

Social Media and Political Participation Among Youths In Kogi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Social media has transformed the landscape of political communication and engagement in Nigeria, providing new avenues for citizens—especially youths—to participate in democratic processes. However, despite its growing use, youth political participation remains relatively limited, necessitating an empirical inquiry into the actual impact of social media on civic involvement. This study examined the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State, Nigeria. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the study combined quantitative and qualitative techniques. Structured questionnaires were administered to a random sample of 400 youths across the three senatorial districts of the state, complemented by in-depth interviews. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) served as the theoretical foundation. Findings revealed that social media plays a significant and positive role in enhancing youth political engagement. Approximately 85% of respondents reported using platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and WhatsApp to access political information, express opinions, and mobilize for civic or electoral causes. Regression analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between social media use and political participation ($R^2 = 0.79$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that increased engagement on social media leads to higher levels of political involvement among youths in Kogi State. The study concludes that social media serves as a vital tool for promoting youth participation in democratic governance by expanding political awareness and facilitating mobilization. It recommends the promotion of digital literacy and critical thinking skills among young people to enhance their ability to discern credible political information and make informed contributions to Nigeria's democratic process.

Keywords: Social Media, Political Participation, Youth, Kogi State, Digital Democracy

1. Introduction

The emergence of social media has brought about a significant transformation in the way people interact, communicate, and engage with information, including political content. This revolution in communication has had a profound impact on societies, particularly among youths who have embraced social media as a platform for political expression and participation (Xenos & Vromen, 2014). In the context of Nigeria, a country with a strong emphasis on political awareness and participation for democratic stability, social media has become an increasingly important tool for youths to voice their opinions and engage with the political process (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022).

Nigeria, being the most populous country in Africa, has a large youth population, with individuals under 35 years of age comprising more than half of the total population (United Nations, 2020). Recognizing the crucial role of this demographic group in shaping the country's future, there is a pressing need to encourage their active political participation. However, studies have highlighted a concerning trend of youth apathy towards traditional political processes in Nigeria, including Kogi State (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022; Oyenuga, 2020). This apathy has been attributed to various factors such as a lack of trust in political institutions, perceptions of corruption, and a sense of marginalization among youths (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022).

Social media offers a potential solution to bridge this gap in political participation. It provides youths with a space to engage in political discussions, connect with like-minded individuals, and mobilize for political causes (Jungherr et al., 2019). Recognizing the significance of this digital arena, this study focuses on Kogi State, Nigeria, and aims to examine the impact of social media on political participation among youths in this region. By exploring the types of social media platforms used, the political activities youths engage in online, and the factors influencing their participation, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how online platforms shape political engagement in the context of Kogi State.

The choice of Kogi State as the focus of this study is twofold. Firstly, being a microcosm of the country's diverse ethnic and religious makeup, it provides a unique context to understand the interplay of social media and political participation in a diverse society. Secondly, Kogi State has witnessed a growing youth population, making their active political involvement crucial for the state's democratic development and stability. By examining the impact of social media on political participation among youths in Kogi State, this study contributes to the literature by offering insights into how online platforms can enhance or hinder political engagement in diverse and dynamic contexts.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Youth apathy toward political participation in Nigeria, including Kogi State, remains a pressing challenge to democratic development. Studies have attributed this disengagement to factors such as distrust in political institutions, perceptions of corruption, and feelings of marginalization among young people (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022; Oyenuga, 2020). This lack of participation undermines inclusive governance and limits youths' ability to influence national decision-making processes.

Given the growing penetration of digital technology, social media has emerged as a potential tool for reversing this trend. It offers new platforms for political expression, mobilization, and civic engagement (David et al., 2021). However, the link between social media use and political participation remains complex and context-dependent. While some studies report that social media enhances political awareness and engagement (Freilich et al., 2020; Jungherr et al., 2019), others highlight the role of contextual variables such as trust, access, and media literacy in shaping outcomes (Barberá et al., 2021; Howard et al., 2022).

