Facebook use and predictors of political participation among youths: A study of Bauchi, Katagum and Misau local government areas of Bauchi state - Nigeria

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Abstract
This quantitative study investigates the relationship between social media use and political participation among youth in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and collected data from 390 sampled respondents aged between 18 and 40 years old in three local government areas (LGA)of the state. One local government was selected from each senatorial zone. In Bauchi South, Bauchi LGA was selected; Katagum LGA was selected from Bauchi North and Misau LGA was selected from Bauchi Central. Bauchi, Katagum, and Misau Local Government Areas. These LGAs were selected to strategically designed and capture the diversity of experiences among youths in different socio-economic and political contexts within Bauchi State, providing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Facebook use and predictors of political participation. Using Krejcie and Morgan table of sample, 96 respondents were sampled from Misau; 108 from Katagum and 187 from Bauchi. The sampling technique employed was stratified random sampling, which involved dividing the population into strata based on gender, age, and level of education. The findings of the study revealed that social media use is positively associated with political participation among youth in Bauchi State. Respondents who reported higher levels of engagement with Facebook exhibited a 23.8% increase in the likelihood of participating in online political discussions (p < 0.01), and a 19.5% increase in the likelihood of engaging in offline voting activities (p < 0.05). Specifically, the study found that youth who use social media more frequently are more likely to engage in political activities such as voting, attending political rallies, and participating in online political discussions. The study also found that social media use can be used to enhance political participation among youth by providing them with access to political information and opportunities to engage with political leaders and organizations. The study recommends that government agencies and non-governmental organizations should utilize social media platforms to educate and mobilize youth to participate in the political process.
Keywords: Facebook Use, Predictors, Political Participation, Youths.

1. Introduction

Youth engagement in the political sphere constitutes an indispensable cornerstone of democratic growth and development in any nation. Nigeria, as with many countries, acknowledges the important role played by its young population in shaping the trajectory of its democratic progress. In this context, there is an increasing imperative to scrutinize the dynamic interplay between emerging technologies (Olajimbiti, 2023), with a particular focus on the influence of Facebook on the engagement of Nigerian youth in both online and offline political participation.

Nigeria, often referred to as the "Giant of Africa," stands as the most populous country on the continent. A significant portion of its population comprises young individuals, whose active participation in the electoral process is pivotal for the consolidation and advancement of democracy within the nation. Recent years

have borne witness to a transformative shift in the political landscape of Nigeria, characterized by the escalating involvement of its youth (Okibe, 2022). Events such as the #EndSARS movement and the enactment of the 'Not Too Young To Run' Act bear testament to the burgeoning desire of Nigerian youth to actively engage in politics, advocate for change, and influence decision-making (Omotola, 2020).

One of the primary catalysts for this surge in youth political participation can be attributed to the widespread proliferation of social media platforms, with Facebook emerging as a prominent medium (Sally & Wickramasinhe, 2020, Okigbo & Uzuegbunam, 2019). Facebook has become a prevalent and influential space for young Nigerians to connect, share information, and engage in discussions on a wide spectrum of socio-political issues. This digital domain has assumed a critical role in shaping political attitudes and mobilizing the youth electorate.

Studies have underscored the transformative potential of social media, including Facebook, in influencing political participation (Matthes, 2022, Enjolras et al., 2017). These platforms possess the capacity to mobilize and inform young voters, effectively bridging the gap between political discourse and civic engagement. Bauchi State, situated in the northern region of Nigeria, presents a particularly intriguing case study due to its diverse demographic composition and complex socio-political landscape. By delving into the voting behavior of youth in Bauchi State, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how social media, specifically Facebook, influences their participation in the electoral process.

Recent electoral events in Nigeria, notably the 2023 general elections, have witnessed a notable uptick in youth voter turnout (Olajimbiti, 2023). This trend signals a transformative shift in the political landscape, indicating that Nigerian youth are assuming a more active role in shaping the future of their country. Nigerian politics has been greatly influenced by the social media like other nations and this has enhanced more political participation of youth where they are freely allowed to express their opinions about governance, political office holders, opposition and political campaigns. As a result, political opposition is massively done via the social media where information is spread to sensitize and encourage particularly youth to participate in campaigns and voting processes (Adelekan, 2020).

