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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FACEBOOK USAGE AND YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA

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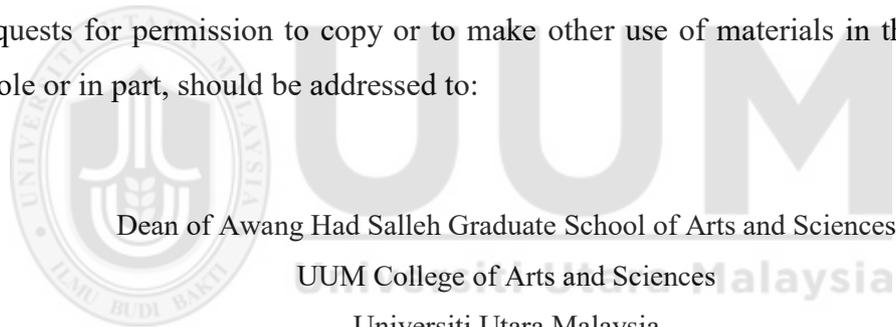
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Abstrak

Penyertaan golongan belia dalam politik merupakan satu bidang penyelidikan yang menarik yang semakin berkembang. Kajian terkini memaparkan bahawa bentuk penyertaan politik yang lama, khususnya dalam kalangan belia semakin menurun di negara maju dan di negara sedang membangun. Perkara ini boleh mewujudkan masa depan yang tidak tentu untuk demokrasi. Namun begitu, kajian masa lampau tidak meneliti dengan jelas perubahan penyertaan belia dalam politik dan perkara yang mendorong golongan ini kembali turut serta dalam arena politik. Kajian ini menyelidik sebab berlakunya peningkatan yang mendadak terhadap minat politik dalam kalangan belia di Nigeria sejak kebelakangan ini. Kajian juga meneliti kedua-dua mod dalam talian dan luar talian berhubung penyertaan belia dalam politik. Kajian mengetengahkan hipotesis bahawa terdapat hubungan yang positif antara penggunaan Facebook dengan penyertaan belia dalam politik. Gagasan ini disokong dengan dapatan empirik daripada tinjauan berbentuk kuantitatif yang dikendalikan ke atas golongan belia (N = 372) di bandar Bauci dan dengan kosa ilmu sedia ada yang berkaitan. Dapatan mewajarkan bahawa penggunaan Facebook, interaktiviti dengan tokoh politik, kualiti maklumat Facebook dan minat politik merupakan antara peramal yang signifikan untuk kedua-dua bentuk penyertaan politik dalam kalangan belia, iaitu sama ada secara dalam talian mahupun luar talian, Facebook membolehkan belia yang terpinggir daripada kegiatan politik untuk berinteraksi dengan mereka yang mempunyai kaitan politik yang lemah mahupun kukuh tentang isu politik, serta berkongsi dan memberikan pandangan mereka. Sebaliknya, dalam kajian ini,interaktiviti dengan tokoh politik tidak signifikan secara statistik dalam penyertaan politik secara dalam talian. Namun begitu, dapatan kajian memperlihatkan implikasi penggunaan Facebook, dan menunjukkkan pengetahuan serta pemahaman yang mendalam berhubung penyertaaan politik belia di Nigeria.

Kata kunci: Penyertaan politik, Penggunaan Facebook, Belia

Abstract

Youth political participation is an engaging area of academic research that is evolving. However, studies have recently suggested that traditional form of political participation, especially among youth has been declining in developed and developing countries which may likely create an uncertain future for democracy. Nevertheless, researches have not clearly examined why youth political participation suddenly changed and what is now motivating them to participate. This research examined the relationship between Facebook usage and youth political participation and also addresses why there has been an unprecedented increase in political interest among Nigerian youth in recent years. The study also examined online/offline modes of youth political participation. The present study hypothesized that, Facebook usage significantly relates to youth political participation. The argument is supported by the empirical findings from the quantitative survey of youth ($N = 372$) in Bauchi metropolis and also from the review of the existing related literature. The results justify that Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest significantly correlates with online/offline political participation among youth. Facebook allows marginalized youth from political activities to interact with weak and strong ties about political issues, share and express their opinions. Conversely, in this study interactivity with political figures does not significant correlate with online political participation. Nonetheless, the findings of this research has reinvigorated the implication of Facebook usage, and present an in-depth knowledge and understanding about Nigerian youth political participation.

Keywords: Political Participation, Facebook Usage, Youth

Acknowledgement

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This research examined the relationship between Facebook usage and youth online/ offline political participation. The chapter presented the background and problem statement of the research. Subsequently, objectives and research questions were highlighted. Finally, the significance of study, structure of the research and operational definition of terms were discussed.

1.2 Research Background

Political participation is not a new concept, it has a long history from the early Ancient Greeks that used to gather at the Agora (a market open place) to hear civic announcement. The open space provided citizens access to civic education and the opportunity for political participation in other to influence public policy (McManimon, 2014). However, research in political participation started with the Columbian University, the pioneer researchers predicted that media would have an influence on voter behaviour. The authors discovered that social contexts were the fundamental influences on the voter's choice instead of mass media (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954). Another study was conducted to further ascertain the early results but found that social networks revealed the strongest influence on voting behaviour (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954).

Since then, political participation as a concept has been evolving and receiving increasing attention from different scholars (Bennett, 1997; Gromping, 2014; Levine

& Lopez, 2002; Putnam, 2000; Russell, 2004; Suhana & Ali, 2012 ; Kilgour, Sasser & Larke, 2015).

Political participation includes among other things, political activities such as joining civic/political groups and having face-to-face meeting, interacting with politicians, voting, contacting government officials by phone or writing letter, signing petition online, making political contribution on social media, participating in protest, fundraising, volunteering or participating in campaign and deliberating with political figures, institutions and organizations (Tang & Lee, 2013; Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Maheo, 2012; Waller, 2013). These types of political participation are the important components and foundations of successful democracy (McManimon, 2014; Putnam, 2000).

However, researches have indicated that these types of political participation appears to be declining, particularly among the youth (Harris, Wyn, & Younes, 2010; Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins, 2002). Thus, scholars over the years have shown concern by investigating the reasons behind youth participation or not participating in political activities using different theories and models (Thun, 2014). These concerns are more apparent in countries characterized with youth declining to participate in online/offline political activities (Milner, 2008).

Studies in many countries like Cambodia, United States, England and some part of African countries (Nnenna, 2014; Ternes, Mittelstadt, & Towers, 2014; Thun, 2014) have revealed that youth are not interested in participating in political affairs and thus; do not engage in democratic process (Curran, Fenton, & Freedman, 2012; Dahlgren, 2009). In addition, youth in particular do not have trust in representative

institutions as well as politicians (Blais & Loewen, 2009; Lusoli, Ward, & Gibson, 2006). It is equally worrisome that young people hold negative attitudes towards voting and participating in political processes such as joining and supporting political parties or candidates (Blais, Gidengil, & Nevitte, 2004). This means that youth are abandoning politics in advanced democracies as well as being likely to vote (Fieldhouse, Tranmer, & Russell, 2007).

Scholars continue to examine youth political participation from two perspectives, disengagement and alternative engagement point of view. Disengagement theorists believe that low voter turnout that manifest among youth is an evidence of their disengagement (Damon, 2001). While engagement theorists stressed that youth have now found new form of participation through the use of social media such as Facebook, thus to them youth have not totally disengaged from politics rather they have found a new online participation (Phelps, 2004).

In the light of this background, youth declining from political participation is now a serious source of concern to many democracies all over the world both developed and developing countries (Skoric & Poor, 2013). For instance in Europe, America, Asia and Africa, youth are not stimulated by the traditional media such as radio, television and newspaper which invariably have limited influence on increasing their political interest (Dong, Toney, & Giblin, 2010). Before the coming of social media, space in newspaper and airtime on radio and television were limited and expensive; thus youth specifically cannot express their opinion nor participate in politics through the old media (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). Similarly, in Nigeria youth participation over the years has decreased because of the fact that youth in political space have been used as thugs by the selfish politicians who seek personal aggrandizement

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through violence (Suleiman, 2011). Consequently, this trend decreases youth morale to participate in politics. Further, according to the reports of Nigerian Youth Agenda on Political Participation, the issue of youth marginalization in Nigerian politics has been portrayed in some viewpoints as a factor that creates insurgency, criminal activities and violence (Olabamiji, 2014). This also explains the fact that Nigeria is still in a period of transition to more sustainable democracy, thus youth online/offline political participation plays a critical and important role in realizing this objective.

However, in recent years there has been a new development of political interest and participation among youth in USA, Britain, Canada, Malaysia and Nigeria for example (Wyngarden, 2012; Yang & DeHart, 2016; Adaja & Ayodele, 2013), especially with the proliferation of social media such as Facebook; the pattern and options for an online political participation have tremendously changed. Moreover, Facebook has brought new possibilities for youth to participate in political activities which was not possible previously (Ternes *et al.,* 2014). Thus, youth now have access to political information, interaction directly with political candidates or government officials is highly enhanced. In addition, a new spaces for public political discussions have been created and synergized (Ternes, *et al.,* 2014).

Facebook is now the primary sources of political information and serves as facilitators of new form of political participation. Unlike traditional or legacy media (such as Television, Radio and Newspapers), Facebook does not need prior permission from the gatekeepers and owners of the medium. The medium allow youth to express their opinions, share personal information with friends and provide them with everlasting awareness into identity foundation, status co-operation and peer-to-peer sociality (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). This is also supported by a Pew

Foundation's study that suggested Facebook users are more likely to participate in political /civic activities such as joining political groups, support for candidates, posting and sharing comment in support for a particular party or candidate (Dong *et al.*, 2010). More recently, in North America (U.S), Europe, Middle East and Asia (Malaysia), youth participation in political affairs appears to be tilting to Facebook (Waller, 2013). In Nigeria, youth have started embracing Facebook to engage in political activities; because they consider it as a medium that make their voice heard in the political activities (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; Oyesomi, Ahmadu, & Itsekor, 2014).

Facebook is now playing important role refer to as "migration process" wherein the youth around the world are using the site to participate in political affairs (Waller, 2013). This is a good development certainly to developing countries like Nigeria. For instance, the Commonwealth Observer Group to Nigeria's 2015 Presidential and National Assembly election revealed that there was some changes in voter turnout from the youth recently and the 2015 general election was credible, peaceful, and transparent and showcased the mandate of citizens of Nigeria. Similarly, the 2015 general election provided a good opportunity for many youth of Nigeria a country of more than 180 million population who indicated interest in the election and contributed to the emergence of the new government in the country (INEC, 2015).

Furthermore, youth around the world are now increasingly using Facebook to influence social and political change (Chan & Guo, 2013), and it is now facilitating new form of political participation among them. For instance, Facebook has recently affected many aspect of life in Nigeria especially in terms of political activities. Facebook has reduced the gap between political party candidates and youth through

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direct interaction and it has also enhances relationship between youth and their friends. Thus, Facebook link youth with both strong and weak tie by creating opportunity for friends to interact, share messages and information (Miller *et al.,* 2015).

Similarly, Olabamiji, (2014) emphasised that Facebook have bridged the knowledge gap between the so called political information rich and political information poor. Additionally, Facebook may likely motivating online/offline political participation through the access to information particularly among youth in Nigeria, Thus, this will make them initiate and cultivate rational thinking capacity as they often share and exchange information with politicians and stockholders on policy or decision making. This suggests that once youth receives political messages on their Facebook they can respond to the message and post the message to others.

This is supported by that statistics which shows that Nigeria is one of the fastest growing nation on Facebook usage globally and third spot in Africa after Egypt and South Africa (Olabamiji, 2014). For instance in Nigeria recently, an increasing social category of youth adopt and interact on Facebook for the purposes such as seeking for political knowledge and information, self-discovery, expression of opinion, pleasure seeking and identity presentation (Agunbiade, Obiyan, & Sogbaike, 2013). However, the question now is why has youth political participation changed? What is it in Facebook that is persuading youth to participate in politics? In interrogating these questions, some researchers have suggested examining the relationship between Facebook usage, perceived Facebook information quality, interactivity with political figures, political interest and youth online/offline political participation is important (Miller, Bobkowski, Maliniak, & Rapoport, 2015; Tang & Lee, 2013).

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Few studies have accounted for the relationship between Facebook usage, perceived Facebook information quality, political interest and online/offline political participation among youth, but literature indicated that interactivity with political figures (i.e. political candidates, elected politicians, party official, political appointees, media commentators) may likely correlate with online/offline youth political participation (Tang & Lee, 2013; Lim, 2012; Lee & Cho 2011). However, existing literature in Nigeria have not study these issue (Amba, 2010). Therefore, this research intends to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the relationship between Facebook usage, Facebook information quality, interaction with political figures, political interest and online/offline political participation among youth in Nigerian context because Facebook usage has recently increased around the world including Nigeria African most populous black nation (National Population Commission Census, 2006).

1.3 Problem Statement

Youth political participation has been an issue of concern around the world (Skoric & Poor, 2013), because they are the important target group to political parties and politicians due to their extraordinary features such as strength, expectations and mental tendency to welcome and support new ideas (Fjerza, Gega, & Memaj, 2014). Therefore, youth participation is imperative to consider because it offers insight into future online/offline political participation (Vissers *et al.,* 2012), and it is indicative of adult participation of those youth (McFarland & Thomas, 2006). In addition, youth in particular represent the driving force of change in the society (Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Brashears, 2006) and their participation as young adult is predictive of their future

participation. Furthermore, youth participation in political activities may likely foster a sense of citizenship and influence policy processes to be more transparent and accountable towards the entire younger generation (EACEA, 2013),

Firstly, despite the fact that some literatures have identify youth as active, diverse and easy to accept and support new changes in the society (Harris *et al.,* 2010), but youth have not been recognized or involved in politics and decision making that may help them to build self-confidence and acquire skills that are relevant such as effective communication or teamwork (Diemer & Li, 2011). Similarly, in spite of youth having diverse initiatives, strength and perception on how to influence the lives of their political systems; in recent past concern have been raised about the decreasing participatory tendencies among them from political participation, electoral turnout and party membership has seriously decreased over last two decades both in Europe and beyond (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014).

These concerns indicate that young people are becoming further disappointed with the traditional bodies of representative government (Milner, 2011) which have been generated by a number of trends such as youth denial to participate in the electoral processes, low rates of electoral turnout and even hatred to politics (Putnam, 2000; Wattenberg, 2012). This trend suggest that youth are not well represented or considered as influential in national and international level of democratic system thus, they become victims instead of becoming stakeholders in a political affairs because their priorities are often under-addressed which may eventually lead to violence, if it is not properly managed (Diemer & Li, 2011; Harris *et al.,* 2010).

Thus, this denial of youth involvement in politics and decision making is attributed to elite or elders' conspiracy which places barrier on youth online/offline participation in political affairs. Scholars of Facebook and political participation have identified use of Facebook as having potentials to help the youth to break the barrier against their participation. However, few studies empirically related Facebook usage to increase participation of the youth in an online/offline political process (Odeyemi & Mosunmola, 2015; Ternes *et al.,* 2014). This has limited the understanding of relationship between Facebook usage and political participation (Smyth & Best, 2013). Therefore, it is important for further study to be conducted to understand the reasons why youth have not been recognized and involved in political activities especially in Nigerian context. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between Facebook usage and youth online/offline political participation in Bauchi metropolis.

Secondly, the rapid growth of Facebook has increased the emergence of engaged youth (Dalton, 2008) who participate in different civic and political activities. These engaged young people often mobilize and sensitize against the selfish politicians (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; van Dijck, 2013). But despite the fact that the advent of Facebook has now re-kindled youth political participation, little research has been done to identify the relationship between Facebook usage and youth political participation (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; van Dijck, 2013).

Thirdly, Facebook usage is important in encouraging youth online/offline political participation but interactivity with political figures has been identified by scholars also as an important factor that may motivate youth online/offline political participation (Tang & Lee, 2013). Nevertheless, little studies have confirmed this

clearly; thus there is the need to extend clear understanding on how interactivity with political figures motivates youth online/offline political participation in Nigeria (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014). Thus, to deal with this issue as highlighted, this study is interested in exploring the concepts interactivity with political figures, and online/offline political participation among youth so as to have a better understanding of the concepts.

Fourthly, it is interesting to learn that literature has suggested that political interest and perceived Facebook information quality may likely encourage online/offline political participation (EACEA, 2013; Muntean, 2015; Traud, Mucha, & Porter, 2012; Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014) but few researches have been conducted to examine how political interest and perceived Facebook information quality relate to youth participate in an online/offline political activities (Lee & Cho, 2011; Whiteley, 2005). Therefore, further research on interrelationship between Facebook usage, perceived Facebook information quality, political interest, interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among youth is needed especially in Nigerian context (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014).

Fifthly, it is equally worrisome that other issues with regards to the context and sample population of some studies conducted on this issue were college students mostly from US and some European countries (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). Basically, this will not provide in-depth understanding because political participation involves wider society. Thus, a better samples that are diverse would be more ideal to be a good representation (Conroy, Feezell, & Guerrero, 2012). So, by focusing on youth of voting age in the larger society that are more exposed in politics will be appropriate as it is imperative to increase research both in terms of methodology used

and sample population (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). Whereas, similar research focusing on Sub-Saharan African context is lacking (Lahabou & Wok, 2011), therefore, such context and samples may lack generalization.

Finally, to date studies on social media (Facebook) usage and youth online/offline political participation in Nigeria has been conducted from few perspectives such as:

a) The research on social media and political participation examined social media usage in Nigeria during the period of 2011 general election. Findings of the research indicates that many people used the medium to spread rumours which degenerated into violence during and after the election (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013).

b) A survey on Facebook and Academic performance was conducted to measure university students' academic success and achievement in Nigeria. The results shows that Facebook use does not have a positive relationship with academic performance of students in the Nigerian university (Ogedebe, Emmanuel, & Musa, 2012).

c) A study on the Effect of Social Networking Sites tested a hypothesis that the frequency of social networking usage by the students has effect on their academics. It was revealed at the end of the study that Facebook was the most popular SNSs used by the students but it has no effects on their studies (Camilia, Ibrahim, & Dalhatu, 2013).

d) The study on Civic Engagement and Electoral Violence in Nigeria investigated the reasons why is electoral violence always occurring in Nigeria, The authors recommended that the use of electoral support network

and security agents should be intensify to avoid violence in the 2015 general election (Aniekwe & Agbiboa, 2014).

Based on the above examples of different studies that mostly examined either students' performance or political violence, existing literature in Nigeria have not examined the relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality, political interest and online/offline political participation among youth (Dagona, Karick, & Abubakar, 2013; Olabamiji, 2014). Thus, there is the need to know more about relationship between Facebook usage and political involvement among youth in Nigeria.

This research is interested in understanding the relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality, political interest and online/offline political participation among youth in Nigerian context using youth of voting age as sample because concepts, ideas and practices need to be advanced and better understood, (Mohamad, 2013).

1.4 Research Objectives and Questions

1.4.1 Research Objectives

The study intends to investigate the relationship between Facebook usage and youth online/offline political participation. However, in a broader teams the objectives of this study are to:

a) Examine the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth.

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b) Investigate the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among youth.

c) Identify the relationship between perceived Facebook information quality and online/offline political participation among youth.

d) Explain the relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation among youth,

1.4.2 Research Questions

These objectives have been formulated into following research questions that guide the study.

a) What is the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among the youth?

b) What is the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among youth?

c) What is the relationship between perceived Facebook information quality and online/offline political participation among youth?

d) What is the relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation among youth?

1.5 Significance of Study

Scholars are uncertain on whether and how youth are disengaging from politics, and the relationship between Facebook usage and existing youth online/offline political participation. Thus, this study advances the ongoing academic debate on whether youth are or not participating in politics and also weather Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality and political interest

correlate with online/offline political participation among youth. Therefore, the outcomes of this research adds to theoretical and practical body of knowledge. At the theory level, the focus on four aspects of Facebook of usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality as well as political interest as independent variables to investigate their relationship with online/offline political participation among youth, this study extends knowledge and literature on role of Facebook in both online and offline political participation in Nigerian context

There have been few studies that provided clear explanation on how Facebook can be used effectively to serve political purposes beyond try and error or street knowledge approach. The outcome serves as a guide to politicians, government and non-governmental organizations on how to formulate a policy related to Facebook usage among youth for political participation and subsequent on how to effectively use them to mobilize the youth. Also academic, development agencies and non-governmental organization will find relevant data to support their research activities and advocacy role in the context of youth online/offline political involvement in Nigerian political system.

Presently, there are limited if any measurement instrument that are relevant to the Nigerian context thus, the instruments adapted for this study are expected to advance measurement of the relationship between Facebook usage and youth online/offline political participation in Nigerian context. Thus, this research would add to the existing body of knowledge and in-depth understanding of the role of Facebook use, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest to youth online/offline political participation in Nigeria.

Finally, the research highlights and examines important issues related to Facebook usage and online/offline political participation as studies have attested that Facebook is a powerful tool which can increase online/offline political participation (Bakker & de Vreese, 2011; Dimitrova, Shehata, Stromback, & Nord, 2011; Farson, 2013; Lahabou and Wok, 2011; Miller, 2015; Ross, Fountaine, & Comrie, 2014; Tang & Lee, 2013; Wyngarden, 2012). Therefore, this study hopefully will be important to researchers of both traditional and non-traditional forms of political participation.

1.6 Structure of the Research

The study is separated into six chapters. Chapter one began with the introduction of the study, describes the background, research objectives/questions, conceptual foundation and methodology. This also followed by the significant of the research. Chapter two reviews existing literature related to political participation, starting with an explanation about the definitions and typologies of political participation, political participation in Nigerian context was discussed. The chapter ends by relating the underpinning theories of the study. Chapter three explains the conceptual model of the study and examines the development of hypotheses. The relationships between online/offline political participation and variables from both concepts are also elaborated.

The Chapter four, deliberates the research methodology and the research design. This chapter also highlights the population of the study, sampling frame, sample size, technique and instrument of data collection and analysis. Chapter five presents the results from the quantitative paradigm that was engaged. The chapter also illustrates the procedure of data screening. Subsequently, the results of scale of reliability and validity test are presented. The chapter ends by showcasing the outcomes of

hypotheses testing. Chapter six produces the research findings and conclusion. The results of hypotheses analysis are also discussed and finally, the chapter summarizes the research implications, and limitations of this study were also clarified. Potential future research directions were also presented.

1.7 Conceptual and Operational Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Social Media

Social media can be define as Web 20 platforms that are popularly used by many youth around the world and Nigeria to be specific, because of its accessibility and interactive nature. Thus, this research makes a particular reference to Facebook as the social media site that is most widely used by the youth (Ternes *et al.,* 2014). Justifying this Chao, Pickering, & Landow, (2012) emphasised that Facebook is the most popular site for political participation and also widely used by politicians and the youth.

1.7.2 Facebook Usage

Facebook usage in this study means the perceptions and feelings youth have for choosing and using the platform for political activities. This is further translate into the relevance of Facebook usage to youth's political activities. Hence, this research examines Facebook usage and reasons why youth use the platform for political activities

Facebook establishes a highly fascinating site for researchers concerned with the affordances of social networks due to its substantial usage patterns and technological capabilities that bridge online/offline political participation relationship. The

popularity of Facebook has revealed a special growth in its use among youth. In Malaysia, the amount of users has reached 10 million, with 38% being 18 and 24-years-old (Mustaffa *et al.,* 2011).

1.7.3 Interactivity with Political Figures

Interactivity is one of the important features of online participation which encourage users to interact with both content and sender of the message. In this study, interactivity with political figures is the direct connection with politicians, a process of two way flow of information and becoming a 'friend' through Facebook account or rather 'Wall' with a public elected politicians, community political activists and a commentator on political affairs. Furthermore, members in a communication course should have a control over the medium and also exchange roles in the process through sending information and receiving feedback at the same time.

1.7.4 Perceived Facebook Information Quality

Perceived Facebook information quality in this research means the quality of information provided by the Facebook especially to the youth who are the majority users of the medium. Thus, Facebook information quality can be measured by the accuracy of the information, its recency, speed, reliability of the information, completeness of the information as well as information presentation plan. Jung, Kim, and de Zúñiga, (2011) asserts that Facebook information quality is an important factor to success of an online interaction which may lead to political participation because youth in particular have been denied an avenue by the traditional media to participate in politics. Therefore, in the political participation context, this study

defines information quality as the accuracy, speed, authenticity and quality of information provided by the Facebook to the youth.

1.7.5 Political Interest

Holleque (2011) defines political interest as the degree to which politics arouses a citizen's curiosity or a citizen's attentiveness to politics. This also means that political interest is the extent to which an individual pays attention to politics and understand what he or she has encountered. Therefore, political interest is a necessary precondition for the desired characteristics of a responsible and democratic citizen which include loyalty, ability and readiness for political participation. Similarly, political interest is a political concept that is very significant for the emergence of democratic political identity and also serve as a crucial force for the exploration and desire to participate.

1.7.6 Youth

This is the age of transition from the dependency of childhood to maturity's independence. United Nations defines youth as those persons between the age of 15 and 24 years while UNESCO approves the definition of youth as used by a specific member state. Similarly, African Youth Charter defines Youth as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Youth in Nigeria include all members of the Federal Republic of Nigeria both male and females aged 18 to 35 years. This segment of the population are the most active part of the Nigerian population thus, youth specifically are the important resources in the society that can be tapped through education, capacity building measures and political activities.

1.7.7 Metropolis

This is an area or region consisting a density populated urban centre that has industries, infrastructures and housing. A metropolitan area usually comprises of multiple townships, cities, districts or states. Similarly, the term also refer to a place with increasing integration of social and economic activities in a more complex system of interdependencies for the population living in and around larger city. Therefore, Bauchi metropolis is the core city and state capital of Bauchi with a large population, high level of literacy and political awareness.

1.8 Summary

The chapter presented the background and problem statement of the research. Subsequently, objectives and research questions were highlighted. Finally, the significance of study, structure of the research and operational definition of terms were discussed. Therefore, the subsequent chapter reviews relevant literatures and highlights the underpinning theories.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Democracy simply means a government of the people, by the people. Thus, to have government truly by the people in any county, then all the people must participate in the selection and decision making (Justis, 2002). However, for a country to be called a truly democratic country, there must be an existence of freedom of expression, the judiciary must be free, freedom and equality of the press, free and fair elections must also be allowed regularly (Tew Abdullah, Ahmad, & Chang, 2014).

Previous studies have shown that people especially youth have not been participating in the democratic process (Bakker & Vreese, 2011; Quintelier, 2013) but this does not mean that youth specifically are completely not participating. In fact, there have been instances in the history where participation has been at greater level than anybody can ever dream of today. For instance, social movement took place at different times in the United States history like during the revolutionary war period, the civil war, the anti-Vietnam movement and the civil rights crusade. Furthermore, political crisis often inspire the formation of new social and political movements like in the case of Egyptian Revolution in 2011 (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014) and more recent Nigerian Bring Back our Girls.

Nevertheless, political participation takes numerous forms, there are passive forms of participation such as voting and there is active participation which comprises protesting or going into political meetings. This study examined online/offline youth

political participation generally and then later zoom into Nigerian context which provided an in-depth understanding of reasons why youth participate or otherwise and at the same time added literature to the existing body of knowledge in that area.

Participation in a democratic system is a fundamental and universal right that has been recognized in the Lisbon Treaty. This further suggests that every citizen shall have equal right to take part in the democratic system (Mayoral, 2011). It is against this background that participation of youth in online/offline political activities has been measured as an important component for a vibrant and strong democracy (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). Therefore, youth political participation is fundamental to democracy and without it, upcoming generation of youth may perambulate into the political process without the requisite knowledge, skills and determination to challenge the selfish political elites. As such, youth may lack enthusiasm to checkmate the actions of the government, and contribute little into the policies that influence their lives (Farson, 2013). Thus, the issue of whether and what is influencing youth to online/offline political participation is imperative to both researchers and political figures.

Thus, regardless of many social and political changes in different countries at national or international level during the few years back, youth online/offline political participation remains an important key factor to democracy (Pritzker & McBride, 2009) and their engagement with political affairs strengthen democratic principles (Putnam, 2000). Participation in political affairs is the main avenue that youth can express their needs and aspirations, exercise their franchise and also influence the equitable distribution of human and material resources by electing representatives (Wyngarden, 2012). Therefore, youth participation in political

activities may increase a sense of citizenship and make policy formulation more open and accountable towards younger generation; at the same time it can also help them to have self-confidence, acquire skill and build initiatives in work place and the society in general (L.S.E, 2011).

However, many studies have emphasised the apparent declines in political participation especially among youth (Bennett, 1997; Delli Carpini, 2000; Harris *et al.,* 2010; Wyngarden, 2012) but studies have divided concerning youth online/offline political participation. Some scholars believe that youth are not participating in the political process (Putnam, 2000), while others argue that youth are engaging but in non-electoral participation such as protest and signing petitions (Dalton, 2008). Indeed, more recent studies have documented that youth especially in Western countries have found new means of participation in politics specifically online which is now changing the trend of political participation around the world (Farson, 2013). The coming of Facebook in the last few years has brought many changes in the political activities, for instance during American 2008/2012 Presidential Election, the Arab Spring in 2011, the Malaysian 2013 election and most recently, Nigerian 2015 presidential election (Gomez, 2014; Odeyemi & Mosunmola, 2015; Ternes *et al.,* 2014). Facebook is being identified as means that facilitates political participation, the medium is open, participatory, interactive and cost effective than the outrageous political advertisement on the old media, thus it enables youth to engage with social and political issues using new participatory skills (Smyth & Best, 2013).

