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

SHAMSU DAUDA ABDU



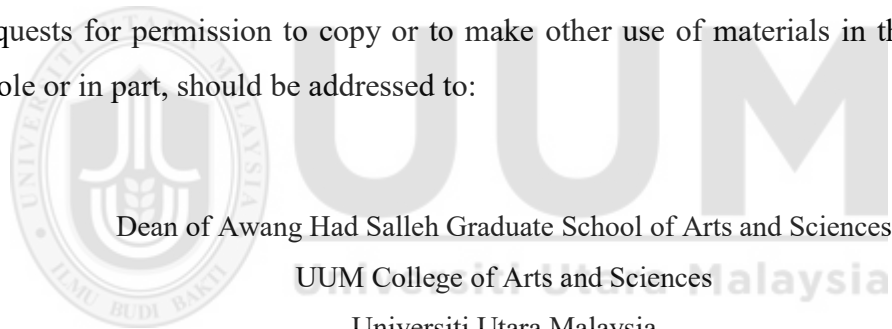
UUM
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Abstrak

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

Kata kunci: Penyertaan politik, Penggunaan Facebook, Belia

Abstract

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

Keywords: Political Participation, Facebook Usage, Youth

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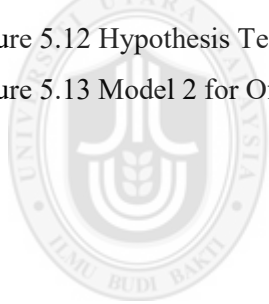
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

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

1.2 Research Background

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

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

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UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

Appendix A

survey questionnaire



Awang Had Salleh
Graduate School
of Arts And Sciences

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Dear respondent

I am a Master student of Communication at School of Multimedia Technology and Communication in Universiti Utara Malaysia. I am seeking your cooperation to respond to the attached survey questions on “The influence of Facebook use on political participation among youth in Nigeria” This research is part of the Universiti requirement for the completion of my thesis. The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. Please, kindly follow the instructions provided within the questionnaire.

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

Thank you for your time and participation.

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

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2016

INSTRUCTIONS

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

SECTION A: ONLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ON FACEBOOK

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

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

SECTION B: OFFLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

SECTION C: FACEBOOK USAGE

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

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

SECTION D: INTERACTIVITY WITH POLITICAL FIGURES

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

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

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

SECTION E: Perceived Facebook Information Quality

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

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

SECTION F: POLITICAL INTEREST

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

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

SECTION G: BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

1 Age

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

2 Gender

- (a) Male
- (b) Female

3 Level of education

- (a) PhD
- (b) M.Sc.
- (c) B.Sc./HND
- (d) ND/OND
- (e) Secondary School.
- (f) Primary School.

4 Religion

- (a) Islam
- (b) Christianity
- (c) Traditionalist

5 Ethnicity

- (a) Hausa/ Fulani
- (b) Yoruba
- (c) Igbo
- (d) Others (please specify)

