

DIGITAL MEDIA, SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN ENUGU STATE

EZE, IJEOMA BIBIAN (Ph.D.)

Project Development Institute (PRODA) Enugu,
+2348063392041

UFONDU ADAORA OGECHUKWU (Ph.D.)

Department of Marketing
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus
+2348033879557

NWANMUOH EMMANUEL EJIOFO

Department of Marketing
University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus
+2348037083523

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ABSTRACT

The study was to examine the effect of digital media and social media on youth's participation in politics in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to ascertain the extent to which facebook usage influences participation of youths in politics in Enugu state; examine the extent to which twitter usage influences participation of youths in politics in Enugu state. The survey research design was adopted. The population of the study was youths in Enugu state from 18-35years. A sample of 384 youths was selected for this study using Topmans formular for unknown population. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Both descriptive and inferential statistics tools were also integrated. The pearson moment correlation was used to test the formulated hypotheses. Findings of the study reveal that the two predators of digital media and social media in the forms of facebook and twitter usage in politics have significant influence on youth's participation in politics in Enugu state. The study concludes that politicians should make use of digital media and social media during and after campaign to get youths actively involved in governance. The study recommends that both the youths and politicians should be well educated and trained on how best they can use social media platforms to actively engage in political discourse.

Keywords: Social Media, Digital Media, Facebook, Twitter, Political participation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the internet brought about a whole new level of change to the media environment. Its existence has brought a paradigm in the packaging and dissemination of information. It ushered in an era of technological information and created advanced socialization mechanisms with a higher desire for news and information (Dagona, Karielle. and Abubakar, 2013). With the advent of the internet came the introduction of social media, which

essentially are platforms for interaction, information dissemination, and information gathering. The development of social media has, therefore, brought a revolution in the field and method of communication. It has aided the way individuals perform their civic and political responsibilities, especially for the youths who are the first to accept and make use of social media. Without doubt, it has paved the way for advanced communication, freedom of speech, social interaction, and enhanced socialization among its users, thereby, culminating in an increased rate of political activities. The general beliefs are that social media play a significant role in politics by facilitating access to political information and by providing tools and avenues for political expression. Social media have created new possibilities for youths, students, and political participation (Ahmad, Aima and Muhammad, 2019). The use of social media in politics has seen a tremendous increase over the past few years.

In the 2008 United States general election, the internet and social networking sites, in particular, played a more significant role. They went from being unknown to a budding platform for increased political participation and communication. The 2008 presidential campaign was the first to play out in the world of YouTube, Facebook, Myspace, and political blogging which were the major internet-based social media. These forms of social media provide a new channel for mediated communication, which enables the audience to procure contents on demands and also share, discuss, and argue with others (UK Essays).

In the Nigeria experience, the 2011 general elections marked the incorporation of social media to politics. According to Udejinta (2011) in Okoro and Nwafor (2013), one remarkable thing about the 2011 general elections in Nigeria was the adoption of social media, especially Facebook, by the politicians, the political parties, and the electorates as a platform for political participation.

In the 2015 Nigeria general election, social media use increased a lot and dominated other media as political parties, and their candidates made great use of them in their campaign. Social media became a more potent tool and a lethal weapon for propagating beliefs, opinions, ideologies, propaganda, etc. There were releases in the form of videos, voice notes, headlines, and broadcasts that made and marred many political parties' and individuals.

According to Oyenuga (2015), a publication on some politicians almost damaged their political ambition. Also, a hate video was disseminated during the election period. In addition, social media played a central role as a watchdog in keeping the integrity of the voting process. Within minutes of votes being counted at a polling unit, the results were all over social media. Election observers with excel sheets were doing tallies and eventually when the results were announced officially, the results matched. Hence, social media played a crucial role, as it made news readily available. Social media was a useful tool in the hands of so many citizens who were involved and interested in the whole process. In a way, social media seized the day from the legacy media, in the sense that almost everyone depended on them for the breaking news. Social media came alive for Nigerians during this time. The recent rise in the use of social media may also be because there are 11.8 million registered Nigerians on Facebook, 1.8 million Twitter users and, in 2013, LinkedIn announced it had reached a million registered accounts in the country (Udoka, 2015).

Almost every election conducted an aggressive social network outreach including the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), political parties, candidates, media

houses, civil society groups, and even the police (Adibe, Odoemelam, and Chibuwe, 2011; Okoroan Nwafor, 2013). The use of social media was not restricted to presidential candidates alone.