This chapter reviews literature on political participation from different perspectives. It looked at related researches on the part of communication, sociology and political

science. The chapter begins with the discussion concerning the definitions findings about decreasing participation and also antecedents of political participation. The influence of Facebook usage on youth political participation was reviewed. Political participation and related terms were also discussed and also political participation in Nigerian context was analyzed. Finally, Uses and Gratification theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory; their relationship to the present study was examined.

2.2 Defining Political Participation

There has been a lack of consensus in the literature about the concept of political participation thus, the definitions and limitations of the concept have over the years been a subject of deliberation. This lack of agreement may also justify for discrepancies in regard to whether or not scholars believe that youth participation is decreasing (Farson, 2013). Political participation is often restricted to traditional politics with specific bias for voting failing to include expression of political interest (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). As such, it is imperative to define clearly what political participation means.

The definition of political participation can be seen from different perspectives. Table 2.1 illustrate the various definitions which exist.

Table 2.1

Numerous Definitions of Political Participation

Related References	*Year*	*Definitions*
Evans	2003	Political participation are the political activities that the citizens use to affect the structure or policies of government, or try to influence the election of government officials.
Xie, Bo and Jaeger	2008	Political participation are the behaviours with the purpose of shaping government policies either by affecting the selection of government officials or influencing their choice.
Bakker and Vreese	2011	Political participation is an instrument of democratic engagement which involves, membership, political knowledge or voting and other online political activities.
Lahabou and Wok	2011	Political participation can be defined as the electoral processes such as voting, working for community, political candidate or political parties.
Wyngarden	2012	Political participation is a major strategic way whereby citizens may express their wishes and aspirations and affect the distribution of resources.
Freedman	2012	Political Participation are the sets of political behaviours that are planned to influence government decision making, they includes: voting, community advocacy, interest group activity and political education.
Saad and Salman	2012	Political participation is a process of being a member of an organization or engaging in a social movement with the aim of influencing changes associated with social order.
Waller	2013	Political participation includes voting, interaction with politicians, joining civic groups, participation in campaign, taking part in protest and deliberating with organizations or institutions.
Thun,	2014	Political participation are the online and offline political activities such as voting, interaction with elected officials, sharing political information or joining political discussion on Facebook.
Theocharis and Quitelier	2014	Political participation includes both individual and collective activities such as, signing petitions, taking part in demonstrations, posting and commenting on Facebook, joining online groups or tweeting to support issues.

From the above table, participation can be seen as a multidimensional concept that has been interpreted from different perspectives. A considerable number of scholars interpret the concept as an act of electoral processes such as voting, working for political candidate or party membership while other scholars have identified participation as volunteering to work for a community or participating in a civic demonstration (Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009).

For the purpose of this study, political participation can be defined as the process of gathering and sharing of political information online, interaction with politicians, participating in political campaign or taking part in voting exercise, influencing others to vote and participation in the selection of official representatives (Dalton, 2008; Evans, 2003; Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). Political participation is also defined by Chan, (2015) as an individual or citizen's activities which they often involve with the aim of influencing or supporting government and policies.

Some literatures have categorised political participation into two types, conventional and unconventional political participation. Firstly, conventional participation refers to a behaviour of being a responsible citizen by attending and participating in a regular election exercise, joining political campaign or volunteering in party activities (Chan, 2015). Secondly, unconventional participation simply means any activity that are legal but sometime shown a sign of inappropriate manner such as signing petition, organising and supporting boycotts and staging demonstration or protests in public places. However, others include what they call illegal participation which has been associated with political assassination, terrorism or committing vandalization on government institution, organizations or even property of political opponent (Ekman & Amnå, 2012).

Furthermore, participation is a sign of support and indication of individual or group desire and expectations of the citizens as voters and sometimes as policy makers (Martin & Stronach, 1992). Political participation consist of political activities such as: voting, interaction with political actors, group or organizational activity, volunteering and campaign activities (Alford & Friedland, 1975). A wider definition of political participation was given by (Evans, 2003), which includes numerous

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forms such as voting, registration, attending political rally, engaging in a political campaign, writing political petition and contributing to the political website or Facebook page.

Additionally, political participation is the set of events that people engage with the aim of influencing government policies or actions (Muntean, 2015). Therefore, citizens can exercise their power by electing political representatives that may eventually formulate policies that will checkmate and monitor the payment of taxes and determine who will benefit social programmes. Political participation also are those activities that citizens perform to influence the structure of government, electing government officials or government policies (Thun, 2014).

In some liberal democratic societies, political participation is viewed as influencing the outcome of a policy while in a country that is not practicing democracy political participation is just accepting or being submissive to the final decision from the government (Suhana & Ali, 2012). The concept of political participation means an individual intention to facilitate or influence government programmes through activities that will ensure the initiation and implementation of public policies directly or indirectly (Lahabou & Wok, 2011).

Basically, there are many reasons for participation or not participating in political activities. Among the reasons for political participation are: Idealism, an individual may decide to participate in politics because he or she believe in strong particular idea. Responsibility, a person may participate because he or she wants to fulfil citizenship duty and role. Self-interest, participation because of certain expectations of any personal gain, benefit or for profit sake. Enjoyment, a person may participate

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in politics because he or she enjoy public events through for instance friend's motivation (SparkNotes, 2010).

Moreover, the participation can be civic or political activities that are designed directly or indirectly to affect government agency or individual life in the society or any social activity aimed at either to influence government agencies and policy processes, or any planned that may indirectly have effect on civic society, or which try to change the organized ways of social behaviour (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014), however the most common and popular form of political participation is voting. This is an avenue where by the majority of the citizens exercise their right through electing their choice of representatives (Muntean, 2015). Nevertheless, it is imperative to learn that political participation is more than just act of voting, it involves among other thing such as attending political events, organising fundraising to support a political candidate's campaign, working for a candidate or party and mobilizing people to vote for a particular candidate or party (Kenski & Stroud, 2006). Thus, these activities are called offline political participation because they take place in a physical and practical world.

However, online political participation among other political activities includes: signing petition on the internet, gathering political knowledge and information on social media, sending messages on Facebook or Twitter to a political candidate or government officials and making comment on candidate's website (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). These activities take place on the social interacting sites such as Facebook.

Based on the aforementioned definitions of political participation, this study intend to categorize and view youth political participation in online/offline forms. Although,

not all the online/offline modes will be analyzed. The online forms in this study include sending or receiving political information on Facebook, contributing to a political campaign on Facebook while offline form involve interactivity with political figures, participating in demonstrations or protest, attending political rally or meeting, voting in the general election. The reasons for examining online/offline political participation is to have an in-depth and general explanation and knowledge of political participation for proper complete understanding of the concept. For instance, voting alone cannot explain the magnitude to which youth participate in politics, because their political participation have been demonstrated in both online and offline activities.

Similarly, beyond voting youth participate in mobilization and campaign, seeking for donation for political party or candidate, interaction with political actors, tagging, post update, sharing and making comment online. Therefore, examining online/offline modes; youth political participation can be closely and holistically investigated and understood especially with the new form of social media (Facebook) activities that increase and shape political behaviour of youth (Miller *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, a new form of youth political participation such as Facebook usage to engage in political activities has started reinvigorating youth to participate because they use the medium more than other age groups (Smyth & Best, 2013).

History has shown that participation of people especially youth in the political affairs is a crucial component for an ideal democracy as the issue have been elevated over the degree of their political involvement and upcoming generation (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). Evidently, reports especially from the western countries indicates decreasing levels of youth participation but the question is whether entire systems of

political participation are decreasing or is it that the current studies are partial by disproportional concentrating on institutional and inadequate measures of participatory behaviour. However, Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, (1995) observed that political involvement has many dimensions and is varying over time thus, it needs various stages of contribution of time resources and expertise. This means that participation in an online setting might be easier and attractive for youth compared to offline participatory acts.

Youth have started forming a fresh group that is less involved by traditional form of political participation (Carpini, 2000b; Phelps, 2004; Russell, 2004). Nevertheless, this calls for more wider and contemporary view of political or community participation (Phelps, 2004; Russell, 2004). However, taking a wider approach, Keeter *et al.,* (2002) emphasized that youth are not totally politically apathetic and disengaged. They concluded that youth are now using more digital online applications for participation because it gives a new approaches of easy accessibility and low cost methods of participation. More importantly, scholars have found that a substantial number of youth have exploited Facebook for online/offline political participation because they believe that Facebook help to raise awareness about political issues, and also assist in solving or changing national or local problems (Himelboim, Mccreery, & Smith, 2013).

However, there are a lot of questions about the connection between Facebook usage and youth political participation. Although, youth are now seriously engaging in online activities but it is imperative to examine factors that hinders their participation in political activities, what is now influencing them to use Facebook? Are they using Facebook to participate in ways that are comparable to offline participation or is

participation on Facebook will increase offline participation? These questions among others remain important for scholars of political participation because studies have demonstrated that youth are using Facebook for some form of participation (Vissers *et al.,* 2012). Eventhogh, some researches have emphasised that participation vie Facebook is not that important and is not significantly related to participation (Matthew, James, Kushin & Yamamoto, 2010; Vitak, *et al.,* 2011). However, Park et al., (2009) also found a strong positive relationship between Facebook usage and political participation. Additionally, Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, (2009) discovered a positive relationship between the intensity of Facebook usage and online political participation. Another studies suggested that political uses of Facebook are important factors for offline participation (Ternes *et al.,* 2014; Vitak, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2011).

The present popularity of Facebook has generated series of discussions regarding the potentiality of the site to increase youth participation in politics (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). Some studies indicates that reliance on Facebook, YouTube and Myspace increases civic participation (Zheng, 2015), while Facebook usage increases political participation (Park *et al.,* 2009). On the contrary, (Matthew *et al.,* & Yamamoto, 2010), found that Facebook usage is not positively related with political participation.

However, this argument did not completely means that Facebook cannot increase political participation among youth, but its influence depends on the type of usage and the nature of the network (Shah, Kwak, & Holbe, 2001). Given this, the research focuses on the Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality, and political interest, online/offline political

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participation among youth especially with their persistent low turnout in the electoral processes. With the current widespread of social media usage among the youth, researchers have concentrated on Facebook as a medium that can facilitate online and offline political participation among youth (Conroy *et al.,* 2012; Effing, Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011a; Skoric & Kwan, 2011). Furthermore, studies suggests that Facebook usage is often used as a space for engaging different forms of political participation particularly among youth that have been frustrated in traditional political spaces (Smith, Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2009).

Considerable amount of studies have indicated declining political interest and dropping participation low turnout in election among youth (Bakker & Vreese, 2011; Effing *et al.,* 2011), youth finds it very difficult to participate in an offline setting compared to online context. Thus, scholars argued that sending messages through Facebook to politicians is easier and affordable than sending a letter (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). Furthermore, Bang, (2005) emphasized that youth are finding more convenient and flexible means to interaction, participation as well as ways of solving issues which they find useful and simple to them. The work of Smith *et al.,* (2009) have corroborated with the above statement as they suggested that youth are now using Facebook to engage and address social or political issues. In addition, youth ages 18-24 found to be more likely to comment on social media such as Facebook than any other age group members, and are likely to make use of social networking site for traditional political activities (Smith *et al.,* 2009).

Farson (2013), advanced the ongoing academic debate that is youth political participation is declining or they are they participating in a new and unconventional ways? The researcher first categorized the various forms of political engagement

(online/offline) and examined the level at which and how youth have been politically engaged in online/offline in US, Australia and Canada. Farson's findings reveals that youth are politically interested but they have shifted away from traditional political activities and look for alternative ways for participation especially online. However, youth political participation in the British experience reveals not a clear picture, but Henn, Weinstein, and Wring (2002) debunked the idea that young people are alienated from politics. In a panel survey and data from focus group, they concluded that youth are interested in political matters contrary to what was upheld in quantitative studies on British youth political participation. In fact, they found that youth actually do support the democratic processes.

Furthermore, scholars continue to examine youth political participation from two dominant research perspectives. Disengagement and Alternative engagement point of view. Disengagement theorists believes that youth are not participating in the political activities (Dalton, 2011; Damon, 2001). These scholars argue especially on low and declining voter turnout that manifest among youth as an evidence of their disengagement from politics. While on the other hand the alternative engagement theorists emphasised that youth are choosing to participate in a new forms of participation. These type of political participation includes online participation activities such as signing petition, protesting or strike. The engagement theorists' advocates that youth are participating through the political process in a new ways. They further suggest that youth are not really disengaged from politics rather traditional participation such as voting and or working for political party does not address their concerns. Thus, this has been overtaking by the new form of democratic expressions through online activities (Phelps, 2004).

Additionally, some scholars have include disengagement active and passive types of non-participation (Carpini, 2000). Obviously, to these scholars by nature there are certain people that ordinarily do not have much interest in politics. Therefore, they have no concern nor care about election or political parties. These are examples and opposite of engagement participation. The passive types of non-engagement are for example the type of youth who perceive political activities as not interesting affair (Norris, 1996). Thus, youth with this orientation do not have feelings or interest to make their voices heard, and to them political activities like voting should be left to others. Additionally, there types of youth do not make any attempt in life to follow political and even civic affairs and they do not have any strong opinions or views about politics (Torcal & Montero, 2006).

Furthermore, the other disengaged type are refers to active types of non-participation. This category here means youth who are not only disinterested in political activities but basically often fell disgusted and irritated with political affairs (Carpini, 2000). According to this type of youth, politicians are cheats, dishonest people that always steal money. They consider politics as an illegal or criminal activity thus they try to avoid political discussion and shown voting. Similarly, these types of youth are consider as anti-political thinkers because they at the end engage in violence and riots since they are out of patience (Zúñiga *et al.*, 2012).

Nevertheless, some researches have a strong support to the fact that political participation is not totally declining but is taking different forms. Scholars argue that socio-economic changes are among the factors that influences youth disengagement from political activities (Dalton, 2008). However, evidently traditional political participation appears to be decreasing while alternative participation is increasing.

Both traditional and new form of participation are important to the democratic society because youth needs to express their grievances through alternative mode and at the same time they need to vote in other to be relevant in the society. This further suggest that youth political participation has now shifted and extended to the new act of online political participation.

2.3 Typologies of Political Participation

Typology of political participation is the systematic classification of political participation in relation to their common characteristics. A typology of political participation demonstrates the exploration and understanding of the various dimensions of youth political participation. Thus, it provides the categorization of numerous aspects of participatory acts of youth in political life. As already established, this research focuses on youth political participation within online/offline forms. Studies recently suggest the significance of examining and differentiating online and offline political participation is very important (Farson, 2013).

Basically, political participation can be simply divided into two major types: conventional and unconventional. Political activities that are usually carryout through official channels are the conventional political participation while those activities such as demonstrations, writing or signing petition and protest that are often performed outside official channels are the unconventional participation (Thun, 2014). Therefore, this can also mean that in conventional participation youth for instance attends political meeting, interact with political figures face-to-face and also participate in voting exercise whereas when it comes to unconventional mode they engage in demonstration and signing a petition (Tournier, 2009). This study intends

to categorise youth political participation in offline/online forms and nor conventional or unconventional political participation

2.3.1 Traditional Political Participation

Traditional participation such as voting especially during election has been considered as important to the democratic processes (Skoric & Kwan, 2011), and become an area of research to many scholars. This can be further supported by the definition of political participation as the activity that provide citizens to express their wishes and aspirations and also to some extents influence the selection of government or public officials that will create good policy (Norris, 2001).

Thus, traditional political participation is an important requirement and necessary for democracy (Putnam, 2000), this is because youth have equal opportunity and right to influence different stages of political processes, right from campaign, election and policy decision and its implementation (Wyngarden, 2012). It may also be true to say that voting and elections in general symbolises an important ways of engaging youth in the democratic processes is the most significant political activity (Dalton, 2008).

This development has created long discussions among scholars that even though youth engagement and electoral turnout appears to be low in different countries (Carpini, 2000; Ugander, Karrer, Backstrom, & Marlow, 2011), but some studies suggest that other forms of youth political participation such as online activities may likely to indicate upward direction and tendency of their participation. Additionally, activities such as demonstrations and protests have now become apparent in youth (Dalton, 2011).

Nevertheless, in spite of an in-depth studies documenting the significance of traditional political participation but it appears to be declining (Milner, 2011) and researches have indicated decreases in voting, party membership, joining community and civic organizations and gradual withdrawal of youth membership in voluntary associations (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). It is imperative to note that youth are vulnerable consistently the subject of research concerning declining traditional political participation (Wattenberg, 2012), and the pendulum of disengagement is directing toward younger generation. Similarly, studies across many different countries has suggest that youth compared to other category of age population are apparently may not likely to participate in voting or any electoral activities (Dahlgren, 2009; Effing *et al.,* 2011). Furthermore, this is because youth are disappointed with government and older people in the society and less likely to indicate interest in political parties or an organizations (Carpini, 2000; Levine & Lopez, 2002; Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). Thus, findings about youth disengagement from traditional participation are obviously worthy of studying because they need to have chance and encourage to participate in politics.

Conversely, some scholars argue that declining political participation among youth is not an issue of much concern because they have shifted their interest from traditional political participation to what is now refer to alternative type of participation such as joining online Facebook activities (Thun, 2014). Therefore, it may be accurate to say that youth have now prefer to participate in an interactive, accessible online medium which make more information available to many youth from different sources.

2.3.2 Online Political Participation

Online participation are the political activities such as sending political messages on Facebook to the politicians, commenting on candidate's Facebook page, seeking donation for a political party or sharing political information on Facebook (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012), and this has provides youth more ways to be active in political affairs than what was not possible in the past generations.

Apparently, studies have demonstrate that youth are disengaging from traditional political activities such as voting, participating in campaign, contacting political candidates or working for political parties because youth interest in politics is not acknowledge and represented (Dagona *et al.,* 2013; Dalton, 2008; Putnam, 2000). In addition, it may be accurate to say that the factors leading to the decreasing participation among youth notably is the inability of the traditional media to provide space for them to express their opinion and the recent development of new experience among youth especially in the area of communication and technology (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). For the proper understanding of online political participation, it is imperative to differentiate internet (web 1.0) usage for the early political participation and the recent group or rather social media (web 2.0) usage for political involvement. Prior to this time, scholars have focused attention on impact of internet (Web 1.0), but recently they shifted their attention to the impact of social media (Web 2.0). Their reason for the shift is the fact that internet was not user friendly and could not allow interactivity thus it has a passive political impact but social media now provides interpersonal, self- communication and instructiveness that enable mass participation.

Equally, the use of social media such as Facebook for political purpose has many advantages such as to express opinion or seeking information which are inherent in youth. These tendencies cannot be achieved with traditional legacy media such as radio, television or newspaper therefore, the attention of both scholars and youth generally has shifted to the use of Facebook as a platform for online political participation (Pritzker & McBride, 2009) .

The recent studies have documented that, Facebook is now demonstrating a remarkable role in social turmoil and political protests especially in nations such as Iran and Egypt but yet some scholars have criticized this new development thus, stressing that Facebook is not an appropriate condition for transitioning to political democracy. It is against this that an additional theoretically-driven method is surely required, focusing on precise features and motivating factors that are inherent in Facebook platform that is influence youth specifically to participate in online/offline political affairs (Skoric & Kwan, 2011).

For instance, Facebook has been characterized by high speed, low cost, precise, easy to access and accurate in targeting the potential users. These features often foster immediate spreading of political information and efficient mobilization of youth. Recent researchers conducted in U.S indicates an encouraging relationship between Facebook usage and online political participation (Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2014). Additionally, Facebook usage was found to increase political discussion and mobilization among users contrary to the notion that Facebook is primarily used to initiate new relationship. Thus, the role and impact of Facebook on youth political interest and their participation in political affairs is very crucial.

Obviously, some researches have emphasized whether Facebook political activities such as liking, sharing political update, making comment on political issue or following politician's Facebook page are part of new form of political participation while some researchers believed that all these mentioned activities may serve as imaginative expressions that have no original and counterfeit connection with politics. On the other hand, to some scholars these political activities corresponds and are similar to offline political activities and as such they are accepted and valid forms of participation, again other scholars considers these activities as different forms of participation which are not the same with offline political participation (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014).

Obviously, there are new ways for being more active than what was obtainable in the past generation. With the proliferation and increased rising role of Facebook use in political activities, participation has taken a new forms such as sharing and posting political messages, contacting political actors, voting or influencing others to vote for a particular party (Vissers *et al.*, 2012). Thus, as the considerable number of online media such as Facebook has increased, access to political information and messages have also become less expensive and often accessible the platform now offers youth opportunities to penetrate, share and interact with like minds on one hand and politicians on the other hand (Bakker & Vreese, 2011).

Further, Facebook has helped increasing youth to have skills and knowledge on how to use deferent online media as such they now become enthusiastic and passionate internet users which enhances communication networks (Xenos & Bennett, 2007). Therefore, online political participation is less expensive and requires little resources

than offline participation because of its interactivity, simplicity and easy accessibility nature of the medium to youth (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Consequently, the debate on whether online political participation is synonymous or an extension of offline parturition is still ongoing but some scholars try to separate them by distinguishing between the activities that take place in different places which shows that they are separated (Turner, 2011). To simply distinguish the two is to understand that they can never occupy the same area of activity simultaneously. Thus, online political participation activities are very complicated because they involved using technology than offline political participation.

Nevertheless, this study strongly advocates that Facebook usage may likely increase online/offline political involvement among youth. Considering the fact that youth participation in political affairs is central to democracy and its absence may affect the upcoming generation. Thus, understanding what motivates youth to participate in political activities is now major area of interest for researchers and students of social media and political communication (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). This has been ignited by the assumption from scholars that youth political participation have been decreased for more than two decades now (Phelps, 2004), the role of social media towards influencing youth non-participatory behaviour has now become a serious growing interest especially with the increasing popularity of online political activities on Facebook among youth (Bakker & Vreese, 2011).

Much definitions of political participation have been offered in the beginning of this chapter by many outstanding scholars as a democratic participation (Carpini, 2000). However, it may be right to say that political participation is more than just voting or

participating in political activities such as joining campaign or party allegiance. The definition and understanding the boundaries of the concept should include online ways of participation (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). In present day, political participation comprises of a variety of phenomena than it was previously, therefore the concept of political participation need to be further operationalized (Quintelier & Deth, 2014). Thus, this study focuses on offline/online political participation among youth in Nigeria.

Conclusively, researchers have emphasised that online political participation is basically an extension of offline political participation but some scholars have demonstrated that the two concepts have separate activities (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). Meanwhile, as already established above that report from western countries and beyond indicates low and decreasing youth political participation but researchers continue to ask whether entire forms of political participation are seriously declining or is it that the current studies are partial by a disproportional attention on conventional formal participation like voting and ignored or limit the measures of participatory behaviour like demonstration (Bakker & Vreese, 2011).

To this end, political participation has many dimensions that can be examined and analyzed for the purpose of understanding youth declining or not, it may be right to say political participation is changing overtime (Dumitrica, 2014). Additionally, it may also be assume that participatory activities that may need essential large extent of input and contribution in offline settings are easily accessible and affordable to youth because this activities can also be carried out in an online environment, for instance interaction with a political candidate on Facebook is easier and cheaper than going for political rally or door to door campaign (Henn *et al.,* 2002).

Facebook has now become a medium for alternative online ways of political participation among youth because it offers a wider range and scope of possibilities to participate in political activities such as receiving and sending political information, following online news, sending email to political candidate and signing petition online. Simply put, youth are shifting their paradigm of political participation from traditional types such as voting and party allegiance to alternative types such as protest and using Facebook political activities (Thun, 2014). These youth have embraced new media technology and spend most of their lives under the umbrella of social media sites such as Facebook (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). The value of governance has been improved over the years as a result of revolutions in social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Blogs. These have, in turn, influenced participation of youth in public affairs; in relation to plurality of voices, advocacy, and electoral activities, enhanced by Facebook platform, thus deepening the democratic process (Ross *et al.,* 2014)

The power of this platform as viable mechanisms for political mobilization was first noticed in advanced democracies in the mid-90s (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2007). Ever since, events and processes have further highlighted its utility to democratic politics, most notably, to the electoral process. This was emphasised by the extensive use of Facebook by Barack Obama in the build up to the 2008 United States of America presidential election. This, perhaps, marked the beginning of e-electioneering (Kushin & Kitchener, 2009).

However, despite the amount of social media accessibility and Facebook interactive nature, its structure of the network and intensity of usage may varies depending on the individual or context that is being used. What remains unclear is whether

Facebook can help in stimulating youth interest in politics and increase level of their online and offline participation in political activities (Chan & Guo, 2013; Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014).

2.3.3 Political Participation: Communication Perspective

Political participation as earlier discussed is an activity that is aimed at influencing government policy and selection of representatives. Political participation encompasses series of activities such as voting, campaign, signing petition, protest, and public consultation. All these activities are the components of ideal participation either directly or indirectly because they are part of citizenship which youth are highly encouraged to be active in. However, political participation is a relative term depending on the country, purpose and the circumstance that it is been used. For instance, most of Americans go to vote to exercise their franchise while thousand youth from Burma voiced their political opinions through protest against their government and political representatives.

Nevertheless, to effectively participate in political affairs by voting or through protest communication is the panacea this is because the relationship between youth and political participation is basically facilitated by communication. Studies have indicated that from communication, youth gain relevant information about issues and challenges in the political processes and also learn the opportunities and ways to participate. It is against this background that media are saddled with the responsibility of dissemination of information and knowledge that may mobilize youth to local and national political participation (Mcleod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999).

Recently, one of the most remarkable political transformation is the change in media environment. The advent of Facebook in particular has tremendously influence how youth learn about politics and nature of political discourse. Few decades back, there has been a strong synergy between media system and political system, this also means that politics and media relay on each other to perform effectively in the society. Generally, media is expected to protect and promote public interest by advocating the truth which will help in solving political problems. Thus, for media to exercise its freedom there must be free exchange of information free from government intervention. Therefore, youth must be allowed to choose messages and voice out their grevanceses (Mannarini, Legittimo, & Talò, 2008).

In recent time, new media provides services to the political system in form of debate, dialogue, discussion, information, enlightenment and sensitizing the youth in particular (Olabamiji, 2014). In line with this, it is imperative to acknowledge that for a healthy democracy to be consolidated there must be a freedom of communication. Thus, it will be safe to say that media needs democracy due to the fact that it is the system that ensure and guarantee freedom of expression also democracy needs media because is a tool of translating government policies and programs (Marlowe, 2009) especially as youth now rely heavily on Facebook for political knowledge and information (Odeyemi & Mosunmola, 2015).

Conclusively, it is widely recognized that media is now a positive interpreter of online/offline political participation activities (Towner, 2013) because is a basis of political knowledge, for instance Facebook is now a platform for political participation as they expose youth to political information and provide more opportunity for connecting political figures with the youth due to its lower cost, time

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and space (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011). The limitations of gatekeeping which the legacy media has been well known for are now shattered. Facebook for example has now become an alternative route for politicians to promote their ideologies and reach out to youth. Additionally, scholars have tested that Facebook in particular have been used for seeking information which contributes significantly in fostering democratic processes. Thus, Facebook which is now a communication channel motivates youth and politicians to engage in political activities because it allow them to communicate with each other with the view of addressing social and political issues such as poverty and human rights (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012).

2.3.4 Political Participation and other Related Terms

2.3.4.1 The Web 1.0 – Political Participation

Internet was launched in the middle of 1990s, at first the scholarly discussion focused on the influence of the internet (Web 1.0), but more recently attention has tilted to the influence of social media (Web 2.0). In both cases, some scholars have been arguing on whether new digital media may have positive impact on political participation (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011). However, in early 2000s political campaign policymakers held enthusiastic expectations about the impact of Web 1.0 to organize new forms of political participation for voters. The popularity of the first Internet (Web1.0) movements appeared as top-down discussions and presented little chance for communication. The campaigns were biased, with information conveyed from the politicians and political events to possible voters. This information used standard HTML and imitate its offline (traditional) media onto the candidate's website (Eremenko, 2011; Valenzuela Turner, 2011).

The candidates' Web sites tended only to be active during the election period and ultimately went vacant or deleted from the first Internet campaigns frequently saw candidates not wanting to take dangers with online activities for fear of losing control of their campaigns with contribution from users of their sites. By the early 2000s however, campaign planners realized the prospects of the Internet in the early 2000s and had to familiarize messages to different demographic populations. A study investigating the implementation of Facebook by candidates in the 2006 and 2008 congressional elections by Williams and Gulati (2009) showed that those politicians who accepted Web 1.0 technology were more regularly the first adopters of Web 2.0.

2.3.4.2 Web 2.0 – Social Media – Political Participation

Web 2.0 signifies the growth and technological advancement of social networks bi-directional communication and important diversity in content type. Web 2.0 basically is the second state of the World Wide Web, which is considered particularly by the change from static Web pages to more active and user generated content and growth of social media. This further implies that Network 2.0 are considered by bigger user interactivity and collaboration, more prevalent network connectivity and enlarged communication channels. Previously, information was sent on Web sites and users only view or download the content but now users have more inputs into the nature and scope of Web content and in some instances Websites allow community-based input, interactive and to share content and collaborate.

Therefore, Web 2.0 have now developed and become a platforms that facilitates both offline and virtual communities thus, the online grassroots platforms encourages debate and deliberations during pre-and postelection period. The role of the crusade helper has shifted from knocking on neighborhood doors to canvassing the electronic

neighborhoods of social networking sites such as Facebook. Social networking sites provided greatly visible locations where candidates made platforms and connected with voters online in new ways. Researchers projected that political policymakers and educational supporters could change social networking participation into democratic involvement. They believed that Facebook offered advanced and inventive ways for citizens to consider the ideas of other people and candidates in online discussions.

2.3.4.3 Political knowledge

Political knowledge simply means information about politics that youth acquire from Facebook for example that is knowledge about political parties, political candidates and the general political activities. This entails youth understanding the processes and ways in which political system works. Similarly, political knowledge encompasses youth learning about policy information which is relevant and important to making an informed decision about participation. Thus, political knowledge is the information concerning government or political activities, for instance information about what government or elected political official do, what leaders and political parties do to run the affairs of their offices.