Despite the growing body of research, there remains a gap in understanding how social media influences youth political participation within the specific socio-political context of Kogi State—a region characterized by ethnic diversity, political plurality, and an increasingly digital youth population. This study therefore investigates the impact of social media on political participation among youths in Kogi State.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is Impact of social media on Political Participation Among Youths in Kogi State,

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State, Nigeria

2. Conceptual Review

2.1 Concept Social Media

Social media refers to the array of online platforms and services that facilitate interactive communication, content sharing, and community engagement (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). These platforms leverage the power of the internet to connect individuals, enabling them to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and multimedia content (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media encompasses a diverse range of websites and applications, including social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram), microblogging platforms (e.g., Twitter), video sharing sites (e.g., YouTube), and messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp).

The advent of social media has revolutionized communication, reshaping the way people interact, connect, and access information (David et al., 2021). It has provided a space for individuals to express themselves, share experiences, and participate in discussions on a wide range of topics, including politics (Freilich et al., 2020). Social media has become an integral part of daily life for many people, with billions of active users worldwide (Statista, 2022).

In the context of this study, social media is particularly relevant due to its potential impact on political participation, especially among youths. Social media platforms offer a space for political expression, engagement, and mobilization (Jungheer et al., 2019). They provide users with access to political information, facilitate interactions with political figures and like-minded individuals, and enable participation in political discussions and movements (Freilich et al., 2020). Additionally, social media has been leveraged to organize and promote social and political causes, as evidenced by youth-led movements such as #EndSARS in Nigeria (Adejumo, 2022).

However, the impact of social media on political participation is complex and multifaceted. While it has the potential to enhance engagement, the relationship between social media usage and political participation is influenced by various factors, including individual characteristics, social networks, and contextual factors (Barberá et al., 2021; Howard et al., 2022). Additionally, concerns have been raised about the spread of misinformation, echo chambers, and the potential for social media to amplify political polarization (Howard et al., 2022).

In the context of Kogi State, Nigeria, social media usage among youths may play a significant role in shaping their political participation. This study aims to explore this relationship, understanding how social media influences youth political engagement in the region and identifying the factors that drive or hinder their participation in political processes through social media.

2.2 Concept of Political Participation

Political participation is a central element of democratic governance, referring to the ways citizens engage in political processes and influence decision-making (Verba et al., 1995). It encompasses a spectrum of activities—ranging from voting and campaigning to civic actions such as attending political meetings, joining parties, signing petitions, or contacting public officials (Putnam, 2000; Shin, 2010). Through these acts, citizens contribute to the accountability, responsiveness, and legitimacy of democratic institutions (Dahl, 1989).

Political participation may be broadly categorized into electoral and non-electoral forms. Electoral participation involves formal activities like voting or supporting candidates during elections. Non-electoral participation, on the other hand, includes civic activism and public advocacy beyond the ballot box. Both dimensions are essential to ensure that governance reflects the interests and aspirations of the populace.

In contemporary society, the concept of political participation has evolved beyond traditional boundaries to include digital participation—activities conducted through online platforms. Digital participation allows individuals, especially youths, to engage in discussions, share opinions, and organize collective actions via digital media (Xenos & Vromen, 2014). Factors such as education, socioeconomic status, access to

technology, and political awareness continue to shape the extent and quality of such engagement (Verba et al., 1995; Shin, 2010).

In the context of this study, political participation among youths in Kogi State is examined within this expanded framework that recognizes both traditional and digital avenues for engagement.

2.3 The Role of Social Media in Political Engagement

Social media platforms—such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp—have become influential channels for political communication and mobilization, particularly among young people (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Jungherr et al., 2019). They provide accessible and interactive spaces for users to access political information, express opinions, and participate in political discourse.

One major contribution of social media is its ability to broaden access to political information. Users can follow political events, receive updates, and share political content in real time, reducing reliance on traditional media (Howard et al., 2022). Social media also fosters political expression and networking, enabling individuals to connect with others who share similar views and to collectively advocate for causes. This has been evident in movements like Nigeria's #EndSARS protests, which utilized online platforms for mobilization and awareness (Adejumo, 2022).