Other political officeholders have made aggressive use of social media, especially Facebook, to campaign, persuade, and convince the electorates.

2.0 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Based on the ease of accessibility, the participatory, interactive, flexible, and affordable nature of the internet, it has made it easy for students to express their views on political matters freely.

According to NPC (2013) an estimate of over 52million youths, the Nigerian youth holds a strong influence on the electoral matters of the nation. The youths are, however, missing in the political space as active players. That is, being candidates seeking political offices, coming out in their number to vote during an election period, etc. Though many are active participators online as indicated by the high level of their activities on social media, they are, however, passive in performing their legal franchise to vote and be voted for. In addition, it has been observed that over the years that during election period, the youths use social media platform to disseminate false rumors, gossips, and false election results, malign, intimidate and discredit political opponents, and exchange hate speeches among political opponents. Several insulting and inciting messages flourish on social media. These were in line with violence and tension witnessed before, during and after the elections in many parts of Nigeria, with some states ordering non-indigenes to leave their states (Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). Several studies have been conducted on the effects of social media on youth participation in politics in developed countries with less emphasis in developing countries, Nigeria inclusive. This study was carried out to fill the gap in the literature.

2.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To ascertain the extent to which Facebook usage influences participation of youths in politics.
2. To examine the extent to which twitter usage influences participation of youths in politics

2.2 Research Questions

To help provide answers to the above research problems, the investigator has posed the following questions;

1. To what extent does facebook usage influence participation of youths in politics?
2. To what extent does twitter usage influence participation of youths in politics?

2.3 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated in the null forms;

1. Facebook usage does not significantly influence participation of youths in politics.

2. Twitter usage does not significantly influence participation of youths in politics.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This work will be of great significance to the youths, political parties, government, and academia. Youths, fall under the category of the major users of social media who participate in political activities in the nation. This work will, therefore, serve as a guide to youths on the best use of social media as an instrument for active participation in politics. Political parties play a significant role in influencing how political candidates conduct themselves during elections. Political parties also go a long way to determine the general conduct of elections (free and fair) in the country. Hence, this work will be of significance to them because it plays up the need and potentials of social media to engage in politics that would be favorable to their party and be accepted by the general public. Government, being at the helm of affairs in a nation, makes policies that affect the lives of the people and determine the chain of activities that would go on in the country. It is on this note that this would serve as a pointer to the government on how best to disseminate credible information that would contribute to nation building and promote peace among the citizens and social media users. Finally, for the academia, the issues treated in this work will serve as a reference point and information source for future researchers researching on students, youths, social media and politics in Nigeria.

3.1 Review of Related Literature

This section gives elaborate literature review under the following headings; conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical studies, and summary of literatures
Conceptualization

3.2 Meaning and Nature of Social Media

Social media, as a concept, has been explained in various ways by different social media scholars. According to Dewing (2012), social media is a term that refers to a wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allows users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content or join an online community. Social media users are no longer passive media consumers but are now very active. This is largely because they have gone from being consumers to actual producers as they have become generators, creators, and disseminators of information. According to Suomen (2012), social media are new information network and information technology using a form of interactive communication skills, where users produce the content of information and interpersonal relationships are established and maintained in the process. In the same vein, social media belong to a new genre of focuses on social networking allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends, and share information with greater freedom as well as publish their views on issues on the World Wide Web (Okoro and Nwafor, 2013).

3.3 Political Participation

According to Verba et al. (1995), political participation refers to “behavior that could affect government action – either directly by influencing the public policies that are implemented or indirectly by influencing the elections of political actors creating those policies” as cited by Rahmawati (2014). In the same vein, Kenski and Stroud (2006) defined political participation

as the involvement in activities related to politics, such as donating to a campaign or influencing others to vote. Political participation can be seen in several political activities, including work on a political campaign, seeking party funding, being part of political campaign team, a member of political party, a volunteer of political party, seeking support for a candidate, trying to persuade others, contacting politicians, donating money, joining political discussions, signing a petition, attending a political rally, and casting a vote at the election (Rahmawati, 2014). Simply put political participation deals with citizen involvement in issues of public concern that would eventually lead to producing a leader for the nation.