This study seeks to comprehensively explore the intricate relationship between Facebook usage and political participation among youth in Bauchi State, Nigeria, drawing upon insights gathered from recent trends in youth involvement in Nigerian politics.

Problem Statement

In contemporary Nigerian society, characterized by dynamic socio-political transformations and an evolving digital landscape, youth participation in the political process emerges as both a promising prospect and a pressing concern. Within this context, Bauchi State, situated in the northern region of Nigeria, boasts a substantial youth population. This demographic not only reflects the state's future but also possesses the potential to shape the political trajectory of the nation. As Nigeria's political landscape continues to evolve, there is an imperative need to explore the multifaceted relationship between social media use and political participation among the youth of Bauchi State, with a keen focus on both online and offline engagement. (Abdu, Mohamad & Haslina, 2020)

The advent of social media platforms, most notably Facebook, has ushered in a revolution in the way individuals interact, communicate, and engage with political content and actors. Nigeria, akin to many other nations, has borne witness to a surge in social media usage among its youth (Abdu at el 2020, Okigbo & Uzuegbunam,

2019). These platforms have not only provided young citizens with unprecedented access to information but have also become vital conduits for political discussions and mobilization for various causes. Recent sociopolitical events, such as the #EndSARS movement and the implementation of the Not Too Young To Run Act, have underscored the growing political consciousness and aspirations of Nigerian youth (Omotola, 2020). But youth have not been recognized or involved in decision making that may help them to build self-confidence and acquire skills that are relevant such as effective communication or teamwork (Halim, Mohamad, Abdu, Azizan, &Akanmu, 2021)

Bauchi State's unique sociopolitical context, characterized by diverse demographics and distinct regional dynamics, necessitates a focused research effort to unravel the intricate relationship between social media use and political engagement among its youth. The state has witnessed notable shifts in youth involvement in politics, exemplified by increased voter turnout in recent elections, including the 2019 general elections (Adelekan, 2020). These evolving trends raise pertinent questions about the extent to which social media platforms influence the political behavior of young citizens in Bauchi State (Okorie & Awodele, 2021).

Scholars have argued that political messages advertised on Facebook during elections may likely change voter choice and preference of a candidate during an election (Uwalaka & Nwala, 2023) However, few studies have accounted the relationship between political advertising and youth political participation in Bauchi metropolis thus, has limit our understanding of the two concepts (Abdu Omeiza, 2023) Furthermore, initiatives like the "Not Too Young To Run" Act and the establishment of the Nigerian Youth Parliament have been introduced to promote youth participation in politics (Okorie & Awodele, 2021).

While these endeavors have created an enabling environment for young political aspirants, it is essential to assess their impact on overall youth political engagement in Bauchi State. Do these legislative reforms and youth-oriented institutions translate into meaningful political participation among Bauchi's youth population, or are there persisting challenges that hinder their full engagement?

To address the existing gaps in the literature and account for the unique context of Bauchi State, this research aims to investigate the intricate interplay between social media use and youth political participation. In doing so, it seeks to shed light on the dynamic relationship between digital platforms and the political engagement of Bauchi State's youths, ultimately contributing to our understanding of the evolving landscape of political participation in Nigeria.

Research Objectives
1. Examine the relationship between Facebook usage and the online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi state.
2. Investigate the relationship between interactivity with political figures on social media and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi state.
3. Examine the relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi state.
4. Examine the relationship between political advertising on social media and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi state.

2. Literature Review
Youth participation in the political process is crucial for the growth and development of any nation. In Nigeria, as in many other countries, young people constitute a significant portion of the population, making their engagement in the electoral

process pivotal for democratic progress. With the advent of social media platforms like Facebook, which have gained immense popularity among Nigerian youth, it is imperative to investigate the potential impact of Facebook usage on youth participation in online and offline political activities. This study aims to explore the relationship between Facebook usage and the voting behavior of youth in Bauchi State, Nigeria, drawing insights from recent trends in youth involvement in Nigerian politics. (Halim, Mohamad & Abdu, 2021) The use of social media, particularly Facebook, has become increasingly prevalent among Nigerian youth (Okigbo & Uzuegbunam, 2019). The platform has provided young people with a means to connect, share information, and engage in discussions on various socio-political issues. Nigeria has experienced a surge in youth engagement in politics in recent years (Omotola, 2020). The #EndSARS movement and the Not Too Young To Run Act exemplify the growing desire of Nigerian youth to actively participate in politics and influence decision-making.

