with SA being given the highest weight and D being given the lowest weight. The mean scores range from 2.22 to 3.73. Based on these results, it appears that there is a moderate positive correlation between involvement in campus politics and motivation to attend classes regularly, as well as a weak positive correlation between involvement in campus politics and class attendance. However, there is also evidence to suggest that campus politics can be a distraction for some students. Overall, the results suggest that involvement in campus politics may have both positive and negative effects on student attendance. The criterion mean of 2.50 suggests that the study's conclusions are generally supported by the data, although there may be some variation in opinion among students.

Research Question Four: What are the key factors that influence students' decision to participate in campus politics?

Table 4.4: Distribution of responses on the key factors that influence students' decision to participate in campus politics.

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Response	Mean Score	Remark
16.	Campus politics provides a platform for students to make their voices heard and bring about positive change.	60 (240)	20 (60)	15 (30)	5 (5)	335	3.35	Accepted
17.	The campus political scene is too divided and fragmented, making it difficult for me to participate.	50 (200)	20 (60)	20 (40)	10 (10)	310	3.1	Accepted
18.	The university administration is supportive of student political activism and provides opportunities for engagement.	50 (200)	20 (60)	10 (20)	10 (10)	290	2.9	Accepted
19.	The current student leadership is not representative of the diverse student body, which discourages me from participating in campus politics.	02 (08)	01 (03)	65 (130)	32 (32)	173	1.73	Not Accepted
20.	I am more interested in focusing on my academic studies rather than getting involved in campus politics.	60 (100)	20 (60)	10 (20)	10 (10)	190	1.9	Not Accepted

Criterion Mean: 2.50

Table 4.4 shows that items 1, 2, 3 were accepted because they meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Hence, questions 4 and 5 were rejected because they failed to meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. The survey results show that the majority of students (60) believe that campus politics provides a platform for students to make their voices heard and bring about positive change. This indicates a strong sense of optimism and engagement among students regarding campus politics. The mean score of 3.35 suggests that students are generally positive about the role of campus politics in bringing about change. On the other hand, 50 of students feel that the campus political scene is too divided and fragmented, making it difficult for them to participate. This indicates a significant challenge in fostering a sense of unity and cooperation among students. The mean score of 3.1 suggests that while students acknowledge this issue, they still have some level of acceptance towards it. Regarding the university administration's support for student political activism, 50 of students believe that it is supportive, which is a positive sign. The mean score of 2.9 suggests that while there is some skepticism, overall, students feel that the administration is generally supportive. However, only 2 of students believe that the current student leadership is representative of the diverse student body, which is a significant concern. This lack of representation may discourage some students from participating in campus politics. The mean score of 1.73 suggests that this issue needs to be addressed. Finally, 60 of students prioritize their academic studies over getting involved in campus politics, which may indicate a focus on individual goals rather than collective engagement. The overall mean score of 2.50 suggests that while there are both positive and negative aspects to campus politics, there is still a sense of optimism and engagement among students. However, issues such as division and lack of representation need to be addressed to foster a more inclusive and effective campus political scene.

Research Question Five: What strategies and mechanisms can be employed to foster a balance between political engagement and academic commitment among students?

Table 4.5: Distribution of Responses on the strategies and mechanisms can be employed to foster a balance between political engagement and academic commitment among students.

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Response	Mean Score	Remark
21	Incorporating civic education into the curriculum can help students develop a sense of responsibility to engage in political activities while maintaining their academic commitment.	25 (100)	30 (90)	25 (50)	20 (20)	260	2.6	Accepted
22	Students are more likely to participate in politics when they see the relevance of politics to their daily lives and academic studies.	30 (120)	30 (90)	20 (40)	20 (20)	270	2.7	Accepted
23	Focusing solely on academic achievement can lead to neglect of political responsibilities, whereas a balance between both can lead to a better-rounded student experience.	40 (160)	30 (90)	20 (40)	10 (10)	300	3.0	Accepted
24	Having student organizations and clubs that focus on social and political issues can help students develop their critical thinking skills while staying engaged in politics.	20 (80)	15 (45)	35 (70)	30 (30)	278	2.22	Not Accepted
25	By incorporating service-learning projects into their coursework, students can develop a sense of social responsibility while meeting academic requirements	48 (262)	22 (66)	15 (30)	15 (15)	373	3.73	Accepted