3.4 Facebook Usage

Facebook is the most popular social media site in the world with over 1 billion registered accounts (Amazing Facebook statistics, 2015). Facebook was first founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 as a platform for college students in America and later in 2006 the service was opened to any interested user with an e-mail address. Facebook usage in this paper means the frequency and intensity of youth using the site which includes time spent hourly or daily (Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield, 2007). Evidently, the use of Facebook recently for political participation, worldwide has greatly increased especially among youth (Skoric and Poor, 2013) and they are particularly using the site to influence social and political change. Studies have suggested that youth are now using Facebook to seek for political information, mobilize like minds, create user-generated content and share political views (Thun, 2014). Aside from this, there is little research addressing the pattern of Facebook use among youth (Chan and Guo, 2013). Studies have indicated that Facebook is more powerful than traditional media because it provides a similar and advanced feature in terms of exposure to information but has the additional benefits and advantages of global reach, better quality and greater speed and also an interactive medium of political discussion. With these features, Facebook plays a significant role in the formation of political knowledge. Youth today get their political information from Facebook rather than the legacy traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers. The information given is more interactive, user friendly, concise and easier to comprehend. In light of the above evidence, it becomes clear that Facebook usage may likely increase political participation among youth (Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, and Maheo, 2012) and lead to traditional participation. Additionally, studies have found a positive relationship between the intensity of Facebook usage and civic and political participation (Zimiga et al., 2012). Two deferent researches have clearly examined the link between Facebook usage and political participation and suggested that Facebook usage is relevant to both online and offline participation (Conroy et al., 2012; Vitak et al., 2011).

Facebook foster exposure to political mobilization and make political information more available, the medium is a potential means of recruiting people that were not politically motivated before into a new political activity. Thus, the accessibility and interactivity nature Facebook can effectively function as what is now referred as 'gateway participation' (Vissers et al., 2012).

3.5 Twitter

Twitter is a social micro blogging network established in 2006. Short messages called "tweets" which are limited to 140 characters is what makes Twitter special (Sandoval- Alamaz, 2017). Data from March 2015 show that Twitter had more than 1.3 billion registered users. Moreover,

data from July 2017 show that Twitter surprisingly had approximately 157 million daily active users (Smith, 2017). Twitter (especially in America) is widely used social network during political events and research on Twitter is more recent than Facebook (Sandoval-Almaz, 2017).

Lassen and Brown (2011) analyzed the use of Twitter among Congress members in the United States. Authors concluded that, in the House, Republicans are far more likely to use Twitter than Democrats are. Gainous and Wagner (2013) explored in the same direction. Kruikemeier (2014) has researched how political candidates use Twitter, and major conclusion is that Twitter has significant impact on preferential votes. But not everyone agrees, Sandoval-Almazan (2017) in accordance with that gives example: 'A controversial research was made by Tumasjan et al., (2011) when they revealed the positive impact of Twitter on elections, but was later on contradicted by another research (Gayo- Avello et. al., 2011) studying congress election on the US in 2010.' Twitter is especially used in, already mentioned, dual screening when TV audiences use Twitter and tweeting for following, searching information or expressing their opinions about political events, candidates, debates or situations (and similar) during live shows (Sasseen et al., 2013; Verizon, 2012; Wohn and Nah, 2011). Chadwick et al. (2017) explored Twitter usage during dual screening and concluded that frequency of access to twitter is positively and significantly associated with the motivation to acquire information and share information and opinions, while frequency of access to other social media is positively and significantly associated with the desire to influence others.

In many studies related to political behavior, users of Facebook and Twitter are researched together. Hyun and Kim (2015) found out that political conversation via social media contributes to boosting political participation. Further, regarding political participation, Skoric and Zhu (2016) found that expressive uses of egocentric social media, including writing and commenting on blogs, Facebook, or Twitter, were not predictive of offline political participation during the elections. Abdulrauf et al. (2017) researched the behavior of young people in the context of social networks (Facebook and Twitter) and politics. Their research, conducted in Malaysia was primarily related to their youth. Authors came to the following conclusions: 'political knowledge moderated the relationship between access to political information on Facebook and Twitter and online political participation on Facebook and Twitter' and 'political knowledge moderated the relationship between political interest and online political participation on Facebook and Twitter.' Charles (2010) and Pattie et al. (2004) came to the same conclusion, but they also discovered how political knowledge did not moderate the relationship between policy satisfaction and online political participation on Facebook and Twitter. According to these researches, Vitak et al. (2011) claim that Facebook and YouTube are widely used for political knowledge and political engagement by youth.

4.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following theories were deemed germane to this study.

