

YOUTH AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: THE LEVEL OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND INFLUENCE IN DELTA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the relationship between youth and good governance in Nigeria, with a specific focus on assessing the level of youth participation and influence in Delta State. It explores the extent to which young people engage in political and governance processes, as well as the structural, socio-economic, and institutional factors that shape their involvement. Political participation theory was adopted for this study for better clarification of the issue under review. Simple percentage and chi-square was used to test the hypotheses while 523 sampled respondents completed a structured questionnaire that was used to collect data from respondents. The study finds that there is significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities, factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State. The study recommend among others the need for Government at all levels to create institutional frameworks that promote youth inclusion in governance through political appointments, mentorship programmes, and leadership training initiatives aimed at strengthening their administrative and decision-making capacities. The study also recommend that there is need for political parties to adopt internal democratic reforms that encourage youth participation by lowering nomination fees, reserving elective positions for young aspirants, and ensuring fair representation of youth in party structures and decision-making bodies.

Keywords: Youth, Good Governance, Participation, Influence, Delta State.

INTRODUCTION

Youth engagement in government has become a crucial topic in contemporary political studies, particularly in developing democracies such as Nigeria, where young people make up a sizable fraction of the population. The young demographic, commonly described as people aged 18 to 35, possesses the energy, ingenuity, and intellectual capability to drive political revolution and assure accountability in governance. Despite their numerical strength and capacity for leadership, Nigerian youths have traditionally been excluded from political processes and decision-making institutions (Adogbeji & Erhenede, 2025). This reality highlights the growing necessity to investigate the extent to which young people are actively involved and influential in governance at both the national and subnational levels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) promotes good governance by emphasizing concepts such as openness, accountability, inclusion, participation, and the rule of law. In Nigeria, effective governance remains a continuous challenge, marked by corruption, weak institutions, and low citizen engagement (Ejumudo et al, 2025). The youth, who are directly affected by bad governance outcomes such as unemployment, poverty, and insecurity, are critical actors in correcting these trends. As a result, understanding their level of engagement and influence in governance, particularly in Delta State, sheds light on Nigeria's overall dynamics of democratic consolidation and political inclusion.

Delta State is an excellent case for such an examination because of its political vibrancy, resource endowment, and history of young engagement. The state, which is rich in oil and cultural diversity, has seen an increase in young movement for political participation and equal resource allocation. Despite the government's multiple empowerment and inclusion programs, questions remain

concerning the policies' true impact on youth engagement and influence in governance. It is thus critical to analyze whether such programs result in meaningful political engagement or only serve as tools for political patronage and control.

Scholarly attention to youth and governance in Delta State also aids in examining the structural and institutional impediments that prevent young participation. Economic disenfranchisement, a lack of political education, gerontocratic domination, and clientelistic politics all contribute to youth disengagement from governance. These impediments not only limit young people's engagement, but also impede their ability to shape policy directions that affect their lives and communities. Examining these challenges in the context of Delta State helps us gain a better understanding of how to increase youth engagement in Nigeria's democratic governance system.

Finally, determining the extent of young participation and influence in governance in Delta State gives useful empirical evidence for assessing Nigeria's democratic progress. It reveals if the country's governing structure is becoming more inclusive or is still dominated by elites. More crucially, it emphasizes the transformative power of young people as agents of accountability, innovation, and democratic renewal. This study aims to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality in youth participation in government, emphasizing the importance of purposeful policies that enable young people to play active and powerful roles in Nigeria's political and developmental processes.

OBJECTIVE

- i. examine the level of youth participation in political activities and good governance in Delta State.
- ii. identify the factors that influence youth involvement in politics and governance in Delta State.

HYPOTHESIS

- i. there is no significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic process in Delta.
- ii. there is no significant factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

CONCEPT OF YOUTH

Who is a young person? Youth is defined as 'a young man' in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. It is also defined as the era of life when one is young, especially before a child grows into an adult. The concept of a general acceptable age range for determining someone is considered a youth varies. As a result, it is difficult to define a specific age range that is commonly accepted for the purpose of using age to decide whether an individual is a youth or not. Even when an age range is given, an individual's genuine maturity may not correspond to their chronological age, as immature individuals can exist at any age. According to Galstyan (2019), youth is a period of transition from reliance to independence. Youth is a developmental stage between infancy and adulthood, not a specific age range (Hilker & Fraser, 2009).

