

**YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICS OF EDO STATE:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, IN PARTIAL
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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, certify that this research study was carried out by ANADOZIE ONYEBUCHI BENEDICT with Matriculation Number SSC2105659, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science Degree (B.Sc.) in political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria..

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DEDICATION

Dedication is to almighty God and to my loving parents Chief and Mr.s Chidozie

Ezidinma

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First of all, I want to thank God Almighty for making this degree a dream come through.

I want to specially appreciate my parents **Chief and Mrs. S Chidozie Ezidinma** for supporting me and cheering me on from JUPEB to throughout university.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the challenges facing Africa today is how to provide opportunities for the continent's more than 200 million youths so that they can have decent lives and contribute to the socio-economic and political development of their countries (G. Genyi, 2016). According to the United Nations (2010), Africa's population as of 2011 was estimated at 1.05 billion and is expected to double by 2050. About 70 percent of Africa's population is 30 year of age or younger.

In 2011, youths, who are defined here as those between 15 and 35 years of age, constituted 21 percent of more than 1 billion people in Africa, whereas another 42 percent were less than 15 years old. Slightly more than half of the African youth population is female, and there are more rural dwellers than urban dwellers. With such a large proportion under 15 years of age, Africa's youth population is expected to grow in the years to come while the Youth population in other parts of the world shrinks (Gyimah-Brempong and Kimenyi, 2013:2).

Since Nigerian independence in 1960, Nigeria has been struggling to install a viable and durable democracy but its dismal politics are characterized by a consistent inability to conduct credible and transparent elections in which its citizens have access to effectively protected opportunities to exercise their franchise in the choice of their leaders, has made the agenda of democratic sustainability largely a mirage. This accounts for so many failed attempts at democratic transitions (Dudley, 1982; Akinsanya, 2005; Agbaje, 2005). Youth political

participation captures the involvement of youths in responsible and challenging political action that meets the genuine needs of the people with opportunities for planning and/or decision-making affecting others in the political system. That is to say, political participation involves recognizing and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people through the provision of real opportunities for them to become involved in decision-making that affects their daily lives (Aniagoh, 2016). Youth political participation fosters a sense of citizenship and makes policy processes more transparent and accountable to young people. At the same time, helps the youth build self-confidence, develop a sense of initiative, and acquire and test skills that are relevant for the workplace, such as communication, negotiation, or teamwork, in a practical environment (EACEA, 2010/03).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A close observation of the degree of political participation and training of youths in Nigeria tends to reveal that they have not been actively involved in the process of sharpening the political system. It is rather unfortunate that with the large population of youths and the kind of influence they can have on national development, they have been relegated to the background as the elderly politicians use them for various vices. Nigeria is a living witness to the fact that some youths are used as political thugs and touts during campaigns and election periods. For instance, the youths engage in hooliganism and cultism and have been executing evil operations, especially in the various parts of Edo State and Nigeria as a whole. These criminals engage in different social vices using traditional weapons and their activities usually increase by a significant percentage during campaign periods or elections. In other instances, they are recruited as personal bodyguards to corrupt politicians. While youths are being deployed as campaign agents for crowd mobilization at rallies to chant political slogans and

for successes in elections, at the end of the day they are relegated to the background. After elections, the hopes and aspirations of the youth are usually ruined. All campaign and pre-election promises of vital appointments and jobs made by the so-called elderly politicians, which mostly entice the youth to engage in sometimes untoward activities at campaign rallies remain largely unfulfilled after elections. It is noteworthy that in rare instances those promises are fulfilled. But since the youths have a future ahead of them, they have to strive to seize such opportunities to secure their future in public life. It will be wise to have youths on various advisory boards, commissions, ministries, etc.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the challenges facing youths participation in politics and governance in Edo State. The specific objectives are to:

1. To investigate the necessary orientation awareness for the Youths to actively participate in politics in Edo State.
2. To find out the factors hindering youths from contributing to political development in Edo State.
3. To examine the level of encouragement of Youth's political participation by Edo State Government.

1.4 Research Questions

In line with the objectives above, the following research questions are designed to give direction to the study.

1. Is the orientation of youths affecting their active participation in politics?
2. What are the factors affecting the youth's contribution to the political development of Edo State?
3. To what extent has the government encouraged Youths' political participation in Edo State?

1.5 Research Propositions

Based on the above research questions, the following propositions are formulated in their null format to give this study:

H01: The youth's political participation is affected by their political orientation.

H02 :Poverty is one of the factors affecting youth's contribution to political development.

H03 :Lack of encouragement by the government affects the political participation of the youth.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research will focus on the political participation of youths in Edo State during the 2023 general elections.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Every research work is aimed at critically looking at a project or work with the sole aim of benefiting the researcher, the reader or both. This work is significant because it will add to the body of existing literatures, journals, overtures and brochure that demonstrates the importance of the solution to most challenges of Nigeria politics and solution to help the youth towards

the political system. It serves as reference materials to students, scholars, and research analyst of Nigeria politics, who have the interest further on this topic.

This research will also help to change the way people think about the status of Edo State as the heartbeat of the nation and even Nigeria as the ‘giant of Africa’ which play a major role in continental, developmental operation, politically, economically, security wise, among others and bring careless of its national issues.

1.9 Conceptual Clarification

- **Youth:** According to the Nigerian National Youth Policy (2009), the youth shall comprise all young males and females aged 18-35 years, who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

- **Political Participation:** According to Eakin (2010), political participation is the process through which the individual plays a role in the political life of his society and has the opportunity to take part in deciding what common goals of the society are and the best way of achieving these goals.

- **Democracy:** A system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Youth

The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. The Secretary-General first referred to the current definition of youth in 1981 in his report to the General Assembly on International Youth Year (A/36/215, para. 8 of the annex) and endorsed it in ensuing reports (A/40/256, para. 19 of the annex).

However, in both the reports, the Secretary-General also recognized that, apart from that statistical definition, the meaning of the term ‘youth’ varies in different societies around the world. When the General Assembly, by its resolution 50/81 in 1995, adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond, it reiterated that the United Nations defined youth as the age cohort of 15-24. The General

According to Wikipedia, **Youth in Nigeria** includes citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria aged 18–29 years according to the new-youth policy (2019). However, the African youths charter recognises youths as people between the age of 15 and 35. Variance in chronologies are used in defining youth and are addressed by members of the state in accordance to their particular society

2.1.2 Youth Participation in Leadership Position and Inclusion in Governance in Nigeria

Youth have had a complicated and paradoxical role in politics and government since Nigeria obtained its independence, containing both positive and negative features. As youthful politicians began to establish themselves in office during the First Republic, the visible roles of youth started to decline in 1979 under the Second Republic. According to Amzat and Abdullahi (2016), these leaders often ignored the youth and relegated them to the "youth wings" of political parties. As a result, political elites frequently use young people in Nigeria as enforcers and thugs during contentious election campaigns, which fuels political unrest and violence. Youth dissatisfaction is especially apparent in areas where state shortcomings have caused major instability, such as the Niger Delta, the North-East, and the South-East. According to Amzat and Abdullahi (2016), one of the reasons behind the fall of the First and Second Republics was the use of young people for violent ends. While the larger political and cultural context affects adolescent political involvement prospects, democratic environments typically provide more conducive settings for youth political participation. Aiming for participation levels similar to those of other demographic groups should be the goal of initiatives to encourage young involvement (Tonge & Mycock, 2009; Amzat & Abdullahi, 2016).