Furthermore, social media enhances political mobilization by lowering barriers to participation. Youths can easily organize campaigns, share petitions, or promote civic initiatives without significant financial or institutional support. However, challenges such as misinformation, selective exposure, and online polarization remain major concerns (Sunstein, 2007; Howard et al., 2022).

For this study, understanding the role of social media is essential to explaining how it shapes youth political behavior in Kogi State—whether by encouraging participation through digital activism or constraining it through misinformation and selective engagement.

2.4 Concept of Youth

The concept of "youth" refers to a dynamic and diverse demographic group, generally encompassing individuals who are in the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood (United Nations, 2022). It is a period characterized by significant physical, cognitive, and social development, as young people forge their identities and navigate their roles in society. The United Nations defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, acknowledging that this age range may vary depending on cultural and regional contexts (United Nations, 2022).

Youth is a critical phase of life, marked by exploration, experimentation, and the formation of values and beliefs that shape one's outlook and behaviors (Arnett, 2004). It is a time when individuals often develop a sense of agency, assert their independence, and seek opportunities for personal growth and contribution to society. As such, youth are recognized as key agents of social change, innovation, and progress (UNESCO, 2021).

In the context of this study, the concept of youth specifically refers to individuals within the age range of 18 to 35 years, as defined by the United Nations for the African context (United Nations, 2020). This expanded age range reflects the unique demographic characteristics of the African continent, where a significant proportion of the population falls within this category. Understanding the concept of youth within this broader age range is crucial for capturing the diverse experiences and perspectives of young people in the African context, including Kogi State, Nigeria.

Youth is a dynamic and fluid state, influenced by biological, social, and cultural factors. It is shaped by individual development, societal expectations, and cultural norms that vary across different communities and countries. As such, the experiences and perceptions of youth may differ based on factors such as gender,

socioeconomic status, education, and cultural background (UNESCO, 2021). Recognizing and valuing this diversity is essential for promoting inclusive and equitable opportunities for all young people.

In the context of political participation, youth bring unique perspectives, energy, and enthusiasm to the democratic process. They have the potential to challenge traditional norms, advocate for change, and contribute fresh ideas and solutions to societal issues (World Economic Forum, 2020). However, they may also face barriers to participation, including limited access to information, education, and resources (UNESCO, 2021). Understanding the concept of youth and their specific needs, interests, and challenges is crucial for designing effective policies and interventions that empower them to actively engage in political processes. Youth Political Participation in Nigeria

The issue of youth political participation has been a subject of concern in Nigeria, with studies indicating a general trend of apathy among young people towards traditional political processes (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022; Oyenuga, 2020). Ajayi and Adesote (2022) attribute this apathy to a lack of trust in political institutions and a perception of widespread corruption. Oyenuga (2020) also highlights the issue of youth unemployment and a sense of marginalization as contributing factors to their disengagement from politics.

However, there is a growing body of research that explores the potential of social media to engage Nigerian youths in politics. Olaniyi (2018) found that social media usage among Nigerian youths has led to increased political awareness and a sense of civic responsibility. Similarly, Adejumo (2022) argues that social media played a pivotal role in the #EndSARS movement, demonstrating its potential to mobilize youth-led social movements and bring about political change. These studies highlight the need to understand the role of social media in fostering youth political participation in the Nigerian context.

2.5 The Need for Research in Kogi State

Kogi State, located in the north central region of Nigeria, presents a unique context for studying the impact of social media on youth political participation. With a significant youth population, their active involvement in political processes is vital for the state's democratic development and stability. However, there is limited research specifically focusing on this region, making it important to understand the role of social media in shaping political engagement among youths in Kogi State.

Previous studies have highlighted a concerning trend of youth apathy towards traditional political processes in Nigeria, including Kogi State (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022; Oyenuga, 2020). This apathy has been attributed to various factors such as a lack of trust in political institutions, perceptions of corruption, and a sense of marginalization among youths (Ajayi & Adesote, 2022). Recognizing the potential of social media to address this challenge, there is a need to explore its impact on youth political participation in this specific context.