2.3.4.4 Political Interest

Political interest entails the motivation of youth to follow the activities of government and to understand policy making (Whiteley, 2005). Thus, political interest provides the necessary motivational opportunities to the young voters to dedicate sufficient time and energy to take part in political activities. Political interest therefore is the driving force that ignite an individual to get political information that

is relevant to making an informed political decision. It help youth for example to assess political alternatives and have ideological consciousness or political beliefs and aspirations.

2.3.4.5 Public consultation

Public consultation is an important element of political participation like voting. It is a public discussion which is more commonly known as town hall meetings that offers a common citizens the opportunity to get together in an informal group with a politician, government representatives or elected official in other to make their opinion, complains and feelings known. Public consultation can be considered as one of the fundamentals ingredients of a true and ideal democratic processes because is a guiding and regulatory process by which the public's contribution on matters affecting them is required. However, the main objectives of public consultation among others are enlightening and improving the proficiency, transparency and public involvement in economic and socio-political affairs or policies. It is an avenue of giving the people a sense of belonging by bringing them close to the governance. Thus, public consultation serves a forum where youth for example are allowed to deliberate freely with their representatives in an unofficial manner with view of solving and resolving social and societal issues,

2.3.4.6 Protest

Protest is another form of participation where by youth often make their grievances and opinions known in a very obvious way which invariably with the expectation that their actions will automatically influence or initiate change in a particular area of public domain. For example in America, open protests are another significant form

of political participation. Additionally, a protest basically is a manifestation and communication which witness on behalf of an express reason by words or actions with regard to specific events, situations or public policies. In political scenario, protest is associated with an orderly, organized and peaceful campaign to achieve a particular unprejudiced objective, and encompass the use of pressure as well as persuasion because it involve cases of civil resistance and nonviolent struggle.

Therefore, in an advanced democracies protest is a unique and systematic process of political participation. Eventhogh, some people perceive protest as an illegal avenue of channeling community or an organizational grievances but when it is planned and coordinated in a matured and peaceful way; it may yield positive outcome.

2.3.4.7 Petition

Petition is a very unique form of political participation in most of developed and some developing societies. Petitions are citizens, legal persons or other establishments using letters, e-mail, phone, Facebook or visits, etc. to reflect suggestions, observations or complaints towards all stages of governments and above the country level to request for resolutions by relevant administrative authorities according to law. Thus, in the absence of legalized oppositions, petitions opened a network for citizens to participate in politics and to express their discontentment.

Additionally, petition is an institutionalized procedure of political participation, which is a common approach for citizens to oppose political difficulties. In contemporary societies like Nigeria, the importance of the petition system is self-evident. For example, in the construction of the nation's political transition period, it helps as a channel for solving social conflicts, and its role is gradually revealing and

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becoming more and more crucial and indispensable. Therefore, when discussing the political participation of youth in Nigeria for instance, the petition is a very important aspect of expressing opinions and political marginalization. Thus, discussions about petition is imperative as far as online/offline political expressions and youth political participation is concern which this study stance for, and in this way we will have a more comprehensive understanding of political participation with reference to Nigerian context.

2.4 Political Participation in Nigeria

Nigeria got her independence on 1st October, 1960 from Britain and three years later it became a republic in 1966. In January the same year, the military overthrew both central and reginal government. The military relinquished power in 1979 which marked the beginning of the second republic, but the military took over power again in 1984 and rule until 1999 (Olabamiji, 2014). Thus, the 50 years after Nigerian self-government, 29 years the country was under the military rule. This means that for the past two decades Nigeria has been struggling from political instability as a result of military intervention in to political affairs of the country. Therefore, Nigeria is still in a period of political transformation and transition to a more sustainable democracy with numerous teething problems associated with such transition, efforts are consistently passioned out by the political figures to put the political institution in a proper shape.

Nevertheless, the political history of Nigeria has been characterized with military rule, political violence and youth denial to actively participate in political activities. However, with over 100 different languages spoken and two major religious dichotomy (Islam and Christianity) cleavages play a major role in Nigerian power

politics and a huge influence both in terms of resources allocation and access to political information or position. Although, the military administration made an effort by creating an avenue of equitable environment including the creation of 36 states and more than 750 local government areas but the military junta in Nigeria have not made a remarkable effort to encourage political participation (Thiele, 2005).

Furthermore, recently Nigeria witnessed a historic election (2015) that ushered in a popular candidate of the masses and general populace Muhammadu Buhari. He won the election based on his track records of prudence, transparency and accountability in all ramifications. Before president Buhari come on board, Nigeria was embedded with egocentric approach in governance. Unfortunately, these ill tendencies make Nigeria struggling to build a stable and responsible democracy thus, the country is now on a political transformation that is aimed at consolidating its democratic governance. Evidently, in struggling to achieve a sustainable democracy political participation plays a significant role (Olabamiji, 2014).

Generally, political participation in Nigeria especially before the coming of social media have been characterized with violence, thuggery, threats and youth boycotts from politics because of intimidation and their denial in decision making process (Aniekwe & Agbiboa, 2014). In Nigeria, before the coming of Facebook in particular, political campaigns and other political activities flourished in the traditional media. Accordingly, prior to this time political rallies, interpersonal contacts and public speeches were used for mobilizing youth support on political affairs. During that period, political participation was highly risky, expensive and needs a huge investments from youth willing to participate in political activities (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). Furthermore, the process was seriously difficult for youth

as far as time, money and information were concern. Therefore, youth were prevented from attending political meeting and going to vote due to the poverty and economic hardship.

Nevertheless, the coming of Facebook in the last few years has tremendously changed the situation as youth now have online platforms that protect and serve as a new avenue where majority youth resort to and participate in political discourse (Dagona *et al.,* 2013). Obviously, Facebook have made political participation among youth much easier, faster and cost effective than previous time. In addition, today in Nigeria almost every institution has embraced Facebook usage like we have just witnessed in 2015 general elections where by National Electoral Commission (INEC), all the political parties, candidates, civil society groups, media houses and the police force aggressively used social media such as Facebook to fast track their activities.

Similarly, in 2011 Facebook was used to stage protest over the removal of fuel subsidy during former president Goodluck Jonathan administration that doubled the prices of fuel across the country overnight. Additionally, Facebook pages of former president of Nigeria Goodluck vehemently received thousands of messages of dissatisfaction and condemnation during that period of protest with many Nigerians calling for his resignation (Aniekwe & Agbiboa, 2014; Nwakanma, 2014).

Facebook has now become a veritable tool especially for youth to participate in Nigerian political system thus, there is little doubt that a political revolution is now seriously taking place in Nigeria a country of more than 180 million population. Unlike before, where by youth were denied access to traditional media but now there is a paradigm shift in political participation among youth in Nigeria via Facebook use

(Odeyemi & Mosunmola, 2015). Considering how Facebook had helped in the uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya many Nigerians particularly youth and even the politician are rushing to make their presence felt on the medium.

Thus, politicians and youth have now embraced Facebook as a means of communication (Olabamiji, 2014). Similarly. Facebook have now provided an opportunity which Nigerian youth to feel empowered and express their political opinion, in fact Facebook is often used to challenge government policies, corruption, electoral fraud and other forms of social or political inequalities in Nigeria (Conference *et al.,* 2012).

Therefore, it will be safe to say that Facebook have the potential to influence the way youth engage in social and political issues. Hence, Facebook ability to transform and influence youth to participate in political activities is still generating scholarly debate, thus numerous researches have emphasized that Facebook have affected youth online/offline political participation (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011).

Further, even before the advent of Facebook scholars have been arguing over the potentiality of new media to canvas youth participation in politics, but studies have documents that new media provide ample freedom to access information to youth and less privileged people in the society that were denied access of knowledge and political information by the traditional media (Terriquez, 2015). Thus, Facebook especial in Nigeria have been used to mobilize and reinforce youth to participate in politics.

It is evident therefore, that Facebook is now a powerful tool for political mobilization and support but sustainability or rather the ability of Nigerian political figures to

involve youth to deliberate on important national decisions is often lacking (Titus-fannie, Akpan, & Moses, 2013). Thus, recent experience of 2015 Nigerian General election have revealed that the political revolution was largely articulated, organized and supported through the use of Facebook which allowed for extensive political expression against selfish politicians and corrupt government of the day. Nigerian youth finds Facebook as a right medium to echo change and socio-political transportation. As witnessed recently, Facebook help youth in Nigeria to gain sympathetic support both nationally and internationally.

Conversely, some scholars have found that Facebook was used in Nigerian politics to instigate violence, attack political opponent, spread false rumours, hatred and inciting messages which were vehemently contributed in the crises and tension witnessed during and after elections (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). This statement is further supported by the fact that Nigeria witnessed the first remarkable test of Facebook usage for political participation during the 2011 general elections Adeyanju and Haruna (2011) argue that Facebook played an enormous role in aggravating and fueling political violence in the country. During that time, Facebook pages were awash with gossips, unpalatable reports and fake election results that created excessive tensions thus, many lives and properties were lost.

However, recently civic and political activities in Nigeria have started actively harnessing the medium of Facebook to encourage various reasons ranging from environmental consciousness to human rights advocacy and political mobilization (Dagona *et al.,* 2013). Further, online participation has now become a gateway to momentous engagement in the political life of Nigerian youth and it has not only mobilize youth but it has also integrate them into everyday political conversation.

Therefore, the rapid growth of Facebook activities particularly in Nigerian democratic processes recently showcase its penetration into the mainstream of political culture and also integration into the daily lives of many Nigerians especially youth. Similarly, in the Nigerian political process the use of Facebook has become very popular since 2011 general elections (Titus-fannie *et al.,* 2013). Many political aspirants in Nigeria have been using Facebook to engage youth in discussing their political philosophies and agenda. In Bauchi, Facebook was the most dominant site used by the two most popular political parties.

The All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) directed their campaign messages and interacted with youth during election period. Many political movement groups were initiated on Facebook to mobilize youth and checkmate government excesses towards the masses. These groups includes Neighbour 2 Neighbour, Alliance for Good Governance among others.

The impact of Facebook on youth mobilization have been tremendously apparent because of the fact that in our contemporary day media ICTs, Facebook and global connectivity have collectively joint to impact the lives of our youth thereby generating what is now referred to as global media driven youth culture (Saha, Print, & Edwards, 2005).

Thus, this shows that the rate and speed at which Facebook is penetrating youth interest in politics is generally remarkable. Thus, it will continue to influence their perception, understanding and thinking pattern together with their political decisions. The relevance of Facebook in Nigeria and beyond is such that most of our political leaders presently own and maintain a Facebook account in other to interact directly

with their constituents regularly (Titus-fannie *et al.,* 2013). Today, world leaders like Barack Obama and Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari and many others are using Facebook for constant interaction with the masses. This further suggest that the feelings, perceptions as well as reactions of the youth over the new interactive medium is highly appreciable. Therefore, the strategy employed by many world political leaders of reaching the electorates especially youth is gaining ground.

It is against this background, many studies have documented that in different socio-political change experiences, youth are apparently the most prone to accepting and reacting to new changes either accepting or rejection more than any age group. Therefore, it will not be out of place for someone to ponder on the introduction and application of Facebook to Nigerian political processes has serves as a catalyst to youth online/offline political participation in recent years. To this end, Facebook has contributed to the increase of online/offline political participation in Nigeria for instance the online/offline forums such as Reclaim Naija and Occupy Nigeria used Facebook pages to consolidate and galvanize support from youth particularly (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). Thus, the unprecedented revolution of political youth participation in Nigeria can be attributed to the emergence of Facebook however, few studies have examine how Facebook usage and interactivity with politician can encourage political participation among youth (Dagona *et al.,* 2013).

2.5 Underpinning Theories

Uses and Gratification Theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory are used as theoretical underpinning. Thus, the first theory serves as the main while the last theory serves as supporting.

2.5.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and Gratification is one of the most influential theories in the field of communication research because the theory advocates the concept of needs which are inherent in most individuals and needs are central to human experience. The theory advocates that all gratifications are borne out of innate needs thus, affordance of social media such as Facebook can shape user needs. Similarly, Uses and Gratification theory offer clues to our understanding about exactly what needs are, where they originate and how they are gratified (Dhaha & Igale, 2013; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008). Nevertheless, in trying to operationalize and understand the factors that motivate people especially youth to use social media, many scholars have connected their researches to uses and gratification theory (Chan, 2015).

The theory is connected with the studies of Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) that seek to understand why and how people in the society actively and purposely look out particular media to satisfy their needs and desires. Uses and gratification theory can be interpreted as a psychological communication perspectives which focuses attention on how individuals use media to fulfil their needs. Thus, the theory shifted the attention away from media sources and information influence to audience uses of media content. Therefore, the theory provides understanding on social and psychological individual needs which generates expectations of the media.

The theory's assumptions includes, audience are active not passive and media consumptions satisfies number of needs ranging from fantasy-escape to information that can educate the audience. Similarly, citizens have certain sufficient self-awareness to understand and clearly know their reason for using particular media (Chan, 2015).

According to Uses and Gratification perspectives, media usage is often decided and influenced by people's needs and motives to communicate, this means that people rely on media to satisfy specific desire and in the process they cultivate certain amount of dependency on the media (Vitak *et al.,* 2011). Uses and Gratification theory also focuses on how media are used to satisfy cognitive and affective needs that has to do with personal and entertainment needs.

From the perspectives of Facebook usage, this theory embodies a new trend now in the society that people have begun to identify several gratifications from the social networking sites use that motivate them to engage in interpersonal communication and socialization. It is also right to say that youth in particular recently spend more time online using Facebook because the medium is accessible, interactive and serve interpersonal function such as building relationships, social recognition, entertainment and information function (Leung, 2009).

The Uses and Gratification theory on social media tools literature is fast evolving. There are many studies carried out to explore the gratifications obtained by the different youth from Facebook platforms (Dhaha & Igale, 2013; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Shao, 2009; Zhang, Johnson, Seltzer, & Bichard, 2009). These researches focused specifically on one or two of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and YouTube. Similarly, some scholars deliberated on how the respondents befriended with the political party candidates through MySpace. They adopted the Uses and Gratification approach to define the gratifications gained by the respondents from visiting the candidates' profiles in the election of 2008 in United Stated of America. Similarly, Mohammed, (2016) research revealed that the social

interaction, information seeking and guidance, and entertainment as the fundermental motives for visiting the candidates' profile on MySpace.

However, there are numerous studies conducted on the Uses and Gratifications of Facebook among many populations. As the theory suggested, the gratifications obtained and pursued from Facebook vary from one individual to another. Raine (2008) explored the uses and gratifications gained from using Facebook generally, as well as seeking political information on Facebook among youth. Below is a table indicating previous studies employed uses and gratification theory.

Table 2.2

Indicating previous studies that employed Uses and Gratification Theory in their researches related to social media

Author	Application	Research Method	Sample size
McManimon, 2014	Social Media	Online Survey	1000 respondents
Nnanyelugo & Nwafor, 2013	Facebook	Survey	384 respondents
Dhaha & Igale, 2013	Facebook	Online Survey	311 respondents
Chan, 2015	Social Media	Survey	401 respondents
Cho, Kim, Park & Lee, 2014	Facebook	Survey	504 respondents.
Lee & Cho, 2011.	Facebook and Twitter	Online Survey	386 respondents.

The above table indicates how Uses and Gratification theory have been previously used in social media related researches by the different scholars which provides psychological, political and sociological motivation among individuals taking part in receiving or exchanging messages. Thus, the coming of new media has revived the importance of Uses and Gratification theory at the same time the theory has provided an innovative theoretical approach in the initial stages of each new means of communication medium such as Newspapers, Television, radio and now Facebook.

This argument support the use and application of the theory to explain reasons and motivations of youth choosing Facebook to gratify their needs of seeking political information, social interactions and personal identity.

According to the study on Facebook groups Uses and Gratification by Park *et al.,* 2009), Facebook users are often motivated to satisfy their needs related to information, self-expression, socializing and quest to participate. Additionally, in a more recent study of Facebook, Vitak, *et al.,* (2011) applied Uses and Gratification framework to determine relationship between motivation and the use of positive features of Facebook like comments, interactivity and nature of information..

Thus, it is important to acknowledge that Facebook is the world leading social network, what is more noteworthy is that Facebook has recently change the process by which youth specifically interact and share political message. Therefore, it is important to extract motivational factors based on the features of Facebook by encompassing the existing concept of Uses and Gratification theory.

Although, before now different people have used a combination of traditional media such as radio, television and newspaper to satisfy their desires but these gratification were not realized because of lack of accessibility, unresponsiveness and expensive nature of old media. However, with the coming of social media such as Facebook individuals media consumers became more active in sending messages to other people in their social networks. People particularly youth, became empowered and instantly gratified. Additionally, majority of people especially youth use Facebook because the platform is an efficient way to communicate with friends and has speed of getting quality and recent information (Gromping, 2014).

Uses and Gratification theory assumes that people are not passive but play the role of an engaged active audience who often interpret and integrate media into their system (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). This is to say that the theory emphasizes that people or youth may use media to fulfil certain specific gratification such as using Facebook to acquire information and knowledge that will help them judge or understand what a person is like. For instance, youth often examine the profile of a politician to form an opinion about his principles and ideologies. Thus, the main thrust of Uses and Gratification theory is that people do have needs which has influence on these type of people, also those who are particularly exposed to, attend and equally hold on to media messages due to the perceived gratification inherent in those messages (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013).

Relating Uses and Gratification theory to social media, it may be right to say that Facebook provides more advanced and interactivity than traditional media, therefore Facebook has contributed more importantly with interaction and provided a considerable level of control of mass communication from the message produces to the now media consumer. Youth now can access and send messages and also receive information at a convenient time. Furthermore, studies emphasised motives of accessing media which includes seeking for information, entertainment, personal identity, integration and social interactions (Miller, 2005) and invariably youth now use Facebook for information, pass time, entertainment, relaxation and social interaction in the society (Williams, Gulati, & Yates, 2013).

Further, Uses and Gratification often provide a front-line theoretical approach in the initial stages of mass communication medium such as newspapers, radio, television and now social media. Thus, it may safe to say that the timely emergence of social

media such as Facebook has encouraged the theoretical influence of uses and gratification theory by allowing it to stimulate productive research into a proliferating new media. This can be supported with the fact that uses and gratification theory permit researchers to investigate mediated communication situations through a different sets of psychological needs, communication channels, communication content and psychological gratification within a particular or cross-cultural context. For instance, the use of Facebook has been linked to youth's motivation to seek for political knowledge and information purpose which is also linked to the fulfilment of gratification such as social personality and identity, interpersonal communication social interaction, companionship, escape, entertainment and information seeking (Ruggiero, 2000).

Apparently, when applying Uses and Gratification theory to this research, Facebook users purposely seek for massages to satisfy both personal and interpersonal needs. Thus, youth especially they are able to select and use Facebook in other to suit their curiosity and purpose. The platform is interactive and accessible with immediacy driven tendencies to motivate youth to become active users in the communication process. Uses and gratification theory advocates how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy their needs and allow them to increase knowledge, relaxation and social interaction which also Facebook stance for (Whiting & Williams, 2013) Similarly, political figures often chose and use media of their interest and information of their interest during campaign and elections.

To this end, the theory emphasized on some basic assumptions which includes first the audience are active, media use should be goal-oriented, media consumption fulfils a number of needs from fantasy-escape to information and education.

Similarly, the theory emphasized that youth for instance have adequate self-awareness to know and articulate their reasons for using Facebook due to the fact that the medium featured more advanced that legacy media. This means that Facebook contributed with interactivity between youth and political figures in the context of political participation.

Additionally, considerable amount of literature of Uses and Gratification framework provides more comprehensive concept of motivation to media, McQuail (2005) emphasized that people are often motivated to access media such as information, personal identity, entertainment and social interaction. Whiting and Williams, (2013) conducted a research on reasons for using social media and found out that social interaction, information seeking, passing time, entertainment, relaxation, communication utility are the factors for using social media. Similarly, Oh, Bellur, and Sundar, (2015) explored on uses and gratification for social media and found out that interaction, responsiveness, dynamic control, seeking information among others are the factors why people especial youth use social media such as Facebook. Aad *et al.,* (2012) conducted a research on political participation through Myspace and Facebook based on uses and gratification and found that user access to political profile and information availability are some of the motivating factors for using social media.

According to the Uses and Gratification theory, people access new media such as Facebook for their personal motivation either for information, socialization, entertainment, personal identity or self-expression. Thus, individual quest for political information presume is the most common motivation among users especially youth while entertainment have been characterized as the less factor

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(Chan, 2015). Therefore, with the evidence above of related researches, this study advocates that Uses and Gratification theory explain the motivation of youth choosing Facebook to accomplish communication and political goals because of their quest for seeking political information, social interaction, self-expression, entertainment and dynamic control.

2.5.2 Deliberative Democratic Theory

Deliberative Democratic Theory can simply be traced back to the works of German social theorist called Jurgen Habermas. He emphasised that a healthy political systems required to sustain a vibrant and active public sphere where by diverse members of a given society can freely and mutually interact with the aim of addressing common issues. The theorist further argued that citizens should debate on issues based on the need or merits of their argument without any intemperance or external influence. Many scholars have been arguing that the political system should not be founded only in aggregative civic behaviours such as voting, the traditional indicator of healthy democracy, but rather a public life where citizens can participate actively by increasing their capacity for public deliberation and judgement (Carpini, 2000; Putnam, 2000).

Deliberate democracy denotes to the idea that democratic practice and rule making should depend on informed discussion of voters. It is a normative political theory that assumes rational communication behaviour and voluntary participation in public affairs on the part of citizens (Pritzker & McBride, 2009). Thus, applying Deliberate Democratic theory to this study is much relevant because social media such as Facebook are facilitators of youth political participation that help them to interact among themselves which may generate outcome that will secure the public or

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common good through reasoning rather than through political power. Deliberate Democratic theory is based not on a competition between conflicting interests but on exchange information and justifications supporting varying perspectives on the public good. Also, for participatory democrats, political deliberations can have a transformational influence since citizens discover legitimate solution to political problem only by engaging in sustained, reflective discourse (Solvang, 2009).

The theory is one of the normative press theories which was an alternative politico-media ideology and perspective that aims to democratize access to the media as against the monopolistic tendencies of the so called powerful political and economic gladiators and forces operating in the society. Thus, the coming of the theory is highly motivated by discontentment with the Libertarian Media theory of the press and also the Social Responsibility theory. This dichotomy arose due to the failure of the two theories to achieve social and political benefits anticipated from them. Similarly, the two theories were not able to prevent the centralization and democratization of public media even when they have been founded according to social responsibility principles (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014).

Nevertheless, political discussion is not a fresh idea. General democratic scholars such as Bryce (1973), Fishkin (1995), Dewey (1927), and Putnam (2000) established on the consequences and benefits of participation in politics. A prominent advocates of Democratic Deliberation theory was Jurgen Habermas. Habermas, (2006) argued for the formation of individual public opinion exceeding to joint decision-making, organizing a public sphere and a participatory democracy. Citizens' discussions with positive ideas and opinions would offer reasons for their stances and collectively conveying increased participation to society's concerns. Deliberation could serve as

an avenue for encouraging groups of persons to clarify their needs and interests. The insertion of Facebook in youth's daily communication practices sees contemporary scholars ringing the perseverance of preceding scholars towards a deliberative framework. The viewpoint of current researchers of online deliberation added echoes to the views of the earlier deliberation scholars that democracy needs a complete, socially inclusive participation of common voters deliberating society's issues and encouraging constructive social change. It cannot be efficacious without society's interest and the reinvention of social media platforms in Internet (Eveland & Scheufele, 2000; Skoric, AlAwadhi, & Scholl, 2015; Soule, 2001).

Research has presented the social networking sites as a solution to the impossibility of holding large-scale political discussion in democratic societies. In fact, scholars have seen social media which is an instrument by which the theory of deliberative democracy can be applied through discussion forums occurring at different times (Coleman & Gøtze, 2002). Supported by its tendencies to make democracy enriching communication channel or forum not affected by limitations of time and space (Freelon, 2010), empirical studies have shown that online deliberative activities do bring potential positive effects on democracy (Chambers, 2003).

Giving the increasing important role of Facebook on youth online/offline political participation in contemporary social and political life, deliberative theory is ideal in that scenario. The theory suggest ways in which youth can enhance democracy and criticize institutions that do not live up to standard or address their socio-political problems (Mayoral, 2011). Thus, the ultimate aim of deliberative democratic practise is increased citizen's participation, better outcomes and more authentic society which this study stands for.

Consequently, the theory represents a more fundamental and radical effort to neutralized and consolidate all categories of monopoly in media gate-keeping therefore accommodating common participation as represented by the diverse societal interest such as youth, political parties, labour and other pressure groups. Additionally, the theory opposes the emergence of monopoly journalism as a result of extreme commercialization of the media especially in the developed societies.

Generally, the theory is interested on how deliberation can empower the oppressed and marginalized citizens (youth in the case of this study), resolve differences, increase recognition and come up with a reasonable policy and opinion (Chambers, 2003). Therefore, the major claims and assumptions of the theory is opinion formation through deliberation that can change mind and transform ideas and opinions.

Applied to this study, the Deliberative Democratic theory helps to conceptualize Facebook as a platform for popular democratic participation where the majority of youth excluded from the bureaucracy invaded traditional media would have opportunity to make their contribution to governance. Thus, Facebook, by virtue of its dynamics, naturally provides the opportunity for youth to popular participation (Miller *et al.,* 2015).

Basically, both Uses and Gratification theory and Deliberative Democratic theory advocates that participation should be open and accessible to every individual in the society irrespective of stature or standing and free from any state domination political control. The two theories thus, emphasized free flow of two-way communication and exchange of information among individual to enable them make

an informed socio-political decision. Therefore, the two theories advocate the ideal of healthy and deliberative democracy in which youth for example make decisions based on unrestricted rational discussion and holds those in power responsible and accountable for their actions or policies (Borton, 2014).

Uses and gratification theory is concern with how people use the media to satisfy their needs, and the audience are proactive and often choose what they want to see, read or hear (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Thus, this presupposes that people use media for some purposes such as personal guidance, identity formation, interactivity, socio-political control and seeking public information. Therefore, the accessibility of Facebook empowers youth to know more on political information and encourage them to participate in political activities, this also translates the fact that accessing and sharing of knowledge and information expressing new ideas, giving feedback are the fundamental activities that youth do through Facebook to participate in political activities (Chan, 2015). While on the other hand, Democratic theory advocates on pluralism as against monopolization of the media and also stresses its commitment to feedback in socio-political communication path. In fact, the theory advocates for grass roots political participation (Whiting & Williams, 2013) which Facebook stance for in this research. Additionally, Deliberative democratic theory emphasizes on the equality between sender of the message and receiver which opposes the command or superiority between sender and receiver in a one way communication system in traditional media.

Therefore, when applied to this study the Deliberative Democratic theory helps to conceptualize Facebook as a platform for political deliberation for online/offline participation where politically marginalized youth by the traditional media will have

the chance and opportunity to make their voices heard and also contribute to governance vis-à-vis Uses and gratification theory also helps to conceptualize the audience (youth) of new media as an active and influential factor in determining the extent Facebook motivates and propels civic and political participation among youth in Nigeria specifically (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014).

To this end, it is important to note that studies on online/offline political participation emerged with mixed results and controversies on whether youth participation in political affairs has declined or it has taken a new dimensions, thus it is against this that there is the need for further studies to be pursued in other to enhance our understanding of online/offline political participation especially among youth. Indeed, there has been a lack of consensus on the declining of traditional political participation among youth, some scholars believe that many youth have started running away from traditional pattern of being passive to the new way of employment. Youth specifically are now seeking out for more political information through social interaction with friends and associates.

Further, youth have now created a new form of social interactions by using online social media (Facebook) which replace the old version of traditional media (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). Similarly, according to these scholars youth disengagement from traditional channels of participation has been exaggerated, and to them youth that were marginalized have now found a means of voicing their voices through social media such as Facebook (Ekman & Amnå, 2012).

Other school of thought believe that voting has been considered as the fundamental primary channel for youth to make their voices heard in a political affair, thus it

should be the best way to measure declining political participation among them. Consequently, voting turnout among youth during electoral process for more than two decades has been decreasing (Putnam, 2000; Wattenberg, 2012). Literature also indicated that youth lack the knowledge of political process, they do not have confidence in political office holders, and in fact youth do not believe their participation in politics can make any difference (Carpini, 2000). These scholars documented their facts and argue that youth have developed negative behaviour towards political parties and politics and thus they do not participating during voting because to them their votes is not important irrespective of who wins election (Diemer & Li, 2011; Ekman & Amnå, 2012).

However, both side may be correct but most importantly is the fact that growing academic interest and debate has alerted researcher, political commentators and political figures about the shortcoming in the literature in the area of political participation. Nonetheless, little has been discussed on the concepts used by many researchers to describe changes in youth online/offline participation in politics and the confusion about disengagement and declining level of political participation among youth (Carpini, 2000; Jennings, 1995; Mcleod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999).

In addition, literature have revealed that youth have complicated the debate about their contemporary political participation because they are neither seriously apathetic nor at the forefront of new political system (Harris *et al.,* 2010). This further suggest that while some youth do have interest in their representative government or political officials, many have been struggling to be heard by the politicians and be included in the process of decision making within the traditional political structure which practically marginalized them. Similarly, some youth have now chose new protest

techniques, others are still holding to their personal concerns of being individualized. However, this different and sometimes contradictory scenarios of youth political dilemma characterized with complex issues concerning political participation calls for a scholarly examination (Harris *et al.,* 2010).