Despite the difficulties, Nigerian youth have proven resilient and dedicated to opposing persecution, according to Akinrolabu and Imoukhuede (2023). They make up a sizable voting bloc, but because they are frequently qualified to vote but not to run for office, they have major obstacles to political participation. Political power has mainly stayed in the hands of elder politicians with prior experience serving in government since the start of the Fourth

Republic. Akinrolabu and Imoukhuede (2023) report that some young people work as political thugs or campaign agents during election seasons, organizing crowds at demonstrations and screaming political slogans. But these young people are often forgotten about after elections. Young Nigerians' low participation rates in electoral contests are a result of their disillusionment with institutions that do not represent their preferences or serve their interests. This disillusionment highlights the necessity of increasing youth participation in decision-making processes, particularly on matters that directly impact them, to allow them to make meaningful contributions to the development of their country (Dike & Dike, 2017).

Young people are more likely to support policies that directly impact their generation when they are in political power. Social justice, school reform, and job development could be the main objectives of these initiatives. Nigeria has a high rate of youth unemployment. Young leaders are more driven to come up with workable answers because they have firsthand experience with this issue. Youth leadership can also contribute to better educational policy since they can advocate for changes that make education more affordable and relevant to the labor market today (Mamuwa, 2023).

The involvement of youth can also improve governance accountability. Social media allows young politicians to engage with their peers more easily. Through this relationship, leaders may communicate with the public in real-time and remain aware of the demands and worries of their constituency. A government that wants to effectively serve its people must be responsive (Egbunike, 2020). Engaging youth in politics can assist in ending the pattern of disengagement and apathy. Adolescents are more inclined to think they can change the world if they see their peers in leadership roles. This idea has the potential to boost young people's

civic engagement and voter turnout. A younger generation that is more engaged in politics upholds democracy and makes sure that all opinions are heard (Anyanwu & Onuoha, 2022).

Additionally, young people's involvement in politics helps advance social justice. It is more probable that young leaders from a variety of backgrounds will recognize and respond to the needs of underserved areas. They can advocate for laws that guarantee an equitable allocation of opportunities and resources. According to Akinyetan (2019), inclusion has the potential to promote social cohesion and peace by bridging economic and social divides.

The #EndSARS demonstrations and other recent events demonstrate how young people in Nigeria are becoming more conscious of their political influence. These demonstrations highlighted the possible influence of a committed, fervent, and organized young group. Due to the large-scale involvement in the #EndSARS movement, many Nigerians have come to see that unaddressed youth issues could be a serious threat to the stability of the country. It is imperative to tackle these issues to fully utilize the promising potential of Nigerian youth and avert further instability.

2.1.3 Why Youths Participates in Politics in Nigeria

Citizenship participation in politics is a significant element of democratic governance all over the world including Nigeria. The structure and amount of citizenship in political participation can have influence on the degree and quality of government and governance. Quite a number of reasons could be deduced for why many Nigerian citizens particularly the youths participate in politics or engage in governance related activities. They include:

To change the structure of leadership and governance: Obsessed by the leadership styles of past leaders which do not impact positively on the lives of common people on the streets

of Nigeria and the continued existence of poverty amidst plenty, the marginalization of some parts of the country and the inequitable distribution of resources, some Nigerian youths participate in politics in order to change the structure in order to herald effective political leadership and envisaged developments. The formulation of more than a hundred political parties and activities of the Civil Liberty Organizations and many interest groups is a pointer to this fact.

To influence government policies and programmes: The revolution—Now by Omoyele Sowore and the various campaigns by organizations like the Social Economic Recovery and Accountability Project (SERAP) and Muslim Rights Concerns (MURIC), as well as demonstrations by Labour and Civil Liberty Organizations has forced government to be up and doing in socio-political issues affect the socio-economic lives of Nigeria. For instance, the agitation by Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) for minimum wage review and whistle blowing action by SERAP have forced government to review workers salaries and recovered stolen funds. The revolution—Now, equally was a conscious expression by youths to intimate the government about the failures of its socio-economic policies and the need to have an inclusive governance capable of affecting peoples' life positively (Vite & Dibang-Achua, 2019a).

To participate in decision-making process: The sponsorship of private citizen's bill, contributing during public debate of bills, protest, and demonstration by pro-democracy groups are all aimed influencing government decisions. For instance, the Bring-Back-Our-Girls campaigns by Obiageli Ezekweze, Our-Mumu-Don-Do by Charles Oputa were efforts obviously tailored towards changing the status quo. The actions of the Bring-Back-Our-Girls Movement on the one hand forced government to do all it could to rescue some of the Chibok

girls that were kidnapped by insurgents. On the other hand, Our-Mumu-Don-Do Movement by Charles Oputa also forced the President to cut short his medical trip in Britain in order to attend to the security and other socio-economic challenges bedevilling the country (Vite & Dibang-Achua, 2019b).

To solicit for leadership roles and representation: Some youth who participate in politics do so in order to be given position of leadership be it through contesting and vying for political offices or being appointed into political offices. The-Not-Too-Young-To-Rule Bill is a welcome development as it affords youth the right to contest election into political offices they were excluded of by virtue of age. Regrettably, as laudable as the idea seems the socio-political structure and process in Nigeria is skewed in favour of the retired elites in military, the intelligentsia and the economic juggernauts.

To agitate for development and social well-being: The activities of SERAP earlier mentioned and other regional pressure groups, such as Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Niger-Delta Frontier Force (NDFF), The Ijaw Youth Movements (IYM), Ohanaeze Ndigbo youth wing, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) youth wing, the Afenifere, and the Middle-Belt Forum youth wings have all engaged in one form of agitation and political engagement to draw development to their region. The intense agitation by the IYM through Kaima declaration and the need for government to pacify the youths of the region gave rise to the establishment of the Niger-Delta Development Commission and the creation of the Ministry of Niger-Delta Development. Of recent, efforts by the ACF as well as those of Northern Elders Forum have yielded the creation of North East Development Commission in view of the ravaging impact of terrorism and insurgency in the region. The Middle-Belt is also agitating for the creation of same commission in their region (Vite, 2018).

For political socialization: Youths in Nigeria also engage in politics not only because of economic gains but for socio-psychological reasons. Some of them are subjects to charismatic and renown politicians by so doing learn from them the attitude, principles and secrets of politic successes.

2.1.4 Factors limiting Youth Political Participation

Any society's success and sustainability depend on the involvement of youth in politics and policymaking. The significance of incorporating youth in political processes has been recognized in recent years. There have been varied levels of engagement on a global scale. Young people have historically been underrepresented in political processes in many nations, including Nigeria. Numerous factors, such as cultural standards, a lack of political knowledge, and economic difficulties are to blame for this. Many young people in Nigeria are disenchanted with the political system, claims Chinnah (2019). They consider it to be unapproachable and corrupt, which causes them to become significantly disengaged from official political processes. Voting, seeking public office, and participating actively in political parties are some of these procedures.