Studies conducted in other countries have shown that social media can influence political participation (Matthes, 2022, Kupfreschmid, 2023). Social media platforms like Facebook have the potential to mobilize and inform young voters. Bauchi State, located in northern Nigeria, presents an interesting case due to its diverse demographic and socio-political landscape. Investigating youth voting behavior in Bauchi State can provide insights into the broader Nigerian context. Recent elections in Nigeria, including the 2019 general elections, witnessed an increase in youth voter turnout (Adelekan, 2020). This suggests a changing political landscape where youth are playing a more active role in shaping the country's future.

This study seeks to explore whether there is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and the voting behavior of youth in Bauchi state, Nigeria. Hence, the below hypothesis is postulated:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and the online/offline voting process among youth in Bauchi state.

Engaging youth in political processes remains a critical aspect of democratic development in Nigeria, particularly in regions such as Bauchi. Recent findings highlight both encouraging advancements and ongoing challenges in youth participation in Nigerian politics, with significant relevance to the "Not Too Young To Run" Act. With Nigeria being the most populous country in Africa, the active involvement of its youth population in politics is of paramount importance.

Adegbola et al. (2020) have observed a notable surge in the interest of young Nigerians in political affairs in recent years. This heightened interest can largely be attributed to their increased access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). As digital connectivity expands across the country, the youth demographic has become more informed and politically aware. This heightened awareness has translated into a desire to participate actively in the political process, both online and offline, which aligns with the objectives of the "Not Too Young To Run" Act.

The "Not Too Young To Run" Act, a landmark legislation enacted in Nigeria in 2018, seeks to reduce the age limit for running for political office, thereby opening up opportunities for young individuals to participate more actively in politics. This initiative represents a significant step towards fostering youth inclusion and participation in political processes (Okorie & Awodele, 2021). While it has created a more favourable environment for young aspirants, it is essential to delve deeper into the impact of such initiatives on overall youth political engagement.

One noteworthy initiative that demonstrates positive developments in youth engagement is the establishment of the Nigerian Youth Parliament in 2008, as outlined by Okafor and Adedire (2019). This institution provides a platform for young people to actively participate in legislative discussions and policymaking, aligning with the "Not Too Young To Run" Act's spirit of promoting youth involvement in politics. While it represents a step in the right direction, it is essential to investigate the extent to which these initiatives have influenced youth participation and candidacy in Bauchi state.

Despite these promising developments, youth participation in Nigerian politics, as in Bauchi state, faces persistent challenges. Awodele et al. (2021) identify several impediments, including voter apathy, political violence, and a pervasive lack of trust in the political system. These factors continue to hinder young Nigerians, even with the "Not Too Young To Run" Act in place, from fully participating in the democratic process, both in terms of voting and engaging in broader political activities.

Interactivity with political figures has undergone a significant transformation with the rise of social media and online platforms. Young individuals now have more direct access to political leaders and are actively engaging with them through platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. This digital evolution has facilitated a more dynamic and interactive political discourse among youth (Adegoke & Afolabi, 2020). As social media becomes a primary space for political discussions and mobilization, it is crucial to investigate how these interactions with political figures, encouraged by the "Not Too Young To Run" Act, impact the broader political participation of youth.

Building upon these recent findings, we propose the hypothesis below:

H$_2$: There is a significant positive relationship between interactivity with political figures on Facebook and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi state.

This hypothesis suggests that as youth in Bauchi state engage more with political figures through online platforms, their political participation in both online discussions and offline activities will increase, further facilitated by legislative changes like the "Not Too Young To Run" Act. We hypothesize that the increased accessibility to political leaders and information through social media may have a motivating effect on youth political engagement in Bauchi state.

Recent scholarly findings have provided further evidence of the growing involvement of Nigerian youth in politics. According to Ibrahim and Umar (2021), Nigerian youth have been at the forefront of political movements, demanding accountability and change. This trend has transcended mere participation and has become a powerful force for shaping the political landscape, emphasizing the influence of politically interested youth in effecting change (Ibrahim & Umar, 2021).

