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**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FACEBOOK USAGE AND YOUTH  
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA**

**SHAMSU DAUDA ABDU**



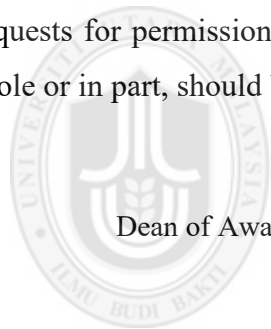
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## Abstrak

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 menunjukkan pengetahuan serta pemahaman yang mendalam berhubung penyertaan 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**

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## Table of Contents

Permission to Use .....	i
Abstrak.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgement .....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures.....	xi
List of Appendix .....	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Background.....	1
1.3 Problem Statement .....	7
1.4 Research Objectives and Questions .....	12
1.4.1 Research Objectives.....	12
1.4.2 Research Questions .....	13
1.5 Significance of Study .....	13
1.6 Structure of the Research .....	15
1.7 Conceptual and Operational Definition of Terms.....	16
1.7.1 Social Media .....	16
1.7.2 Facebook Usage .....	16
1.7.3 Interactivity with Political Figures.....	17
1.7.4 Perceived Facebook Information Quality .....	17
1.7.5 Political Interest .....	18
1.7.6 Youth.....	18
1.7.7 Metropolis .....	19
1.8 Summary .....	19
<b>CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	20
2.2 Defining Political Participation.....	23

2.3	Typologies of Political Participation.....	34
2.3.1	Traditional Political Participation .....	35
2.3.2	Online Political Participation .....	37
2.3.3	Political Participation: Communication Perspective.....	43
2.3.4	Political Participation and other Related Terms .....	45
2.3.4.1	The Web 1.0 – Political Participation.....	45
2.3.4.2	Web 2.0 – Social Media – Political Participation.....	46
2.3.4.3	Political knowledge .....	47
2.3.4.4	Political Interest.....	47
2.3.4.5	Public consultation .....	48
2.3.4.6	Protest .....	48
2.3.4.7	Petition.....	49
2.4	Political Participation in Nigeria.....	50
2.5	Underpinning Theories.....	56
2.5.1	Uses and Gratification Theory .....	57
2.5.2	Deliberative Democratic Theory.....	64
2.6	Summary .....	72
	<b>CHAPTER THREE HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT.....</b>	<b>74</b>
3.1	Introduction.....	74
3.2	Hypotheses Development and Theoretical Framework .....	74
3.3	The Concept of Social Media.....	75
3.4	The Relationship between Facebook usage, and Online/ Offline Political Participation .....	77
3.4.1	The Relationship between Interactivity with Political Figures and Online/Offline Political Participation .....	86
3.4.2	The Relationship between Perceived Facebook Information Quality and Online/Offline Political Participation .....	91
3.4.3	The Relationship between Political Interest and Online/Offline Political Participation .....	98
3.5	Summary .....	102
	<b>CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN .....</b>	<b>104</b>



4.1 Introduction.....	104
4.2 Philosophical Foundation of Research.....	104
4.3 Research Design.....	106
4.4 Research Setting.....	107
4.5 Population of the Study.....	108
4.6 Sampling Procedure.....	109
4.7 Sampling Size.....	110
4.8 Sampling Technique.....	111
4.9 Data Collection Method.....	111
4.10 Instrumentation.....	112
4.11 Measurement of Variables.....	113
4.11.1 Facebook usage.....	114
4.11.2 Perceived Facebook Information quality network.....	114
4.11.3 Interactivity with political figures.....	115
4.11.4 Political Interest.....	115
4.11.5 Online/Offline Political participation.....	115
4.12 Method of Data Analysis.....	116
4.13 Items Development.....	117
4.14 Reliability Test.....	120
4.15 Summary.....	123
<b>CHAPTER FIVE DATA ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>124</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	124
5.2 Data Management.....	124
5.3 Data Screening and Characteristic of sample.....	124
5.3.1 Missing Data Analysis.....	125
5.3.2 Outliers' Detection.....	125
5.3.3 Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity, and Multicollinearity.....	129
5.3.3.1 Normality.....	129
5.3.3.2 Homoscedasticity.....	132
5.3.3.3 Linearity.....	134
5.3.3.4 Multicollinearity.....	136
5.4 Factor Analysis.....	138