Youth can be characterized by personal experience, namely an individual's level of reliance, which can be quantified in a variety of ways depending on cultural context. The level of reliance refers to how much young people continue to rely on their families emotionally and financially. Youth relates to age, however age can be a biological term or a social construct. A young man could get to the top of the sociopolitical pyramid by mobilising others. For some purposes, such as employment data, 'youth' can refer to anyone aged 14 to 21, although the British Youth Council defines youth as anyone under the age of 31 (Hilker & Fraser, 2009).

In the 2012 National Baseline Youth Survey, the National Bureau of Statistics projected that Nigeria's youth population (ages 15 to 35) was 64 million. Scholars contended that age-based definitions vary among cultures and time periods, and that it is more realistic to define youth by focusing on social

processes in the transition to adulthood. As a result, youth is the stage at which people form their self-concepts. Peers, lifestyle, gender, and culture all influence young people's self-concept. It is the stage of a person's life when he makes important decisions that will affect his future. This is summarized in the words of Robert F. Kennedy, which are mentioned in the abstract above. According to Chief (Dr) Paul Olatunde Alabi, former Deputy Governor of Ekiti State, in the Forward of a book, "The word 'Youth' refers to the time when a person is young, or the state or quality of being young." A moment full of vitality. What matters, therefore, is not age, but the quality of youth and how well an individual possesses the related attributes. As a result, the gun is crucial, but the man holding it is even more so (Turnbull, 2020).

CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE

In 1989, the World Bank's research "Sub-Saharan African -from Crisis to Sustainable Growth" used the term "Governance" to express the need for institutional change and a better and more efficient public sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. It described governance as "the use of political power to manage a nation's affairs." The World Bank's 1992 paper 'Governance and Development' expanded on the concept of governance, defining it as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development." In 1994, the Bank further supported this definition, as follows: "Governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy making (that is, transparent processes); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law" (Rahul, 2017). Since then, institutions and thinkers have approached governance in a number of ways.

Governance is defined as "the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development" by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (1995). The United Nations Development Programme (1997) defines governance as "the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels." Governance refers to the procedures, processes, and institutions that allow persons and groups to express their interests, exercise their political rights, fulfill their obligations, and resolve their disagreements.

According to Udeh (2017), governance is the process of converting societal needs into tangible activities. Governance is the growth of governing systems in which the distinction between the public and private sectors has become blurred and societal needs are increasingly served. Governance is the exercise of political authority to direct a state's economic development. It focuses on utilizing a state's resources to support its development. The United Nations (UN) defines governance as the actions of all political and administrative organizations to control their respective countries. Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines governance as the control over a country's economic, policy, and legal characteristics. In general, governance refers to the process of making decisions and determining which policies will and will not be implemented.

Governance refers to the institutions and processes that are intended to provide accountability, transparency, responsiveness, the rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. It symbolizes the game's norms, ideals, and rules for managing public affairs in a transparent, interactive, inclusive, and responsive manner. Governance, therefore, can be nuanced and difficult to observe. Governance is broadly defined as the culture and institutional framework in which individuals and stakeholders engage and participate in public affairs.

Governance is defined as 'ruling' (the act or manner of exerting authority) carried out by 'rulers' (those with power/authority) within a 'specified set of norms' (i.e., a common society). This simple definition of governance provides description, leaving up the possibility of how and to what ends power can be exerted within the society. For example, it could be by popular vote, consensus, adherence to a system of universally applicable laws, the orders of a supreme leader, or physical force. Government agencies, elected officials, hereditary monarchs, religious leaders, judicial authority, and the voting public are all potential key actors. A community's collective affairs might

range from national security to natural resources, monetary policy to cultural affairs, infrastructural development to educational standards (Adcock & Collier, 2001).

CONCEPT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The concept of good governance has gained popularity around the world in recent years. It has become a catchphrase in the vocabulary of political and administrative reform, owing to the importance placed on it by the world community. The notion was first introduced in the mid-1980s as governability, with a focus on upholding the rule of law. Good governance was initially defined in the Forward by former World Bank President Barber Conable (1986-1991) as a "public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to its citizens." Johnston (2014) defined good governance as the competent management of a country's resources and affairs in an open, transparent, responsible, equitable, and responsive manner to the requirements of its citizens. According to Mohammad (2015), good governance requires the presence of five variables: political freedom, constitutional and judicial protection of individual rights, a stable currency, universal access to education and healthcare, and the executive's accountability to a freely elected legislature. (UNDP, 1997) describes good governance as a process that promotes "staff incentives, civil servant training, administrative and fiscal decentralization, and dialogue between governments and civil society." Downer (2000) defines good governance as the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and ensure the implementation of human rights. Good governance achieves its objectives in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, while also upholding the rule of law.