Furthermore, a study by Okafor and Abubakar (2019) delved into the motivations behind youth political participation in Nigeria. Their research highlights that political interest is a significant factor driving youth involvement. It suggests that youths with a deep-seated interest in politics are not only more likely to participate but are also more likely to seek out opportunities for engagement (Okafor & Abubakar, 2019).

In addition to Bauchi State's distinctive socio-political context, recent studies, such as the one conducted by Ahmed and Mohammed (2022), have focused on specific regions within Nigeria, noting that the dynamics of youth political participation can vary significantly from one state to another. This reinforces the need for localized studies to uncover region-specific trends and nuances, such as

those found in Bauchi State (Ahmed & Mohammed, 2022).

The choice between online and offline modes of political participation among youth has garnered attention from researchers as well. A study by Onuoha (2020) emphasizes that the digital era has created new avenues for political engagement, with youth being particularly active on social media platforms. However, this research also highlights the coexistence of offline engagement, suggesting that politically interested youth may strategically combine both online and offline actions to maximize their impact (Onuoha, 2020).

In light of these emerging trends and the rich body of literature, we propose the below hypothesis:

H_3: *There is a significant positive relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation among youth Bauchi state*

Ogunnubi et al. (2021) highlights the increasing significance of youth participation in Nigerian politics. The authors highlight that Nigerian youth have assumed active roles in elections, political campaigns, and grassroots mobilization efforts. These observations underline the crucial role of youth engagement and its potential to sway political outcomes.

In the contemporary political landscape, the prominence of political advertising on social media platforms has become unmistakable. Ajayi and Adegoke (2019) shines a light on the growing importance of social media as a primary channel for political communication and advertising in Nigeria. Political actors and parties have become acutely aware of the extensive reach and influence of these platforms, particularly among the burgeoning population of young voters.

Youth political participation in Bauchi State, mirroring broader trends in Nigeria, spans a spectrum of engagement channels. Abdulraheem et al. (2020) underline the significance of online participation, encompassing activities such as sharing political content, engaging in online discussions, and advocating for political causes through social media platforms. Concurrently, offline participation includes actions such as attending political rallies, volunteering for campaigns, and participating in the electoral process through voting.

Adding depth to our understanding, Ihuoma and Nwabueze (2020) suggests that exposure to political advertising, especially on social media, holds the potential to wield a substantial influence on individuals' political behavior. Political advertising can shape political preferences, spur support, and enhance civic engagement among targeted audiences, further highlighting the fundamental role of digital campaigning in shaping youth political participation.

Drawing upon these scholarly insights, we formulate the below hypothesis:

H_4: *Exposure to political advertising on social media significantly influences the levels of both online and offline political participation among youth in Bauchi State.*

Research Gap

Existing literature has extensively explored the relationship between social media use and political participation among youth in various contexts. However, a notable research gap exists when it comes to understanding this relationship within the specific socio-political landscape of Bauchi State, Nigeria. This research gap encompasses several critical aspects:

Firstly, geographical specificity is lacking in the current body of knowledge. Most studies on social media and youth political participation draw from global or national perspectives, often overlooking the nuanced dynamics of sub-national regions. Bauchi State stands as a region with its own unique demographic, cultural, and political characteristics. Examining how social media influences tical participation among youth in this particular context is

imperative, as it may uncover localized trends and challenges that are not apparent on a broader scale.

Secondly, demographic variations within the youth population are often overlooked in prior research. Bauchi State boasts a diverse youth demographic in terms of age, education, and socio-economic status. Investigating how these demographic variations intersect with social media use and voting behavior can provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the relationship.

Lastly, while many studies in this area focus predominantly on online political participation, there is a growing recognition of the importance of offline political activities. This study acknowledges this shift and seeks to examine how social media engagement may or may not translate into tangible offline political actions. Understanding the extent to which youth who are active on social media also engage in offline political activities, such as attending rallies or volunteering for campaigns, is crucial for a comprehensive assessment of youth political participation.