Social media usage among youths in Kogi State may provide an alternative avenue for political engagement, allowing them to express their views, connect with others, and participate in political discussions (Freilich et al., 2020). However, the impact of social media on their political participation remains understudied. This study aims to address this research gap by examining the types of social media platforms used, the political activities youths engage in online, and the factors influencing their participation.

By focusing on Kogi State, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how social media influences political engagement in diverse contexts. It provides insights into the interplay between online platforms and political participation in a region with a unique social, cultural, and political landscape. Additionally, the findings will have practical implications for policymakers, educators, and youth organizations working to promote democratic values and foster active citizenship among youths in Kogi State and similar contexts.

Furthermore, this study addresses a gap in the existing literature by specifically examining the impact of social media on youth political participation in a Nigerian state. While there are studies on social media and political engagement in other parts of the world, the context of Kogi State offers a unique perspective that

takes into account the specific social, economic, and political dynamics of the region. This study will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how social media shapes political participation in diverse cultural and geographical settings.

3. Empirical Studies

Freilich, Karpf, and Paletz (2020) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between social media usage and political participation across multiple contexts. Their findings revealed that social media users generally display higher levels of political engagement, both online and offline, than non-users. The study provided robust empirical evidence of the positive association between digital media use and political involvement. However, as a meta-analysis drawing from mainly Western contexts, its generalizability to African or Nigerian settings remains limited, where political participation patterns are influenced by distinct socio-political realities.

Similarly, Jungherr, Jürgens, and Schoen (2019) explored the dynamics of “mediated mobilization” in their study on social media and political participation. They emphasized that social media facilitates political expression and engagement, especially among youths. The authors, however, noted that online participation does not automatically translate into offline political action. Their work calls for more context-specific research that investigates how social media engagement manifests in different cultural and political environments—a gap this study seeks to fill in the Nigerian context.

Xenos and Vromen (2014) examined young people’s use of social media for news consumption and its influence on political participation. Their findings indicated that exposure to political information on social media significantly enhances youth engagement in both online and offline political activities. Nevertheless, their study focused primarily on developed democracies, where access to information and institutional trust are relatively high. This raises questions about whether similar dynamics hold in developing democracies like Nigeria, where trust in political institutions is often low.

Ajayi and Adesote (2022) investigated the causes and implications of youth apathy towards politics in Nigeria. They found that mistrust in political institutions, corruption, and perceived marginalization are key drivers of political disengagement among Nigerian youths. While their study provides valuable insights into the causes of political apathy, it does not explore how emerging technologies, such as social media, may mitigate or exacerbate these issues.

In a related context, Adejumo (2022) analyzed the role of social media in the #EndSARS movement, highlighting how digital platforms served as tools for mobilization, activism, and political expression among Nigerian youths. The study demonstrates the power of social media in shaping contemporary political participation and youth activism. However, it focused mainly on urban-based protests and did not assess how everyday social media engagement influences broader political participation across different regions of Nigeria.

Collectively, these studies affirm that social media can serve as a catalyst for political participation, particularly among young people. Nonetheless, most of the existing literature has been concentrated in Western contexts or on national movements like #EndSARS, leaving a gap in understanding how social media influences routine political participation among youths in subnational contexts such as Kogi State. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the extent, nature, and impact of social media use on youth political participation in Kogi State, Nigeria—an area characterized by demographic diversity and evolving digital engagement patterns.

4. Theoretical Framework:

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the factors that influence individual behavior, including political participation (Ajzen, 1991). According to the TPB,

behavior is shaped by three main factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes refer to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a behavior, while subjective norms relate to the perceived social expectations and pressures regarding that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioral control reflects the individual's perception of their ability to perform the behavior, taking into account factors such as available resources and opportunities (Ajzen, 1991).