Consequently, in the quest for youth to gratify and satisfy their political ambitions studies have suggested that they have now developed 'romance' with online new political participation which lower the cost of participation, creates new platform for interactivity and enhance channels of information that was not previously possible in traditional legacy media (Di Gennaro & Dutton, 2006; Zheng, 2015). Researches have suggested that social media such as Facebook has a positive effect on voting behaviour especially among youth by creating a social network that allow for the consumption and sharing of political information (Bryan, 2013).

Additionally, some also believe that Facebook usage and strength of diverse friends' political discussion through Facebook appears to be a positive determinant of youth online political participation (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012). But despite the increase popularity of Facebook usage in recent time, there is limited empirical study on the influence of its usage especially on youth online/offline political participation (Lampe *et al.,* 2007; Park *et al.,* 2009). This concern is also in line with the fact that the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation has not been resolved (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011; Kushin, M. J & Yamamoto M, 2010; Park *et al.*, 2009; Skoric & Kwan, 2011). Therefore, a broader understanding of political participation is needed because concept and practices need to be refine and better understood (Mohamad, 2013).

Conclusively, many studies have been conducted in Nigeria on Facebook usage and political participation recently, yet it not clear why youth political interest suddenly changed and what is really motivating them (Uzochukwu & Ekwugha, 2014). Additionally, most of the researches conducted in Nigeria emphasised on electoral violence or student academic performances, thus literature in Nigeria have not fully capture relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceive Facebook information quality, political interest, online/offline political participation among youth (Dagona *et al.,* 2013). Thus, the present study examines the connection between Facebook use, online and offline political participation among youth.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, the definition of political participation as a concept has been analyzed from different scholars. In this study, political participation has been defined as the process of gathering and sharing of political information online, interaction with politicians, participating in political campaign or taking part in voting exercise, influencing others to vote and participation in the selection of official representatives. Similarly, under review the concept of political participation has been examined from engagement and disengagement perspectives, also offline/online participating has been discussed in this chapter. Finally, Uses and Gratification theory and Deliberative democratic theory were analyzed and gaps were identified.

In the subsequent chapter, the conceptual models of this research were identified and the development of hypothesis was examined. Consequently, the relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook

information quality and political interest were explained, and hypothesis were developed and established.

CHAPTER THREE
HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

Four main concepts that were deliberated in this research are: Facebook Usage, Interactivity with Political Figures, Perceived Facebook information quality and Political Interest. Hence, the arrangement and structure of this chapter is as follows. First, it reviews the connections between online/offline political participation and hypotheses were developed after the discussion of each relationship of the concepts of the framework.

3.2 Hypotheses Development and Theoretical Framework

In trying to clarify the connections among different constructs motivating youth online/offline political participation, two conceptual models are suggested. The conceptual models serves as a way of illustrating the several dimensions of political participation and how Facebook political activities motivate online/offline political participation among youth. Figure 3.1 shows the key constructs. The basic conceptual assumptions of this study are that Facebook usage is an entity promotes online/offline political participation among youth and that the major variables on Facebook usage that are associated with online/offline political participation are the nature of the youth's interactivity with political figures on the site, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest.

Therefore, the chapter starts with the opalization of concept of social media, Facebook usage, and interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest. Subsequently, the relationship between

online/offline political participation has been established with the development of hypotheses

3.3 The Concept of Social Media

Social media are the collection of online communication channels that facilitate interaction and content sharing among users. These includes; Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Viber and Skype. Participation appears to be the important concept that explains the difference between 'old' web and 'new' social media. (Effing, Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011). Social media give access and information to the users, allow them to interact with organizations and empower users with options to collaborate with different organizations (Effing *et al.,* 2011). Thus, with this user participation level may likely to increase because they are going to be more active participants more than before. Social media often rely on the concept of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is a term that was initially used in 2004 to explain the new way in which software developers and users began to utilize World Wide Web; which was a platform that the application and content where created, published and modified by the users in a more participatory way and not by any single individual (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Furthermore, social media can also be defined as the internet-based technology that allow people to create, send or receive information, ideas and pictures online. In another words, social media are interactive computer-mediated channel that allow citizens opportunity to create and share their opinion, experiences and contacts. These technologies are interactive web-based media platforms which provides youth an avenue to connect, share feelings, opinion, experience, knowledge and skills. Mayfield (2008) describes social media as online medium of communication that

promote participation, openness, conversation and connectedness. Logan (2010) sees social media as "social instruments of communication which are entirely different from the conventional legacy media like newspapers, magazines radio or television.

Thus, social media appear as a vital source of political information as well as a site of social and political participation where politicians and government can create avenues for youth political participation, engage and also empower them for numerous benefits. Undouble, social media can play a role in the information environment like the traditional media such as radio, television and early internet. Social media sources open up new avenues of influence and discourse. Thus, as the medium has already started developing, social interaction on Facebook offers similar impacts on social involvement as in-person interaction (Dalton, 2008). Social interaction is imperative in sustaining and maintaining a rich society and to preserve the democracy.

However, this study focuses on Facebook as one of the types of social media. Facebook is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends, families and associates (Dumitrica, 2014). Therefore, the choice of Facebook in this study is in relation with the fact that the technology is fast growing world-wide which also become a platform for political activities for young people (Ksiazek, Peer, & Lessard, 2014; Lusoli *et al.,* 2006).

Facebook is an online social media sites that allows users interact with other users by exchanging information or opinion about themselves through personal profile (Conroy *et al.,* 2012). Currently, the medium of Facebook is the most popular

growing online social media platform with over 1 billion active users around the world surpassing other online social networks like twitter, Myspace and Instagram. Facebook in 2004 started as a service only rendered to university staff and students, in September, 2006 Facebook was expanded and gain global registration.

Since then, Facebook has increased tremendously and become a popular online network site especially for youth and students all over the world (Conroy *et al.,* 2012). Facebook have been helping users to share their information by "friending" other users and also allow them to have access to their profile. Facebook started as a small network on campus in America but now has more than hundred million active members (Facebook, 2012) and has become a great source of information, dialogue and expression. Facebook online features allows for participants to be more free and outspoken concerning their thoughts or feelings. Therefore, this aspect may further increase social pressure to vote felt through online network. The consequences of Facebook influence are showcased in the happenings and accomplishments in the U.S. 2008 presidential election and the Arab Spring (Howard & Hussain, 2011). From it beginning in Tunisia and Egypt, Facebook connected discontent and previously isolated people. The medium allowed isolated and voiceless groups to communicate and speak (Howard & Hussain, 2011).

3.4 The Relationship between Facebook usage, and Online/ Offline Political Participation

Literature has documented Facebook to represents an understudied offline/online trend (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2007). Nevertheless, at the time of writing this thesis, Facebook basically have been the most popular social media site in the world with over 1 billion registered accounts (Amazing Facebook statistics, 2015).

Facebook was first founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 as a platform for college students in America and later in 2006 the service was opened to any interested user with an e-main address (Ulusu, 2010).

Facebook is a Website with a different variety and useful tools that users may require on internet, it also allow youth for instance to create 'Wall' which is a place they can post information, photos and videos. Obviously, users of Facebook engage in social and political activities such as searching new and old friends, surveillance and monitoring events, seeking for information and knowledge, establishing and maintaining a relationship (Vitak, *et al.,* 2011). Equally, Facebook is often used by campaigners and ordinary people as a source of information and platform to expand their campaign and viewpoint (Kim, 2011).

Facebook allow users with a series of opportunities for marketers, advertisers and politicians to get close to their markets and supporters through effective communication strategies, sponsoring activities online and interactive forum online. Therefore, with the popularity, quality and interactive nature of Facebook the platform is now the one of the subject of numerous researchers and academicians from various fields of studies (Ellison *et al.,* 2007). Additionally, the technology has transform the process of accessing and sharing of information globally especially to the youth, it has also reinvigorate them to engage into the social and political issues (Ulusu, 2010).

Evidently, the use of Facebook recently for political participation, worldwide has greatly increased especially among youth (Skoric & Poor, 2013; Towner, 2013), and they are particularly using Facebook to influence social and political change. Studies

have suggested that youth are now using Facebook to seek for political information, mobilize like minds, create user-generated content and share political views (Thun, 2014). Aside from this, there is little research addressing the pattern of Facebook use among youth (Chan & Guo, 2013). Although, researches on Facebook use have indicated updating one's profile on Facebook and diverse number of friends may likely lead to voting (Wyngarden, 2012). However, in trying to understand the growing political use of Facebook, researchers have suggested investigating Facebook pattern of usage, network size of Facebook, interactivity with political actors and political participation (Tang & Lee, 2013).

The 2008 US presidential campaign and election was the first to fully take advantage of Facebook usage to young American voters, particularly first timers. Barack Obama's campaign team effectively made use of Facebook in many ways to reach out to young voters. Thus, he won almost 70 percent of votes of youth by using the Facebook effectively. Therefore, the increase use of Facebook and its growth has led to the emergence of youth that participate in the online/offline political activities (Gennaro & Dutton, 2006).

Increasingly, Facebook has been used to mobilize individuals to participate in politics and protest around the world (Carlisle & Patton, 2013). In particular, considering Western democracies where scholars are concern with the decline of youth in political participation (Putnam, 2000), Facebook appears to hold hopes for increase political participation and reinforcing democracy (Solvang, 2009). This however, suggest that Facebook can help convert or mobilize the people that have been disengage from offline politics to now participate in an online political activities.

This statement has synergy with the work of Theocharis and Quintelier (2014). The authors believe that Facebook provides suitability and accessibility for a sufficient number of people, improved access to information, online opportunities for political expression and political action. Similarly, Facebook help citizens to identify and affiliate with like-minds which may eventually draw in those that have been deprived with traditional methods of political participation (Boulianne, 2009).

Eventually, with the coming of Facebook, youth have been reinvigorated to participate in political activities by creating new opportunities for participation with substantively lower cost (Bimber, 2005; Earl & Kimport, 2011). The above statement is important to this research especially as it capture the impact of Facebook in political participation in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Facebook has now become an important tool for mobilizing youth into active engagement in political process and democratic processes (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). It also allow youth to express their grievances, interact with their friends, share information and at the same time publish their own views on the internet (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013).

However, Facebook and other social media sites are often use to sensitize and mobilize youth for political purposes but it appears that in some places in America and other part of Europe some users do not appreciate its relevance in terms of recruiting people to engage with political issues (Ternes *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, this indicates that the potential of Facebook to increase youth political knowledge and participation may not be realized. For instance, 49% of American that uses social networking sites do not appreciate their importance especially in terms of discussing political matters while 59% explains that social networking sites are not significant when it comes to mobilizing people to participate in (Ternes *et al.,* 2014).

Contrary to the above statement, other studies indicated that Facebook have been characterized with limited cost, high speed and instant feedback generation with precision aimed at specific recipients which increase the dissemination of political information and effective mobilization of youth (Skoric & Kwan, 2011). Furthermore, Facebook recently is being used to engage youth in online political activities. In 2012 for example, 66 percent of social media users reportedly to have used Facebook for civic or political activities (Smyth & Best, 2013; Ulusu, 2010). Similarly, more than 40 percent of Americans with social media sites became political active during 2008 election (Smith *et al.,* 2009).

In the context of Nigeria, Facebook was first actively tested and used during 2011 general elections. For the first time, it gave many Nigerian youth the opportunity to express their opinions and interest in the electoral process. Many positive result were achieved during the election as a result of Facebook usage by the politicians. In fact, local, national and international observers recommended the recent election was the best since the return of democracy from prolong successive military dictatorships. However, after the election, the Human Right Watch report of April 18, 2011 indicated that despite the huge success recorded, there were also some level of irregularities in the election.

Similarly, Facebook usage in Nigeria can be well understood with the revolution brought about by the introduction of mobile phone in Nigeria. According to African Facebook use statistics 2013, Nigeria has more than 149 million lines that are in use making Nigeria one of the fastest growing mobile phone market in the world. This development also allows more people to go online via their mobile phones.

Facebook is generating a new generation of Nigerians who have neither power nor money but have influence (Nwakanma, 2014). The technology is a platform where you can be the news, you can make the news, and you can report news all at the same time. Thus, it empowers a new generation of individuals (Nasution, 2014). Furthermore, Facebook penetration in Nigeria has been at 6 percent as of January 2014, accounting for 11.2 million users. Therefore, Nigeria is among the eight countries where Facebook use and mobile penetration has reached 65 percent of the population.

However, Nigeria with a population of 180 million in the world rank 8th Facebook user in the world with over 67 million users (internetworldstatistics, 2014). This therefore, makes Nigeria an appropriate country in which Facebook use for online/offline political participation needs to be examined. Thus, the study was conducted in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The State is located in Northern Nigeria (Northeast precisely). Its capital is the city of Bauchi. The state was created in 1976 and now has 20 Local Government Areas. According to the 2006 Census, the state has a population of 4,178,683 and has different tribal groups in which Hausa, Fulani, Gerawa, Sayawa and Jarawa among others. The State was blessed with eminent scholars and politicians such as the first and only Prime Minister of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafa-Belewa.

In spite of the growing popularity of Facebook as a facilitator of political activities, many scholars have expressed serious concerns regarding the pattern of Facebook usage and democratic value of the medium (Feezell, Conroy, & Guerrero, 2009; Waller, 2013). Scholars argued on whether Facebook may help to increase democratic society by mobilizing youth to participate in an online/offline political

activities and dissemination of political knowledge (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011). In this regard, some scholars believe Facebook as an entertainment medium (Baumgartner & Morris, 2009). On the other hand, studies have indicated Facebook may have a positive and strong influence on youth online/offline political participation (Jarvis, 2010).

Nevertheless, studies have indicated that Facebook is more powerful than traditional media (Gromping, 2014). Facebook provides a similar and advanced features in terms of exposure to information but has the additional benefits and advantages of global reach, better quality and greater speed and also an interactive medium of online political discussion. With these features, Facebook shows a significant role in the formation of political knowledge (Muntean, 2015). Additionally, youth today get their political information from social media (Facebook) rather than the legacy traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers.

The information given is more interactive, user friendly, concise and easier to comprehend. Youth are frequently posting political issues online, their views and opinions in relations to politics, sharing news and informative articles, their interaction with political actors and viewing videos about political activities. Therefore, it can be safe to say that Facebook is suitable medium to spread political knowledge among youth and in turn increase their online/offline political participation. Political knowledge, as defined by Carpini (2000), is the series of factual and true information concerning politics or political actors that is kept in a long-term memory.

Over the years, it has been argued that political knowledge is one of the important political variable that serves as a strong indicator of an ideal functioning democracy (Kenski & Stroud, 2006). Thus, electorates' proper knowledge and understanding of politics is imperative in other for them to make informed decision or choice (Carpini, 2000). A well-structured and democracy requires citizens with effective knowledge, skills, and a personality of character (Ngagement, Ducation, & Galston, 2001). The knowledge and skills are much needed to judge and interpret deeds or actions of politicians and representatives with a critical and analytical mind. Political knowledge is highly required to be a competent democratic participant and analyze government public policy and institutions which in turn showcase well-grounded and effective judgements.

In relation to the above statement, Popkin and Dimock (2000), emphasized that citizens with low levels of political knowledge or lack of good information about politics may certainly not engage into public discussion of issues, make any meaningful judgement and also are probably not going to participate in political activities at all. Knowledge of politics and public participation are very important especially in terms of political decision making in a democratic setting. Also, political knowledge is an essential ingredient for participation in politics such as turn out for voting (Binder *et al.,* 1971; Carpini, 2000). Thus, there is a positive relationship between political knowledge and online and offline political participation (Brooks, Carpini, & Keeter, 1997).

In light of the above evidence, it becomes clear that Facebook usage make likely increase online political participation among youth (Vissers *et al.,* 2012) and lead to offline participation (Wyngarden, 2012). Additionally, studies have found a positive

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relationship between the intensity of Facebook usage and civic and political participation (Ellison *et al.,* 2007; Park *et al.,* 2009). Two deferent researches have clearly examined the link between Facebook usage and political participation and suggested that Facebook usage is relevant to online/offline participation (Conroy *et al.,* 2012; Vitak *et al.,* 2011).

A significant positive relationship between Facebook usage and online political participation exist (Skoric & Kwan, 2011; Tang & Lee, 2013; Theocharis, 2011; Conroy *et al.,* 2012; Chan & Guo, 2013; Lahabou & Wok, 2011; Bakker & Vreese, 2011; Vissers & Stolle, 2014). Additionally, studies indicates that Facebook use is positively related to offline political participation (Ternes, Mittelstadt & Towere, 2014; Carlisle & Patton, 2013; Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011; Hirzalla, Zoonen & Ridder, 2011; Ahmed & Sheikh, 2013; Miller *et al.,* 2015; Vissers & Stolle, 2014; Theocharis, 2011).

Facebook foster exposure to political mobilization and make political information more available, the medium is a potential means of recruiting people that were not politically motivated before into a new online/offline political activities. Thus, the accessibility and interactivity nature on Facebook can effectively function as what is now referred as 'gateway participation' (Vissers *et al.,* 2012) Thus, the researcher propose the first hypothesis on the Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth.

- *Hypothesis 1a: There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and online political participation among youth.*

- ***Hypothesis 1b:*** *There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and offline political participation among youth.*

3.4.1 The Relationship between Interactivity with Political Figures and Online/Offline Political Participation

Interactivity is one of the important features of online participation which encourage users to interact with both content and sender of the message (Ksiazek *et al.,* 2014). In this study, interactivity with political figures is the direct connection with politicians, a process of two way flow of information and becoming a 'friend' through Facebook account or rather 'Wall' with a public elected politicians, community political activists and a commentator on political affairs (Zheng, 2015). Furthermore, members in a communication course should have a control over the medium and also exchange roles in the process through sending information and receiving feedback at the same time (Oh *et al.,* 2015).

Studies that are mobilization-oriented concentrates on the idea of e-democracy which translate to an interactive online environment where youth for instance can inform themselves about topical political issues and at the same time correspond with political representatives (Hirzalla Fadi, 2011). The nature of Facebook is no bordering, thus it helps youth to communicate and discuss many issues on the platforms and at the same time the medium encourages the sense of socialization among youth. For example youth use Facebook to build their social capital, interact with diversity of friends, discuss online with political figures, to meet other supporters of a candidate or political party, and update what people say about politics (Chan, 2015).

Facebook provides a great opportunity to political figures to reach out to their constituents and voters. The technology also link and facilitates interaction between community and elected political representatives by providing a public online 'Wall' a space where community members can easily write comments in favour or against their political leaders (Lahabou & Wok, 2011). Apparently, because of Facebook heavy usage and technological advantage which bridges the online/offline connections through interactivity and fostering political campaign and engagement; politicians are now using it to post their profiles, share political information and also directly interact with their supporters (Conroy *et al.,* 2012).

Facebook demonstrates the quality of instructiveness and a medium compared to traditional media thus, it allows two-way communication rather than one-directional dissemination of information to the audience (Mayfield, 2008). However, the interactivity nature of Facebook may allow and create the process of interdependence among the users as such, interactivity may likely contribute to online participation attitude towards politics (Lee & Cho, 2011).

Furthermore, Facebook is an online platform that allow users interact with each other through sharing of social and political information or messages via personal profiles. Users of Facebook share their information by 'friending' others and letting them to have access to their profile (Conroy *et al.,* 2012). Along this line, there is a reason to believe that Facebook usage may likely increase online/offline political participation among youth by linking them with many political figures in the area politics (Tang & Lee, 2013). In addition, political figures here means politicians, community political activities academics and media commentators that are versed and interested in political activities in the society, these group of people are highly influential in the

society because of their roles and responsibilities in public affairs. Therefore, interaction with political figures through Facebook may likely encourage and motivate youth to participate in an offline political activities such as attending political meetings, campaigns, or voting (Tang & Lee, 2013).

Recent literature shows that social interaction contributes positively to event participation, for instance people especially youth are more willing to honour invitation sent by someone they have already established relationship and interacted with (Tang & Lee, 2013). Thus, information that is distributed through multiplex networks and with existing established relationship and interaction via Facebook for example in which people are already connected online may likely trigger online and offline participation (Huang, Wang, & Yuan, 2014). Individual interaction and identity is a fundamental factor and instrumental towards invitation or influence for offline participation, thus message exchange online and the strength of social ties may influence political mobilization and participation (Marlowe, 2009; Vitak, *et al.,* 2011).

Nonetheless, the turning point for Facebook as a tool of political engagement in Nigeria was 2010. In May that year, the former president of Nigeria Goodluck Jonathan joined Facebook; it was the most potent endorsement of social media platform in the country, and subsequently Facebook became an avenue for youth in particular to connect and interact with Mr. President (Ogunlesi, 2013). This development really encouraged youth to write and post their opinions and comments. Similarly, even Barack Obama, Muhammadu Buhari (president of Nigeria) and some other presidents are on Facebook for regular interactions with their subjects (Aniekwe & Agbiboa, 2014). The relevance of Facebook usage in our contemporary

societies cannot be underestimated this is because most of our leaders, politicians and other relevant stockholders maintain Facebook or Twitter account to ease interaction with youth and strengthen political relationship with them (Titus-fannie *et al.,* 2013).

Since then, the use of Facebook provided a new lease of social and political life to Nigeria's youth and particularly the electoral process in the 2015 general election, the political parties and candidates used the medium to interact with their supporters. The interactive influence of Facebook on youth online political participation is also reflected in the World Youth Report (2005) thus, it is becoming increasingly obvious that through new media, ICTs and global interconnectedness have now joined to influence the lives of youth, creating what is known as global media driven youth culture (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006).

One important method that can be used to differentiate between Facebook usage from the traditional media is its interactive features which is a unique characteristic in terms of application because traditional media provide mostly one-way communication with potential voter. As Facebook now evolved, the sites of political figures and political parties is now more interactive and started to incorporate more multimedia and interactive characteristics (Dimitrova *et al.,* 2011). Similarly, Facebook provides more opportunities for connecting political figures and youth because of its simplicity, interactivity and affordability in nature.

While social media in general and Facebook in particular provides important opportunities for youth to interact with politicians and various stockholders, youth can become friends and initiate other linkages with political figures such as politicians in representatives bodies, government officials and prominent community

leaders through Facebook (Tang & Lee, 2013). Consequently, youth 'friendship' and interaction with those important political figures are likely to be vital source of political information and viewpoint (Gromping, 2014). Therefore, these political figures especially politicians, grass root activists and political commentators have the tendencies of mobilizing and influencing youth to participate in offline political activities (Feezell *et al.,* 2009).

Thus, interactions with these political figures may increase political participation because political interactivity and discussions may likely stimulate interest to participate in online/offline political activities due to the fact that the process of interaction itself influences opinion formation (Ksiazek *et al.,* 2014; Valenzuela Turner, 2011). Therefore, Facebook use appear as a fundermental source of political information as a result of political interactivity between youth and political figures thus, online interactivity seems to be correlated to political participation offline (Smith *et al.,* 2009; Dumitrica, 2014).

Based on the above evidences, the researcher propose the third hypothesis on interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among youth.

- ***Hypothesis 2a:*** *There is a significant relationship between interactivity with political figures and online political participation among youth.*

- ***Hypothesis 2b:*** *There is a significant relationship between interactivity with political figures and offline political participation among youth.*

3.4.2 The Relationship between Perceived Facebook Information Quality and Online/Offline Political Participation

Perceived Facebook information quality in this research means the quality of information provided by the Facebook especially to the youth who are the majority users of the medium (Skoric & Kwan, 2011). Thus, Facebook information quality can be measured by the accuracy of the information, its recency, speed, reliability of the information, completeness of the information as well as information presentation plan. Jung, Kim, & de Zúñiga, (2011) asserts that Facebook information quality is an important factor to success of an online interaction which may lead to political participation because youth in particular have been denied an avenue by the traditional media to participate in politics. Therefore, in the political participation context, this study defines information quality as the accuracy, speed, authenticity and quality of information provided by the Facebook to the youth.

Studies have reveals that people use a particular channel of communication because of both external and internal factors for instance, the strength and quality of the information, the credibility of source of the information, easy accessibility and understanding of the information, its timeliness, the organization and arrangement of the information and also the completeness and reliability of the information (Sundar, Bellur, Oh, Jia, & Kim, 2014). Similarly, individual personal purpose or intention of having good and reliable information can motivate people to select and use a specific media, therefore this can help in ascertain and justifying Facebook information quality as a motivating factor for youth inperticular for using Facebook for both online/offline political participation.

This can be supported with the fact that youth select and use Facebook because it may satisfy their political information needs and desires, youth's social and psychological factors often mediate quality of information among them (Diemer & Li, 2011). Uses and Gratification theory for example has recently focused on motivational factors involved in social networks such as Facebook which shifted from simple information searching to active self-expression and participation in political activities (Tang & Lee, 2013). Thus, Facebook information quality is now becoming increasingly attractive predictor of participation into political affairs as it provide accurate, complete, up to date, well arranged and organized information needed by the youth (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009).

Evidently, Young & Quan-Haase, (2009) engaged Uses and Gratification theory to compare motivations for Facebook usage and quality information and found that use of two tools is driven by similar motivational factors including socialization needs and information needs. Thus, youth need Facebook quality information to experience interpersonal communication satisfaction and to seek the approval and support of political party or candidate (Leung & Lee, 2014).

Furthermore, in the context of social media Ksiazek *et al.,* (2014) advocates that information quality such as accuracy, speed, timeliness and thoroughness of information may be a significant factors to use Facebook for social and political affairs. This however further suggest the fact that information content quality is an important determinant to online/offline participation and Facebook have been used to facilitate participation especially online political participation. Gromping, (2014) suggest that Facebook information quality has a positive relationship with political participation.

Facebook is one of the social media experience of many users around the world. More than 500 million registered people actively participate on Facebook keeping each other updated with news, knowledge and information concerning socio-economic and political affairs. This sharing and exchange of information shows a significant role in creating and sustaining a mutual understanding and rapport between sender and receiver of the message which may help them in decision making (Ellison *et al.,* 2007; Koroleva, Krasnova, & Günther, 2010). Thus, the quality of information in terms of accuracy, timeliness, completeness and its reliability justifies a remarkable and important factor in the choice of media and activity to engage in.

Perceived Facebook information quality as earlier discussed demonstrate youth's perception of the collective content quality of Facebook information (Huang *et al.,* 2014). Previous researches have documented that Facebook information quality can influence factors related to online political participation such as interactivity with individuals, usage intention to participate in offline politics activities such as engaging in civic or community services (Dong *et al.,* 2010; Ferber, Foltz, & Pugliese, 2007; Ellen Quintelier, 2007). This is because youth participation is often considered a significant element of a healthy democracy (Ellen Quintelier & Vissers, 2008), thus what facilitate youth's online/offline political participation is very important area of research to academics and political stakeholders. From the communication perspectives, the theoretical development of political participation has been focused on the influence of accurate and quality information from reliable and more interactive media which Facebook stands for because it facilitate interpersonal discussion about politics (Jung *et al.,* 2011). However, a considerable

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body of research has demonstrated important effects of Facebook information quality on online and offline political participation (Jung *et al.,* 2011).

Facebook as one of the social network site has evolve from being a network of document to now a network of people, it has exhibit a high level of online penetration with over 1.49 billion monthly users (Zephoria Internet Marketing Solution, 2015). Some studies have examined Facebook population particularly social network of students, others studied communication patterns and activity and found the intensity of its usage does not predict bonding but the quality, conciseness, simplicity and affordability of the Facebook information is positively related to online participation of youth in to politics (Vitak, *et al.,* 2011).

Clearly, what motivate youth to use Facebook is their ability to interact with friends and share quality and accurate information with people. Correa, Hinsley, and de Zúñiga (2010), emphasised that the higher the speed and quality of information is and the higher possibility to be politically engaged with other issues and people. This translates that the content of information speed and its authenticity, it will determine its acceptability and applicability to people who are already active and could eventually influence people opinions and views. Therefore, Facebook information quality increase user's relationship between both weak and strong ties by allowing them to create and share new information and ideas within a short period of time to achieve clear understanding (Bakshy, 2012).

Further, Facebook is argued facilitates a more efficient information sharing and more democratic structure of communication between politicians and youth. The ability to successfully campaign online become envisaged as a new faster winning card in

electoral process. Thus, the capacity and quality of information alleviate the social and political problems because the relationship gap between youth and political figures often is bridged through Facebook as the medium become positioned as universally available, accessible with quality and speed (Dumitrica, 2014).

Additionally, the completeness, accuracy and its arrangement of presentation youth's network determines the volume of information they may get and also are likely to be exposed and introduced to a substantive variety of information (Ksiazek *et al.,* 2014). Similarly, Young and Quan-Haase (2009) argued that the nature and quality of information is positively related to the large amount of information an individual receive which may satisfy his communication need and propel the person to act or react.

One of the reason why youth engage in Facebook is motivated by their political information needs and information quality is a significant predictor for online interaction (Lin, 2014) which may also increase information sharing since online communities lack face-to-face interaction. Seemingly, when youth compare political parties and candidates and decides to support a particular party or politician the quality of information they will get may likely influence and help them to make an informed decision about the candidate or party (Lin, 2014) as such youth especially may actively participate in an offline political activities such going for campaign or physical voting.

Nevertheless, quality of information makes communication easier, clear and understandable. Youth quest for political knowledge and information make then so inquisitive to find out how and where to obtain the right and accurate information

(Nelson *et al.,* 2005; Lin, 2008). In this case, youth will require more time and efforts to get reasonable quality information from Facebook and already they perceived Facebook as an interactive network with speed and quality well-arranged information to the users (Dhaha & Igale, 2013). Like several other websites, Facebook basically makes political information more accessible and thus users can provide their own political beliefs and also can connect to outside sources of political information to support or negate political arguments. As online news and information sources permit Facebook users to share content with their Facebook friends these persons essentially become news recommenders who locate quality information for others (Wyngarden, 2012).