There have been initiatives to raise young people's political participation despite these obstacles. One such example is the #NotTooYoungToRun campaign in Nigeria. This movement was successful in lowering the age restrictions for political office, which encouraged more young people to enter the political arena (Eberechukwu, 2023). Still, there aren't many young individuals holding elected office. They likewise have little effect on policy. This suggests that youth participation in government needs more organized paths. They are possible because of social ties, psychological, economic, and other manipulations. These are covered in the section that follows.

Youths' Economic disadvantage:

Among the biggest obstacles to youth political participation is limited economic opportunities. Since politics frequently demands significant financial resources, it is difficult for young people to engage in it because many of them struggle with unemployment and underemployment (Amrit, et al, 2024). The majority of Nigerian youths lack money to participate in politics and compete with elder politicians in the country, in a country where by nomination fee for the ruling party All Progressives Congress (APC) fixed the cost of nomination forms for president at a hundred-million-naira, governorship at fifty-million-naira, senate at twenty-million-naira, house of representatives at ten million naira, and state assembly at two million naira which average Nigerian youths cannot afford. When money shapes politics, it assaults the democratic rights of citizens to contest for public office, especially where it determines who qualifies to participate in politics. As the Chairman of Nigeria's ruling party noted; "if you don't have N100 million, you have no business with becoming president". The implication is the evolution of a state that is governed and exists to serve wealthy elites at the detriment of popular participation (Amrit, et al, 2024).

Poverty on the other hand is the unfortunate situation of youth unemployment, seeing many lacking accesses to the opportunities for providing meaningfully for themselves, and those who depend on them. A minority of youths are not trained enough to have skills that make them employable, others are yet offloaded from tertiary institutions into non-existent labour markets, which were destroyed by the poor economic policies of the government. This has served as the basis for many in the political elite to consider youths as only being suitable for roles as political enforcers, purveyors of violence, and other nefarious purposes (Amrit, et al, 2024)..

For Youths reluctance, distraction, ineptitude, and misplacement of priorities which manifested in Yahoo Yahoo, Yahoo Plus, money rituals, uncut exuberance, and attachment to frivolous activities such as entertainment including TV series like Big Brother Naija, etc. Why Unemployment is one of the major reasons that pushed a lot of youths into many negative activities like yahoo-yahoo, and ritual killings, based on the Nigerian government's response to this problem, it is safe to say that they have belittled the negative impact of unemployment on the youths with over 30million people (majority youths) walking around jobless ((Amrit, et al, 2024).. Nigeria is sadly becoming a country filled with unemployed graduates and when these youths discover that their peers are doing extremely well in the cyber-crime industry driving in flashy cars, living flamboyant lives, they are forced to rethink and be influenced.

The underlying consequences of unemployment are devastating, among which are hostility, poverty, insecurity, etc. and Nigerian youths are too idealistic and adventurous to sit and watch these consequences eat them up, they would rather give attention to the cybercrime business such as Yahoo yahoo, ritual killing. The majority of these youths had higher aspirations and goals during their formative years, goals that could increase the resourcefulness and productivity of the nation. The youth stage is a point where many psychological and sociological behavioral instinct traits are manifested, so when these youths view their goals being tainted as a result of unemployment, these youthful instincts push them to find ways of erasing these taints, unfortunately, yahoo, ritual killing is an option some fall into. Over the years Nigerian government has come up with different strategies that are supposed to end youth unemployment such programs include: the Nigeria Youth Empowerment Program, Government

Enterprise Empowerment Program (GEEP), National Social Investment Program (NSIP), and Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (ACGSF) Npower initiative program etc to tackle youth unemployment but majority of the strategies have fallen short of expectations.

Narrowing it to the reality television shows like Big Brother Nigeria (BBN) hereafter referred to as BB Naija. Proved to be a favorite among the youth particularly those who fall within the range of 18-25 years (Chikafe and Mateveke 2012) Big Brother Nigeria is a Nigerian reality competition television series, based on the Big Brother television franchise in which 12-20 contestants live in an isolated house and compete for a large cash prize of hundred million nairas (100,000,000). Nigerian Naira at the end of the show by avoiding being evicted from the house by viewers. According to (Chikafa and Mateveke, 2012) the concept of Big Brother was borrowed from George

Orwell's novel 1984 titled "Fictional Dystopia of Oceania" in which he described a world of neverending surveillance. For example, over the years Big Brother reality show has been criticized for its display of obscene and vulgar scenes. The level of immorality being celebrated by the Big Brother reality show is adjudged short programs intended for education (Laotto, 2015). Yet many African youths have continued to imbibe the damaging style of the program and the actors involved have turned to celebrities, number of viewers that voted on the final week of Big Brother Nigeria season 7, 2022 "level up" was estimated over one billion votes most of which were youths and this shows that there is a large followership amongst the Nigeria youths as the reality show seems to have a lasting impact on the youths. BB Naija displays uninhibited sexual frolics on open cameras, the accusation being passed around shameless smooching by hormonally charged housemate and vulgar words and the majority of Nigerian youths enjoy such acts because of idleness, it is quite depressing to know

that since the inception of Big Brother Naija show, there have been increase incidents of immoral behavior among the Nigerian youths. Big Brother Nigeria and other silly or amusing activities like Yahoo yahoo (cyber fraud) killing for quick money or money rituals have made the majority of Nigerian youths feel reluctant to engage themselves in other vocational skills like mechanical engineering, tailoring, smiting, welding, shoemaking. The number of youths has faded away as the majority of apprentices have drastically reduced Nigerian youths are preoccupied with money heists (Laotto, 2015).

Lack of Political Awareness:

The absence of political education is another significant obstacle. Many young people lack sufficient understanding of the political system and their possible positions within it. Their lack of understanding lowers their confidence and hinders their ability to participate well. Furthermore, the political climate is frequently antagonistic and violent in many nations, including Nigeria. For fear of their safety, this discourages a lot of young people from taking part (Abdulyakeen, 2021). Because of psychological and sociological manipulation, young people in Nigeria now think that adults are more suited for positions of leadership. This case concerns how young people are perceived and addressed as "leaders of tomorrow." The youth's complete disengagement from active participation in gladiatorial politics is a result of this. As stated by Kukah (1999), "Youth all over the world are sometimes lulled into higher dreams and idealism by such concepts as leaders of tomorrow, reassures/owners of the future, but here in Nigeria, cynicism has become so deep that they seem to have also disengaged from the nation-state."

Cultural Hindrances:

An important contributing factor to youth participation barriers is culture. Elder domination in politics is a common result of the customary reverence that many communities have for their elders. To allow themselves to keep taking turns holding elected and nonelected political positions in the nation, the elders constantly disparage the younger generation and call them "incapable of ruling" (Fasua, 2018). This cultural norm may deter young people from pursuing leadership positions, perpetuating the trend of marginalization of young people in politics. The low rate of youth involvement in Nigerian politics has significant effects on governance. It has an impact on the standard of leadership, how well policies respond to public needs, and how the country develops as a whole. We look closely at these implications.

Age limit for candidacy

The Nigerian constitution sets age limits for political candidacy, posing a significant limitation for ambitious and energetic young individuals seeking political office. The minimum age requirements are 30 years for the presidency, 35 for governors and senators, and 25 for members of the House of Representatives. This age barrier becomes a hindrance for youth who possess the drive and capability to lead. A simplistic viewpoint suggests that if one is not deemed too old to rule, they should not be deemed too young to rule.