However, governance in any society seeks to maintain transparency by exercising economic, political, and administrative control. It primarily seeks to develop positive relationships between rulers and the ruled. In summary, the good is not a static concept. Good administration must contribute to the achievement of people aspirations. Aspirations must be based on realism and dynamism. In more concrete terms, good governance can be defined as "the exercise of power in a variety of institutional contexts with the goal of directing, controlling, and regulating activities in the interests of people as citizens, voters, and workers." Thus, good governance can be defined as that which promotes human growth through popular engagement and social and economic equality. The ultimate goal of good administration must be to establish civil society (Mohammad, 2015).

In the 1990s, the World Bank was the first international organization to include and publicize the concept of good governance into funding agreements for developing countries. The concept of good governance was described in its 1992 report "Governance and Development" as the use of authority to control a country's economic and social resources in order to promote development. National and international organizations regularly use the term "good governance." Good governance aims to prevent corruption, examine minority perspectives, incorporate oppressed people's voices into decision-making, and actively respond to the community's current and future needs (Turnbull, 2020).

Oguma, Adogbeji, and Ejumudo (2025) define good governance as a collection of eight concepts. Participation in the concept of good governance gives everyone the option to express their opinions through institutions or representatives. Furthermore, everyone has the freedom to associate and express themselves. To achieve effective governance, the country's legal structure, including human rights law, must be applied impartially. Transparency necessitates that all policies developed and implemented by the government follow existing regulations. Furthermore, there must be assurances that any policy-related information is available to all, particularly those who are directly affected by it. Good governance necessitates organizations and processes that try to serve all stakeholders within a fair timeframe. When the decision-making process cannot accommodate everyone's preferences, the decision must, at the very least, be one that everyone can accept and will not harm anyone. Good governance promotes fairness in the community. Everyone has an equal opportunity to maintain and improve their well-being. Every decision-making process and its institutions must be able to produce results that meet the needs of the entire community. The government must also

make efficient use of community resources. All institutions involved in good governance are fully accountable to the public in order to increase social quality and accountability (Oguma, Adogbeji, & Ejumudo, 2025).

Good Governance is an initial policy for developing strong determination in which decision makers generate points of view after a period of consensus in the decision-making institution. The major purpose of the organization in question is to create productive policies for institutional production. The ruling machine's infrastructure must be reformed. The identification of social and political difficulties is expected on organizational mechanisms that necessitate administration for the implementation strategy. As a result, a strong political and social structure is required to reinforce economic ideals, which can be achieved through excellent governance. Good governance is the sole method to freely grant fundamental rights (Oguma, Adogbeji, & Ejumudo, 2025). Good governance requires public servants to use public resources wisely and effectively. Good governance requires using authority while adhering to transparency, accountability, probity, and the rule of law. Udeh (2017) defines good governance as enhanced service delivery, public engagement in decision-making, democracy, rule of law, judicial independence, election integrity, press freedom, equality before the law, and the inclusion of marginalized groups in politics. Good governance encourages gender equality, accountability, and transparency.

The World Bank classifies good governance into two categories. To begin, Good Governance refers to the political system of an organization, institution, or government that produces a strong power exercise mechanism through valid votes from the grassroots to the highest levels and provides an administrative scale for regional progress. The exercise of political power offers a methodical plan for long-term growth reform, with a focus on national reformation to ensure national integrity in social and economic development. Second, good governance provides social and economic resources that benefit human development. The method for creating a Social Progressive environment for economic development is complicated for the common person. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is inspired to redefine good governance through civil servant capacity building, staff incentive programs, administrative values, financial devolution, and stakeholder engagement (Ojo, 2018).

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

Youth around the world are acknowledged as a formidable and crucial element of the population of any civilization, whose vigor and dynamism are critical in the development process. Unfortunately, in most developing nations, including Nigeria, the government at all levels has not embraced youth as a key aspect in its development efforts. Since the return to democratic government in 1999, successive governments have not identified real plans for youth mobilization and engagement as a crucial tool for effective governance and development in the new normal world, aside from simple ceremonial recognition of the youth as "Leaders of Tomorrow". The topic of young deprivation and non-engagement in the pursuit of good governance and constructive change in Nigeria has remained a key sociopolitical discussion (Njoku & Osigwe, 2019).