Apparently, numerous additional features of Facebook facilitates the establishment of classifying and reputational information which are all imperative for reducing ambiguity when engaging in online interaction, thereby encouraging the development of standards of trust (Skoric & Kwan, 2011). Thus, trust is important in increasing civic, collective action and political participation (Carlisle & Patton, 2013). It may be accurate to say that Facebook appears to be well suited for promoting online/offline political participation due its features such as interactivity, speed, accuracy, timely, easy accessibility which Facebook information quality stands for. Further, use of Facebook information quality can build a communicative power such as capacity to foster socio-political movement (Sormanen & Dutton, 2015).

Superficially, youth's Facebook usage is motivated by their political information need (Ternes *et al.,* 2014) and they may likely participate in online/offline political activities. In addition, when youth are about to develop interest in politics they will

search and join Facebook to obtain information provided from Facebook friends and associates who have knowledge and experience of the party or candidate and quality information assist youth in making an informed political decision (Koroleva *et al.,* 2010).

Cogburn and Vasquez, (2011) also claim that Facebook information quality is a determinant of youth's decision to use Facebook for political activities. Supporting this, a study aspect emphases on how people especially youth may like exploit the informative, educational and political potentials of online networks site such as Facebook with content deemed political. The study emphasize and demonstrates the richness and accuracy of information available online to the general public and how the network offers information with speed and timely new freedoms to youth, government and nongovernmental organizations to spread their messages that may encourage offline participation (Hirzalla Fadi, 2011). Therefore, accurate information quality is highly influential to youth in terms of making a right political decision (Dhaha & Igale, 2013), thus based on the discussion above, the third hypothesis is proposed.

- *Hypothesis 3a: There is a significant relationship between Perceived Facebook information quality and online political participation among youth.*
- *Hypothesis 3b: There is a significant relationship between Perceived Facebook information quality and offline political participation among youth*

3.4.3 The Relationship between Political Interest and Online/Offline Political Participation

Holleque, (2011) defines political interest as the degree to which politics arouses a citizen's curiosity or a citizen's attentiveness to politics. This also means that political interest is the extent to which an individual pays attention to politics and understand what he or she has encountered. Therefore, political interest is a necessary precondition for the desired characteristics of a responsible and democratic citizen which include loyalty, ability and readiness for political participation (Kann, Berry, Gant, & Zager, 2007). Similarly, political interest is a political concept that is very significant for the emergence of democratic political identity and also serve as a crucial force for the exploration and desire to participate (Whiteley, 2005).

In this study, political interest means the motivation which propel youth to participate in politics. Thus, political interest is the driving mechanism that lead youth to weigh ideological position and finally a commitment and achieve political awareness (Bartels, 1996). Youth recently are so enthusiasm about events and happenings around them particularly political activities by seeking more knowledge and information about a political party and candidate. Their quest to know and learn more about political activities propels them to develop interest in politics and social issues by getting and sharing political information, willingness to follow political figures and engaging in political discussion (Kyranakis & Nurvala, 2013).

Many psychosocial variables have been operationalized and considered as antecedents of political participation such as political knowledge, socialization or self-efficacy but political interest appears to be a strong predictor of online/offline political participation (Uddin & Choudhury, 2008). Some scholars argued that the

recent youth interest in political activities is the consequences of recent proliferation of Facebook as a platform for political participation (Miller *et al.,* 2015). The increase and rapid growth Facebook recently explains that youth particularly are often exposed to volume and abundance of information every day, but there is little empirical studies on the influence such exposure has on political interest and participation (Vitak, Zube, *et al.,* 2011). Facebook has recently provided vast amount of political information ranging from news on political to political campaign and youth because they are the active users and the most exposed to Facebook they develop interest (Himelboim *et al.,* 2013).

Additionally, some scholars believe that the use of Facebook has little influence on political knowledge and participation but rather political interest has the most influence (Whiteley, 2005). Political interest provide the motivation needed to devote sufficient time and energy to participate in online and offline political activities. This means that it ignite and inspire youth specifically to seek for political information that can help in assessing political alternatives before they vote for their choice. It may be correct to also say that political interest has become important youth's willingness to become politically informed, thus Facebook has help in articulating easy accessibility to political information therefore the influence may likely to be vice versa. Superficially, it could be argued that Facebook is now an important source of political knowledge and that it indirectly influence political interest of youth and it has the potential to increase it (Zúñiga *et al.,* 2012).

Relatedly, there has been some claims that empirical studies between Facebook use and political interest are limited and the outcome seem to conflict as they discovered that few citizens participate in politics online (Kyranakis & Nurvala, 2013).

Obviously, literatures have documented that political interest have a positive influence on online/offline political participation (Carlisle & Patton, 2013). Similarly, the result of their study indicated that Facebook operators who are more concerned in politics are more likely to participate through Facebook in elections

Further, there is a large consensus among scholars that among all other predictors, political interest have a strong influence in terms of motivation to participate in politics. This statement has a synergy with the work of (Moeller, Vreese, Esser, & Kunz, 2014), they supported this assertion by emphasizing that political interest is an attitude that provide a stable and sustainable outcome in politics because it often tells whether an individual may be politically active or passive. Therefore, it may be correct to say that Facebook users promote political interest and influence friends in their network are likely to participate in online/offline politics. Additionally, Vissers *et al.,* (2012) corroborated that opportunities for political participation are more likely to manifest if the level of political interest among youth specifically is high.

Youth that remain more engrossed in politics are likely to pay more attention to political content in media which may eventually turn to participation in political activity (Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2016). Ideally, youth are expected to develop political interest because of their nature as active and easy to accept new changes in the society but their withdrawal from political activities can be characterized with lack of interest, motivation and access to new media (Terriquez, 2015). It will also be correct to advance the discussion that political interest is necessary condition of participation as it measures youth's online/offline political participation. Political interest is significant in political participation because it provide the motivation to get political information, skill or knowledge which are

relevant in assessing political alternatives (Aad *et al.,* 2012). Thus, it has been discovered to be positively related to online/offline political participation (Brady *et al.,* 1995).

In the same way, it is also found that youth declining in political interest is attributed to declining in offline political participation (Chao *et al.,* 2012). This explains the fact that youth do not think of conventional ways of political participation such as taking part in voting exercise hence they often discard it. Consequently, Facebook is now the alternative platform of political expression and political interest appears to be a significantly related to online/offline political participation among youth (Kim, Kavanaugh, & Pérez-Quiñones, 2007; Yamamoto & Kushin, 2014; Yang & DeHart, 2016). Facebook political activities such as reading and posting political opinions, interacting with politicians on Facebook and discussing politics with friends on Facebook groups may likely stimulate interest and knowledge about positive social and political issues, later facilitating participation in other online political activities and more demanding offline political activities (Vissers *et al.,* 2012).

- *Hypothesis 4a:* *There is a significant relationship between political interest and online political participation among youth.*
- *Hypothesis 4b:* *There is a significant relationship between political interest and offline political participation among youth.*

This framework is graphically represented as thus:
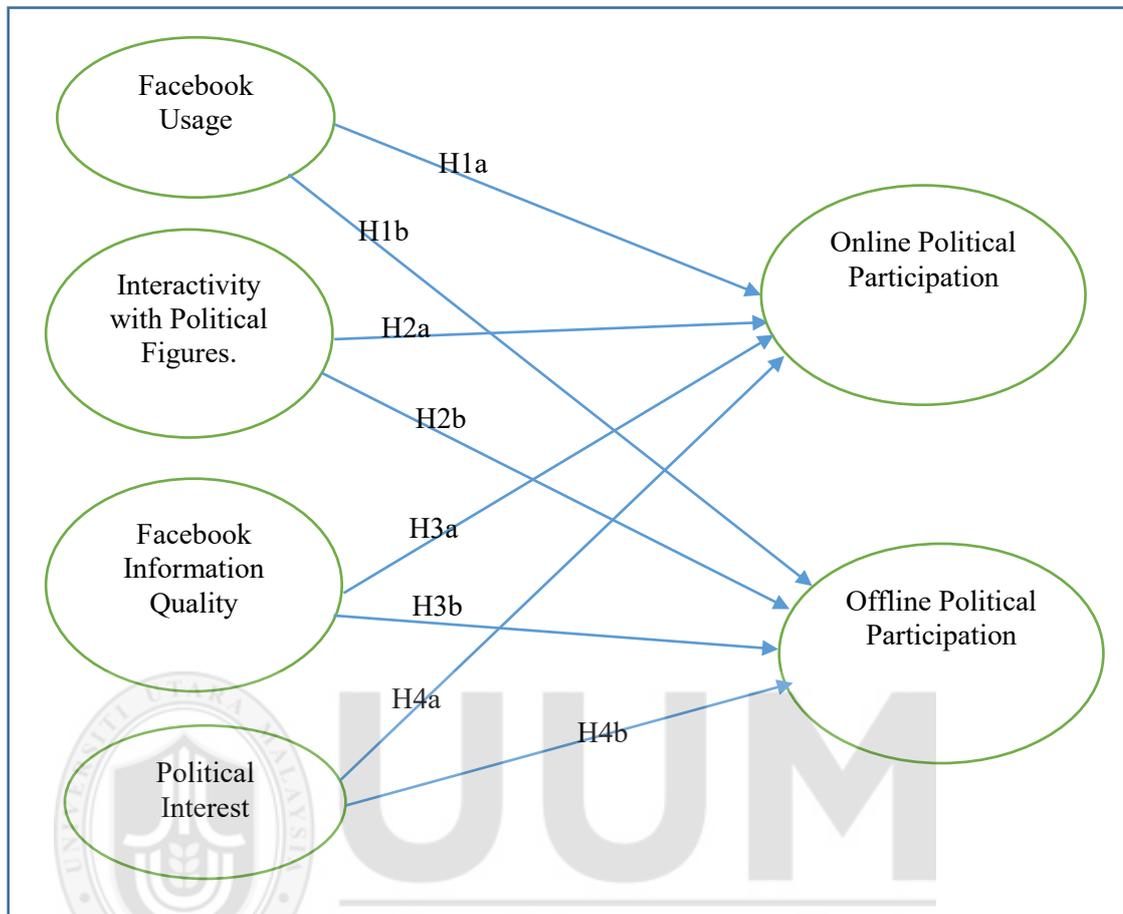
Figure 3.1 Proposed Theoretical Framework for Online/Offline Political Participation

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, a proposed conceptual models have been identified based on analysis and review of some existing study in the area of Facebook usage and online/offline political participation. Similarly, based on the literature initially discussed four variables; Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest were hypothesized being related to online/offline political participation. Furthermore, there are eight (8) hypotheses in the framework. Firstly, in this study it is proposed that there is a positive relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth.

Secondly, it is proposed that there is a positive relationship between interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among youth. Thirdly, it is also proposed that there is a positive relationship between perceived Facebook information quality and online/offline political participation among youth, and lastly there is a positive relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation among youth.

In the subsequent chapter, methodology that was engaged for testing the research hypotheses and also to address the research questions was discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR
METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers the research design and methods, population of study, sampling procedure, method of data collection and analysis. The research examined the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Quantitative method was used in data collection, descriptive and explanatory research procedure were discussed.

4.2 Philosophical Foundation of Research

Even though method and methodology are continuously used interchangeably by a researcher, they are two diverse ideas. According to Payne and Payne (2004) research methods are used in social research as a particular technique in classifying research questions, gathering and analyzing the data and presentation of the conclusions. However, research methodology signifies to a broader concept comprising a set of conceptual and philosophical assumptions that rationalize the use of the chosen method. Consequently, in empirical research, the philosophical foundation depends upon the epistemology, ontology, human nature and methodology. All of these relates to reality, the link between reality and the researcher, and the techniques used by the researcher to establish the reality, respectively (Healy & Perry, 2000).

Epistemological issue generally denotes to what should be regarded as standard and satisfactory knowledge in a field of study (Bryman, 2011). Thus, the epistemological foundation of this study is signified by the postpositivists' worldview, in which there

is a need to identify and asses the causes that determine effects or consequences. Creating numeric measures of observations and exploring the conduct of individuals is fundamental for postpositivists (Bryman, 2011), and that is why the researcher favours working with "an observable social reality", developing hypotheses based on existing theory. Another significant distinguishing characteristics of the postpositivists view is that the researcher neither affects nor is affected by the subject of study. Conversely, some may argue that it is impossible to assume a complete value-free position, because the selections of research objectives, methods of data collection and even the choice to adopt a value-free perspective itself can suggest the existence of value position, to some extent (Gil & Johnson, 2010). Furthermore, it is often call for that the researcher uses a very structured methodology, with the purpose of enabling replication and the focus is on quantifiable observations (Gill & Johnson, 2010).

Ontological issues means whether social entities should be careful and measured objective entities with an external reality, or whether they should be considered social constructions formed based on the actions and perceptions of social actors. These positions are categorised as objectivism and constructionism, respectively (Bryman, 2011). This study is based on the objectivist position, which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors (Bryman, 2011). This study attempts to understand the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation and the generative mechanisms underlying the relationship. Additionally, positivism is the base of this research using elements of realism, such as the existence of social facts (Bryman, 2001). The approach of the positivist looks into explanation and prediction in a social

world by searching for regularities and the relationships between its elements (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

4.3 Research Design

Research design is a blueprint or scheme that can be used to collect, measure and analyze data by the researcher (Kothari, 2012). Thus, in this research, quantitative method was used as research design in both data collection and analysis stages. Quantitative method try to use systematic observation to gather data. It is a method suitable for examining the relationship between independent variable (Facebook usage) and the dependent variable (online/offline political participation). Hopkins, (2008) asserts that quantitative research is about quantifying the relationships between variables. In addition, quantitative research basically is an inquiry into an identified issue or problem through testing of a theory and hypothesis (Creswell, 2014) and subsequently data will be analyzed using statistical techniques.

The study is survey (cross-sectional) research methods. Surveys often allow for the study of people's opinion on a given issue of public interest. The justification for choosing cross-sectional survey is because the data was collected on individual characteristics (youth) at a specific point in time. Therefore, it can estimate prevalence outcome of youth political participation (Levin, 2006). According to Okoro and Nwafor, (2013), survey research is concern with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting practice, beliefs and attitudes, this means that the aim is often to describe systematically the facts, qualities or characteristics of a giving population, events, or areas of interest concerning the problem under study. One advantage of survey is the rapid turnaround in data collection (Creswell, 2014).

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4.4 Research Setting

Bauchi, one of the geo-political states in Nigeria is the place of this study. Specifically the Bauchi Metropolitan Area is the focus of the research. Thus, the research area is Bauchi Metropolitan Area under Bauchi State. The state is located in North-Easter Nigeria and its capital is the city of Bauchi. It was created in 1976 and now has 20 Local Government Areas with Bauchi LGA as the capital. According to National Bureau of Statistics provided a 2012 National Baseline Youth Survey and presented an estimated population of 5,832,115 of Bauchi state and 1,720,878 as the estimated population of youth in the state.

The choice of Bauchi Metropolitan as the area of the research is based on the fact that is the state capital with the higher population and literacy level among youth (Survey, 2010). Metropolitan area is a large region characterized with socio economic and political activities. Similarly, metropolitan area cover broad regions bigger than town which consist of a densely populated urban places and it is sharing industry infrastructure and housing townships. Thus, the area has municipal in fractural social, political and educational services such as highways road, public schools, health and social welfare centres. Similarly, because of the rural-urban migration youth are now residing in the cities and towns like Bauchi metropolitan as a result of social-economic and political advantages such as accessibility to internet facilities. Bauchi metropolitan is the capital of Bauchi states which is one of the federating units in Nigeria. Nigeria presently is the most populous black African nation with the projected population of 185,739,695 million in the world with over 67 million users (Worldometers, 2015; Internet World Statistics 2014). The country is located in West Africa and share border with Guinea in the South, Cameroon in the East, Benin Republic in the West and Niger in the North respectively.

Furthermore, Nigeria currently has 36 States and Abuja the Federal Capital Territory. It has 6 geopolitical zones namely: North-Eastern zone, North-West, North-Central, South-South, South-West and South-Eastern zones.

4.5 Population of the Study

Population is a total set of individuals or items of interest in a study. Thus, in a research sometimes it is difficult to study all components in a population because the number of the population is large. Therefore, youth, comprising both males and females; in Bauchi metropolitan area forms the population for this study. The choice of youth as the research focus population is based on the fact that this age group often are using Facebook for political activities (Himelboim *et al.,* 2013). In Nigeria, youth have been in the frontline of struggle for independence and democracy, they also contribute and ensure good governance as well as demand for credible leadership in the country (National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria., 2012).

According to the National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria., (2012), 2012 National Baseline Youth Survey Report Bauchi State has estimated population of 5,832,116. The same reports also indicated that the youth in Bauchi constitutes 1,720, 878. This means that the youth have constitutes about 30% of the population. Therefore, when expressed in percentage, the total number of youth in Bauchi state over one hundred, times thirty will be 516263.4. Thus, this is the estimated population of youth in Bauchi metropolis.

In terms of age, this study adopts the Youth, On, and Sub, (2015) definition that regards youth as every person between the age of 18 and 35 years. Thus, this study is being guided by the UNESCO definition in selecting sample for the study. This

sample therefore includes, youth that are residing in Bauchi metropolitan. Due to the literacy level among youth in Bauchi metropolitan area, it is observed that there is high rate of use of Facebook among youth. Similarly, Bauchi Metropolis has the characteristic of urban area with a high population, high level of development and awareness of politics. The location status and literacy level and political awareness are the criteria to be considered for effective choice of Bauchi metropolitan area. The unit of analysis are basically youth in Bauchi metropolitan area who are homogenous in nature because they come from the same area, ethnic and the same religious background.

However, inability of the researcher to access document on accurate identity and addresses of youth that comprise population of the study pose serious challenge to define sampling frame. Therefore, the research adopts lists of available youth that uses Facebook for political participation from the National Youth Council of Nigeria Bauchi State Office.

4.6 Sampling Procedure

A sample is a portion of components in the population meticulously selected to represent the entire population under study. The reasons for studying a particular sample instead of the entire population are cost constraint, time, and the process of analysis is more systematic because the number of sample to deal with is small (Zainudin, 2012).

The sample in this study are the youth in Bauchi metropolitan area that have registered Facebook account. Thus, the justification for choosing this sample is based on the fact that youth are the active participant in political activities; they are willing

to be co-opted and accept changes in the society (Harris *et al.,* 2010; McManimon, 2014). Additionally, PEW Internet and American Life Project Research (2010) revealed that 72 percent of youth uses Facebook, thus they are the heavy users of social media sites such as Facebook (Dagona *et al.,* 2013).

Furthermore, youth are now using Facebook more than other age groups to engage with political issues (Smyth & Best, 2013), which make them critical stockholders in the democratic system. Youth now have diverse perception on how to effectively and systematically influence the political system because of their population and willingness to accept and adapt to new changes in the society (EACEA, 2013). Evidently, substantial number of related studies (Bakker & Vreese, 2011; Dagona *et al.,* 2013; Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014; Titus-fannie *et al.,* 2013) have indeed used youth as population because of their nature and influence in the political processes.

4.7 Sampling Size

Size of population means a sub set of the people from the population. The number of samples to be selected from the entire population which should not be too large or very small (Kothari, 2012). Thus, the size of the sample is 390 which is in conformity with the rule of thumb for a sample size of population size from 1,000, 000 up to 1, 000, 000, 000 according to Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) simplified tables. Thus, this should effectively satisfy the prerequisite level of reliability and representativeness. However, in this study, samples were selected from the population of youth in Bauchi metropolitan area. Similarly, this sample is expected to minimize the margin of error and increase the confidence level and also the accuracy of data (Keyton, 2014).

4.8 Sampling Technique

Consequently, for the purpose of sampling in this research, simple random sampling technique is adopted thus; every youth must have an equal chance of being selected and participated in this research (Keyton, 2014). The rational for choosing this technique is because it allowed for the use of statistical method of analyzing sample results such as defining a confidence interval around sample mean. With this, a representative sample that has been choosing from the population was provided with the ability to make generalization to a population (Creswell, 2014). The choice of simple random sampling was also because of the fact that is the simplest and quickest means of selecting a sample (Keyton, 2014). The target population of this study have been defined, the existing sampling frame of the target population is also identified and the sample size of the population has been determined.

4.9 Data Collection Method

The method of collecting data for this study is survey with questionnaire as the instrument. It was a cross sectional survey but effort to access records of identities and addresses of registered youth with Facebook account was not successful. In place, the researcher liaised and obtained lists of available youth that uses Facebook for political participation from the National Youth Council of Nigeria Bauchi State Office. Thus using the lists manually, a table of random numbers was used and respondents were totally selected randomly to avoid problem of bias. Therefore, data were collected through the assistance of the National Youth Council of Nigeria,

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(Bauchi state office) with the assistance from research assistants that were recruited and trained by the researcher.

Additionally, cross sectional is a research tool used to gather data for a specific period. This method is suitable for this research because it is not costly to undertake and it does not require too much time. Thus, Bauchi state is planning to conduct Local government election very soon, cross sectional survey captured information based on data that were accumulated for a specific period to forecast youth participation in the subsequent election. The research examines direction of Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi metropolitan area at a particular time that is political dispensation.

According to Creswell (2014), a survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of a component of the population. It is also use to obtain present information at a given time or period (Berger, 2009). Additionally, another advantages of survey are replication and its objective process of comparing information and responses over interval of time, places and different segments or groups. It is in line with this that similar scholars have also adopted it (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; Yousif & ALsamydai, 2012). Therefore, the instrument that was used in this study is self-administered questionnaire.

4.10 Instrumentation

The instrument was a questionnaire used in the research for data collection in this study. The rational for using survey is that big amount of information can be gathered from a large number of people in a short period of time. As mentioned earlier, the researcher encountered challenge of unavailability of comprehensive

records of registered youth with Facebook account thus sampling frame was resolved by using lists of youth with Facebook account that engage in political activities sourced from the National Youth Council of Nigeria Bauchi State Office. Furthermore, the researcher selected eligible respondents and assigned them numbers. The assigned numbers which were youth later were selected using simple random technique. Similarly, the outcome result of survey was easily and effectively quantified by the researcher through the use of SPSS. Thus, the result eventually was analyzed scientifically (Allen, Titsworth, & Hunt, 2009).

Therefore, the questionnaire comprises close-end questions which measured the opinion of the youth (respondents) about the relationship between the variables raised in the hypotheses. The questionnaire was separated into 6 parts. The first 4 sections contained questions concerning the independent variables, the two sections comprises of questions on dependent variable while the last part of the questionnaire was used to obtain demographic details of the respondents. While taking into consideration, contingency question was asked to ensure respondents have Facebook account and they are using it for political participation. For instance, respondent who answered (yes) was considered and who answered (no) was automatically not considered.

4.11 Measurement of Variables

Basically, measurement in this study are adapted from the Facebook intensity scale developed by Ellison *et al.,* (2007) and measured Facebook usage. Ellison *et al.,* (2007) developed Facebook intensity scale to measure Facebook usage using time spent on Facebook, number of friends and attachment to Facebook. This study also used the same measures to measure youth Facebook usage because scholars such as

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Valenzuela, Park and Kee, (2009), Vitak *et al.,* (2009) and Vitak, Zube and Smoek, (2010) have used the same items and the results were significant. Measuring perceived Facebook information quality items from Lim, (2012) were adopted. In measuring interactivity with political figures, items from the work of Lee and Cho, (2012) were adapted while in measuring online/offline political participation items from the work of Jung, Kim and Gil de Zuniga (2011) were adapted. Political interest was measured using work of Whitely, (2005).

4.11.1 Facebook usage

The measurement of Facebook usage was based on the previously developed instrument by Lampe *et al.,* (2007). The measures contained questions that asked youth to respond to a number of questions. This includes youth's perception of Facebook usage and how they feel when using Facebook. Similarly, the scale required respondents to show the extent to which they may agree with a position indicating their attachment to Facebook on a five-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree).

4.11.2 Perceived Facebook Information quality network

Perceived Facebook Information Quality was measured by five major questions adopting from the work of Lim, (2012). Firstly, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on whether the information provided by the Facebook is accurate. Secondly, whether Facebook provide them with a complete set of information. Thirdly, the information from the Facebook is always up to date. Fourthly, whether Facebook provide them with all the information they need. Lastly, whether the information provided by the Facebook is well arranged.

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4.11.3 Interactivity with political figures

To measure interactivity with political figures, three items were adopted from the work of Lee and Cho, (2011). Thus, respondents were asked three questions ranging from: Facebook help me to have two-way communication with politicians. Secondly, Facebook helps me with the opportunity to interact with local and grass roots political activists. Lastly, Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from the politicians. Respondents were required in indicating their level of agreement or disagreement base on 5 Likert scale.

4.11.4 Political Interest

Political Interest was measured by asking respondents questions adopted from the work of Whitely (2005) questions that includes: Firstly, most of my Facebook friends are interested in politics. Secondly, I have time to worry about politic using Facebook. Thirdly, I often discuss politics with my friends on Facebook. Lastly, Facebook helps me to have interest in politics. Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement using 5 Likert scale.

4.11.5 Online/Offline Political participation

To measure offline political participation, items from the work of Jung, Kim and Gil de Zuniga, (2011) were adapted. Therefore, the scale consisted of 11 items that asked respondents how often they perform the following political activities: Vote in the general election, Speak with public officials in person, Call or send a letter to the elected public officials, Participate in demonstrations or protest, Attend a political meeting, Encourage someone to vote, Put a campaign button or T-shirt, Display a campaign bumper sticker or yard sign, Work for a political party or candidate, Was

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involve in political action groups, party committees or political clubs, Participate in any local action (1- Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree).

Online political participation was measured using a 5-item scale. Thus, youth were asked to indicate how often they perform online political activities such as : Sending political messages to politicians on Facebook, Visiting a campaign or candidate advocacy on Facebook, making contributions to a political campaign on Facebook, receiving information from political party's Facebook page, Volunteering for the activities of political party on Facebook.

4.12 Method of Data Analysis

The research examines the relationship between Facebook Usage, Interactivity with Political Figures, Perceived Facebook Information Quality, Political Interest and Online/Offline Political Participation among youth in Nigerian context. Thus, descriptive statistics was used to describe certain data at the preliminary level while correlation and regression analysis were used to test the research questions and find the relationship between some key variables in the research and test the hypothesis.

Furthermore, SPSS was used to test the relationship among the variable in the research. Also, it was used to test the reliability of the instrument. In testing the item reliability, the Average Variance Expected (AVE) was used against the Cronbach's alpha is the least and weak way of testing reliability in research. SPSS is a variance based test that was used to test relationships between dependent and independent variables and (Chan & Guo, 2013). Additionally, SPSS was also be used to replace the missing values in questionnaire.

4.13 Items Development

Development of the instruments for this study was conducted by identifying the items from the existing instrument through the review of related literature. This process was meticulously carried out to ensure the items adapted were in line with context of research. After careful scrutiny, the questionnaire were distributed to a sample respondents 50 for the pilot test in other to have a reliability of the instruments thus, the following section presents the items original and modified together with the results of the pilot study.

Table 4.1

Items for Measuring Online Political Participation

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References.
ON1	Sending e-mails to politicians	Sending messages to politicians on Facebook	Jung, Kim and Gil de Zuniga, 2011.
ON2	Visiting a campaign or candidate advocacy Web site	Visiting a campaign or candidate advocacy on Facebook page	
ON3	Making contributions to a political campaign online	Making contributions to a political campaign on Facebook	
ON4	Subscribing to political listserv	Receiving information from political party Facebook page	
ON5	Signing up to volunteer for the activities of political parties	Volunteering to participate for the activities of political party on Facebook	

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Table 4.2

Items for Measuring Offline Political Participation

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References
OF1	whether respondents voted in the 2008 presidential election	Vote in the general election	Jung, Kim and Gil de Zuniga, 2011.
OF2	spoke with public officials in person	Speak with public officials in person	
OF3	called or sent a letter to elected public officials	Call or send a letter to elected public officials	
OF4	participated in demonstrations or protests	Participate in demonstration or protest	
OF5	attended a political meeting rally, or speech	Attend a political meeting, rally or speech	
OF6	encouraged someone to vote	Encourage someone to vote	
OF7	wore a campaign button or T-shirt	Put a campaign badge or T-shirt	
OF8	displayed a campaign bumper sticker or yard sign	Displayed a campaign sticker or yard sign	
OF9	worked for a political party or candidate; was involved in political action groups, party committees or political clubs;	Worked for a political party or candidate	
OF10	was involved in political action groups, party committees	Involving in political action groups, party committees or political clubs	
OF11	participated in any local actions	Participate in any local actions	

Table 4.3

Items for Measuring Facebook Usage

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References.
FU1	Facebook is part of my everyday activity	Facebook has become part of my life	Ellison Steinfield and Lampe, 2007.
FU2	I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook	I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook	
FU3	Facebook has become part of my daily routine	Facebook has become part of my everyday activity	
FU4	I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while	I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while	
FU5	I feel I am part of the Facebook community	I feel I am part of the Facebook family	
FU6	I would be sorry if Facebook shut down	I would not be happy if am not online	

Table 4.4

Items for Measuring Interactivity with Political Figures

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References.
IF1	Facebook facilitates two=way communication among users.	Facebook helps me to have two=way communication with politicians	Lee & Cho, 2011.
IF2	Facebook gives me the opportunity to talk with other users	Facebook helps me with the opportunity to interact with local and grass root political activists	
IF3	Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from others	Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from politicians	

Table 4.5

Items for Measuring Political Interest

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References.
PI1	None of my friends are interested in politics	Most of my Facebook friends are interested in politics	Whitetely, 2005.
PI2	I am too busy to worry about politics	I have time to worry about politics using Facebook	
PI3	I often discuss politics with other people	I often discuss politics with my friends on Facebook	
PI4	I am very interested in politics	Facebook helps me to have interest in politics	

Table 4.6

Items for Measuring Perceived Facebook Information Quality

Item code	Original Items	Modified Items	References
PQ1	The information provided by the virtual community is accurate.	The information provided by the Facebook is accurate.	Lim, 2012
PQ2	The virtual community provides me with a complete set of information.	Facebook provides me with a complete set of information.	
PQ3	The information from the virtual community is always up to date	The information from the Facebook is always up to date	
PQ4	The virtual community provides me with all the information I need	Facebook provides me with all the information I need	
PQ5	The information provided by the virtual community is well formatted	The information provided by the Facebook is well arranged and organized	

4.14 Reliability Test

For the clarity of questions, a pilot test was run to ensure the questionnaire make sense and that it require the precise piece of information needed for the study. The questionnaire was first given to experts who meticulously scrutinized and gave feedback on the questions construction, the language, the content, layout and fond size of the questionnaire. Thus, the final instrument was designed based on the professional recommendations. Their comments and observations were noted and subsequently the questionnaire was improved based on their remarks and generally the feedback was useful thus no many negative comments were observed. Additionally, 50 participants participated in the pilot test which was conducted to assess the reliability of the items in the questionnaire. The test was conducted to find out whether the procedure of compiling the questionnaire were adequate and test the reliability of the scale. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the scale measurement to ensure if all items were actually measuring the same thing. It is also used to calculate the internal consistency of the pilot test research questions which measured the independent variables and the dependents variables. Thus, the Cronbach's scores provided support for conducting the research.