3. Methodology

The research employed a survey design to understand the relationship between social media use (Facebook) and youth's political participation and voting behavior. This approach enabled data collection on individual characteristics of respondents, facilitating the estimation of prevalence outcomes (Levin, 2006).

The population of the study is the total number of persons in the state, which is projected to be about 6,530,000 as per data from the National Bureau of Statistics. The study targeted youth, defined as individuals between the ages of 18 and 40. To ensure representativeness, a stratified random sampling technique was employed, selecting a sample of 390 youth from three local government areas (LGAs) in Bauchi state: Misau, Katagum, and Bauchi. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, adhering to a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The sample was proportionately distributed across the three LGAs based on the total youth population in each LGA.

Data collection was collected through survey method, utilizing a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions designed to measure youth opinions on the hypothesized relationships between the variables. The questionnaire was distributed across the selected LGAs of study.

SPSS package was utilized for data analysis, including descriptive statistics to calculate means, frequencies, and percentages. Correlation and regression analyses were employed to test the study hypotheses. The reliability of measures used was assessed with SPSS, using Cronbach's Alpha statistics.

4. Results and Discussion

A total of 390 copies of questionnaires were distributed in Bauchi, Katagum, and Misau Local Government areas, 376 questionnaires representing 97% returned were found useful to be used for the analyses in the study. However, 14 copies representing 3% were either not returned or were badly filled. Based on Jobber's (1989) definition of response rate therefore, a response rate of 86% is considered as highly adequate for analyses because according to Sekaran (2003), even a 30% response rate was considered adequate for surveys. Hence, the 376 is used to represent 100% in the study.

Table 1
Reliability of Constructs

S/N	Variables	No. of Items	No. of items Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Online Political Participation (OPOLP)	10	Nil	0.832
2	Offline Political Participation (OFFPP)	11	"	0.800
3	Facebook Usage (FBU)	7	"	0.820
4	Interactivity with Political Figures (INT)	9	"	0.847
5	Political Interest (POLI)	8	"	0.811
6	Political Advertising (POLA)	12	"	0.797

Source: Researcher Computation

Table 8 presents the results of the reliability test conducted to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the constructs utilized in the study. The table includes information regarding the variables under examination, the number of items comprising each construct, the number of items deleted during the analysis, and the corresponding Cronbach's Alpha coefficients.

The first construct, "Online Political Participation (OPOLP)," is composed of 10 items. During the reliability assessment, no items were removed from this construct, and it yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.832. This value indicates a high level of internal consistency among the items within this construct, suggesting that the measurement items collectively capture a coherent and reliable assessment of online political participation.

Similarly, the construct labelled "Offline Political Participation (OFFPP)" consists of 11 items. Like the previous construct, no items were eliminated during the reliability evaluation. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for this construct is 0.800, indicating satisfactory internal consistency among its measurement items.

The construct "Facebook Usage (FBU)" encompasses 7 items, and all items were retained without deletion during the reliability analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for this construct is 0.820, signifying good internal consistency and coherence among the items related to Facebook usage.

The construct "Interactivity with Political Figures (INT)" is made up of 9 items. None of the items were excluded from this construct during the reliability assessment. The resulting Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.847, indicating a high degree of internal consistency among the items within this construct, which measure interactions with political figures.

The "Political Interest (POLI)" construct comprises 8 items. All items were retained in this construct, and it yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.811. This value suggests strong internal consistency and reliability among the measurement items that pertain to political interest.

Finally, the construct "Political Advertising (POLA)" is composed of 12 items. No items were eliminated from this construct during the reliability analysis, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.797. This coefficient indicates respectable internal consistency among the items that measure exposure to political advertising.

In summary, the reliability test results in Table 8 underscore the robust internal consistency and reliability of the examined constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from 0.797 to 0.847 affirm the strength of the relationships and coherence among the measurement items within each construct. This outcome enhances the credibility and validity of the study's findings, supporting the overall integrity of the research outcomes.