A careful look at Nigeria's history reveals how much youth have played a role in political leadership and effective governance. However, the story has changed recently. For example, Shehu Shagari became a federal legislator at the age of 30 and a minister at the age of 35; M.T Mbu became a minister at the age of 25 and Nigeria's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom at the age of 26; Chief Richard Akinjide became Minister of Education at the age of 32; Maitama Sule became oil minister at the age of 29, Audu Ogbe was a minister at the age of 35, it is worth noting that the aforementioned Nigerians performed admirably as political leaders when they were young, and their records remain intact to this day. In contrast, today's reality is a political system in which Nigerian youths serve as electoral advisors, social media battalions, and political thugs. Many have attributed this trend to a conspiracy of the top class, who cannot bear the thought of vacating the stage for the younger generation, resulting in a system that makes it impossible for young people to emerge and flourish in politics and government (Oguma, Adogbeji & Ejumudo, 2025).

The potential of youths is the driving factor behind Nigeria's progress. However, young in Nigeria and other African countries, who should be driving the country's and continent's transformation, are more alienated and disenfranchised. Although legislative commitments to youth development have improved in recent decades at both the national and regional levels, such achievements have not always been matched by actions on the ground. Many young people remain unemployed and have little access to public resources and high-quality social services. They play little role in policy development and programme design since their participation in politics and decision-making is limited and often sporadic (Ransford, 2013). In Nigeria and other African countries, the only formal opportunity for youth participation is through recruitment into government ministries and agencies (MDAs) to serve as personal assistants to former political office holders, which employs only 2% of the total youth (Ransford, 2013).

According to research, youth unemployment is a stumbling block to Nigerian development and increases youth vulnerability to criminal activity. Nigeria must establish a link between democratic development, young involvement, and long-term security challenges that are critical to Africa, particularly Nigeria. There is an urgent need for the Nigerian government to work for the welfare of all Nigerians, particularly youth, by providing equal chances in policymaking and policy implementation (Adogbeji & Erhenede, 2025). The constraints and impediments to youth engagement in democratic governance make it clear that no democratic institutions can claim to be legitimate and proper if youth are marginalized and disengaged from democratic processes; thus, youths in Nigeria and other African countries should be involved in the democratic process and institutions of democracies.

However, some say that the history of broad involvement and engagement in politics has been marked by battles. Several scholars have extensively detailed the difficulties that resulted in the extension of voting rights to specific demographic groupings in various settings. Though the obstacles to limited suffrage posed by property ownership, race, religion, gender, income, and so on have been overcome, legal and constitutional barriers to elective political office age limits continue to pose challenges to inclusive participation in contemporary political spaces, particularly in Nigeria. While age qualifications remain in place in many countries, Oyeyipo and James (2016) observed that most countries have addressed the issue of age discrimination by removing legal and constitutional barriers and liberalizing access to political space, allowing young people to participate in leadership and decision-making processes.

France, Canada, Australia, and several more countries currently have young presidents. Even in South Africa, the major opposition group Economic Freedom Fighters is led by a 32-year-old (Julius Malema), while in Botswana, a 29-year-old woman, Ms. Bogolo Kenewendo, has been appointed Minister of Investment, Trade, and Industry. Nigeria is one of the few countries that still has a constitution that limits young people's ability to run for elective office due to age restrictions. The minimum age for political office in the country is 25 years old for councillor positions, while the age requirement for the House of Representatives and Houses of Assembly is 30 years. As a result of the preceding, the political space is restricted, and the youth, who constitute the majority of the population (Mengistu, 2017; Ebije, 2017; Oyeyipo & James, 2016), are excluded.

Wariboko (2017) correctly highlighted that the inability to develop and sustain inclusive political and economic institutions has had an impact on most people's mindset, as they mistakenly believe that leadership and decision making are just for the elderly or the elite. In the face of these enervating issues, palliative measures such as the establishment of a Ministry of Youths and the implementation of several youth empowerment projects have done little to give young people a voice in the country's government. Restriction of participation by age denies youths the ability to contribute to policies and governance, limiting them to voting in elections (Onwughalu & Obiorah, 2018).