Cost of Political Participation

Participating in political office in Nigeria comes with exorbitant costs, which creates a substantial barrier for youth who often have limited financial resources. For example, the astronomical expenses associated with political party candidacy forms and the cost of conducting political campaigns pose significant challenges. These financial constraints

prevent many young individuals from successfully challenging for political office, perpetuating the lack of youth representation in the parliament.

Patriarchal Sentiment

One foundational challenge faced by young people aspiring for leadership roles is the deeply entrenched patriarchal sentiment within Nigerian society. Traditional norms tend to view young individuals as lacking the necessary experience to hold political offices. This prejudice further marginalizes the youth, hindering their opportunities for meaningful political participation.

Limited resources or capacity

Many young people lack the necessary resources and capacity to run a robust political campaign that can effectively compete with more established political figures. This further diminishes their chances of attracting the required support needed to win an election. As a result, youth face significant disadvantages in challenging or competing with older, more experienced political elites

Fear of maiming, killing, and assassination (political hooliganism):

The fear of maiming and politically meditated assassinations has equally contributed to the withdrawal and apathy of some youths in political discourses affecting their areas. Electioneering period in Nigeria is often fraught with killings, kidnapping and assassination of political opponents. The Brigandage of cult groups to accentuate aspirants of their interests

has been noticed and has leaved in the wake the plethora of killings experienced in the country (Vite & Dibang-Achua, 2019a).

Blackmailing:

Blackmailing is one characteristic feature of politics in Nigeria. Smear campaign and character assassination and propaganda are correlated with politics. Hence, youths who are rectitudinous and wish to preserve their moral integrity, are most times seen to distant themselves from political participation. This is so as many of them tag politics as “dirty game” meant for political-touts and school drop-outs (Vite & Dibang-Achua, 2019a).

Indiscipline:

The indiscipline among politicians as seen in massive looting of government coffers, wanton, and merciless spending of tax payers’ money, brandishing of wealth without reasonableness and the various act of human rights abuses have tended to put off some youths out of political engagements on the one hand and equally inform some youth’s engagement on the other hand.

Sabotage:

Dishonesty among some youths who engage in politics has equally deterred some from participating. For instance, poor and unwholesome execution of contracts, such as schools, roads, and water projects and supplies has rendered government projects not durable and wasted. The outright vandalism of government property by government officials and their cronies often time makes politics a detestable to some youths (Udoffia & Godson, 2016).

The lack of youth participation in political processes is one factor contributing to Nigeria's leadership shortage. As older politicians continue to rule the political scene, new ideas and

methods of governing are frequently lacking. Young people are vital for tackling today's issues because they provide new perspectives and enthusiasm (Onesmus, 2023; Aina, 2024). Exclusion of the youth causes the political system to stall and prevents leadership from changing to suit contemporary needs. The lack of representation of a substantial section of the population's experiences and views in decision-making processes is another consequence of this leadership gap. Older politicians might not prioritize the special issues that young people experience, like high unemployment rates and restricted access to high-quality education (Okolie, U. and Igbini, 2020; Akpokighe and Ejovi, 2020). Consequently, insufficient attention to the requirements and goals of the younger generation may result in policies that are not effective in governing.

There is a gap between government policies and the requirements of the younger population as a result of young people's limited political involvement. Despite making up a sizable portion of Nigeria's population, policymakers frequently ignore the interests and concerns of young people. Because of this gap, policies may become less effective and exacerbate social problems like unemployment and poverty by being out of touch with the realities of young people (Oseni, 2021). For example, policies concerning work and education are essential to the development of youth. But when young people aren't part of the policy-making process, the policies might not accurately represent their wants and situations. A vicious cycle of exclusion and inefficient governance can result from this lack of representation, which can also cause disappointment and further disengagement from political processes (Eme-Uche & Eme, 2023).

Young people need to be involved in governance to promote civic engagement and democratic values. The act of excluding youth from political processes erodes their sense of

accountability and ownership towards the government. Civic participation contributes to the development of democratic principles including accountability, openness, and the rule of law. Young people are more likely to become invested in the prosperity of their communities and the country as a whole when they participate actively in decision making (UN, 2018). Youth exclusion from politics can result in apathy towards politics and a decline in confidence in democratic institutions. Young people are less likely to get involved in politics in the future if they believe that their opinions are not heard and that their efforts are not recognized. Nigeria's democracy is vulnerable to serious threats to its health and stability due to the decline in trust and engagement (Akinyemi, 2019; Ojo, 2022).

The low rate of youth political participation has an impact on socioeconomic advancement as well. Young people are a key driver of economic expansion and innovation. Their lack of participation in governance prevents them from realizing all of their potential to contribute to economic growth. Policies that fail to take into account the needs of youth can impede attempts to address problems including inequality, poverty, and unemployment (Adamaagashi et al., 2023). Development strategies that are more inclusive and equitable can result from involving youth in government. Engaging young people in policy talks, for instance, can guarantee that programs about healthcare, education, and employment creation are more in line with the demands of the younger generation. Development outcomes that are more durable and effective may result from this alignment (Ariyo, 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 The Political Participation Theory

The Political Participation Theory, which contends that institutional, societal, and individual elements all affect political activity, serves as the theoretical foundation for this paper. Scholars like Verba and Nie (1972) developed this theory, which offers a thorough knowledge of the different factors that encourage or impede political engagement. According to the theory, a person's political efficacy, income, and level of education are all important determinants of their political engagement. For example, there is generally a positive correlation between increased political knowledge and participation and higher income and education levels. This is especially important in Nigeria, where economic stability and educational attainment pose major obstacles to youth engagement. Due to high unemployment rates and restricted access to high-quality education, many young Nigerians might not have the tools or information needed to participate in politics successfully (Verba & Nie, 1972).

Social elements that have a substantial impact on political participation include community involvement, social influence, and family history. The approach emphasizes how crucial civic associations and social networks are to getting people involved in politics. Social movements and youth-led organizations in Nigeria have developed into essential venues for political participation, offering young people chances to engage in politics and access to resources and training. Nevertheless, these groups frequently face financial difficulties and opposition from powerful political figures, which reduces their efficacy (Adeyemi, 2019).

The legal system, government policies, and political system are examples of institutional variables that determine the opportunities and limitations for political engagement. The Political Participation Theory emphasizes how institutional arrangements can either support or impede participation. Institutional impediments that severely limit youth involvement in

Nigeria include corrupt practices, politically charged content, and restrictive electoral rules. Apathy and disenchantment with the political process are common among young people who believe that the political system is dishonest and unresponsive. The theory of political participation offers a thorough framework for analyzing the complex aspects of young people's political involvement in Nigeria. It draws attention to the interactions between social, institutional, and human issues and emphasizes the necessity of tackling adolescent participation hurdles from all angles. Using this theory as a guide, the study seeks to mitigate the possibility of a leadership deficit in Nigeria by identifying practical ways to increase youth political engagement.