1. Agenda setting theory
2. Uses and gratification theory

4.1 Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda setting depicts an intense impact of the media; the capacities to disclose to us what issues are noteworthy. It is “the process whereby the news media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues” (Zhu and Blood, 1997). This implies that the media is geared towards influencing people’s perception of what is necessary, acceptable and desirable. The media influence people to turn towards certain issues in the society neglecting other aspect; thus, striking issues are raised keeping in mind the end goal to impact the general population to think to-wards it. Folarin (1998:68) observes that “agenda setting implies that the mass media predetermines what issues are regarded as important at a given time in a given society. During elections, different media are used by politicians and electorate to propagate their views and opinions.. Nonetheless, agenda setting does not attribute to the media the potency to determine what the people think, but it does outline what to think about. As such, it sets the agenda for political campaigns. The reason for adopting this theory is that agenda setting explicates the role or functions of the media in ascertaining public agenda before, during and after elections. It further traces the influence of the media in molding and shaping the notion of the public towards some topical issues, of which politics is para-mount.

In fact, the primary thrust of the agenda-setting theory is that the mass media set the docket on the burning topic in the society for public discussion. Consequently, social media can be used to influence people to participate in politics.

4.2 Uses and Gratification Theory

Framed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch in the 1970s, Uses and Gratification Theory turned attention away from media sources and message effects to audience uses of media content. The uses (exposure to the media) and, gratification (benefits or gains) are determined by the needs of members of the audience. Therefore, according to Anaeto, Onabanjo, and Osifeso (2008), Uses and Gratification is concerned with what people do with media instead of what media do to people. The practical use of the media is what the Uses and Gratification Theory explains. This theory emphasizes on the reason(s) people have for engaging one medium over another as well as the gratifications they aim to derive. Thus, youths, as the audience, are active in the following sense. Firstly, with regards to their needs, they select the social media platform that appeals to them. Secondly, they selectively consume the political contents that meet their needs. Thirdly, the political content may or may not affect them. Even if it does, it will result in increased participation of youths in politics. This goes to show that the youths, as the audience, are not passive. In the same vein, political candidates are also able to select and use the social media platform of their choice to disseminate the messages of their choice during electoral campaigns and other electioneering activities. The theory is relevant to this study as this research looks into why and how youths use social media to participate in politics.

4.3 Empirical Studies

Several studies have been carried out on diverse social media. Some of these works were reviewed in this study

Ann, Ham and Karla (2016) examined whether social media usage influence youths interest in politics. The survey was conducted using online questionnaire among young people between the ages of 15 – 29 years. Results shown that using facebook for political discussion has a

significant positive influence on young people’s interest in politics. Using twitter, however, has shown not to have significant influence on political interest of young people.

Dagona, Karicki and Abubakar (2013) investigates the relationship between facebook users' political attitudes and online political participation among youth. Participants were 100 active Facebook users comprising of 58 males and 42 females, with an age range of 16-32 years. The study employed a correlation design. The facebook intensity scale {FIS} (Ellison, Stein field and Lampe, 2007) was used to measure facebook usage and political participation. The results revealed a significantly positive relationship between face book usage and political participation among the youth in Nigeria. However, facebook use rate did not significantly influence political participation. It is therefore concluded that facebook usage affords persons of different perspectives the ability to unite and engage in political discourse.

Oberiri and Ivo (2017) investigates the public perception towards Facebook usage in the 2015 political campaigns in Nigeria. The study made use of descriptive survey design with a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using the 2016 Microsoft Excel statistical package with frequency counts and simple percentages presented in tables and graphs. The hypotheses generated in this study were tested via inferential statistical chi-square analysis at 0.05 level of significant. The study demonstrated that Facebook was used in the 2015 senatorial electioneering campaigns in southern Taraba, and this influenced electorate to vote a particular candidate. However, it is the perception of the respondents that there were dysfunctions such as deliberate distortions in the information about opponents, abusive speech, distortion of the facts about personal performance, and misinformation as a strategy for influencing on the Facebook pages of the electorates and candidates. Reliability (e.g. message must be clear, focused, well conveyed, believable, credible, free from abusive speech and attacking of opponents) should be an essential concept in the posted political messages or promises of politicians so as to draw more fans to themselves. Recommendation for Researchers It should be noted that this study centers on southern Taraba alone, therefore, in order to get a more generalized results, it is pertinent for further research to include other parts of Nigeria.

Additionally, a combination of content analysis and interview will be helpful in examining the nature of the abusive words/speeches used on Facebook in the 2015 southern Taraba senatorial electioneering campaign.