Table 4.7:

The results of the reliability test

Constructs	Items	Corrected Items Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if the item is deleted	Cronbach's alpha	Sample size (N)*
Online political Participation	ON1	.66	.77	.82	50
	ON2	.67	.77		
	ON4	.57	.81		
	ON5	.70	.75		
Offline political Participation	OF1	.48	.86	.87	50
	OF2	.63	.85		
	OF3	.59	.85		
	OF4	.42	.87		
	OF5	.54	.86		

	OF6	.47	.86		
	OF7	.48	.86		
	OF8	.64	.85		
	OF9	.74	.84		
	OF10	.79	.84		
	OF11	.50	.86		
Facebook Usage	FU1	.51	.86	.86	50
	FU2	.70	.88		
	FU3	.78	.81		
	FU4	.70	.87		
	FU5	.69	.83		
	FU6	.57	.85		
Interactivity with Political figures	IA1	.71	.84	.86	50
	IA2	.76	.79		
	IA3	.76	.79		
Perceived Facebook Information Quality	PQ1	.70	.88	.89	50
	PQ2	.74	.87		
	PQ3	.71	.87		
	PQ4	.84	.85		
	PQ5	.72	.87		
Political Interest	PI1	.72	.87	.88	50
	PI2	.82	.82		
	PI3	.83	.82		
	PI4	.64	.64		

The items for omission and deletion from Table 5.1 were determined based on the correlations of items inside each scale (henceforth item-item), the corrected item-to-total correlations (henceforth item-scale), the item standard deviation scores and the effects on Alpha if the item were deleted. The Alpha would increase if the items with low item and item-scale correlations are deleted; items showing low variance (and hence would have low explanatory power in any framework) are also potential candidates to be excluded. However, to ensure that the area coverage of the construct would not suffer a check is made before any item is deleted. However, 1 item was dropped and the length of the scale was significant thus, for online political participation only one item was dropped. As suggested, if the scale's Cronbach alpha is below .7 the researcher may need to consider deleting items with low item-total

correlation (Pallant, 2005,) Thus item 3 under online political participation was dropped and the Cronbach alpha was increase to .824.

Table 4.8:

Results from the pilot-test

| | Pilot Test | | | |
Scale Name	Items	Alpha	Number of items dropped	New number of items for main survey
Online political participation (ON)	05	0.82	1	04
Offline political participation (OF)	11	0.87	0	11
Facebook usage (FU)	06	0.86	0	06
Interactivity with political figures (IF)	03	0.86	0	03
Facebook information quality (PQ)	05	0.89	0	05
Political interest (PI)	04	0.88	0	04

The sample size was 50 respondents in the pilot test. The corrected items total correlation was significant and reliable. However, one item from online political participation was dropped and the subsequent Cronbach's alpha for online political participation is now .82. Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Perceived Facebook information quality and Political interest were all above .8. Thus, it is believed that the method of developing the scales provides a high degree of confidence in their constructs and content validity. The result was a 33 item instrument, comprising 6 scales based on 5 Likert scale all with an acceptable level of reliability. This instrument was then used to investigate the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation among youth.

4.15 Summary

In this chapter, the layout of the research plan including the research design, research methods and the population of study has been identified. It also provides detail explanation of the sampling procedure which leads to the sample size selection. Also in this chapter, the content of the instrument are clearly explained. Specifically, the questionnaire is based on the items adopted from the Facebook intensity scale developed by Ellison *et al.,* (2007) to measure Facebook usage while to measure interactivity with political figures items from the work of Lee and Cho (2011) was adopted. Similarly, items from the work of Lim, (2012) was adopted to measure perceived Facebook information quality while online/offline political participation were measured adopting items from the work of Jung, Kim, and Zuniga (2011). At the end of this chapter, items development was presented. Items were generated from the existing literature in other to develop questionnaire. Similarly, reliability test was also conducted to ensure items were actually measuring the same thing thus, the result for the pilot test was presented the significant Cronbach's alpha. The next chapter presents Data screening and analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE
DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The basic concern of this chapter is dwells toward examining the relationships between independent and dependent variables. The chapter comprises the following sections: Introduction; data management; data screening proceeding to analysis; data analysis hypothesis testing and subsequently conclusion.

5.2 Data Management

Chapter 4 have identified the research methodology used in the present study while this chapter provides in-depth of data analysis and results. Thus, the process begins with data examination and screening to prepare for quantitative analysis and also the descriptive statistics are presented. Additionally, before the acceptable level of reliability for further analysis was established, a reliability test was performed on measurement scales. Conclusions are drawn in the last section.

5.3 Data Screening and Characteristic of sample

This section of the study follows the procedure recommended by (Hair, William, Babin, & Anderson, 2014) in which the data are examined and subsequent descriptive statistics are reported. Several issues have an impact on the variables or relationships of such variable for example missing data, linearity, outliers, homoscedasticity, normality and multicollinearity. Therefore, to overcome these problems, Tabachnick and Fidell, (2007) have outlined the procedure for data screening. Firstly, the researcher have to search and identify the missing values and

substantive missing data in the questionnaires. For instance, respondents that answered either extreme or neutral on all items in the questionnaire were removed before the analysis. Secondly, all variables were carefully calculated and examined with descriptive statistics. Thirdly, the normality of the data distribution of the variables were also examined. Lastly, the process of identifying outliers at the univariate and multivariate stages were meticulously considered. Additionally, SPSS software was used for all tests and the result of each process is defined below.

5.3.1 Missing Data Analysis

Missing data occurred in the multivariate analysis especially when the valid values in one or more variables are not obtainable for the analysis (Hair *et al.,* 2014). This happen when the respondent forget or did not answer one or more survey questions or it may be an error happen during entering data. Missing data is divided into classes-known versus unknown process based on their sources. It is also important to identify the fact that the researcher may know the missing data process as they recognized in a factor processes. For example, errors in data entry that create invalid code, the failure to answer all the questions in the questionnaire or the indisposition of the respondent. Thus, control over the missing data process by the researcher is reduced. The unknown missing data processes are not easy to identified and accommodate and this has to do with the respondent's refusal to answer certain sensitive questions.

5.3.2 Outliers' Detection

Outliers are observations basically with a unique combination of characteristics identifiable as distinctly different from the other observations (Hair *et al.,* 2014)

Outliers might be the properties of extreme values (very high or very low scores) and could result in non-normality data and create a serious problem for multivariate data analysis (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus, outliers can be detected by using univariate, bivariate and multivariate methods. This is in line with a suggestion by Hair *et al.*, (2010) that more than one method should be used by a researcher to categorise outliers in a consistent format. To identify univariate outliers, which are cases with an extreme value on one variable, the researcher can observe the distribution of observation for each variable (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, to detect univariate outliers, all raw scores for a variable in the distribution are changed to standard scores. For research with a small sample size, 80 cases or fewer, the outliers exist when the standard score is ±2.5 or beyond (Hair *et al.*, 2010). However, for sample sizes of larger than 80 cases, the standard score of ±3.0 or beyond is set to determine the outliers. In this study, the result shows the data has a number of univariate outliers.

Additionally, the second method is bivariate outliers that can be measured by applying a couple of variables mutually through a scatter plot where cases fall noticeably outside the range of the other observations and are understood as isolated points (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Whereas in the third method, multivariate outliers can be used, which comprise of unusual combinations of scores on two or more variables. Consequently, the multivariate detection method of dealing with outliers is more useful for multidimensional positions of variables. Multivariate outliers can be recognized by the Mahalanobis D2 measure (Hair *et al.*, 2010; Field, 2009).

The Mahalanobis D2 with the greater value for a case and the smaller its corresponding probability value, the more likely the cases are to be multivariate

outliers. A value exceeding 2.5 (D2/df) in small samples and 3 or 4 (D2/df) in large samples can be selected as a possible outliers (Hair *et al.,* 2010). Because this research has a larger sample (397), the value 3.0 standard scores to find multivariate outliers is a suitable cut off point. If there is no evidence that outliers truly differ from the normal and are not representative of any observation of the population, they should be taken (Hair *et al.,* 2010).

In several instances, problematic outliers can be accommodated in a manner that will not completely distort the analysis. To check the outliers' effect on the objectives of this study, univariate outliers were detected by using a graphical method, and multivariate outliers were established by applying Mahalanobis's distance case. Figure 5.1 of the box plot of univariate outliers was found with cases which is obvious with an asterisk, and also compared with the multivariate outlier by Mahalanobis's distance test, which confirm the samples. However, the number of data at the initial stage were 397 but 25 outliers found were deleted so as not to affect the analysis and 372 were retained and analyzed. Therefore, the outliers with asterisks are deleted to avoid noise in the statistical test as recommended by Hair *et al.* (2014).
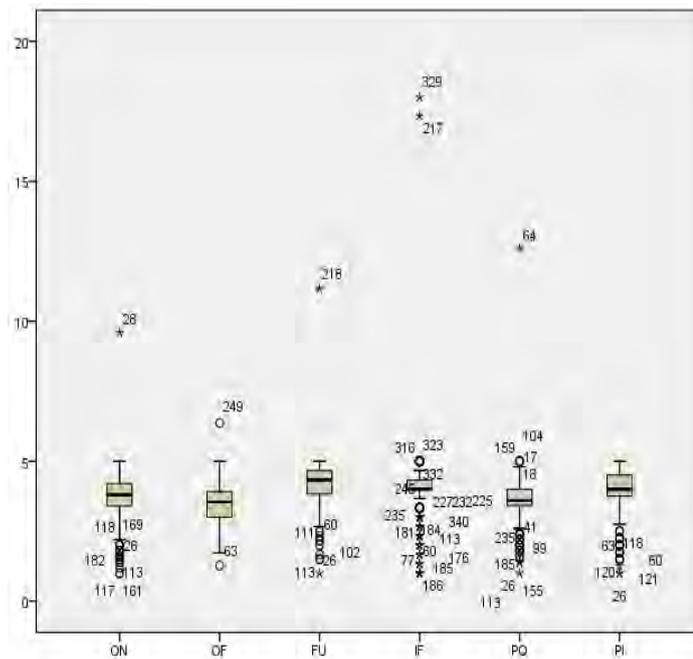
Figure 5.1 Inbox Plot

Table 5.1

Univariate and Multivariate Outliers Results

Variables	Univariate outliers Case with standard value with exceeding + 2.5		Multivariate outliers Case with a value of D2/df Greater than 3.0 (df=6)	
	Case	Case	D2	D2/df
ON	28	113	151.68	25.28
OF	No case	249,63	149.47	24.91
FU	218,113	102,60	141.54	23.59
IF	329,217,77	60,186	108.04	18.01
FQ	64,185,26		89.78	14.96
PI	120		28.86	4.81
			27.81	4.64
			27.73	4.62
			27.10	4.52
			22.52	3.75
			21.78	3.63
			20.76	3.46
			19.70	3.28
			18.94	3.16
			18.93	3.16
			18.44	3.07
			18.36	3.06
			18.24	3.04

a. Mahalanobis D^2 Value based on six variable perception.
   Note: ON = Online political participation; OF = Offline political participation; FU = Facebook usage; IF = Interactivity with political figures; PQ = Facebook information quality; PI = Political interest.
   Source: Developed for the study

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5.3.3 Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity, and Multicollinearity

At this stage, the researcher is expected to ensure data are normally distributed and the relationship between the variables are established and confirmed before continuing to inter results. Thus, the ultimate assumption will shape the research data to show the variation in multivariate analysis. Thus, the variables with each other must normally be distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, in the subsequent section the normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity of data were screened before inferring results from the data.

5.3.3.1 Normality

Following assessment of missing data and outlier detection, normality of data distribution is assessed. Thus, normality of data means the data distribution which basically is a primary assumption in multivariate analysis. It can be measured based on the variation from a normal distribution but if large enough then statistical tests are invariably not valid (Hair *et al.,* 2014; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The statistical method can assess the normality of the data Skewness and Kurtosis test and Kolmogorov and Shapiro methods were used by the researcher to test the normality of the data distribution (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). This research applies SPSS for descriptive statistics to identified Skewness and Kurtosis. All variables were found to be normally distributed. To further support this, the histogram of both online/offline political participation shows that the scores are reasonably normally distributed. The most essential assumption in multivariate analysis is normality which also means the shape of the data distribution for an individual matric variable and its correspondence to the normal distribution (Hair *et al.,* 2010). Thus, the results show that the data of this research are within the

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acceptable level of normality assumption. This also means that data does not violate the normality assumption if the skewness is lower than 3.00 and kurtosis is lower than 10.00 (Kline, 1998).

Table 5.2:

Skewness and Kurtosis Values

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean Statistics	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistics	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistics	Std. Error
ON	372	1.20	5.00	3.78	.04	.67	-.82	.13	1.31	.25
OF	372	1.73	5.00	3.46	.03	.62	-.24	.13	-.11	.25
FU	372	2.00	5.00	4.24	.03	.52	-.86	.13	.98	.25
IF	372	1.00	5.00	4.06	.03	.66	-1.5	.13	4.33	.25
PQ	372	1.40	5.00	3.64	.03	.61	-.86	.13	1.45	.25
PI	372	1.50	5.00	4.10	.03	.61	-1.2	.13	2.65	.25

Valid N372. Note: ON = Online Political Participation; OF = Offline Political Participation; FU = Facebook Usage; IF = Interactivity with political figures; PQ = Facebook information quality; PI = Political Interest.

Table 5.3

Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ON	.11	37	.00	.95	372	.00
OF	.08	37	.00	.99	372	.02
FU	.11	37	.00	.93	372	.00
IF	.25	37	.00	.85	372	.00
PQ	.21	37	.00	.93	372	.00
PI	.20	37	.00	.95	372	.00

a Lilliefors Significance Correction. b. Note: df = degree of freedom, sig. = significance. c. Note: ON = online political participation; OF = offline political participation; FU = Facebook usage; IF = interactivity with political figures; PQ = facebook information quality; PI = political interest.

Figure 5.2. Histogram

Histogram
Dependent Variable: OF

Mean = -4.05E-15
Std. Dev. = 0.995
N = 372
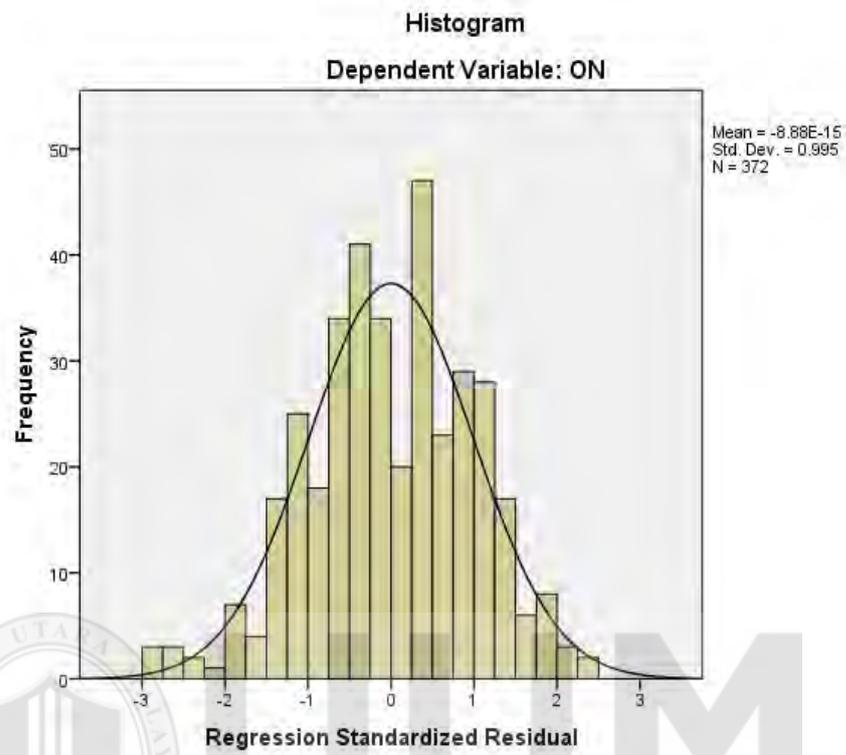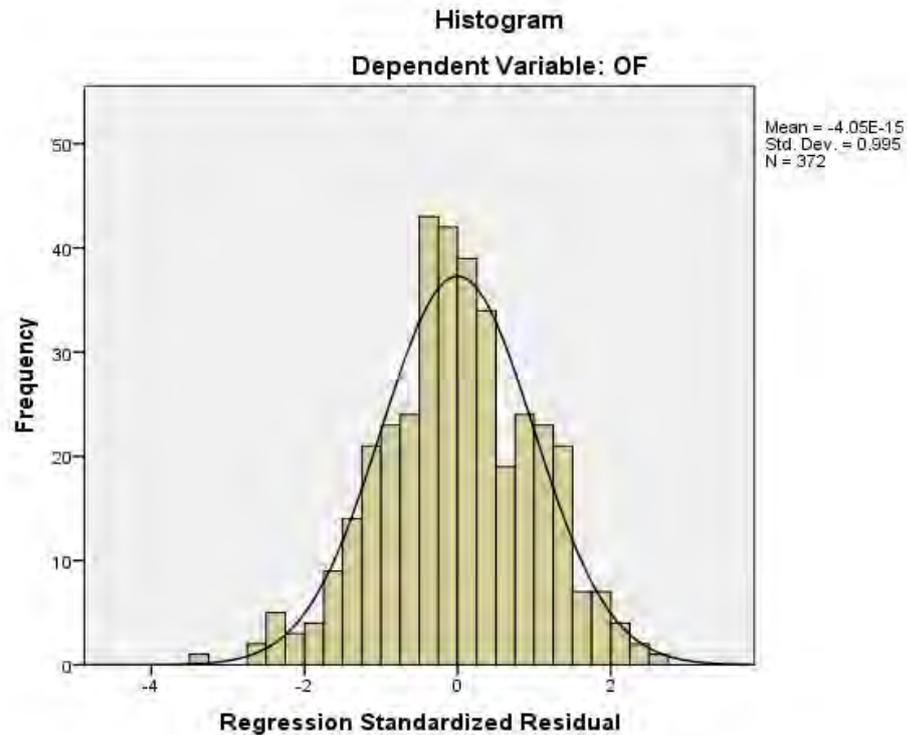
Figure 5.3. Histogram

5.3.3.2 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity can be define as the level of homogeneity of variance that assumes dependent variable show equal levels of variance across the range of predictor variables (Hair *et al.,* 2014). Therefore, the normality is assumed and expected because when the multivariate normality assumption is met, then the relationship between the variables are homoscedasticity (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus homoscedasticity can also be assessed graphically, as well as statistically (Hair *et al*., 2014).

Firstly, visual scatter plots are formed for a reasonable level of homoscedasticity. The data is scattered evenly around the horizontal line of the plots, and does not show any concerns about heteroscedasticity. Secondly, a Levene test which was used

to examine each metric of variable across the non-metric variables in the data set (for

instance, gender).
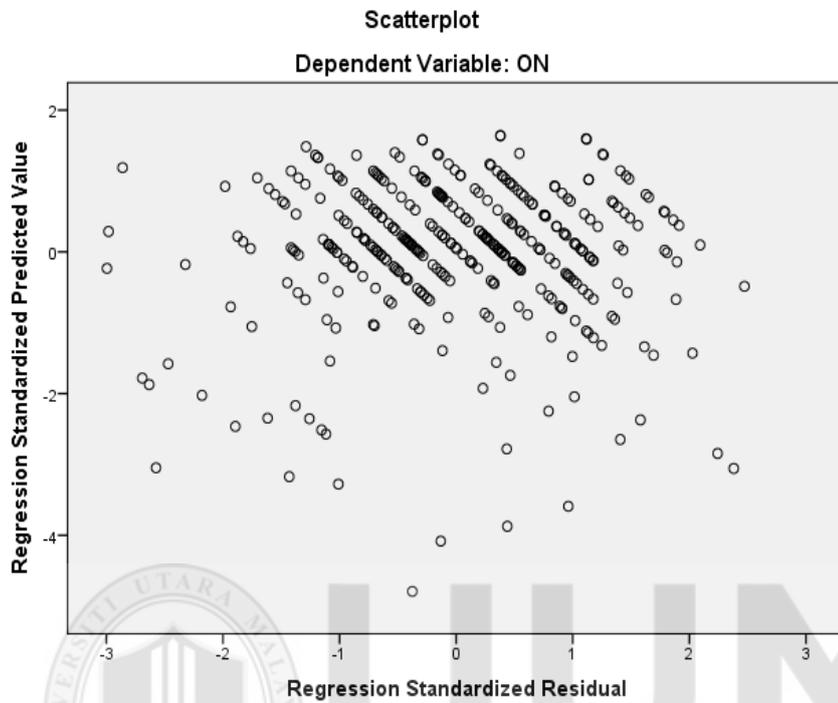
Figure 5.4. Scatterplot
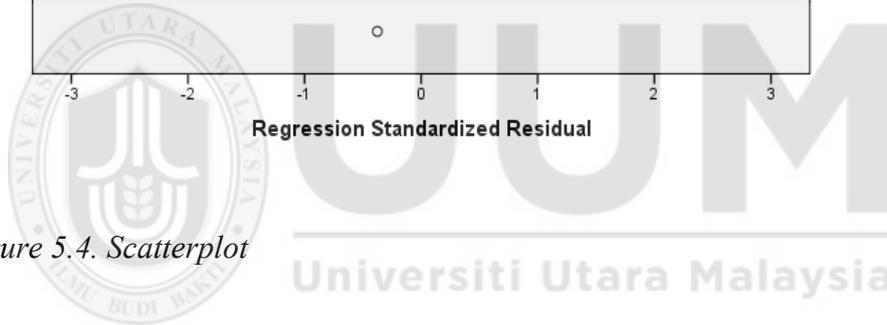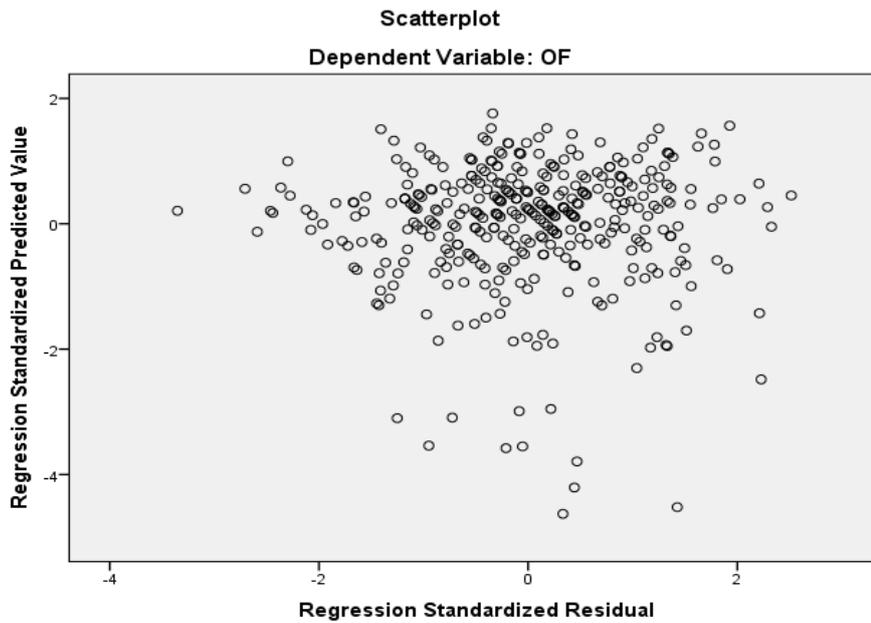
Figure 5.5. Scatterplot

5.3.3.3 Linearity

Linearity is the correlation between constructs which is highly represented by a straight line. Thus, it is imperative in data analysis to measure the relationship between variables. An implicit assumption of all multivariate techniques based on correlation measures of association, including multiple regression, logistics regression, factor analysis and structural equation modelling are all part of linearity. Therefore, researchers shall examine the relationship of variables to identify any emission that may affect the correlation. Thus, linearity can be measured statistically by the person correlation or scatter plot (Hair *et al.,* 2014; Fidell, 2007). In this research, Pearson's correlation indicated that all independent variables and dependent variables are significantly positive. Additionally, a linear regression analysis among variables which is political participation being dependent variable, the result showed the presence of linear relationship among the dependent and independent variables. As shown on the p-p plot of regression standardized residual.

This however confirms the results of the test indicating that all variables were linear to each other.

Table 5.4

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities of Variables

	Variables	A	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Online Political Participation.	.701	3.78	.67	1.000					
2.	Offline Political Participation.	.774	3.46	.62	.53**	1.000				
3.	Facebook Usage	.827	4.24	.53	.29*	.40**	1.000			
4.	Interactivity with Political Figures	.789	4.06	.66	.43**	.50**	.40**	1.000		
5.	Facebook Information Quality.	.725	3.64	.61	.38**	.40**	.35**	.50**	1.000	
6.	Political Interest.	.776	4.10	.62	.50**	.41**	.34**	.51**	.46**	1.000

Significance *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; Note: ON, Online Political Participation; OF, Offline Political Participation; FU, Facebook Usage; IF, Interactivity with Political Figures; PQ, Facebook Information Quality; PI, Political Interest.
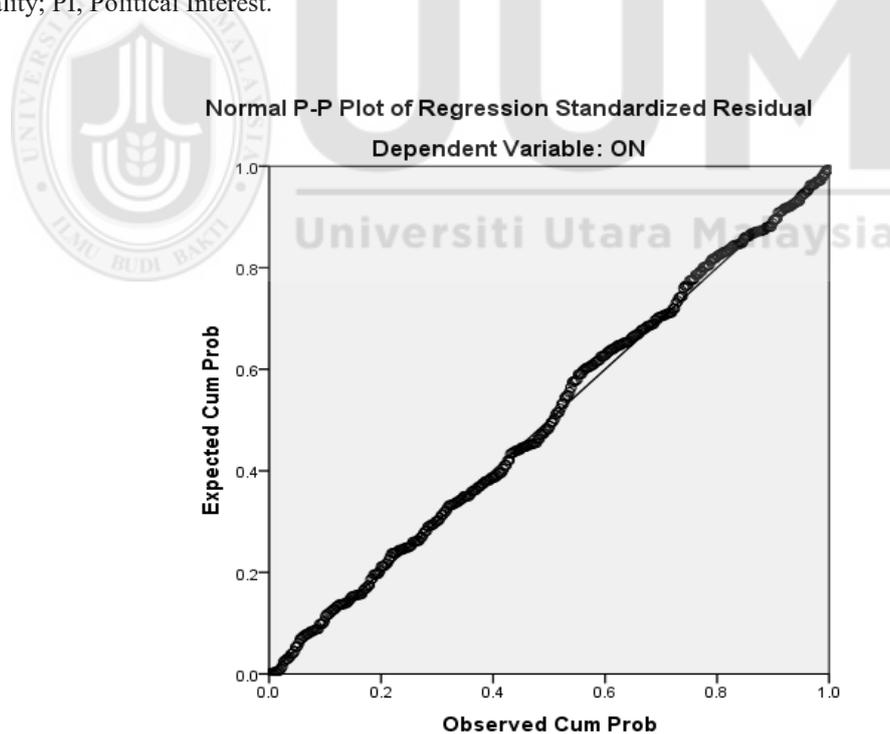

Figure 5.6. Linearity between independent and dependent variables (Online)

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Figure 5.7. Linearity between independent and dependent variables (Offline)

5.3.3.4 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity happens when there is solid and strong correlation between two or more variables in the framework. Obviously, a high level of multicollinearity will increase the standard errors of the b-coefficients and will create a danger to the framework which can be a challenging and problematic to multivariate analyses. Multicollinearity can be recognized by checking the correlation matrix for high correlation (for example, >.80). In this study there is no value greater than 0.8. Additional method to analyze multicollinearity is to check the variance inflation factor (VIF) and collinearity diagnostics of tolerance statistics. According to Myers (1990) if the VIF is greater than 10 and the tolerance is below than 0.1, a serious problem is indicated. In this study there is no value greater than 10.