2.2.2 The Procedural Democratic Theory (PDT)

The procedural democratic theory (PDT) of governance posits that citizenship engagement with political issues ought to be limited to voting participation or representation of the electorate (McCaffrie & Akram, 2014). After selecting their delegates, citizens ought to allow them to perform their work of making policies by not interfering. Traditionally, elections are seen as a means of control for corrupt and greedy political representatives (Thiery, 2011). However, from the 1980s, there were calls for a more dynamic and active citizenship participation in democratic governance (Ebeling, 2015).

The procedural perspective of the democratic system implicitly acknowledged that normal citizens are unable to engage properly with political issues, while supporters of participatory democracy promote more active engagement and democratic responsibility or accountability (Ebeling, 2015). Honneth (1998) argued that dynamic or active citizenship engagement can be a very useful guarantee against poor democratic systems, as advocated by McCaffrie and Akram (2014, p. 4).

However, the procedural view is not fundamentally intended to preclude genuine democracy, nor is participatory democracy without problems. There are earnest democratic arguments for procedural government, whereby resolutions or decisions reached and made because of political discussions and thought may support the relations between citizenship and elected delegates, and thus contribute to civil awareness (Honneth, 1998; Doldor, 2014). While democratic participatory theories suggest that citizens inherently yearn to engage (Jackson, 2015), Vite (2018) claimed that some citizens might decline to engage effectively in political issues, and would rather actualize a “furtive” democratic system in which they attempt to avoid notice or attention while elected delegates make policies for them, allowing them to pursue their own activities. In a period of low levels of formal political participations in acceptable democratic governments, the theory seems to relate more closely with reality compared to participatory democratic government (De Minico, 2013).

Moreover, this study is bolstered by evidence that individuals are not interested and indifferent towards political issues, as previous theories of procedural and furtive democracy neglect to address the question of how to guarantee that elected delegate will not mishandle whatever authority is accorded to them (De Minico, 2013, p. 269). If citizenship is only engaged in elections, there may be long time periods before the activities of elected delegates will be checked (Dzur, 2016, p. 2). Nevertheless, McCaffrie and Akram (2014, p. 8) offered an attractive argument about the doubtful demand of a participatory society, as it does not persuasively challenge the supporting logic for empowering active or dynamic political engagement (Froissart, 2014).

The deliberative (improving collective decision-making) democratic government is the transformation of the ideals proposed by supporters of the participatory democratic

government in the 1970s (Vite, 2019a). It is a philosophical paradigm that has been shaped for some years, particularly in response to the seeming deficiencies of modern day liberal democratic government (Vite, 2018). In particular, the distance of the political elite from grassroots citizens and the role of celebrities surrounding party political issues can alienate citizens from engaging in political dialogue (Kosterina, 2016). The necessity for a new kind of political engagement to handle these matters is fundamental to the deliberative (improving collective decision-making) democratic system. These depend on urging citizens to debate and deliberate about political matters in an informal way (Balestri, 2013; Campbell, 2013; Emery, 2016).

The significance of this structure is in increasing the quality rather than the amount of engagement, which is a significant departure from previous experiences of participatory democratic systems (Kosterina, 2016, p. 6). Nevertheless, beliefs vary incredibly among supporters of the deliberative democratic based system towards how to execute, implement, and evaluate the achievement of deliberations (Campbell, 2013; Theis, 2016). Furthermore, these concerns support the significant criticism of deliberative democratic government.

Hauptmann (2004) argued that the needs it placed on equality and logical agreement are not realistic (Crick, 2014). For instance, Crick (2014) asserted that deliberation within citizenship can be profitable for increasing the quality of democratic government and policy making, as it stresses the formal methods, which can exclude lot of potential members. Therefore, rather than enhancing access to engagement it conceivably promotes inequality in the system.

In reaction to this, Crick (2014) recommended that informal deliberative methods ought to frame the routes intended to enhance co-operations among political representatives and citizenships. Crick (2014, p. 353) accepted the claims of McCaffrie and Akram (2014), acknowledging their concerns that many citizens would choose not to be politically inclusive, but he disagreed that this would be because political engagement was unattractive. Crick (2014, p. 354) proposed government by political amateurs (non-professionals), introducing citizens into political participation through approaches to which they can relate (Crick, 2014, p. 354). As the ideals of dynamic or active engagement are generally valuable to a democratic system, less emphasis is placed on the quantity of engagement than in established theories of participatory democratic system, and the model is comprehensive, involving citizens in many accounts of deliberative democratic-based systems. Also, this strikes a persuasive balance among deliberative and participatory theories of a democratic system receptive to the characteristics of liberal democratic based systems (Deveaux, 2016). In one sense, Crick's (2014, p. 354) reasoning confers the burden of political amateurs (non-professionals), here the youths to participate in Nigeria's political space.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Bariika Nornubari Vite Anglia, Essien Blessing Stephen, Nenbee Simeon Gbimoie and Kpaa Kabee (2020) researched on Youth Political Participation in Nigeria: A Theoretical Synthesis. Their study clarifies how political engagement is understood and the activities that constitute it or are included. The paper further explains political participation, first by presenting an outline of how previous literature have interpreted and adjusted the concept. A brief analysis of the core debate on the activities that ought to be recognised as political

engagement has also been examined. It zeros in with the analysis of reasons youths engage and some fail to participate in politics in Nigeria.

Nnubia, Chimezie Modestus and Ajisebiyawo, Adekunle Saheed (2024) conducted a research on limiting factors for youth political participation and the challenges of leadership and governance in Nigeria: an appraisal. The research aimed to investigate youth political engagement and the possibility of a leadership gap in Nigeria, the paper used a content analysis methodology. By applying a methodical approach to the interpretation of textual material, content analysis enables a thorough investigation of the themes and patterns present in the content. Various sources, including scholarly articles, government studies, policy documents, and media articles, provided the data for the investigation. The materials that covered youth leadership, political engagement, and related policies in Nigeria were the main focus. These resources offered a wide-ranging viewpoint on the condition of young people's participation in politics and government today. Also, the dynamics of youth participation and leadership gap in Nigeria was theoretically viewed from the point of view of Political Participation Theory. The paper observed that, in the past, elderly members with deep political clout have often ignored Nigerian youth, relegating them to supporting positions and using them as props for activism. It found that due to economic obstacles like high unemployment and the high expense of running for office, young people have become widely disillusioned and disengaged as a result. Youth engagement is further limited by cultural norms that support elder authority and a lack of political education. Although age limits for political office have decreased due to initiatives like the #NotTooYoungToRun campaign, there is still very little youth representation. Youth lacking in leadership experience stagnation and ineffectual policies that do not meet the requirements of the younger generation as a result

of their exclusion from significant political responsibilities. Including young people in governance opens up new ideas and is likely to lead to policies that prioritize social justice, education reform, and job creation. Moreover, youth involvement combats political indifference and institutional mistrust by fostering civic engagement, accountability, and the growth of democratic values. However, the paper recommended that to minimize the danger of a leadership deficit and to fully utilize the potential of Nigerian youth to propel sustainable development and efficient government, it is imperative to address the obstacles preventing young people from participating in politics.