However, it is becoming clear in Nigeria and other African countries that youths are raising legitimate concerns and demands. As a result, young uprisings are possible in the near future to highlight their demands to policymaking institutions. Because the youth demand change at all levels, they do not want to rely on their leaders' false promises with nothing to show for it (Hilal, 2016). Several youth

and groups have recently advocated for Nigerian young participation in politics and administration. The "Not Too Young To Run" bill, signed into law in 2019 before the general election, was one of the youth's initiatives to push for their representation at all levels of government in Nigeria. The bill proposed a constitutional amendment to lower the age restriction for running for political office in Nigeria. On May 31, 2018, Nigerian President Mohammadu Buhari signed a bill into law that effectively reduced the age qualification for the office of President from 40 to 30 years, Governor from 35 to 30 years, Senate from 35 to 30 years, House of Representatives from 30 to 25 years, and State Houses of Assembly from 30 to 25 years. (Pardikar, 2018). The measure gave many Nigerian youth the opportunity to run for political positions in the 2019 election, and many of them were elected to the State House of Assembly and the National Assembly.

For Nigeria and other African countries to experience all-inclusive development, they must do everything possible to harness the productive resources of their youth. Adopting a youth-inclusive legal framework is an important first step in mainstreaming youth in a country's political aspects. It would allow young people to participate formally and increase their political positions in their country. Elections are one way for people to exercise their political rights. In this circumstance, election formalities and procedures should be courteous and sensitive to the needs of young people. It might be as simple as raising the voting age to include young people and creating favorable legislative conditions for young people to participate actively in elections (Mengistu, 2017).

YOUTH INFLUENCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

The impact of youth on good governance in Nigeria has grown in recent years, since young people make up a sizable proportion of the country's population and are an important force for democratic sustainability. Nigeria's youth, generally seen as agents of social change, play an important role in affecting governance outcomes through political debate, campaigning, and civic involvement. With increased awareness of governance concerns such as corruption, accountability, and transparency, young Nigerians have used digital platforms, civil society movements, and grassroots mobilization to call for changes and more inclusivity in public administration. This developing consciousness indicates a generational change toward active citizenship, in which young people are no longer passive onlookers but actively participate in the political process.

Youth involvement in political and electoral processes demonstrates their influence on government. The passage of the "Not Too Young To Run" Act in 2018 is a watershed moment in widening the political space for young people, allowing them to run for numerous elective offices that were previously prohibited by age constraints (Adogbeji & Erhenede, 2025). This legislative breakthrough, mostly driven by youth advocacy, exemplifies how organized activism can reshape governing systems and promote inclusion. Beyond legislation, young involvement in political campaigns, election monitoring, and policy debates has increased transparency and accountability. These engagements represent a gradual but continuous reshaping of Nigeria's political environment, with the younger generation increasingly impacting the conversation around governance and public service delivery.

Furthermore, the use of technology and social media has increased youth influence in governance by creating forums for information dissemination, policy critique, and social mobilization. Movements like #EndSARS shown the capacity of youth to challenge state institutions and seek fundamental reforms. Nigerian youths have used internet activism to hold authorities responsible, highlight government shortcomings, and spark national and global conversations about fairness and democratic values (Adogbeji & Erhenede, 2025). As a result, social media has evolved into a democratic platform where young people may express their frustrations, mobilize public opinion, and influence decision-making. This digital interaction demonstrates the transformative power of youth-led governance advocacy to improve transparency and civic involvement.

Despite these encouraging trends, significant structural barriers remain to limit youth influence on good governance in Nigeria. High unemployment, political isolation, and institutional corruption have frequently discouraged persistent youth participation. Many young people are still marginalized in

formal political organizations controlled by elder elites who have access to power and wealth. Furthermore, insufficient civic education and weak institutional frameworks impede the growth of informed political engagement among adolescents. These impediments not only silence youth voices, but they also impede the democracy process by sustaining governing institutions that are insensitive to the needs of younger generations.

Nonetheless, the future of effective governance in Nigeria is inextricably linked to the empowerment and engagement of youth in the government process. Strengthening young capacity through education, leadership training, and policy inclusion can help them positively affect public affairs. Institutional reforms that promote openness, accountability, and participatory governance will strengthen youth voices and develop a culture of responsibility among political actors. Finally, active and sustained youth engagement is a strategic road toward good governance in Nigeria, where policies reflect citizens' collective interests and governance is based on integrity, equity, and social justice.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study relies on political participation theory propounded by Sidney Verba Samuel Popkin and Norman Nie which seeks to explain the motivations, behaviors, and conditions that drive individuals to engage in political activities such as voting, protesting, campaigning, or joining political organizations. It emphasizes the role of socio-economic status, political efficacy, education, socialization, and institutional structures in shaping citizens' involvement in governance processes. The theory posits that participation is not merely an individual choice but a product of complex interactions between personal attitudes and systemic opportunities or constraints. They view participation as a calculated action based on perceived costs and benefits, while civic voluntarism models stress the importance of resources, psychological engagement, and mobilization by elites (Teorell, 2006). Ultimately, political participation theory provides insight into how and why citizens contribute to democratic governance and the functioning of political systems.