5.3.4 Demographic Characteristics and Relationships

Table 5.5

Demographic profile of Nigerian youths' main survey sample (N=372)

Sample size (n)	%	N
Gender		
Male	70.2	261
Female	29.8	111
Total	100	372
Age (Years)		
18-22	36.6	136
23-27	34.4	128
28-32	19.4	72
33-35	9.4	36
Total	100	372
Educational Level		
Ph.D.	.3	1
M.Sc.	8.6	32
B.Sc./HND	37.8	114
ND/OND	51.1	191
Secondary School	9.1	34
Total	100	372
Religion		
Islam	86.8	323
Christianity	12.9	48
Traditionalist	0.3	3
Total	100	372
Ethnicity		
Hausa/Fulani	82.6	305
Yoruba	11.0	41
Igbo	5.9	22
Others	0.8	4
Total	100	372

The demographic profile are provided in Table 5.7. Thus, results indicate that majority of respondents were males (70.2%); most were between the ages of 18 to 22 (36.6%). The majority of youth holds Diploma or were in the process at various schools which indicated (51.1%), followed by National Higher Diploma or Degree

holders represented by (37.8%). Additionally, majority of youth were Muslims represented by (87%), followed by the minority Christians represented by (12.9%). Generally, the demographic results indicated that a high number of the respondents were Hausa/Fulani represented by (82.6%).

5.4 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis methods are often used for data reduction, which takes a number of different variables and attempts to discover any essential dimensions at which variables may be present (Pallant, 2005). The set of variables created in this analysis demonstrate the relationship of variables to the factor. This data reduction is achieved by looking for variables that correlate highly with a group of other variables, but do not correlate with variables outside that group (Field, 2009). Furthermore, factor analysis offers the tools for scrutinizing and analyzing the arrangement of the interrelationships (correlations) among a large number of variables by defining sets of variables that are highly interrelated, identified as factors (Hair *et al.,* 2010). Basically, factor analysis can be used to understand the structure of a set of variables, construct a questionnaire in other to measure any underlying variables and also reduce a data set in to a more manageable size and at the same time retain the original information (Field, 2009).

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.86
	Approx. Chi-Square	4831.96
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	561
	Sig.	.000

Figure 5.8: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test
KMO and Bartlett's Test

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The table indicates that the Bartlett test of Sphericity is significant and that the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is far greater than .6. Thus, a statistically significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity is greater than 5 which indicates that satisfactory correlation exist among the variables to proceed (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

5.4.1 Communalities

Eigenvalue and scree plot are usually used to evaluate the adequacy of extraction and the number of factors. Earlier to moving on to extract factors, it is important to determine the variability in scores (the variance) for any given measures or variables (Field, 2009). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), communality is the total of squared loadings for variable across factors. A variable that has no precise variance (or random variance) would have a communality of 1, while a variable that shares none of its variance with any other variables would have a communality of 0 (Field, 2009). Thus, a framework comprising multiple constructs requires 0.5 or less for communalities and 0.7 or less for larger sample size for a framework stability (Hair *et al.,* 2010). However, variables with communalities of less than 0.6 are not having sufficient explanation and are considered as not contributing to the variance explained.

Table 5.6

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
ON1	1.00	.68
ON2	1.00	.59
ON4	1.00	.58
ON5	1.00	.57
OF1	1.00	.49
OF2	1.00	.67
OF3	1.00	.61
OF4	1.00	.45
OF5	1.00	.65
OF6	1.00	.65
OF7	1.00	.51
OF8	1.00	.61
OF9	1.00	.63
OF10	1.00	.61
OF11	1.00	.54
FU1	1.00	.51
FU2	1.00	.61
FU3	1.00	.67
FU4	1.00	.61
FU5	1.00	.62
FU6	1.00	.50
IF1	1.00	.66
IF2	1.00	.69
IF3	1.00	.53
PQ1	1.00	.56
PQ2	1.00	.60
PQ3	1.00	.55
PQ4	1.00	.65
PQ5	1.00	.63
PI1	1.00	.56
PI2	1.00	.64
PI3	1.00	.61
PI4	1.00	.52

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Note; ON= Online Political Participation; OF= Offline Political Participation; FU= Facebook usage; IF= Interactivity with political figures; PQ= Facebook information quality; PI= Political Interest.

The Table 5.7 that follows demonstrates that the total variance described at three stages. At the first instance, it displays the factor and their associated eigenvalues, the percentage of variance explained and the cumulative percentages. Thus, in reference to the eigenvalues it is expected three factors to be extracted because they have eigenvalues greater than 1.

Table 5.7

Average Variance Extracted

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.59	24.55	24.55	8.592	24.55	24.55	4.08	11.65	11.65
2	2.95	8.44	32.97	2.953	8.44	32.99	3.78	10.81	22.46
3	1.98	5.65	38.63	1.976	5.65	38.63	2.89	8.27	30.73
4	1.85	5.27	43.90	1.845	5.27	43.90	2.70	7.70	38.43
5	1.54	4.39	48.30	1.537	4.39	48.30	2.60	7.42	45.85
6	1.43	4.08	52.38	1.429	4.08	52.38	2.28	6.53	52.38
7	1.27	3.64	56.02						
8	1.12	3.21	59.22						
9	1.02	2.93	62.15						
10	.94	2.68	64.83						
11	.91	2.61	67.44						
12	.88	2.51	69.95						
13	.81	2.31	72.26						
14	.76	2.16	74.42						
15	.72	2.06	76.48						
16	.67	1.91	78.39						
17	.62	1.78	80.17						
18	.60	1.70	81.88						
19	.55	1.57	83.44						
20	.51	1.47	84.91						
21	.49	1.40	86.31						
22	.47	1.34	87.66						
23	.47	1.33	88.98						
24	.41	1.18	90.16						
25	.41	1.16	91.32						
26	.40	1.15	92.47						
27	.37	1.05	93.52						
28	.35	.99	94.52						
29	.33	.94	95.46						
30	.31	.90	96.35						
31	.29	.82	97.18						
32	.27	.78	97.96						
33	.26	.74	98.70						
34	.24	.69	99.39						
35	.21	.61	100.00						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

5.4.2 Eigenvalue

Eigenvalues and variance are used to detect the number of factors to extract, which shows the essential importance of the factor (Hair *et al.,* 2010). Conferring to Tabachnick & Fidell, (2007), a fast estimate of a number of factors is achieved from

the size of the eigenvalues reported as part of an initial run with principal component extraction. Each variable for component analysis variance is contributing 1, thus is not important for a component with an eigenvalue less than 1 (Hair *et al.,* 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, factors are measured significant for eigenvalues greater than 1; and all factors with hidden roots less than 1 are considered not significant and are ignored (Hair *et al.,* 2010).

5.4.3 Scree Plot

The numbers of extraction factors are recognized by eigenvalues, while scree plot is predominantly used to check the maximum number of factors by examining the graph. Fundamentally, a scree plot extracts the optimum number of factors before the amount of unique variance starts to dominate the common variance structure (Cattell, 1966). According to Hair *et al.,* (2010), *"the scree test is derived by plotting the latent roots against the number of factors in their order of extraction, and the shape of the resulting curve is used to evaluate the cut-off point"* (p.110). "Usually the scree plot negatively decreases; the eigenvalue is highest for the first factor and reasonable but decreasing for the following few factors before getting small values for the last several factors" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p.644). As a result, the number of factors based on a scree plot test on data is confirmed as the same with extracted factors through eigenvalues presented above.

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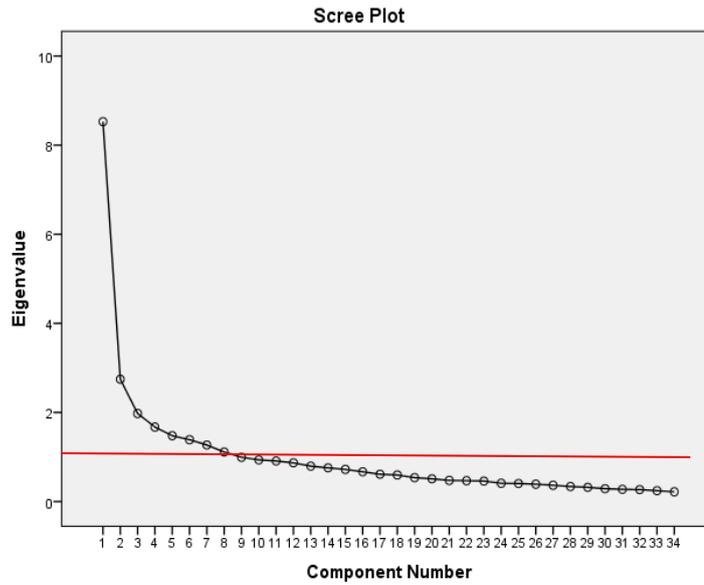
Figure 5.9 Scree Plot

Table 5.8

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
FU1	.68					
FU2	.72					
FU3	.75					
FU4	.74					
FU5	.70					
FU6	.53					
PI1		.64				
PI2		.75				
PI3		.68				
PI4		.59				
PQ1			.59			
PQ2			.64			
PQ3			.61			
PQ4			.64			
PQ5			.57			
IF1				.44		
IF2				.41		
IF3				.45		
ON1					.66	
ON2					.60	
ON4					.67	
ON5					.61	
OF2						.76
OF3						.68
OF4						.47
OF5						.67
OF6						.52
OF7						.65

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OF8			.46
OF9			.67
OF10			.69
OF11			.61

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 5.9

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Facebook usage

Variables	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
FU1	Facebook is part of my every day activity	.69	.83
FU2	I am proud to tell people I am on Facebook	.72	
FU3	Facebook has become part my daily routine	.75	
FU4	I feel out of touch when I have not logged onto Facebook for a while	.74	
FU5	I feel I am part of the Facebook community	.70	
FU6	I would be sorry if Facebook shut down	.53	

Factor 1- Facebook Usage (FU): This factor covers youth's Facebook usage for online political participation. Six items were applied based on numerous literature review from related area. The complete item loaded in the same factor, which is basically above 0.4 (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2007) and no single item was deleted.

Table 5.10

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Political interest

Variable	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
PII	Most of my Facebook friends are interested in politics	.64	.78
PI2	I have time to worry about politics using Facebook	.75	
PI3	I often discuss politics with my friends on Facebook	.68	
PI4	Facebook helps me to have interest in politics	.59	

Factor 2-Political Interest (PI): This factor comprises what motivate and make youth want to participate in politics. The four item scale was applied and the items loaded

in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and no any item was deleted.

Table 5.11

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Facebook information quality

Variable	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
PQ1	The information provided by the Facebook is accurate	.59	.73
PQ2	Facebook provides me with a complete set of information	.64	
PQ3	The information from Facebook is always up to date	.61	
PQ4	Facebook provides me with all the information I need	.64	
PQ5	The information provided by the Facebook is well arranged and organized	.57	

Factor 3- Perceived Facebook information quality (PQ): This factor include the quality, speed and accuracy of information youth get from Facebook. Five items scale was applied and the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and also no single item was deleted.

Table 5.12

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Interactivity with political figures

Variable	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
IFI	Facebook helps me to have two-wat communication with politicians	.44	.79
IF2	Facebook helps me with the opportunity to interact with local and grassroots political activists	.41	
IF3	Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from politicians	.45	

Factor 4- Interactivity with political figures (IF): This factor encompasses the link and interaction between youth and politicians. A three items scale was used thus, all the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), similarly no any item was deleted.

Table 5.13

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for online political participation

Variable	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
ON1	I often send messages to politicians on Facebook	.66	.71
ON2	I always visit campaigns or candidates advocacy on Facebook page	.60	
ON4	I frequently receive information from political party's Facebook page	.67	
ON5	I always volunteer to participate in the activities of political party on Facebook	.61	

Factor 5- Online political participation (ON): This factor contain a political activities that youth carry out on Facebook such as posting or commenting on political information. A 5 item scale was applied to measure youth online political activities, however one item (ON3) was deleted at the pilot test to increase the Cronbach's alpha as recommended by Pallant, (2005). Therefore, all the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), and one item was removed.

Table 5.14

Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for offline political participation

Variable	Factor and related Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
OF2	I often speak with public officials in person	.76	.74
OF3	I frequently call or send letters to elected public officials	.68	
OF4	I always participate in demonstrations or protests	.43	
OF5	I attend political meetings, rallies or speeches	.67	
OF6	I always encourage others to vote	.52	
OF7	I approve of wearing a campaign stickers or yard signs	.65	
OF8	I always participate in displaying campaign stickers or yard signs	.46	
OF9	I often work for political party or candidate	.67	
OF10	I got involve in political action groups, party committee or political clubs	.69	
OF11	I always participate in local actions	.61	

Factor 6- Offline political participation (OF): This factor covers the political activities that youth carry out physically such as participating in protest, participating

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in campaign and taking part in voting exercise. Although, it was an 11 items scale initially but item one (OF1) was deleted because the score is less than 0.4 (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

5.5 Hypothesis Testing

The objectives of the research was to examine the relationship between Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Perceived Facebook information quality, Political interest and Online/Offline youth political participation in Nigeria. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression statistically in order to answer the research questions and address research objectives, Therefore, the hypotheses were found to be significantly related which indicated that the objective of the study have been achieved and also research questions were statically answered.

Figure 5.10 Hypothesis Testing
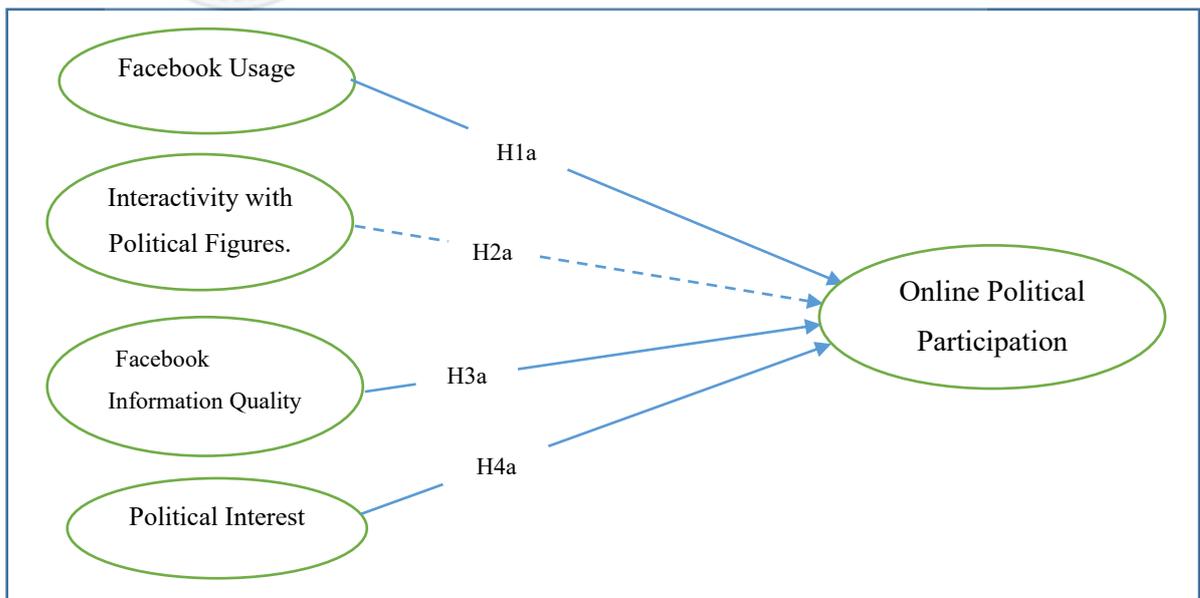
5.5.1 Model 1: Online Political Participation

Model one is the youth online political participation which involves Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest as independent variables. Thus, below is the regression analysis of the model

Table 5.15

Multiple regression result of Model 1: Online Political Participation

Variables	Expected sign	B	t-statistics	P-value
Intercept		.76	2.88	.00
Independent variables				
Facebook usage	+	.08	1.64	.00**
Interactivity with political figures	+	.13	1.17	.14
Facebook information quality	+	.18	2.25	.02**
Political interest	+	.36	6.14	.00**
Adjusted R^2			.29	
F-statistics *(df 4, 367)*			39.430	.00**
Durbin-Watson			1.93	
N			372	

Notes: ** significant at 0.05 (1-tailed), respectively; *Dependent variables* = ON, Online political participation; OF, Offline political participation; *Independent variables* = FU, Facebook usage; IF, Interactivity with political figures; PQ, Facebook information quality; PI, Political interest.

Table 5.16

Results for testing the hypotheses of Model 1: Online Political Participation

Hypotheses	*t-statistics*	*p-value*	Test results
H1$_a$: There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and online political participation among youth.	1.64	.00**	Supported
H2$_a$: There is a significant relationship between interactivity with political figures and online political participation among youth.	1.17	.14	Not supported
H3$_a$: There is a significant relationship between	2.25	.02**	Supported

perceived Facebook information quality and online political participation among youth.			
H4$_a$: There is a significant relationship between political interest and online political participation among youth.	6.14	.00**	Supported
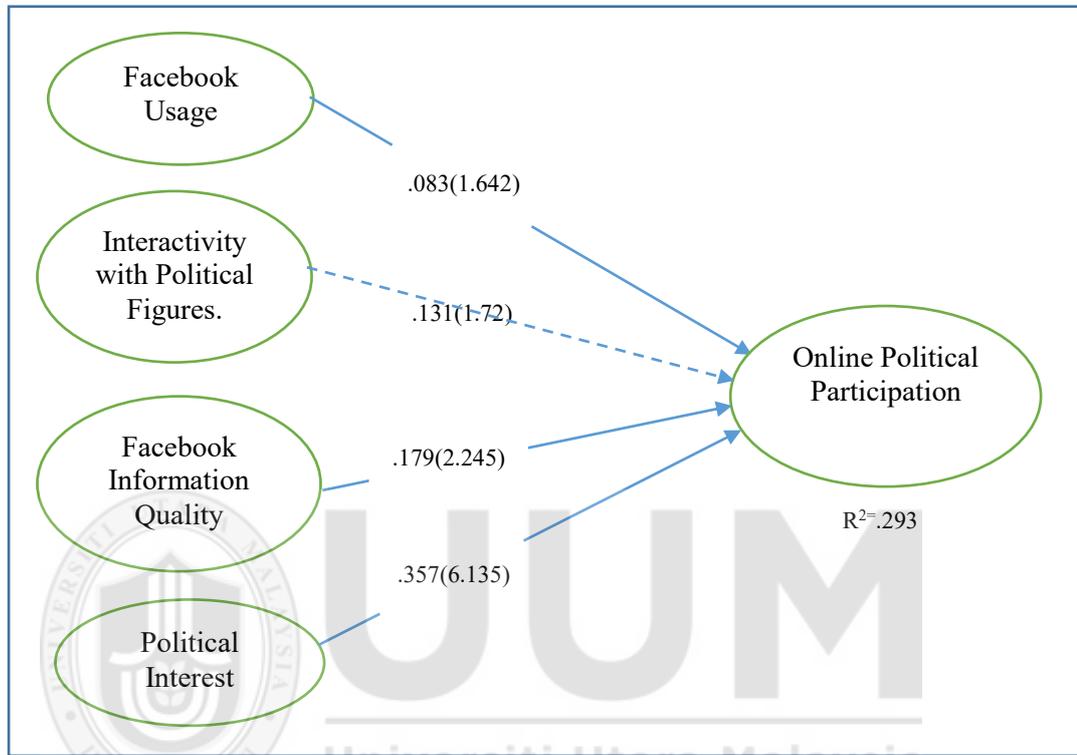
Figure 5.11 Model 1 Online Political Participation

Results for Testing the Hypotheses of Model 1 Online Political Participation

Under online political participation, 4 hypotheses were tested. Thus, the implications of these results are subsequently discussed in Chapter 6

H1a: Facebook usage (FU) and online political participation (ON)

As presented previously, hypothesis (H1a) explains the relationship between the Facebook usage and online political participation. Thus, as indicated in Table 5.8, the hypothesized relationship was found to be significant (p-value =.00**, t-statistics=1.642). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported.

H2a: Interactivity with political figures (IF) and online political participation (ON)

Hypothesis (H2a) explains the relationship between interactivity with political figures (IF) and online political participation (ON). Thus, as shown in Table 5.8. The hypothesized relationship was found to be insignificant (p-value= .145, t-statistics = 1.17). This means that this hypothesis is not supported.

H3a: Perceived Facebook Information quality (PQ) and online political participation (ON)

Hypothesis (H3a) explains the relationship between perceived Facebook information quality (PQ) and online political participation (ON). As shown in Table 5.8 the hypothesized relationship was found to be statistically significant (p-value= .02**, t-statistics= 2.245). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported.

H4a: Political Interest (PI) and online political participation (ON)

As presented before, hypothesis (H4a) explains the relationship between political interest (PI) and online political participation (ON). Thus, the hypothesized relationship was found to be statistically significant (p-value= .000**, t-statistics= 6.135). The hypothesis is found to be supportive.

Model one test 4 hypotheses H1a H2a H3a and H4a. The significant result shows 3 out of 4 hypotheses are statistically significant. The hypothesized model testing indicated the results as presented in Table 5.13 H1a H3a and H4a are supported. Thus, these hypotheses demonstrating the standard estimate were all significant ($r^2=$ 293 and $\beta=.759$) respectively. However, hypothesis H2a was rejected because it was not statistically significant ($\beta= .131$ and p-value= .145) which is greater than 0.05.

Thus, model one (online political participation) fit the data statistically. Therefore, among the independent variables comprising of Facebook usage, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest their relationship with online political participation is positive and statistically significant at 0.05 level. The results indicated a strong empirical evidence for H1a H3a and H4a while the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online political participation is insignificant. Thus, political interest has the highest relationship with online political participation with β =.357 and t-statistics= 6.135

5.5.2 Model 2: Offline Political Participation

Model two is the youth offline political participation which involve Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest as independent variables. Thus, below is the hypotheses testing and regression analysis of the model

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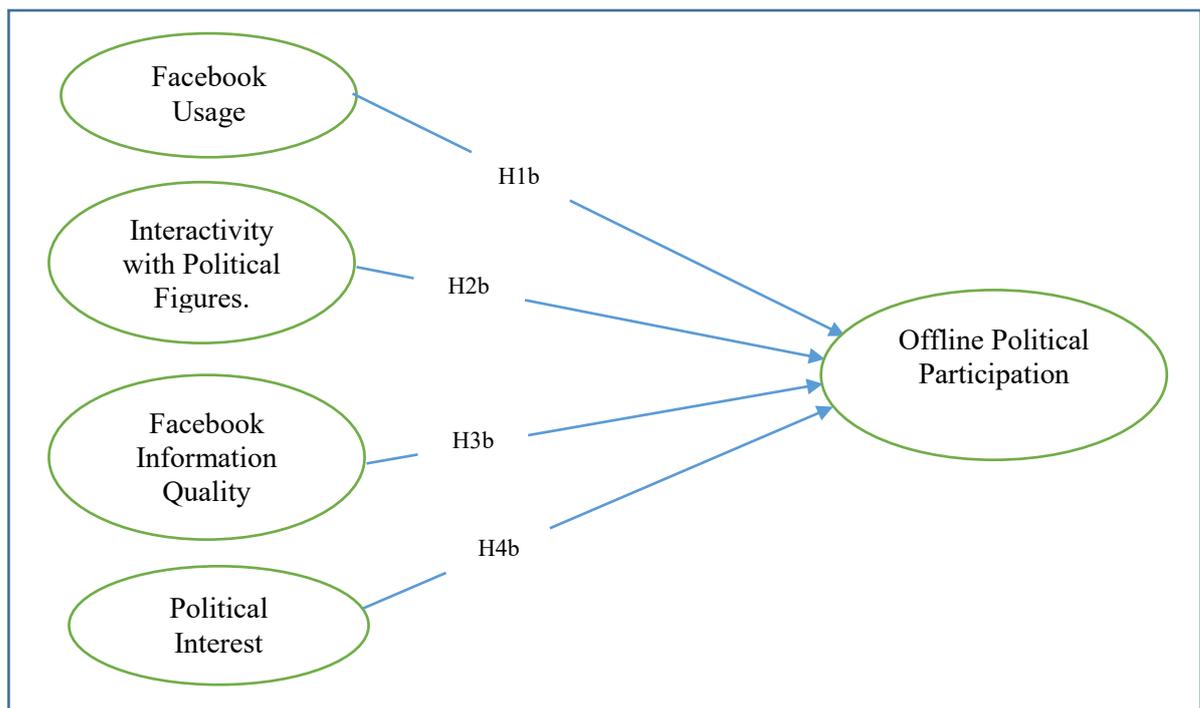
Figure 5.12 Hypothesis Testing: Model Two Offline Political Participation

Table 5.17

Multiple regression result of Model 2: Offline Political Participation

Variables	Expected Sign	B	t-statistics	P-value
Intercept		.46	1.92	.06
Independent variables				
Facebook usage	+	.20	3.85	.00**
Interactivity with political figures	+	.27	5.19	.00**
Facebook information quality	+	.12	2.35	.02**
Political interest	+	.15	2.91	.00**
Adjusted R^2			.32	
F-statistics *(df 4, 367)*			13.68	.00**
Durbin-Watson			1.83	
N			372	

Notes: ** significant at 0.05 (1-tailed), respectively; *Dependent variables* = ON, Online political participation; OF, Offline political participation; *Independent variables* = FU, Facebook usage; IF, Interactivity with political figures; PQ, Facebook information quality; PI, Political interest

Table 5.18

Results for testing the hypotheses of Model 2: Offline Political Participation

Hypotheses	t-statistics	p-value	Test results
H1b: There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and offline political participation among youth.	3.88	.00**	Supported
H2b:: There is a significant relationship between interactivity with political figures and offline political participation among youth.	5.19	.00**	Supported
H3b: There is a significant relationship between perceived Facebook information quality and offline political participation among youth.	2.35	.02**	Supported
H4b: There is a significant relationship between political interest and offline political participation among youth.	2.91	.00**	Supported
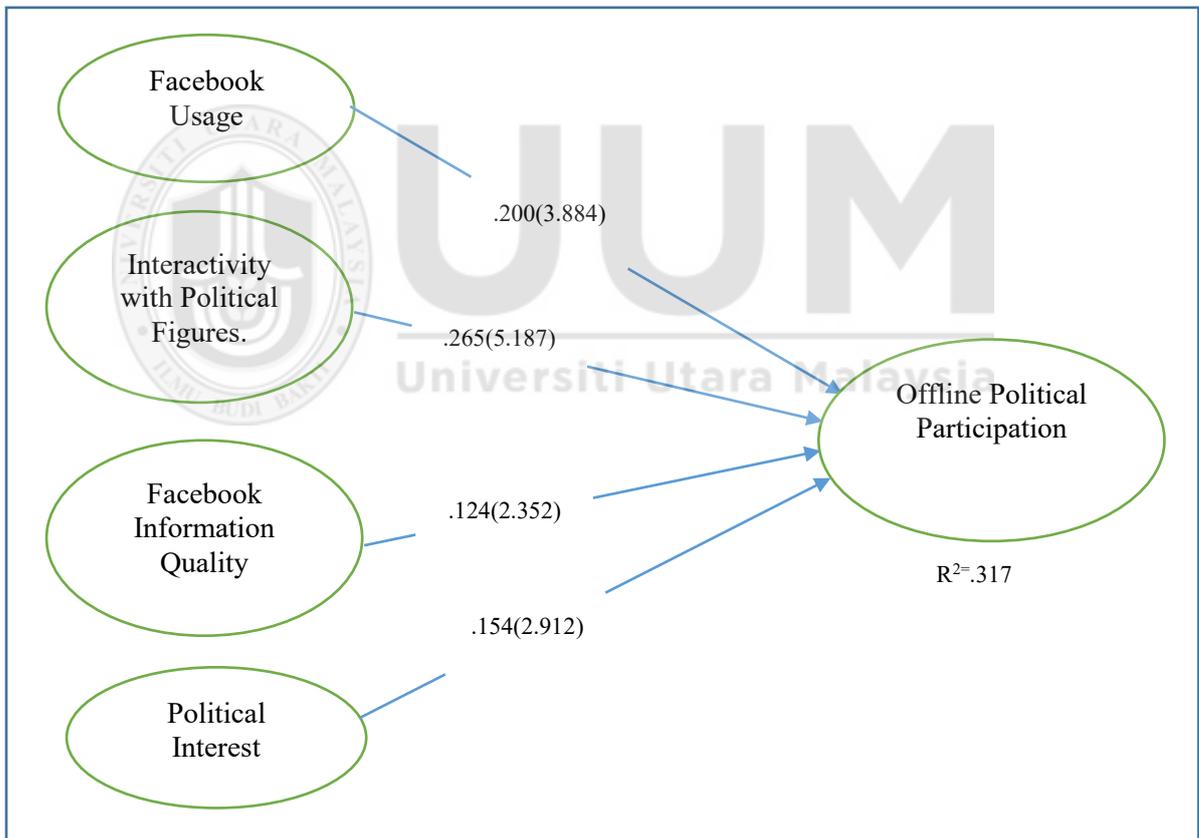
Figure 5.13 Model 2 for Offline Political Participation

Results for Testing the Hypotheses of Model 2 Offline Political Participation

Under offline political participation, 4 hypotheses were tested. Thus, the implications of these results are subsequently discussed in Chapter 6.

H1b: Facebook usage (FU) and offline political participation (OF)

Hypothesis (H1b) explains the relationship between Facebook usage and offline political participation. Table 5.8 Indicated that the hypothesis is statistically significant (p-value = .000**, t-statistics=3.884). Thus, this hypothesis is supported

H2b: Interactivity with political figures (IF) and offline political participation (OP)

Hypothesis (H2b) indicated a significant relationship between interactivity with political figures and offline political participation (OP). Therefore as shown in Table 5.8. The hypothesized relationship was found to be statistically significant (p-value= .000**, t-statistics= 5.187). Thus, this hypothesis is supported.

H3b: Perceived Facebook information quality (IF) and offline political participation (OF)

Hypothesis (H3b) explains the relationship between perceived Facebook information quality (PQ) and offline political participation (OF). The hypothesized relationship was found to be statistically significant (p-value= .019**, t-stoical= 2.352). Thus, this hypothesis is found to be supportive.