Abdulrasheed Abdulyakeen (2021) carried out a research on youth participation in democratization and governance processes in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: challenges and prospect. The study examines the challenges and Prospects of Youth Participation in the Democratization and Governance Processes in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Using secondary sources and Liberal democratic theory as a framework of analysis. It has been discovered that despite various international communiqués to ensure increased participation of the vulnerable segments of the society in their national political process, Nigeria is still ranked among those countries with low Youth Participation as a result of corruption, monetization of Nigerian politics, the incessant discrediting of the youth by the elders. The finding also reveals youth have been used as political thugs in the electoral process by the political class. The study concludes youth participation in democracy and governance is critical but largely depends on the quality of the population of the youth. The study recommends that government should be coupled with a commitment to building long-term civic institutions that give youth a means of engaging political systems and actors beyond Elections.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Methodology involves the systematic collection and analysis of data in research. It also involves the research design, population of study, sample size, sampling methods or techniques, sources of data, instruments of data collection and the techniques of data analysis. The components of the methodology of this research are outlined here under.

3.1 Research Design

This is the specification of the method and procedures for acquiring the information needed for the research. This research will utilize the quantitative method of data collection which involve conducting interviews and the circulation of carefully designed questionnaires to respondents in the study area.

3.2 Population of Study

The population of this study include all youths of Edo State origin comprising of both male and female. According to The Nigeria Census – Nigeria Data Portal (2021), the population of Edo State is 4,777,000, but the actual population of youths was not given. The United Nations, for statistical. purposes, defines 'youth', as those. persons between the ages of 15 and 24. years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. But Youth in the Nigeria contexts includes citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria aged 18–29 years according to the new-youth policy (2019).

3.3 Sample Size/Sampling Technique

The sample size of this study will be 100 respondents which will comprise of male and female adults in Ekosodin Community. This sample will be conveniently drawn from Ovia North-East Local Government Area of Edo State, Ekosodin Community in particular. The sample size of 100 respondents was randomly selected from the population for interview and administration of questionnaire through the use of stratified random sampling.

3.4 Research Instrument

The standardized questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. It guarantees subjects anonymity and encourages high response rate. The questionnaire comprised of standardized questions structured to appropriately elicit useful information from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, sections A and B. Question in section A dwells on the bio-data of respondents – sex, age, educational qualifications, gender and occupation. Section B comprised of questions that relate to the social work strategies in curbing the effect of social media pressure on teenagers. Also, community social workers was interviewed.

3.5 Validity of Instrument

The questionnaire constructed will be given to supervisor to scrutinize so as to ensure that the research instruments was consistent with variables raised in the hypotheses and that they can actually measure the issues under study by the researcher.

3.6 Source of Data Collection

For the purpose of the study, primary and secondary data formed the nuclei of data collection for analysis. The primary source of data was based on the administration of questionnaire and the conduct of interviews, while the secondary source included perusal of textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, internet amongst others.

3.7 Techniques of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using standardized methods. Simple percentage method of data analysis will be utilized for this study. Analysis of data by simple percentage enabled the researcher to know the different opinions and interpretations given immediately. The data was presented in tables according to bio-data information like sex, age, marital status, educational qualification, and occupation after which the research questions will be tabulated and interpreted.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This study utilized questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. One Hundred (100) questionnaires were distributed, retrieved and analyzed. This section covered data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Frequency and percentage tables were used in the analysis of the respondents' responses in this study, and chi-square analysis was employed to examine the state of the stated hypothesis of this study.

4.2 Analysis of the Respondents Profile

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of the Respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid below 20 years	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
21-25 years	20	20.0	20.0	21.0
26-30 years	9	9.0	9.0	30.0
31-35 years	56	56.0	56.0	86.0
36 years and above	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the age distribution of the respondent, 1 respondent representing 1.0% is between the age of 20 year below, 20 respondent representing 20.0% were between the age of 21-25 years, 9 respondent representing 9.0% were between the age of 26-30 years, 56 respondent representing 56.0% were between the age of 31-35years, and while 14 respondent representing 14.0% were 36 years an above. From the above analysis it could be seen that

majority of the respondent were between the age of 31-35 years, while others were 30 years below.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution Of The Respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	51	51.0	51.0	51.0
Female	49	49.0	49.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Respondent despondence distributions is showed in the above table reviewing that the male respondent were 51 representing 51.0% and while 49 respondent representing 49.0% were female. In the above it could be deduced that both male and female participated in the filling of the research questionnaire and majority of them were male while the female 49% out 100%

Table 4.3: Educational Qualification of the Respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid OND/DIPLOMA	31	31.0	31.0	31.0
HND/BSC	26	26.0	26.0	57.0
MASTER DEGREE	39	39.0	39.0	96.0
PhD DEGREE	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the educational qualification of the respondent, 31 representing 31.0% has attained OND/Diploma certificate, 26 respondent representing 26.0% has attained HND/BSC, 39 respondent representing 39.0% has attained master degree certificate, while 4 respondent

representing 4.0% has attained PhD degree certificate. From the above it could be seen that respondents were people who has attained educational degree and majority of them has attained master degree followed by OND/Diploma degree.

Table 4.4: Employment Status of the Respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Employed	14	14.0	14.0	14.0
self employed	32	32.0	32.0	46.0
Student	53	53.0	53.0	99.0
not employed	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

In the above table 14 respondent representing 14.0% were employed, 32 respondent representing 32.0% were self employed, 53 respondent representing 53.0% were student, 1 of the respondent representing 1% were not employed. It could be deduce that most of the respondent were student follow by self employed.

Table 4.5: Have you been supportive to any political party

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	62	62.0	62.0	62.0
No	38	38.0	38.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Most of the respondent on the statement that have you been supportive to any political party. 62 respondent representing 62% opted Yes, 38 respondent representing 38% opted No. it could be deduced that majority of the respondent has been supportive to political party during election period

4.3 Analysis of the Respondent on the Issue Relating to your Political Participation in Edo State

Table 4.6: I am aware of the current political issues affecting Edo State.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	27	27.0	27.0	27.0
Strongly Agree	56	56.0	56.0	83.0
Undecided	3	3.0	3.0	86.0
Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	93.0
Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

27 respondent representing 27.0% and 56 respondent representing 56% agree and strongly agree to the statement that I am aware of the current political issues affecting Edo State. 3 respondent representing 3% were undecided, 7 respondent representing 7% disagree and 7 representing 7% strongly disagree. From the above analysis it could be deduced that respondent were aware of the current political issues affecting Edo State.

Table 4.7: I understand how the political processes work in Edo State, including how elections are conducted

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	44	44.0	44.0	44.0
Strongly Agree	47	47.0	47.0	91.0
Undecided	2	2.0	2.0	93.0
Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	98.0
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Most respondent agree to the assertion that I understand how the political processes work in Edo State, including how elections are conducted. In the above table, 44 respondent representing 44% agree, 47 respondent representing 47% strongly agree, 2 respondent representing 2% were undecided, 5 respondent representing 5% disagree, 2 respondent representing 2.0% strongly disagree. It could be deduced that respondent understand how the political processes work in Edo State, including how elections are conducted

Table 4.8: I have access to educational resources that help me learn about politics and governance.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	28	28.0	28.0	28.0
Strongly Agree	52	52.0	52.0	80.0
Undecided	14	14.0	14.0	94.0
Disagree	4	4.0	4.0	98.0
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the assertion that I have access to educational resources that help me learn about politics and governance, 28 respondent representing 28% agree, 52 respondent representing 52% strongly agree, 14 respondent representing 14% were undecided, 4 respondent representing 4% disagree, and 2 respondent representing 2% strongly disagree. It could be concluded that youth in Edo state have access to educational resources that help learn about politics and governance.