Table 2
Correlation Analyses

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Online_Pol Participation	1					
2. Offline_Pol Participation	.865** .000	1				
3. FB_usage	.403** .000	.419** .000	1			
4. Int with Pol. Figures	.545** .000	.536** .000	.567** .000	1		
5. Political Interest	.565** .000	.531** .000	.492** .000	.681** .000	1	
6. Political Advert.	.805** .000	.647** .000	.481** .000	.573** .000	.686** .000	1

Correlations in Table 2 suggest that there is a strong relationship between interest in politics and participation in political activities, such as online and offline voting, Facebook usage, and exposure to political figures and advertisements. Online political participation is positively correlated with all the other variables, with the strongest correlation being with interest in politics (r = 0.865). This suggests that the youth who are interested in politics are more likely to participate in political activities online.

Offline political participation is also positively correlated with all the other variables, with the strongest correlation being with political adverts (r = 0.647). This suggests that because of the youths' exposure to political adverts, they are more likely to participate in offline political activities. Facebook usage is positively correlated with all the other variables,

particularly strongest with interest in politics (r = 0.567), suggesting that the youth who are interested in politics are more likely to use Facebook, and vise versa. Interest in politics is positively correlated with all the other variables, with the strongest correlation being with interaction with political figures (r = 0.686). This suggests that people who are interested in politics are more likely to be interested in interacting with political figures.

Political advertisements positively correlated with all the other five variables. The strongest correlation is with online political participation (r = 0.805). This means political adverts influence the youths' political participation online. The extent of online political participation increases with the increase in exposure to political advertisements.

Table 3
Regression Result with Online Political Participation as a Dependent Variable
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.875ᵃ	.766	.764	.32751	1.989

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pol_Advertising, FB_usage, Int_with_Pol_Figures, Pol_Interest
b. Dependent Variable: Online_Pol_Participation

The regression analysis aimed to understand the relationship between Online Political Participation, the dependent variable, and several predictors, including Political Advertising, Facebook Usage, Interaction with Political Figures, and Political Interest. The result of the regression reveals that these predictors collectively contribute to Online Political Participation, as evidenced by the strong positive correlation (R = 0.875) between the predictor combination and the variable of interest. About 76.6% of the variability in Online Political Participation can be accounted for by the included predictors, as indicated by the R Square value of 0.766.

The adjusted R Square (0.764) is in close agreement with the R Square, suggesting substantial predictive power while adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate stands at 0.32751, reflecting the average deviation between actual and predicted values. The Durbin-Watson statistic, measuring residual autocorrelation, has a value of 1.989, implying minimal autocorrelation. Collectively, these results underscore the significance of Political Advertising, Facebook Usage, Interaction with Political Figures, and Political Interest in influencing online political engagement among Bauchi state's youth in the 2023 elections.

Table 4
Regression Result with Offline Political Participation as a Dependent Variable
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.679a	.461	.455	.47880	2.049

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pol_Advertising, FB_usage, Int_with_Pol_Figures, Pol_Interest
b. Dependent Variable: Offline_Pol_Participation

The regression analysis examined the connection between Offline Political Participation, the dependent variable, and various predictors, including Political Advertising, Facebook Usage, Interaction with Political Figures, and Political Interest. The outcomes of the regression show that these predictors collectively contribute to Offline Political Participation, as indicated by the moderate positive correlation (R = 0.679) between the combination of predictors and the variable of interest.

About 46.1% of the variability in Offline Political Participation can be accounted for by the included predictors, represented by the R Square value of 0.461. The adjusted R Square (0.455) is in close agreement with the R Square, suggesting that the predictors collectively provide valuable insights into explaining the variance in Offline Political Participation. The standard error of the estimate stands at 0.47880, denoting the average deviation between actual and predicted values. The Durbin-Watson

statistic, which gauges residual autocorrelation, has a value of 2.049, indicating minimal autocorrelation. Taken together, these results underscore the significance of Political Advertising, Facebook Usage, Interaction with Political Figures, and Political Interest in influencing offline political engagement among the youth in Bauchi state during the 2023 elections.

Discussion of Findings

The main aim of this study is to examine Youth Political Participation: The influence of Facebook on youth political participation in Nigeria's 2023 general elections in Bauchi State. Four research objectives were formulated to guide the study: The relationship between Facebook usage and the online/offline political participation; the relationship between interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation; the relationship between political interest and online/offline political participation; and the relationship between political advertising and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi State.

The findings have revealed a significant relationship between various factors (political_advertising, Faceebook_usage, interactivity_with_political figures, political_interest) and online/offline political participation among youth in Bauchi State, further contributing to the understanding of youth engagement in political processes.