H4b: Political interest (PI) and offline political participation (OF)

Similarly, as shown earlier (H4b) explain the relationship between Political interest (PI) and offline political participation (OF). Therefore the hypothesized relationship was statistically significant (p-value= .004**, t-statistics= 2.912). Thus, the hypothesis is found to be supportive.

Model two test 4 hypotheses H1b H2b H3b and H4b. The significant result shows that all the 4 hypotheses are statistically significant. The hypothesized model testing indicated the results as presented in Table 5.14 H1b H2b H3b and H4b are supported. Thus, these hypotheses demonstrating the standard estimate were all significant (r^2= .317 and β=.458) respectively. Thus, model two (offline political participation) fit the data statistically. Therefore, among the independent variables comprising of Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest their relationship with offline political participation is statistically significant at 0.05 level. The results indicated a strong empirical evidence for H1b H2b H3b and H4b. Thus, interactivity with political figures has the highest relationship with offline political participation with β = .265 and t-statistics= 5.187

5.6 Summary

This study presents a picture of youth online/offline political participation on Facebook thus, literature and the results of this research suggest that there is a relationship between Facebook usage and online political participation among youth. Nevertheless in this chapter, normality of responses showing the skewness and kurtosis was presented and the youth's demographic characteristics were described. Even though some items were dropped and outliers were deleted to ensure the normality of the data, the results demonstrated a good level of reliability and average variance extraction took place for each constructs.

The assessment of the framework and testing of the hypotheses was undertaken at the final stage of the regression analysis. Thus, the results indicated a good fit of the framework, beta values were significant and 7 out 8 hypotheses were found to be

significant. The framework demonstrated that 7 hypotheses (H1a, H1b H2b, H3a, H3b and H4a, H4b were statistically significant) while H2a was not significant.

CHAPTER SIX
RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

An in-depth discussion on the research results that would response the research questions as well as answering the main problem statement are the focus of this chapter. Additionally, the summary of research hypotheses and their significant assessment are discussed. Consequently, the study implications are also explained. This chapter further discussed the findings in terms of the contribution to the theories and their relevance to political participation experts. Similarly, the summaries of the limitations and recommendations of the current research were presented, and finally yet significantly, implications for future research were explored.

6.2 Overview of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation, which involved the most significant factors that motivate youth political participation in Nigerian context. The important of this study to existing literature and political organizations can be understood from the contributions of youth political participation to political figures, government and Non-Governmental organizations and the consequent ability to increase political awareness and youth involvement in policy making and participating in political affairs (Agu, Okeke & Idike, 2013; Farson, 2013; Valenzuela *et al.,* 2009; Zuniga *et al.,* 2012).

The conceptual framework hypothesized a strong relationship between Facebook usage and online/offline political participation (Conroy *et al.*, 2012; Vitak, *et al.*,

2011), interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation (Turner, 2011; Tang & Lee, 2013), perceived Facebook information quality and online/offline political participation (Dhaha & Igale, 2013), political interest and online/offline political participation (Chao *et al.,* 2012).

Moreover, literature review also established that Facebook usage has a strong relationship with online/offline political participation (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014). Thus, Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality and political interest are presumed to increase youth online/offline political participation (Conroy *et al.,* 2012; Leung & Lee, 2014; Terriquez, 2015; Towner, 2013). However, interactivity with political figures is not statistically significant to online political participation. Nevertheless, based on the review of relevant literatures, the empirical study conducted in this area is limited thus, numerous researches especially in the Nigerian context have focused on use of Facebook for academic performance or use of Facebook for political violence (Aniekwe & Agbiboa, 2014; Okoro & Nwafor, 2013).

However, quantitative method was adopted to examine and investigate the research problem, and close ended questionnaire was used to elicit response from the sample population of youth in Bauchi metropolis. At the preliminary stage of the research, a pilot test was run for the clarity of questions and to ensure the questionnaire make sense and that it require the precise piece of information needed for the study. Thus, fifty respondents participated in the pilot test which served as a parameter before the actual survey took place. Nevertheless, one item was dropped and some sentences were grammatically restructured. The items were found to be reliable, and the Cronbach's scores validated and provided support for conducting the research.

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The SPSS software was used to regress and analyze the quantitative data, thus the results of this research indicated that Facebook usage correlates with online political participation and also has relationship with offline political participation. Furthermore, the assessment of reliability for all the constructs also indicated an accepted level of degree. However, the hypotheses were tested using a sample population of 397 at the initial stage but after outliers were found and removed, the final sample is 372 population of youth aged 18 to 35 years in Bauchi metropolis. The results indicated significant relationship between independent variables and dependent variables, thus it confirmed that both the measurement and the hypotheses have satisfactory fit indices. However, the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online political participation was insignificant.

To this end, it is imperative to understand that in this research there are four hypotheses for online political participation and four hypotheses of offline political participation which were developed from the literature especially in quantitative data such as Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Perceived Facebook information quality and Political interest. Therefore, these hypotheses remained estimated and showed a significant relationship between dependent and independent variables in the two models however, interactivity with political figures is not statically significant with online political participation

6.3 Facebook Usage and Political Participation

Research supporting the idea H1a that Facebook usage is significantly related to online political participation. This assertion has been supported and confirmed by work of Ahmed and Sheikh, (2013); Vissers and Stolle, (2014). Similarly, another studies have found Facebook usage to be positively related to online political

participation (Chan & Guo, 2013). Furthermore, Skoric and Kwan, (2011) claimed that, the intensity of Facebook use is positively related to online political participation among the youth. Thus, the results of this study demonstrates the hypothesized relationship in this research were statistically significant. Therefore, this research concludes that, Facebook usage correlates with online political participation among youth in Nigeria. Its role can certainly help political organizations, government and non-governmental organization. As such, variously political stakeholders must allocate huge amount of budget to encourage political awareness among youth, in order to acquire skill, knowledge and confidence to support government policies in Nigeria.

The relationship between Facebook usage and offline political participation (H1b) also appears to be significant in this study. Nevertheless, studies have presented a mixed results concerning whether Facebook can positively correlate with offline political participation (Effing, Hillegersberg & Huibers, 2011). Suggested by different scholars for instance (Conroy *et al.*, 2012;. Miller *et al.*, 2015; Ternes *et al.*, 2014; Waller, 2013). This has a direct but negative relationship on offline political participation which is not supported by the previous researches. Contrary to the previous findings, this study found a positive relationship between Facebook usage and offline political participation among youth in Nigeria. As such, this findings is consistent with the works of Bakker and Vreese (2011); Tang and Lee (2013); Vissers and Stolle, (2014).

6.4 Interactivity with Political Figures and Political Participation

The view that Interactivity with political figures often expected to correlate with online political participation (H2a), nevertheless the hypothesis is not supported in

this research. This findings is not consistent with the work Tang and Lee (2013) which argued and emphasised that, political participation is described mostly by direct connection with public political figures. The findings is also not in concomitant with the fact that, interaction with political figures also is a fundamental factor in online political participation. Nevertheless, despite the importance of interactivity with political figures, the research related to youth online/offline political participation is limited (Tang & Lee, 2013).

However, the test of hypothesis H2b supported the proclamation that, the interactivity with political figures is believed to be related to offline political participation. In this research, interactivity with political figures is significantly related and supports offline political participation, in line with other researches related to political participation (Huang *et al.,* 2014; Leung & Lee, 2014; Ogunlesi, 2013; Valenzuela Turner, 2011; Vitak, Zube, *et al.*, 2011). This research shows the relationship between interaction with political figures and youth offline participation. Therefore, the findings demonstrated that, if there is a constant interactions between politicians and youth via Facebook, offline political activities will be increased in Nigeria.

6.5 Perceived Facebook Information Quality and Political Participation

The results significantly supports the idea that perceived Facebook information quality has a positive relationship with online political participation (H3a). Previous researches emphasised the relationship between Facebook information quality and online political participation (Skoric & Kwan, 2011), This is also in line with the work of Ksiazek, Peer and Lessard (2014) who advocated that, information quality such as accuracy, speed, timeliness and thoroughness of information may be a

significant factors to use Facebook for social and political affairs. Evidently, perceived Facebook information quality has the tendency of making political messages more accurate, precise and timely (Dhaha & Igale, 2013). Thus, the current research reveals a strong support for the hypothesis H3a concerning the impact of perceived Facebook information quality on online political participation among youth in Nigerian context.

Similarly, the result of hypothesis H3b supports the claim that perceived Facebook information quality has a significant relationship with offline political participation among youth. This finding was supported based on the previous research (Diemer & Li, 2011; Jung et al., 2011; Leung & Lee, 2014). Thus, the current research findings are corresponding with Bakshy, (2012) who demonstrate that Facebook information quality increase user's relationship between both weak and strong ties by allowing them to create and share new information and ideas within a short period of time to achieve clear understanding that may lead to participation, thus youth in Nigeria often use Facebook to participate in political activities because of the quality and current information they receive.

6.6 Political interest and Political Participation

Studies concentrating on the relationship between political interest and online political participation has demonstrated that political interest provides the motivation needed to devote sufficient time and energy to participate in political activities. This means that it ignite and inspire people specifically to seek for political information that can help in assessing political alternatives (Whiteley, 2005). Furthermore, there has been some assertions that empirical studies between Facebook use and political

interest are limited and the outcome seem to conflict as they discovered that few citizens participate in politics online.

However, literatures have documented that political interest had a significant relationship with political participation (Carlisle & Patton, 2013). Thus, this assertion suggestion a strong evidence in this respect that the level of political interest significantly correlate with the online political participation among youth (H4a). The outcomes of this research are in concomitant with the previous studies Yamamoto & Kushin, (2014) that also found a significant relationship between political interest and political participation, also political interest and offline political participation have a significant relationship among youth in Nigeria.

The notion that political interest is positively related to offline political participation (H4b) thus supported in this study. Therefore, the findings is consitent with the Yamamoto and Kushin, (2014) argument that political interest has an impact on offline political participation especially among youth. For example, political interst provides youth with the initial zeal and motivation to develop keen interst to take active part in political campaighn and voting exercise. The findings confirm that political interest is significantly related to offline political partiocipation because it propels youth quest and ignite them to political activities. Additionally, the results from the questionnare indicated that the respondents are interested in politics because Facebook help them to interact with local grassroots politicians which often encourage them to vote and motivate others to vote in the general election.

Evidently, this research presents data and facts concerning the relationship between online/offline youth political participation and Facebook usage. Further, the results

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are consistent with the hypotheses but interactivity with political figures has no significant relationship with online political participation among youth in Nigeria.

6.7 Motivation of Uses and Gratification Theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory

This research focused on the relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality, political interest and online/offline political participation among youth based on the motivation of Uses and Gratification theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory. The two theories were adapted to understand the motivation of youth accessing Facebook for online/offline political participation. The study explored the sudden unprecedented surge among youth recent political interest in Nigeria and what motivate them to use Facebook for political activities. Thus, based on Uses and Gratification theory the present research examined and relate some factors that motivate youth to use Facebook for online/offline political participation such as youth's need for political information and knowledge, personal identity, self-expressions, socio-political interactions are among the factors that motivate and informed youth's quest of using Facebook for online/offline political participation.

Political information is the most common motivation among the others while quest for revealing personal identity, need to express youth political opinion, social and political interactivity are running behind respectively. From the questionnaire, respondents identified and acknowledged that they frequently receive information of politics that is of interest to them from Facebook. According to youth, Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from politicians and they feel accurate political information from Facebook improves their understanding and help them to have

interest in politics. The study reveals that youth's quest for political information through online discussion and deliberation with friends and political figures remain highly a priority to them as seen and addressed by statement on the questionnaire. And it became the main reason that motivate youth to use Facebook for online/offline political participation. Similarly, from the results of the study youth use Facebook to explore and express their political opinion, personal identity and interactivity with political figures. Besides this, it means for youth to be relevant politically, build their confidence, exercise their franchise and perform social roles in the community, Facebook is the right platform to know how much youth understand politics and also what level of their capabilities in societal social issues such as political matter. Facebook encourage and motivate them to explore on online/offline politics for their potentials and influence to socio-political change in the society.

On the other hand, this study presented an investigation into whether Facebook add positive deliberations and impact to online/offline political participation among youth based on the motivation of Deliberative Democratic Theory. This research second hypothesis hypothesized that Facebook usage significantly correlates with interactivity with political figures and youth online/offline political participation with. This hypothesis is supported from the responses of youth based on the questionnaire which indicates that Facebook help them to have a two-way interaction with politicians and the platform is effective in gathering feedback from political figures.

Deliberative Democratic theory advocates and emphasised on the existence of an ideal communicative spaces where youth can participate in a rational healthy deliberations over issues of importance and relevant to the common good. Thus,

Facebook often provide unrestricted communicative space for youth to deliberate on social, political and personal conversation in other to have political power. This power is obviously directly connected to the combinations and youth visibility that Facebook add to the atmosphere for effective deliberations. Therefore, Facebook exists as a potential emporium of diverse information where youth can deliberate freely without the restrictions of time or space (Conroy, 2012).

However, the information and free deliberations offer by Facebook may produce groups with members who may share similar opinions, values and ideas. Basically, deliberation is a characteristics of group online/offline which allow for discussion of issues of public interest. Thus, it has been recognized as a fundermental ingredient for healthy and ideal online/offline political participation, the emergence of an informed youth that can act as a counterbalance to power bearers is crucial (Gromping, 2014), certainly that is what Deliberative Democratic theory advocates for.

To this end, Nigerian youth access and use Facebook effectively to be involve in political open deliberation by seeking knowledge and information, for personal identity or to express online/offline political opinions, and maintaining social-political interaction with political figures which are the main motivation of this research. Additionally, the results of this study reveals that youth use Facebook for online/offline political participation because the platform provides the wisdoms of greater independence in political realm without evasion from gatekeepers of information or influences which both Uses and Gratification theory and Deliberative Democratic theory stance for. Facebook also shape the news agenda in media system

and social deliberations, in fact using the platform can reach to the larger youth with ease deliberations and affordable prices (Kanhe & Cohen, 2012).

Finally, Uses and Gratification Theory addresses research question one, and three which states that: what is relationship between Facebook use and youth online/offline political participation? (Research question one). What is the relationship between perceived Facebook information quality and youth online/offline political participation? (Research question three). Additionally, Deliberative Democratic Theory addresses research question two and four which states: what is the relationship between interactivity with political figures and youth online/offline political participation (Research question two). What is the relationship between political interest and youth online/offline political participation? (Research question four).

The results of this research confirmed a significant relationship between online/offline political participation and Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality and political interest.

6.8 Conclusion

Bearing in mind the fact that Facebook continues to integrate in young people daily lives and that it is enthusiastically used by youth around the world, scholars also continue to examine this issue from different perspectives. Thus, this particular research added a step further in this direction. In general, the inconsistency in the findings exploring the relationship between Facebook usage and political participation attracts scholarly attention over the years. Similarly, the recent prevalent democratic transformation in Nigeria and given the unprecedented use of Facebook by the youth in the political realm of the country, signified the motivation of exploring this research.

This research hypothesized a significant relationship between Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality, political interest and political participation (online/offline) in the Nigerian context. Scholars argue that youth recently use Facebook to seek for political knowledge and information and interact directly with week and strong ties. Conversely, interactivity with political figures does not explain the reasons for online political participation in this study therefore, there is the need for further study to be conducted and investigate the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online political participation among youth.

Nevertheless, this research employed quantitative method approach in gathering data and analysis using SPSS software. In summary, Facebook usage was found to be relevant and relate significantly with online political participation and statistically significant to offline political participation as well. It was found that, interactivity

with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality, and political interest also correlate with online/offline political participation,

6.9 Implication of Research Findings

6.9.1 Theoretical Implications

Political participation has been considered as a form of democratic processes and a good indicator of a strong system of government (Kim & Kim, 2008). It has also been recognized as a fundermental for achieving development especially in the developing nations like Nigeria (Nnanyelugo & Nwafor 2013). However, this part discusses and examines the contribution of the study to political communication theory.

The growing literature and the scholarly environment need a different context to test the applicability and implication of theories already developed from the Western countries (Mohamad, 2013). Therefore, a new study is imperative to test the connections of existing theories to the context of Nigeria. This assertion is important because majority of the theories in the literature on political participation are developed from the assumptions that are linked to the Western culture which often reflect a specific culture and the institutional underpinnings that are western oriented (Chan & Guo, 2013). Thus, Nigerian youth and their culture are considerably different from that of the West. Therefore, examining political participation model in Nigeria enhances remarkable insights to the literature. The findings of this research suggest the fact that what has been portrayed to apply in Western based theory may not necessarily be applicable to another, including Nigeria.

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Furthermore, this research confirms the existing measurements instruments that were gathered from the literatures previously used in different contexts. The measurement was refined and tested to address and fill a gap in the study, the developments of adapting and testing a new scale for Nigerian context was crucial. This study employed quantitative method, therefore rigorous statistical exploration and analysis were used to ensure the reliability of the measurement items. However, some items were removed while others were satisfied the reliability criteria in the study. Thus, this research contribute to the body of literature by modifying the measurement scale for certain constructs which basically were tested in a different environment which is Nigeria.

Evidently, the results of this study indicates that the relationship between Facebook usage, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest are significantly related to online political participation (Theocharis & Quintelier, 2014; Leung & Lee, 2014; Whiteley, 2005), while Facebook usage, interactivity with political figures, perceived Facebook information quality and political interest are significantly related to offline political participation (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013; Tang & Lee, 2013; Jung *et al.,* 2011; Carlisle & Patton, 2013). Therefore, a theoretical consequence and implication of this research is that the study offered the statistically significant relationship between Facebook usage, online/offline political participation among youth in Nigeria.

6.9.2 Managerial Implications

Youth are the important segment of a society due to their ability to pursue and champion socio-political activities through participation (Putnam 2000; Pritzker & McBride, 2009). They tent to exhibit leadership tendencies at the tender age by managing and piloting the resources and affairs of their community (Bakker & Vreese, 2011). This study focus on youth political participation in Nigeria through the use of Facebook one of the most widely social media platform in the world.

This research found youth political participation to be a fundermental instrument to increase a competitive advantages in political setting (Lahabou & Wok, 2013). Evidently, a more vibrant politically motivated youth are the catalyst and important segment groups to the political organizations (Dagona *et al.,* 2013). This is because they can execute management style and strategies to the political figures by creating meaningful desired outcomes through managing good interpersonal communication (Tang & Lee, 2013). Thus, youth political participation can be perceived as an important instrument to support and enhance political organization and political parties in pursuit of strategic campaign objectives (Ahmed & Sheikh, 2013; Chan & Guo, 2013; Muntean, 2015). This research has shown the significance of Facebook usage for youth online/offline political participation which can be implemented by the political figures to improve party or candidate popularity, acceptability and performance.

6.10 Limitations, Significance of results and Direction for Future Research

6.10.1 Limitations of the study

Facebook usage for political participation among youth in Nigeria has received a relative little scholarly attention when compared to other countries globally (Nnanyelugo & Nwafor, 2013)**.** Thus, it is surprising that this issue has not attracted many academic research before now. However, from the literature youth represents a large segment of the society's population but it is worrisome that we have had a limited understanding of why youth in Nigeria have recently started taking active part in political activities. Therefore, this study is timely and imperative to be carried out because its findings would provide a broad and deep insight into why the sudden unprecedented change in youth's political interest in Nigerian in general and Bauchi metropolis in particular.

Basically, there are two main limitations of this study. Firstly, this research was conducted to investigate the relationship between Facebook usage and political participation among Nigerian youth aged between 18 to 35 years. Those who may not have satisfied these eligibility conditions were excluded from the research. Thus, the results of this research could be applied only to Nigerian youth and it cannot be generalized to a larger population. Additionally, the research was conducted in Bauchi metropolis thus, the results may not be generalized because the scope of the study is too narrow to represent the entire Nigerian youth. Therefore, these findings may not represent the population of young Nigerian Facebook members because the samples were predominantly from the urban area given the extremely small number of rural youth.

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Secondly, the study limited to the use of Facebook only and no other platforms which are also use in the political field such as Twitter, blogs, YouTube. Additionally, mainstream media such as newspapers, radio, and television were not included because the media networks are either owned by or controlled with the ruling party, so their news is very biased in favor of the party. Furthermore, they are often used by the political party to publicize their propaganda, instead of more credible information that portray the true picture of the society, Thus, the opposition parties are always deprived access to media, so they are not able to reach Nigerian youth through those media to present their political agenda.

Furthermore, examining the influence of traditional media on Nigerian youth political participation may probably yield subjective and biased results, and limit our understanding of their level of political participation. Facebook is not under any ownership obligations, control or government influence in fact, the medium has recently gained more popularity, freedom and independence from the enemies of state or their political manipulations and censorship of the contents. Overall, this research provides additional support for the view that Facebook usage among youth matters for their political participation.

However, this study is significant in the sense that it brought and linked together two aspects of theories that have not always been looked at together before: the Uses and Gratification Theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory which reflected and explained the framework as well as the hypothesis. Thus, by combining the two theories it was possible to have more details of political participation and to come to the understanding of what gratify youth to use Facebook for political participation.

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The Uses and Gratification Theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory advocates that participation should be open and accessible to every individual in the society without any state domination or political manipulations. Additionally, the two theories stress a more vibrant political deliberation and free flow communication as well sharing of information especially among youth and how they appreciate rational, discursive, deliberative democracy through the use of Facebook The results of this research are also very significant to the field of Communication and Political Science in the sense that it pinpointed at least four definite predictors of political participation and types of participation.

Similarly, age and education level can definitely be looked at to determine the probability that one will participate. As youth are considered very active and ready to accept changes and their higher levels of education, it is clear that they will be more likely to participate in online/offline political participation. Specifically, these results are also important to the field of Political Science because they may help solve the problem of low levels of youth political participation. The fact that a very small percentage of youth in Nigeria participate in political activities has never been questioned. However, by knowing what are the factors responsible for youth disengagement in political arena and what are the possible predictors of political participation that may be possible to increase participation is very crucial.

The predicted hypotheses were able to provide evidence that Facebook have a significantly motivates youth online/offline political participation in Bauchi metropolis. Thus, the importance of this findings also is that youth Facebook users are likely to participate online/offline political activities than those who do not use

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Facebook. Therefore, increasing the level of youth political participation is a very important aspect of Political Science. However, to do this, you must first know why youth are or are not participating which this study stands for. Eventually, this research has pointed to some of the variables that lead to political participation.

Hopefully through this and other research, more can be learned and participation of all types and at all age and education levels can be increased. As youth continue to become increasingly dependent on Facebook to keep up with the demands of their socio-political lifestyle, it can be assumed that youth will continue to rely on online forms of social interaction. As Facebook develop and increase in strength and universality we expect that it will continue the trend we have observed and reach a positive impacts in the future.

6.10.2 Direction for Future Research

Different directions are suggested for future researchers to expand the body of knowledge in the literature on political participation and Facebook usage should be of scholarly interest and also deserve investigation. Firstly, the addition of qualitative data to explain youths' choice of different Facebook political activities. This research seeks to examine the relationship between Facebook usage and youth political participation in Nigeria. Assumptions were drawn based on quantitative analysis.

However, a qualitative exploration could also shed more light on the findings of this research by adding in-depth explanations. Bimber and Copeland (2013) put forward that a focus on technology as the driver of youths' political participation seems to be a poor measure of understanding political engagement. It is their contention that

surveys emphasize the medium rather than the context of the message. The multitude of online political experiences might not strongly correlate with how frequently or intensively someone uses digital media for participation.

Additionally, research should also be conducted to compare Nigerian youth that are Facebook members with other youth that are not Facebook members to investigate whether the use of the medium can increase political participation among them. The cross-sectional nature of this research may not account for connection among the variables thus, longitudinal studies will provide a clearer and rich picture of the mutual influence between Facebook usage and political participation. Finally, this research was conducted in Nigeria, country with a remarkable Facebook penetration among youth thus, the process might likely work differently in other contexts, therefore it has to be tested in future research undertakings. To this end, it is imperative to stress that this research adds to the existing literature by providing evidence that a significant positive relationship between Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality, Political interest and political participation (Online/Offline) exists. Facebook has evolved and replacing the traditional media in all ramifications. Thus, future studies should endeavour to examine the changing relationship between Facebook and political participation. Obviously, there are limits on what this particular research can address as the researcher is not privy to much of the information that Facebook holds. Further investigation should incorporate different social media sources such as YouTube and Twitter to investigate and determine their influence because if

different social media sites accommodate and cater to different sub-population, it may yield different implications for users.

This study was set to examine whether Facebook usage correlate with youth political participation, and the findings reveals that the answer is yes. Basically, the discrepancy in the previous findings exploring the relationship between Facebook usage and political participation drew the attention of many scholars. Additionally, the remarkable features of marginalized Nigerian youth, couple with the unprecedented widespread use of Facebook by the youth in the political arena (especially during 2015 presidential election in Nigeria) signified another motivation of exploring this research.

Therefore, it may be wise for political figures to appreciate and understand that youth are now seriously using Facebook in their quest for political information and participation. Thus, it is imperative to state that political participation amongst youth is largely dependent on use of Facebook because more youth are often showcasing stronger reliance on the Facebook as their platform for securing political information they need to make an informed political decisions. Hence, targeting and tailoring political messages to the youth through Facebook should be important factor in future campaign strategies. Additionally, politicians need to consolidate and consider both Facebook and youth in their allocation of campaign resources.

Finally, this study initially hypothesized a positive relationship between Facebook usage, Interactivity with political figures, Facebook information quality, political interest and political participation among youth in Nigeria. The findings of this

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research indicate that Facebook usage significant relates with Nigerian youth political participation thus, in spite of the study's limitations the findings bring a contribution to existing research in political communication.

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Appendix A

survey questionnaire

Dear respondent

I am a Master student of Communication at School of Multimedia Technology and Communication in Universiti Utara Malaysia. I am seeking your cooperation to respond to the attached survey questions on "The influence of Facebook use on political participation among youth in Nigeria"

This research is part of the Universiti requirement for the completion of my thesis. The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. Please, kindly follow the instructions provided within the questionnaire.

I humbly request you to fill this questionnaire as truthful as you can. Please, be assured that the research is primarily for academic purposes. Therefore, your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your time and participation.

For further enquiries, please you may contact any of the following:

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INSTRUCTIONS

Please, provide the appropriate information by ticking (√) or circling (o) the option in the box provided that best represent your response.

SECTION A: ONLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ON FACEBOOK

Online political participation are political activities that you carry out on Facebook such as posting and sharing political information, commenting on a political party or candidate's Facebook page.

Code ON	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I often Send messages to politicians on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
2	I always visit campaigns or candidate advocacy on Facebook page	1	2	3	4	5
3	I often make contributions to a political campaign on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
4	I frequently receive information from political parties' Facebook page	1	2	3	4	5
5	I always volunteer to participate in the activities of political party on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION B: OFFLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

These are the political activities that you carry out physically such as actual voting exercise.

Code OFF	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I always vote in the general elections	1	2	3	4	5
2	I often speak with public officials in person	1	2	3	4	5
3	I frequently call or send letters to elected public officials	1	2	3	4	5
4	I always participate in demonstrations or protests	1	2	3	4	5
5	I attend political meetings, rallies or speeches	1	2	3	4	5

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6	I always encourage others to vote	1	2	3	4	5
7	I approve of wearing a campaign badge or T-shirt	1	2	3	4	5
8	I always participate in displaying campaign stickers or yard signs	1	2	3	4	5
9	I often work for political party or candidate	1	2	3	4	5
10	I get involved in political action groups, party committees or political clubs	1	2	3	4	5
11	I always participate in local actions	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: FACEBOOK USAGE

This section is about the intensity of your Facebook usage. Please, kindly give your honest answers that truly represent your attitude towards Facebook usage.

Code FU	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Facebook is part of my everyday activity	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
3	Facebook has become part of my daily routine.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel I am part of the Facebook community.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I would be sorry if Facebook shut down.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: INTERACTIVITY WITH POLITICAL FIGURES

This section is about your link and interaction with politicians, local and grassroots political activists, lecturers or media political commentators.

Code IF	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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1	Facebook helps me to have two-way communication with politicians	1	2	3	4	5
2	Facebook helps me with the opportunity to interact with local and grassroots political activists	1	2	3	4	5
3	Facebook is effective in gathering feedback from politicians	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: Perceived Facebook Information Quality

This is about the quality, speed and accuracy of information you receive through Facebook

Code PQ	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	The information provided by the Facebook is accurate.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Facebook provides me with a complete set of information.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The information from the Facebook is always up to date	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Facebook provides me with all the information I need	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The information provided by the Facebook is well arranged and organised	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION F: POLITICAL INTEREST

This is what motivates and makes you want to participate in politics on Facebook.

Code PI	Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.	Strongly disagreed	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Most of my Facebook friends are interested in politics	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have time to worry about politics using Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
3	I often discuss politics with my friends on Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
4	Facebook helps me to have interest in politics	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION G: BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

1   Age
   (a) 18-22 years   ☐
   (b) 23-27 years   ☐
   (c) 28-32 years   ☐
   (d) 33-35 years   ☐

2   Gender
   (a)   ☐   Male

   (b)   ☐   Female

3   Level of education
   (a) PhD   ☐
   (b) M.Sc.   ☐
   (c) B.Sc./HND   ☐
   (d) ND/OND   ☐
   (e) Secondary School.   ☐
   (f) Primary School.
          ☐

4   Religion
   (a) Islam   ☐
   (b) Christianity   ☐
   (c) Traditionalist   ☐
5   Ethnicity
   (a) Hausa/ Fulani   ☐
   (b) Yoruba   ☐
   (c) Igbo   ☐
   (d) Others (please specify)   ☐

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