4.4 Conceptual Framework

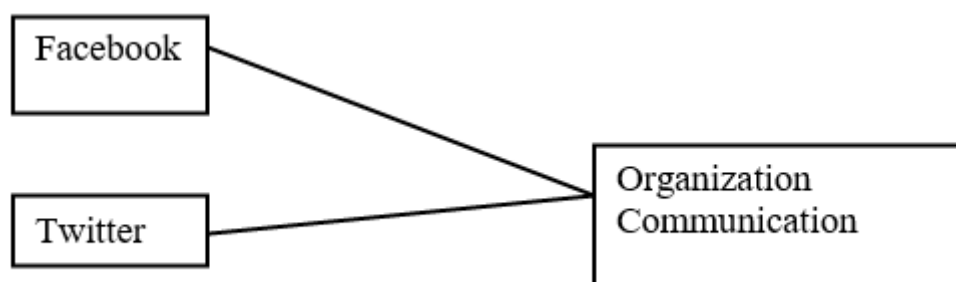


Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researchers study (2019)

4.5 Justification for the Study

Several studies have been carried out in this area before now, some of which were outside Nigeria and within the country, among these are Onyechi (2018) Isaac and Chime (2019), Dagona et al (2013), Ahmad et a (2019), Yaliisa an Oluuyina (2018) and they made use of Chi-square, simple linear regression analysis, simple percentages and mean scores, standard deviation t-test and multiple analysis. Considering the aforementioned, none of these studies employed Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. More so, no similar study has been carried out in Enugu State, Nigeria. These gaps necessitated the present study.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional research was undertaken. Survey research method was employed to assess the effects of social; media on youth’s participation in p0olitiics, with the target population comprising youths aged 18years to 29. Their population is unknown. A sample size of 384 was chosen from this population. Convenient sampling technique was adopted for the study based on the wiliness, knowledge, ability and availability of the respondents. Structural questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were presented in tables, using percentages, mean and standard deviation. Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the formulated hypotheses.

5.1 Presentation and Analysis of Data

Frequency Table

S/N	characteristics	Respondents Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	140	44
		Female	180	56
2	Age	18-26	80	25
		27-35	240	75
3	Educational qualification	Formal Education	-	
		Primary School	50	16
		Secondary school	100	31.25
		Tertiary	170	52.75

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From table above, 140 (44%) respondents were males, 180 (56%) represented the female youths which shows that females were more involved in the study than the males 80 (25%) and 240 (75%) represents under the ages of 18-26years and 27-35years indicating that youths between the ages of 27 and 35 years participated more than those under the ages of 18 and 26

years ; 50 (16%) were primary school students, 100 (31.25%) and 170 (52.75%) were secondary school students and tertiary students.

5.2 Descriptive

Table 1 Influence of Facebook usage on the level of political participation among youths

s/no	Items	S A	A	U	D	SD
1	Facebook usage helps the youths to interact with political figures.	190	95	8	7	20
2	Facebook usage help to facilitate political participation among youths in both online and offline.	230	70	7	7	6
3	Facebook quality of information influence and help the youths to make an informed decision about the candidate or party.	268	40	4	2	6
4	Facebook usage influence youth political interest.	240	69	5	2	4

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The analysis in table above showed that 190 respondents strongly agreed that facebook usage helped the youths to interact with political figures. 95 respondents agreed. This shows that majority of the youths used facebook to interact with political leaders. 230 and 70 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that facebook usage helped them to facilitate political participation among youth in both online and offline, this also goes to show that majority of the youths use Facebook to participate in politics. Additionally, 268 or 40 either strongly agreed or agreed that facebook quality of information influence and help the youth to make an informed decision about the candidate or party, 240 and 69 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that facebook usage influence youth political interest.

Hypothesis 1

H₀; Facebook usage does not significantly influence participation of youths in politics.

H₁; Facebook usage significantly influence participation of youths in politics.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.764 ^a	.584	.583	.39825	.082

a. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook usage

b. Dependent Variable: level of political participation

Table 3 ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.403	1	66.403	418.677	.000 ^a
	Residual	47.263	638	.159		
	Total	113.667	639			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook usage

b. Dependent Variable: level of political participation

Table 4. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.744	.055		13.516	.000
	Facebook usage	.473	.023	.764	20.462	.000

a. Dependent Variable: level of political participation

R = 0.764
 R² = 0.584
 F = 418.677
 T = 13.516

DW = 0.082

5.3 Interpretation

The regression sum of squares (66.403) is greater than the residual sum of squares (47.263), which indicates that more of the variation in the dependent variable is not explained by the model. The significance value of the F statistics (0.000) is less than 0.05, which means that the variation explained by the model is not due to chance.