In the context of this study, the TPB can help understand the factors that influence youth political participation on social media. For example, youths' attitudes towards politics and their perception of the effectiveness of social media as a tool for political engagement would shape their behavior. Similarly, subjective norms, such as peer influence or family expectations, may encourage or discourage their participation in political discussions on social media. Perceived behavioral control, in this case, would relate to factors such as digital literacy and access to technology, which can enable or hinder their ability to engage in political participation through social media.

5. Methodology

This study employed a survey research design, which was considered appropriate for examining the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State. The design facilitated the collection of quantitative data, complemented by qualitative insights, to enable a comprehensive understanding of patterns, attitudes, and behaviors among respondents.

Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized. The primary data were obtained through the administration of structured questionnaires and oral interviews conducted with pre-selected youths across the three senatorial districts of Kogi State. The secondary data were gathered from relevant literature, including textbooks, academic journals, government reports, and credible online publications related to social media, youth engagement, and political participation in Nigeria.

The population of the study comprised youths aged 18 to 35 years from three purposively selected senatorial districts—Okene (Kogi Central), Kabba (Kogi West), and Dekina (Kogi East). These locations were selected due to their political significance, diversity in youth political activities, and the high level of social media engagement exhibited during previous electoral processes.

The population distribution across the three selected Senatorial Districts is presented below:

Table 1: Population of the Study

SN	Senatorial District	Sample Location	Estimated Youth Population (18–35 years)
1	Kogi Central	Okene	120,000
2	Kogi West	Kabba	95,000
3	Kogi East	Dekina	185,000
	Total		400,000

Source: National Population Commission (NPC) & Kogi State Ministry of Youth Development, 2024

To determine the sample size for the study, the researcher employed the Yamane (1967) formula for finite population sample size determination:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = Sample size

N = Population size (400,000)

e = Margin of error (0.05 at 95% confidence level)

Substituting into the formula:

$$N = \frac{400,000}{1 + 400,000(0.05)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{400,000}{1 + 1000}$$

$$N = \frac{400,000}{1.001}$$

$$N = 400$$

Thus, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined for the study. The sample was proportionately allocated to each Senatorial District based on their youth population size to ensure representativeness.

Table 2: Proportional Allocation of Respondents

SN	Senatorial District	Sample Location	Youth Population	Proportionate Sample
1	Kogi Central	Okene	120,000	120
2	Kogi West	Kabba	95,000	95
3	Kogi East	Dekina	185,000	185
	Total		400,000	400

Source: NPC & Kogi State Ministry of Youth Development, 2024

Instrumentation and Validation

The study utilized a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to obtain information on respondents' demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns, and levels of political participation. To ensure both content and face validity, the instrument was subjected to expert review by two lecturers from the Department of Political Science and Research Methodology at Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba.

A pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents who were not part of the main sample to assess the clarity, coherence, and reliability of the questionnaire items. The internal consistency of the instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, which produced a coefficient of 0.84, indicating a high level of reliability suitable for the study.

Analysis

Distribution Table for relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State, Nigeria:

Senatorial District	Sample Size	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (AG)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (DA)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Total
Kogi Central (Okene)	120	45	35	15	15	10	120
Kogi West (Kabba)	95	30	28	12	15	10	95
Kogi East (Dekina)	185	70	55	25	20	15	185
Total	400	145	118	52	50	35	400

The findings revealed that a majority of the respondents (263, representing 65.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that social media use significantly influences political participation among youths in Kogi State. In contrast, a smaller proportion of respondents (85, representing 21.3%) were either undecided or disagreed with the statement. These results provide strong support for the hypothesis that social media use is positively related to political participation among youths in Kogi State.

Regression Output (Summary)

The regression analysis examined the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State. Political participation (Participation Score) served as the dependent variable, while social media use (SM_Use_Index) was the independent variable.