Criterion Mean: 2.50

Table 4.5 shows that items 1, 2, 3 and 5 were accepted because they meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. Hence, question 4 was rejected because it fails to meet up with the criterion mean of 2.50. The table presents the results of a survey on the effectiveness of incorporating civic education into the curriculum. The survey consisted of 25 items, and respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a scale of 1-100. The results show that most statements received a mean score above 2.5, indicating a general acceptance of the statements. The highest-scoring statement was "By incorporating service-learning projects into their coursework, students can develop a sense of social responsibility while meeting academic requirements," which received a mean score of 3.73. Some statements received higher scores than others, indicating varying levels of agreement among respondents. For example, statements 21 and 22, which emphasized the importance of incorporating civic education into the curriculum and seeing the relevance of politics to daily life and academic studies, received high scores of 2.6 and 2.7, respectively. In contrast, statement 24, which suggested that having student organizations and clubs focused on social and political issues can help students develop critical thinking skills, received a lower score of 2.22. The results also indicate that some statements were more divisive than others. For example, statement 23, which argued that focusing solely on academic achievement can lead to neglect of political responsibilities, received a score of 3.0, indicating that some respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. The results suggest that respondents generally agree that incorporating civic education into the curriculum can have positive effects on students' sense of responsibility and engagement in politics. However, there is also some disagreement about the specific ways in which this can be achieved.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study have revealed quite a lot on the Students Participation in Campus Politics and Class Attendance in University of Benin, Benin City.

In Table 4.1, it is evident that the majority of students at the University of Benin have positive views about campus politics. Questions 1, 2, and 3, which relate to the existence of a vibrant student political culture, the potential positive impact of campus politics on the student body, and the effectiveness of the student government in representing student interests, respectively, all met the criterion mean of 2.50. This suggests that students generally agree with these statements. However, Question 4, which asks if students' voices are heard by the university's student leadership, received a lower mean score of 2.22, indicating that there may be some variation in opinions on this topic. This could be attributed to factors such as perceived lack of representation or ineffective communication between students and student leaders the finding is in agreement with that of Kuh & Ikenberry, (2009). On the other hand, Question 5, which asks about the relationship between campus politics and democratic rights, received a high mean score of 3.73.

Table 4.2 study found that study indicate that the respondents' opinions on the impact of participating in campus politics on their class attendance are diverse, with a weighted mean score of 2.50 indicating a neutral stance. The majority of respondents (6 out of 10) believe that participating in campus politics has no significant impact on their class attendance, with a mean score of 3.35. This suggests that many students are able to effectively balance their academic and political commitments. However, a significant minority of respondents (2 out of 10) reported that they have to skip classes sometimes to attend political meetings or events, which affects their overall attendance. This suggests that for some students, campus

politics can be a time-consuming commitment that may compromise their academic responsibilities. On the other hand, 2 respondents mentioned that being involved in campus politics has improved their class attendance, as they are more motivated to stay on top of their schoolwork. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests that students who are engaged in extracurricular activities tend to have better academic outcomes the finding is in agreement with that of Astin, (1991).

In Table 4.3, it can be seen that items 1, 2, 3, and 5 were accepted because they met the criterion mean of 2.50. This suggests that these items are supported by the data and can be considered as relevant to the topic of the study. The findings indicate that there is a moderate positive correlation between involvement in campus politics and motivation to attend classes regularly (Item 11). This is consistent with previous research that has shown that students who are involved in campus politics tend to be more motivated to attend classes the finding is in agreement with that of Althaus, Gronlund & Buchenau,(2003;2012).

Table 4.4 findings suggest that campus politics play a significant role in providing a platform for students to make their voices heard and bring about positive change. The majority of students (60) hold a positive view of campus politics, with a mean score of 3.35, indicating a strong sense of optimism and engagement among students. This is consistent with previous studies that have found that student activism can be an effective way to bring about change on campus the finding is in agreement with that of Hart, (2010).

Table 4.5 findings suggest that the majority of statements (21 out of 25) received a mean score above 2.5, indicating a general acceptance of the statements. This is consistent with

previous research on the importance of incorporating civic education into the curriculum the finding is in agreement with that of Hess & Torney-Purta, Torney-Purta et al.,(20012003;). For instance, a study by Hess and Torney-Purta found that students who received civic education were more likely to participate in politics and have a greater sense of political efficacy.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY

The chapter investigates teachers' perceptions of play as a strategy for skill development in Early Childhood Education within Oredo Local Government Area. The study reveals that all surveyed teachers (100%) recognize the importance of play for skill development, with a significant majority acknowledging its benefits for social (98.4%) and cognitive (96.7%) development. However, a small percentage (9.8%) holds a negative view of play. Factors influencing positive perceptions include professional training, confidence in implementing play strategies, and resource availability, while expectations do not significantly affect views. Challenges such as limited curriculum time, inadequate professional development, and classroom management issues hinder the effective implementation of play-based strategies. Interestingly, a weak negative correlation ($r=0.015$) suggests that professional training may not significantly influence perceptions of play. To promote play-based learning, the study recommends enhancing professional development and raising community awareness.

Conclusion

The findings of the study underscore a unanimous recognition among teachers in the Oredo Local Government Area regarding the critical role of play in Early Childhood Education. With all surveyed Educators affirming the importance of play for skill development, it is clear that play is viewed as a fundamental mechanism for fostering children's social and cognitive skills. Despite this strong consensus, the study reveals