R, the correlation coefficient which has a value of 0.764, indicates that there is positive relationship between facebook usage and level of political participation. R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 0.584% of the variation in the level of political participation is explained by the model.

With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .39825. The Durbin Watson statistics of 0.082, which is not more than 2, indicates there is no autocorrelation.

The facebook usage coefficient of 0.764 indicates a positive significance between facebook usage and level of political participation, which is statistically significant (with $t = 13.516$). Therefore, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accordingly accepted. Thus Facebook usage significantly and positively influences the level of political participation among youths.

5.4 Descriptive

Table 5 Influence of Twitter usage on the level of political participation among youths

s/no	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
5	Twitter usage help the youths to participate in politics.	200	98	6	14	2
6	Twitter users are more likely than non-users to be politically engaged.	199	98	16	3	4
7	Twitter usage influence youth political interest.	240	70	3	3	4
8	Twitter usage help the youths to interact with political figures	280	32	4	3	1

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The analysis in table above showed that 200 or 98 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that twitter usage helped the youths to participate in politics, This implied that the increase in the youth p0articipation in politics was attributed to twitter usage . . 1999 and 98 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that twitter users were more likely than non-users to be politically engaged. This further implied that youths would be more engaged in politics if they make use of twitter the more 240 and 70 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that twitter usage influenced their political interest. This means that majority of the youths participated in politics due to their use of twitter. Finally, 280 and 32 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that twitter usage helped the youths to interact with political figures.

Hypothesis 2.

Ho; Twitter usage does not significantly influence participation of youths in politics

H1; Twitter usage significantly influence participation of youths in politics

Table 6 Model Summaryb

Table 6 Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.782 ^a	.611	.611	.67998	.076

a. Predictors: (Constant), Twitter usage

b. Dependent Variable: Level of political participation

Table 7 ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	652.129	1	652.129	1.410E3	.000 ^a
	Residual	415.216	638	.462		
	Total	1067.346	639			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Twitter usage

b. Dependent Variable: Level of Political participation

Table 6 Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.782 ^a	.611	.611	.67998	.076

Table 8 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.418	.046		9.149	.000
	Twitter usage	.800	.021	.782	37.555	.000

R = 0.782
 R² = 0.611
 F = 1.410
 T = 9.149
 DW = 0.076

5.5 Interpretation

The regression sum of squares (652.129) is greater than the residual sum of squares (415.216), which indicates that more of the variation in the dependent variable is not explained by the model. The significance value of the F statistics (0.000) is less than 0.05, which means that the variation explained by the model is not due to chance.

R, the correlation coefficient which has a value of 0.782, indicates that there is positive relationship between twitter usage and level of political participation. R square, the coefficient of determination, shows that 61.1% of the variation in the level of political participation is explained by the model.

With the linear regression model, the error of estimate is low, with a value of about .67998. The Durbin Watson statistics of 0.076, which is not more than 2, indicates there is no autocorrelation.

The twitter usage coefficient of 0.782 indicates a positive significance twitter usage and Level of political participation, which is statistically significant (with t = 9.149). Therefore, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accordingly accepted. Thus twitter usage significantly and positively influence the level of political participation among youths.

6.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of first hypothesis tested shows that Facebook usage significantly and positively influences the level of political participation among youths. This result is in accordance with the findings of Ann, Ham and Karla (2016). Who found out that using facebook for political discussion has a significant positive influence on young people's interest in politics? Additionally, the findings of Dagona, Karicki and Abubakar (2013). Who found a significantly positive relationship between face book usage and political participation among the youth in Nigeria? The result of second hypothesis tested shows that twitter usage significantly and positively influence the level of political participation among youths. This result is in not in accordance with the findings of Ann, Ham and Karla (2016) who found out that shown that using twitter, however, has shown not to have significant influence on political interest of young people

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The study concludes that Facebook and twitter significantly and positively influence youth's participation in politics. The following recommendations are made in line with the findings and the conclusion of this study;

1. The findings of this study should use to formulate political participation policies three interact with each other and their lender on issue that affect them.
2. The youth should be informed and trained on how best they can use social media platform to actively engage in political discourse.

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