Political Participation Theory provides a useful framework for understanding the role of youth in promoting good governance in Nigeria, particularly in Delta State, by emphasizing the importance of active citizen engagement in political processes. The theory posits that individuals' involvement in political activities—such as voting, advocacy, protests, and holding public office—directly influences the quality of governance and accountability within a society. In Delta State, the level of youth participation reflects their capacity to shape political outcomes, demand transparency, and challenge corrupt practices. However, despite the youths' numerical strength and awareness, their influence is often limited by systemic barriers such as political exclusion, unemployment, and lack of access to decision-making platforms. Political Participation Theory thus underscores that greater inclusion of youth in governance processes is vital for fostering responsiveness, equity, and sustainable development, as their engagement serves as both a mechanism of accountability and a catalyst for democratic renewal in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHOD

Using the survey approach, the study used a descriptive research design. The data were presented and analyzed using simple percentage and chi-square analysis. Youths in Delta State (Asaba, Warri and Ughelli) was used for this study. The purposive sampling techniques was employed to choose the survey respondents. A structured questionnaire was employed as the data gathering tool. There are two section to the questionnaire. The three sections of the instrument correspond to the research questions that were developed for the study. The four-point likert scale was scored as follows: 4 for strongly agree, 3 for agree, 2 for strongly disagreed and 1 for disagreed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Out of the five hundred and sixty two (562) questionnaire, only five hundred and twenty three (523) were found. This suggests that the instrument eighteen copies were misplaced. This is sufficient for

data analysis since it shows that 93.1% of the questionnaire were returned and 6.9% were lost. Thus, the 482 collected questionnaire served as the basis for the data analysis.

Table 1: Distribution of respondent based on gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	319	61
Female	204	39
Total	523	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. 319 respondents of 61% were male while 204 respondents of 39% were females. Thus, this study was dominated by male respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondent Based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16-20 Yrs	85	16.3
20-26Yrs	17	3.3
26-31Yrs	52	9.9
32-37Yrs	95	18.2
38-43Yrs	119	22.8
44-49Yrs	74	14.1
50-55Yrs	81	15.5
Total	523	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents based on age. 85 respondents of 16.3% were 16-19 years old, 17 respondents of 3.3% were 20-26 years old, 52 respondents of 9.9% were 26-31 years old, 95 respondents of 18.2% were 32-37 years old, 119 respondents of 22.8% were 38-43 years old, 74 respondents of 14.1% were 44-49 years old, while 81 respondents of 15.5% were 50-55 years old. Thus, this study was dominated by age between 38-48 years old.

Table 3: Distribution of respondent based on educational qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	136	26
OND/HND	106	20.3
B.Sc	192	36.7
M.Sc	68	13
Ph.D	21	4
Total	523	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents based on their educational qualification. 136 respondents of 26% were SSCE holders, 106 respondents of 20.3% were OND/HND holders, 192 respondents of 36.7% were B.Sc holders, 68 respondents of 13% have M.Sc, and 21 respondents of 4% have Ph.D. Thus, this study was dominated by B.Sc respondents.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondent Based on Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	420	80.3
Islam	20	3.8
ATR	44	8.4
Others	39	7.5
Total	523	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents based on their religion. 420 respondents of 80.3% were Christians, 20 respondents of 3.8% were Islam, 44 respondents of 8.4% belong to African Traditional Religion (ATR), 39 respondents of 7.5 does not belong to any of the above religion. Thus, this study was dominated by Christian respondents.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondent Based on Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	264	50.5
Married	192	36.7
Divorced	67	12.8
Total	523	100

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents based on their marital status. 264 respondents of 50.5% were single, 192 respondents of 36.7 respondents were married, while 67 respondents of 12.8% were divorced. Thus, this study was dominated by single respondents.

Research Question One

Is there any relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic processes in Delta State?