Table 4.9: Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
Strongly Agree	19	19.0	19.0	79.0
Undecided	4	4.0	4.0	83.0
Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	86.0
Strongly Disagree	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Respondent uphold the view that Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics. From the above, 60 respondent representing 60% strongly agree, 19 respondent representing 19.0% strongly agree, 4 respondent representing 4% were undecided, 3 respondent representing 3% disagree, 14 respondent representing 14% strongly disagree. From the above analysis it could be deduced that Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics.

Table 4.10: There are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	24	24.0	24.0	24.0
Strongly Agree	53	53.0	53.0	77.0
Undecided	4	4.0	4.0	81.0
Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	92.0
Strongly Disagree	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Majority of the respondent agree that there are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State. From the above table 24 respondent representing 24% agree, 53 respondent representing 53% strongly agree, 4 respondent representing 4% were undecided, 11 respondent representing 11% disagree, 8 respondent representing 8% strongly disagree. The above statement showed that there are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State

Table 4.11: Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
Strongly Agree	83	83.0	83.0	92.0
Undecided	2	2.0	2.0	94.0
Disagree	1	1.0	1.0	95.0
Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Respondent agree to the opinion that Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance. In the above table 9 respondent representing 9.0% agree, 83 respondent representing 83.0% strongly agree, 2 respondent representing 2% were undecided, 1 respondent representing 1% disagree, 5 respondent representing 5% strongly disagree. The above statement showed that Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance.

Table 4.12: The education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	76	76.0	76.0	76.0
Strongly Agree	16	16.0	16.0	92.0
Undecided	3	3.0	3.0	95.0
Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	97.0
Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the opinion that the education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation, 76 respondent representing 76% agree, 16 respondent representing 16% strongly agree, 3 respondent representing 3% were undecided, 2 respondent representing 2% disagree, 3 respondent representing 3% strongly disagree. Base on the above statement, it can be concluded that the education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation

4.13: High unemployment rates and economic instability hinder youths from engaging in political activities.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
Strongly Agree	11	11.0	11.0	14.0
Undecided	12	12.0	12.0	26.0
Disagree	57	57.0	57.0	83.0
Strongly Disagree	17	17.0	17.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the statement that high unemployment rates and economic instability hinder youths from engaging in political activities, 3 representing 3.0% agree, 11 respondent representing 11% strongly agree, 12 respondent representing 12% were undecided, 57 respondent representing 57% disagree, 17 respondent representing 17% strongly disagree. Base on the above analysis it can be concluded that high unemployment rates and economic instability does not hinder youths from engaging in political activities.

Table 4.14: Cultural beliefs and social norms discourage youths from participating in politics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
Strongly Agree	8	8.0	8.0	17.0
Undecided	19	19.0	19.0	36.0
Disagree	50	50.0	50.0	86.0
Strongly Disagree	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Most respondent disagree with the view that Cultural beliefs and social norms discourage youths from participating in politics. In the above 9 respondent representing 9% agree, 8 respondent representing 8% strongly agree, 19 respondent representing 19% were undecided, 50 respondent representing 50 disagree, 14 respondent representing 14% strongly disagree. It can be concluded that cultural beliefs and social norms does not discourage youths from participating in politics

Table 4.15: The prevalence of political violence in Edo State deters youths from contributing to political development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	11	11.0	11.0	11.0
Strongly Agree	51	51.0	51.0	85.0
Undecided	10	10.0	10.0	34.0
Disagree	13	13.0	13.0	24.0
Strongly Disagree	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Respondent believe that the prevalence of political violence in Edo State deters youths from contributing to political development. In the above table 4.15, 11 respondent representing 11% agree, 51 respondent representing 51% strongly agree, 10 respondent representing 10% were undecided, 13 respondent representing 13% disagree and 15 respondent representing 15% strongly disagree. It could be concluded that the prevalence of political violence in Edo State deters youths from contributing to political development

4.16: The Edo State Government actively promotes youth engagement in political activities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
Undecided	21	21.0	21.0	40.0
Disagree	42	42.0	42.0	82.0
Strongly Disagree	18	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Respondent disagree with the view that the Edo State Government actively promotes youth engagement in political activities. In the above table 19 respondent representing 19% disagree,

0 respondent representing 0% strongly disagree, 21 respondent representing 21% were undecided, 42 respondent resenting 42% disagree, and 18 respondent strongly disagree. It could be seen that the Edo State Government does not actively promotes youth engagement in political activities

Table 4.17: There are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politics.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	44	44.0	44.0	44.0
Strongly Agree	43	43.0	43.0	87.0
Undecided	4	4.0	4.0	91.0
Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	94.0
Strongly Disagree	6	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the assertion that there are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politic, 44 respondent representing 44% agree, 43 representing 43% strongly agree, 4 respondent representing 4% were undecided, 3 respondent representing 3% disagree, 6 respondent representing 6% strongly disagree. It can be concluded that there are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politics

Table 4.18: The Edo State Government provides adequate resources and support for youth to participate in political processes.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
Strongly Agree	50	50.0	50.0	90.0

Undecided	1	1.0	1.0	91.0
Disagree	6	6.0	6.0	97.0
Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

40 respondent representing 40% and 50 respondent representing 50 agree and strongly agree to the assertion that the Edo State Government provides adequate resources and support for youth to participate in political processes. 1 respondent representing 1% were undecided, 6 respondent representing 6% disagree, 3 respondent representing 3% strongly disagree. It can be concluded that the Edo State Government provides adequate resources and support for youth to participate in political processes

Table 4.19: Youth voices are considered in the decision-making processes by the Edo State Government.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	46	46.0	46.0	46.0
Strongly Agree	45	45.0	45.0	91.0
Undecided	2	2.0	2.0	93.0
Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	96.0
Strongly Disagree	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

On the assertion that Youth voices are considered in the decision-making processes by the Edo State Government, 46 respondent representing 46% and 45 respondent representing 45% agree and strongly agree. 2 respondent representing 2% were undecided, 3 respondent representing 3% disagree, 4 respondent representing 4%. The above analysis of the

respondent showed that Youth voices are considered in the decision-making processes by the Edo State Government.

Table 4.20: The Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	29	29.0	29.0	29.0
Strongly Agree	61	61.0	61.0	90.0
Undecided	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	97.0
Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Most respondent agree on the assertion that the Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically. In the above table, 29 representing 29% agree, 61 representing 61% strongly agree, 5 respondent representing 5% were undecided, 2 respondent representing 2% disagree, 3 respondent representing 3% strongly disagree. It can be concluded that Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically.

4.4 Testing of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

H01: The youth's political participation is affected by their political orientation.

Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics. * There are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State.

Crosstabulation

Count							
		There are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State.					Total
		Agree	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics.	Agree	22	36	0	2	0	60
	Strongly Agree	0	3	4	6	6	19
	Undecided	0	2	0	1	1	4
	Disagree	0	2	0	1	0	3
	Strongly Disagree	2	10	0	1	1	14
Total		24	53	4	11	8	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	66.868 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	67.581	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.195	1	.023
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 20 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.