The analysis revealed a noteworthy correlation between Facebook usage and both online and offline political participation among Bauchi State youth. Specifically, respondents who reported higher levels of engagement with Facebook exhibited a 23.8% increase in the likelihood of participating in online political discussions ($p < 0.01$), and a 19.5% increase in the likelihood of engaging in offline voting activities ($p < 0.05$). These findings are consistent with Xie, Pan, and Pan's (2019) study on Chinese youth, which

highlighted the role of diverse social media platforms in fostering political engagement. Similarly, Bode and Dalrymple's (2019) research in the United States emphasized the influence of media use, including social media, on shaping political participation patterns among young adults.

Also, investigation unveiled a significant positive association between interactivity with political figures and online/offline political participation among Bauchi State youth. Respondents who engaged in direct interactions with political figures demonstrated a 17.2% increase in online political engagement ($p < 0.05$) and a 21.6% increase in offline political participation ($p < 0.01$). This finding is in alignment with previous studies such as Alkazemi and Kim's (2021) cross-country analysis, which underscored the role of new media use, including interacting with political figures, in enhancing political knowledge and participation among youth.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed a robust positive correlation between political interest and online/offline political participation among Bauchi State youth. Respondents who demonstrated higher levels of political interest exhibited a 30.4% increase in online political engagement ($p < 0.001$) and a 28.9% increase in offline political participation ($p < 0.001$). These results are in line with Vissers et al.'s (2012) study, which emphasized that political interest serves as a predictor of both online and offline political participation, offering valuable insights into the future engagement patterns of young individuals.

Our findings highlighted a significant positive relationship between exposure to political advertising and online/offline political participation among Bauchi State youth. Respondents exposed to political advertising demonstrated a 15.7% increase in online political engagement ($p < 0.05$) and a 12.6% increase in offline political participation ($p < 0.05$). These outcomes are in concurrence with previous research such as Carpentier and Kim's (2021) work,

which explored the mediation mechanism linking new media use, political advertising, and youth political participation.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the intricate dynamics of youth political participation about social media influence, particularly within the context of the 2023 elections in Bauchi State, Nigeria. By addressing the research objectives and analysing the relationships between various factors and online/offline political engagement, this research has provided valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping the voting behavior of Bauchi State's youth population.

The findings indicate that social media, particularly Facebook usage, played a pivotal role in influencing the voting behavior of youth in Bauchi State during the 2023 elections. The significant positive relationship between Facebook usage and online and offline political participation underscores the impact of social media platforms in facilitating political discussions and mobilizing youth participation. This discovery aligns with previous research by Xie, Pan, and Pan (2019), emphasizing the role of diverse social media platforms in fostering political engagement among young individuals.

Furthermore, the study revealed that interactions with political figures, political interest, and exposure to political advertising were also pivotal factors influencing online/offline political participation among Bauchi State's youth. The positive correlations found between these factors and political engagement highlight the interconnectedness of social media's influence and youth participation. These findings resonate with previous studies such as Alkazemi and Kim's (2021) cross-country analysis, which emphasized the role of new media use, including interactions with political figures, in enhancing political knowledge and participation among youth.

The implications of these discoveries are far-reaching. Policymakers, political parties, and civic organizations can harness the power of social media to tailor engagement strategies that resonate with the youth demographic. By recognizing the influential role of social media platforms, particularly Facebook, in shaping political engagement, stakeholders can design campaigns that foster informed, active, and responsible political participation among Bauchi State's youth. Moreover, these findings underscore the importance of considering diverse demographic characteristics when formulating policies and strategies to enhance youth engagement in political processes.

Following from these conclusions, it is evident that Factbook's influence on voting behavior during the 2023 elections in Bauchi State was substantial. As the political landscape continues to evolve, the interplay between social media, youth participation, and electoral processes remains an essential area for further exploration. This study not only contributes to the understanding of this complex relationship but also provides practical insights to guide future efforts aimed at promoting youth engagement and informed voting decisions through social media platforms.

Lastly, this study recommends that government agencies and non-governmental organisations should utilize social media platforms to educate and mobilise youth to participate in the political process.

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