Table 6: simple percentage response of sampled respondents on the relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic processes in Delta State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	%A	%D
1	Youths participate in political activities in Delta State.	274	182	42	25	87.2	12.8
2	Youths frequently engage with democratic processes in Delta State.	270	189	42	22	87.8	12.2
3	Youths utilize digital platforms and social media to advocate for democratic governance in Delta State.	212	143	83	85	67.9	32.1
4	Youth participation in political and democratic processes influences decision-making and governance outcomes in Delta State.	123	114	176	110	45.3	54.7

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 6 shows the simple percentage of respondent on the relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic processes in Delta State. 87.2% of respondents agreed that youths participate in political activities in Delta State while 12.8% of respondents disagreed. 87.8% of respondents agreed that youths frequently engage with democratic processes in Delta State while 12.2% of respondents disagreed. 67.9% of respondents agreed that youths utilize digital platforms and social media to advocate for democratic governance in Delta State while 32.1% of respondents disagreed. 45.3% of respondents agreed that youth participation in political and democratic processes influences decision-making and governance outcomes in Delta State while 54.7% of respondents disagreed.

Research Question two

Is there any relationship between factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State?

Table 7: Simple percentage response of sampled respondents on relationship between factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	%A	%D
1	Educational background influences youth level of interest and participation in political and developmental activities within Delta State.	221	168	82	52	74.4	25.6
2	Unemployment shapes the degree of youth involvement in politics in Delta State.	252	186	42	43	83.7	16.3
3	Cultural values, traditional norms, and family background affect youth motivation to participate in democratic governance in Delta State.	49	34	263	177	15.9	84.1
4	Social media platforms and other modern communication technologies shape youth perception and involvement in politics and democratic activities in Delta State.	188	192	81	62	72.7	27.3

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 7 shows the simple percentage of respondent on factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State. 74.4% of respondents agreed that educational background influences youth level of interest and participation in political and developmental activities within Delta State while 25.6% of respondents disagreed. 83.7% of respondents agreed that unemployment shapes the degree of youth involvement in politics in Delta State while 16.3% of respondents disagreed. 15.9% of respondents agreed that cultural values, traditional norms, and family background affect youth motivation to participate in democratic governance in Delta State while 84.1% of respondents disagreed. 72.7% of respondents agreed that Social media platforms and other modern communication technologies shape youth perception and involvement in politics and democratic activities in Delta State while 27.3% of respondent disagreed.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic process in Delta.

Table 8: Chi-square analysis of questionnaire for the relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic process in Delta.

Sources of Variation	Responses		Df	X2-Cal	X2-Crit	Alpha Level	Decision
	Observed	Expected					
Strongly Agree (SA)	879	130.8	3	188.6	7.82	0.05	Significant Ho1 Rejected
Agree (A)	628	130.8					
Strongly Disagree (SD)	343	130.8					

Disagree (D)	242	130.8					
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Source: Field work 2025

Table 8 shows that there is significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic process in Delta. The calculated value of 188.6% is greater than the chi-square table value of 7.82. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities and democratic process in Delta.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State.

Table 9: Chi-square analysis of questionnaire for the factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State.

Sources of Variation	Responses		Df	X2-Cal	X2-Crit	Alpha Level	Decision
	Observed	Expected					
Strongly Agree (SA)	710	130.8	3	193.78	7.82	0.05	Significant Ho2 Rejected
Agree (A)	580	130.8					
Strongly Disagree (SD)	468	130.8					
Disagree (D)	334	130.8					

Source: Field Work 2025

Table 9 shows that there is significant relationship between factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State. The calculated value of 193.78 is greater than the chi-square table value of 7.82. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings of this study, we conclude that there is significant relationship between level of youth participation in political activities, factors that influence youth involvement in politics and development in Delta State.

Considering the discussion and conclusion of this study, the following are recommended.

- i. Government at all levels should create institutional frameworks that promote youth inclusion in governance through political appointments, mentorship programmes, and leadership training initiatives aimed at strengthening their administrative and decision-making capacities.

- ii. Political parties should adopt internal democratic reforms that encourage youth participation by lowering nomination fees, reserving elective positions for young aspirants, and ensuring fair representation of youth in party structures and decision-making bodies.
- iii. Civil society organizations and educational institutions should intensify civic education and political awareness campaigns that equip young people with knowledge about governance processes, accountability, and their rights as citizens, thereby enhancing informed participation.

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