5.4.1 Communalities .....	139
5.4.2 Eigenvalue.....	141
5.4.3 Scree Plot .....	142
5.5 Hypothesis Testing.....	147
5.4.4 Results for Testing the Hypotheses of Model 1 Online Political Participation .....	149
5.5 Summary .....	155
<b>CHAPTER SIX RESULTS AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>157</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	157
6.2 Overview of the Study .....	157
6.3 Facebook Usage and Political Participation.....	159
6.4 Interactivity with Political Figures and Political Participation .....	160
6.5 Perceived Facebook Information Quality and Political Participation.....	161
6.6 Political interest and Political Participation .....	162
6.7 Motivation of Uses and Gratification Theory and Deliberative Democratic Theory .....	164
6.8 Conclusion .....	168
6.9 Implication of Research Findings .....	169
6.9.1 Theoretical Implications .....	169
6.9.2 Managerial Implications .....	171
6.10 Limitations, Significance of results and Future Research.....	172
6.10.1 Limitations of the study .....	172
6.10.2 Direction for Future Research.....	175
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>179</b>

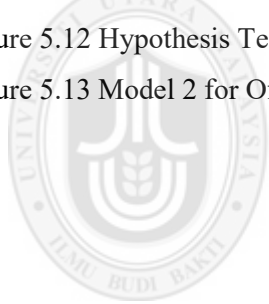
## List of Tables

Table 2.1 .....	24
Numerous Definitions of Political Participation .....	24
Table 2.2 .....	59
Indicating previous studies that employed Uses and Gratification Theory in their researches related to social media .....	59
Table 4.1 .....	117
Items for Measuring Online Political Participation .....	117
Table 4.2 .....	118
Items for Measuring Offline Political Participation.....	118
Table 2.3 .....	118
Items for Measuring Facebook Usage .....	118
Table 4.4 .....	119
Items for Measuring Interactivity with Political Figures .....	119
Table 4.5 .....	119
Items for Measuring Political Interest.....	119
Table 4.6 .....	119
Items for Measuring Perceived Facebook Information Quality.....	119
Table 4.7: .....	120
The results of the reliability test.....	120
Table 4.8: .....	122
Results from the pilot-test.....	122
Table 5.1 .....	128
Univariate and Multivariate Outliers Results.....	128
Table 5.2: .....	130
Skewness and Kurtosis Values .....	130
Table 5.3 .....	130
Test of Normality.....	130
Table 5.4 .....	135
Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities of Variables .....	135
<b>5.3.4 Demographic Characteristics and Relationships.....</b>	<b>137</b>
Table 5.5 .....	137
Demographic profile of Nigerian youths' main survey sample (N=372) .....	137

Table 5.6.....	140
Communalities.....	140
Table 5.7.....	141
Average Variance Expected.....	141
Table 5.8.....	143
Rotated Component Matrix.....	143
Table 5.9 .....	144
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Facebook usage .....	144
Table 5.10 .....	144
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Political interest.....	144
Table 5.11 .....	145
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Facebook information quality.....	145
Table 5.12 .....	145
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for Interactivity with political figures .....	145
Table 5.13 .....	146
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for online political participation.....	146
Table 5.14 .....	146
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha for offline political participation .....	146
Table 5.15 .....	148
Multiple regression result of Model 1: Online Political Participation .....	148
Table 5.16 .....	148
Results for testing the hypotheses of Model 1: Online Political Participation.....	148
Table 5.17 .....	152
Multiple regression result of Model 2: Offline Political Participation.....	152
Table 5.18 .....	153
Results for testing the hypotheses of Model 2: Offline Political Participation .....	153

## List of Figures

Figure 3.1 Proposed Theoretical Framework for Online/Offline Political Participation .....	102
Figure 5.1 Inbox Plot .....	128
Figure 5.2. Histogram .....	131
Figure 5.3. Histogram .....	132
Figure 5.4. Scatterplot.....	133
Figure 5.5. Scatterplot.....	134
Figure 5.6. Linearity between independent and dependent variables (Online).....	135
Figure 5.7. Linearity between independent and dependent variables (Offline).....	136
Figure 5.8: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test KMO and Bartlett's Test.....	138
Figure 5.9 Scree Plot.....	143
Figure 5.10 Hypothesis Testing .....	147
Figure 5.11 Model 1 Online Political Participation .....	149
Figure 5.12 Hypothesis Testing: Model Two Offline Political Participation .....	152
Figure 5.13 Model 2 for Offline Political Participation.....	153



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## List of Appendix

Appendix A survey questionnaire..... 193



# 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 order 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

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UUM  
Universiti Utara Malaysia

## Appendix A

### survey questionnaire



Awang Had Salleh  
Graduate School  
of Arts And Sciences

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Universiti Utara Malaysia

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.

<b>Code ON</b>	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.

<b>Code OFF</b>	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



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

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)