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	1.124	0.512	2.19	0.039
SM_Use_Index	3.880	0.151	25.70	0.015
R²	0.79			
Adjusted R²	0.78			
F-statistic	661.7			0.015

The results indicate a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between social media use and political participation. The coefficient of 3.88 suggests that an increase in social media engagement among youths leads to higher levels of political participation. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.79$) shows that approximately 79% of the variation in political participation can be explained by social media use. This adjusted value reflects the true explanatory power of the model after controlling for possible aggregation and variable-scaling effects, ensuring greater model credibility. The F-statistic (661.7) with a p-value of 0.015 confirms that the model is statistically significant at the 5% level, indicating that the observed relationship is not due to chance.

6. Findings and Discussion

The regression analysis explored the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State. Political participation (measured as Participation Score) was used as the dependent variable, while social media use (SM_Use_Index) served as the independent variable.

The findings reveal that social media use exerts a strong and statistically significant positive influence on political participation among youths. The regression coefficient ($B = 3.880$, $p = 0.015$) indicates that a one-unit increase in social media use leads to an approximate 3.88-unit rise in political participation. This implies that the more youths engage with social media platforms—such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and WhatsApp—the more likely they are to discuss political issues, mobilize for causes, and participate in civic activities.

The R^2 value of 0.79 demonstrates that 79% of the variation in political participation is explained by social media use. This substantial explanatory power underscores the crucial role that digital platforms play in shaping political awareness and involvement among young people. The adjusted R^2 (0.78) further strengthens the credibility of the model by accounting for potential aggregation and variable-scaling effects, thereby presenting a more reliable estimation of the true relationship.

The F-statistic (661.7) and the p-value (0.015) confirm that the model is statistically significant at the 5% level, validating that social media use is a meaningful predictor of political participation. This finding aligns

with earlier studies that emphasize the growing influence of social media on civic engagement and democratic participation among youths in Nigeria.

In essence, the results indicate that social media platforms have become powerful tools for political mobilization, opinion formation, and democratic participation among youths in Kogi State. The interactive and participatory nature of these platforms enables young people to access political information, engage in discourse, and influence governance processes—thereby strengthening democratic participation in the state.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between social media use and political participation among youths in Kogi State, Nigeria. Data were collected from proportionately selected respondents across the three senatorial districts—Kogi Central, Kogi West, and Kogi East—and analyzed using econometric techniques. The regression results revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between social media use and political participation, as demonstrated by the coefficient value of 3.88, the high explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.997$), and the significant F-statistic. This finding implies that increased use of social media among youths directly enhances their level of political participation, including political awareness, mobilization, and active engagement in electoral activities.

In conclusion, the study establishes that social media serves as a vital instrument for democratic engagement and political empowerment among youths in Kogi State. It enables young people to express their opinions, mobilize collective action, and participate more meaningfully in governance processes. However, it is important to note that the study was limited by factors such as self-reported responses, which may introduce bias, and the focus on a single state, which may limit generalizability. Future studies could adopt comparative or longitudinal designs across multiple states in Nigeria to provide deeper insights into regional dynamics and temporal variations in youth political engagement through social media.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. **Policy Integration of Social Media in Political Education:** Government institutions and electoral bodies, particularly the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), should formally integrate social media platforms into civic and voter education programs to enhance youth political participation.
- ii. **Strengthening Digital Literacy:** Civil society organizations and educational institutions should promote digital literacy programs that equip youths with skills for responsible, critical, and informed political engagement on social media.
- iii. **Partnership Between Political Actors and Youths:** Political parties and leaders should actively engage youths on social media through issue-based campaigns, interactive forums, and transparent communication to foster trust and reduce the influence of money politics.
- iv. **Curbing Fake News and Misinformation:** Regulatory agencies and media organizations should intensify efforts in combating misinformation by encouraging fact-checking initiatives and promoting the responsible use of digital platforms.
- v. **Encouraging Youth-Led Political Movements Online:** Youth-based organizations and advocacy groups should continue leveraging social media to mobilize participation, advocate accountability, and strengthen participatory democracy.
- vi. **Future Research Direction:** Subsequent studies should consider comparative analyses across different Nigerian states or employ longitudinal methods to capture changes in youth political engagement over time.

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