The chi-square result above showed that the Pearson Chi-Square value stands at 66.868, with the degree of freedom at 16, and the significant value stands at .000 which is less than 5% alpha significant value. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (youth's political participation

is affected by their political orientation) and accept the alternative that youth's political participation is not affected by their political orientation..

Hypothesis Two

H02: Poverty is one of the factors affecting youth's contribution to political development.

The education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation * Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance Crosstabulation

Count							
		Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance					
		Agree	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation	Agree	2	69	1	0	4	76
	Strongly Agree	5	9	1	1	0	16
	Undecided	1	2	0	0	0	3
	Disagree	0	1	0	0	1	2
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	0	3
Total		9	83	2	1	5	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.987 ^a	16	.004
Likelihood Ratio	25.498	16	.062
Linear-by-Linear Association	.194	1	.660
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 22 cells (88.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

From the above result the Pearson chi-square value stand at 34.987 with degree of freedom of 16. The significant value stand at .004 which signify. From the above the significant value is less than 5% alpha significant value which denote that the null hypothesis (Poverty is one of the factors affecting youth's contribution to political development) should be rejected and accept the alternative that poverty is not one of the factors affecting youth's contribution to political development.

Hypothesis three

H03: Lack of encouragement by the government affects the political participation of the youth.

There are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politics. * The Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically Crosstabulation

Count							
		The Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically					
		Agree	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
There are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politics.	Agree	11	28	2	2	1	44
	Strongly Agree	15	23	3	0	2	43
	Undecided	3	1	0	0	0	4
	Disagree	0	3	0	0	0	3
	Strongly Disagree	0	6	0	0	0	6
Total		29	61	5	2	3	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.235 ^a	16	.581

Likelihood Ratio	17.516	16	.353
Linear-by-Linear Association	.100	1	.752
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 21 cells (84.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

On the testing of hypothesis three, the result showed that the pearson chi-square value stand at 14.235 with the degree of freedom of 16. The significant value stand at .581 which is more than 5% alpha significant value, therefore the null hypothesis (Lack of encouragement by the government affects the political participation of the youth) will be accepted and the alternative will be rejected.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The issues of political participation has been the major issues that been discuss by several researcher around the word particularly in Nigeria. For example Bariika, Essien, Nenbee and Kpaa (2020) researched on Youth Political Participation in Nigeria: A Theoretical Synthesis. Abdulrasheed (2021) carried out a research on youth participation in democratization and governance processes in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic: challenges and prospect. The finding reveals youth have been used as political thugs in the electoral process by the political class. The study concludes youth participation in democracy and governance is critical but largely depends on the quality of the population of the youth.

This the empirical analysis of this study showed that there are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State, though this opportunities were not much supportive by the government of the state and youth now have less political orientation. This lead to the less youth's political participation. On the factors affecting youth

political participation, respondent disagree with the view that poverty is one of the factors affecting youth's contribution to political development. 57 respondent representing 57% disagree, 17 respondent representing 17% strongly disagree that high unemployment rates and economic instability hinder youths from engaging in political activities

Lack of encouragement by the government affects the political participation of the youth. According to the respondent Youth voices are considered in the decision-making processes by the Edo State Government. This result support the view of Nnubia and Ajisebiyawo (2024) elderly members with deep political clout ignored Nigerian youth, relegating them to supporting positions and using them as props for activism. As a result of that young people have become widely disillusioned and disengaged.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This study has empirically reviewed the challenges and opportunities of youth participation in the politics of Edo State. This section of this work aimed at summarizing the findings, conclusion, recommendation.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study broadly evaluate youth participation in the politics of Edo State: challenges and opportunities. The sample of one hundred (100) respondent randomly selected. Simple percentage was used to analyze the results obtained from the questionnaires distributed while crosstabulation method was used to test the hypothesis of this study. The study reviewed that youth state are aware of the current political issues affecting Edo State. It was discovered that the respondent understand how the political processes work in Edo State, including how elections are conducted. On the encouragement of the youth, community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics. Very high number of the respondent uphold the viewed that there are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State. Poverty, High unemployment rates and economic instability does not hinder youths from engaging in political activities according to the respondent opinion. It was discovered that there are prevalence of political violence in Edo Stat. The prevalence of political violence in Edo State deters youths from contributing to political development. Respondent reviewed that though there are educational system, but the educational system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation.

5.3 Conclusion

The study critically focused at examined the challenges of youth participation in Edo. It was carried out to provide the necessary orientation for the Youths to actively participate in politics, to find out the factors hindering youths from contributing to political development in Edo State and to examine the level of encouragement of Youth's political participation by Edo State Government. Base on the empirical analysis it was discovered that

1. there is need for providing necessary orientation for the Youths to actively participate in politics.
2. there are factors hindering youths from contributing to political development in Edo State.
3. The level of encouragement of Youth's political participation by Edo State Government is very low. Therefore there is need for the government to put more effort to encourage the youth toward participation in the politics

5.4 Recommendation

Base on the finding of this study, the following recommendation were made:

1. Nigeria government should put more effort to reduce the prevalence of political violence which deters youths from contributing to political development
2. to minimize the danger of a leadership deficit and to fully utilize the potential of Nigerian youth to propel sustainable development and efficient government, it is imperative to address the obstacles preventing young people from participating in politics.

3. Nigeria government should be coupled with a commitment to building long-term civic institutions that give youth a means of engaging political systems and actors beyond Elections

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Political Science,
Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Benin
Benin City

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year student of the above named institution currently undertaking research on “**youth political participation: challenges and**” the study is a prerequisite for the partial fulfilment for the award of Bachelor of Science Degree (B.Sc) in political Science. I therefore crave your indulgence to assist to fill the questionnaire. Any information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

(Researcher)

Auto-biodata of the respondent

1. Age: below 20 years (), 21-25(), 26-30, 31 years and above ()
2. Gender: male (), female()
3. Educational qualification: OND/Diploma(), HND/BSc(), Master Degree (), Phd Degree()
4. Employment status: employed(), Self employed(), Student(), Not employed()
5. Have you been supportive to any political party during election? Yes() No()

	STATEMENT	A	SA	U	D	SD
6	I am aware of the current political issues affecting Edo State.”					
7	I understand how the political processes work in Edo State, including how elections are conducted.					
8	I have access to educational resources that help me learn about politics and governance.					
9	Community leaders encourage youths to participate actively in politics.					
10	There are sufficient opportunities for youths to engage in political activities and discussions in Edo State.					
11	Youths in Edo State lack sufficient knowledge about political processes and their importance.					
12	The education system in Edo State does not adequately prepare youths for active political participation.”					
13	High unemployment rates and economic instability hinder youths from engaging in political activities.					
14	Cultural beliefs and social norms discourage youths from participating in politics					
15	The prevalence of political violence in Edo State deters youths from contributing to political development.					
16	The Edo State Government actively promotes youth engagement in political activities.					
17	There are sufficient programs and initiatives by the Edo State Government aimed at increasing youth participation in politics.					
18	The Edo State Government provides adequate resources and support for youth to participate in political processes.					
19	Youth voices are considered in the decision-making processes by the Edo State Government.					
20	The Edo State Government effectively communicates opportunities for youth to engage politically.					