

# Media, Political Socialization and Participation: The Case of South-South/South-Eastern Nigeria

Okafor Samuel Okechi<sup>\*1</sup>, Akwaji Fidells Ngaji<sup>2</sup> and Oga Timothy<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology/Anthropology, University of Nigeria, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Sociology, University of Calabar, Nigeria

## Research Article

Received date: 29/04/2018;

Accepted date: 28/08/2018;

Published date: 04/09/2018

### \*For Correspondence:

Okafor Samuel Okechi, Department of Sociology/Anthropology, University of Nigeria, Nigeria. Tel: +2348034853595;

E-mail: samuelokey200@gmail.com

**Keywords:** Democracy, Political participation, Political socialization, Public media, Social media

## ABSTRACT

Political participation in Nigeria since the fourth republic has been a major challenge to the progress of democracy in the country. Though on the surface there are indices of political consciousness such as number of political parties and aspirants, the net participation among the masses still remain a challenge to the growth of democracy in this part of the world. The present study focused on the youth and the public media outlets as the pillars for the future survival of democracy in the country. The study involved 625 undergraduate students from the South East and South-South Nigerian universities while survey research design was adopted to collect data from the respondents. The findings showed the strong relationship between political socialization at the family and political participation ( $P < 0.01$ ,  $\rho = 0.451$ ), political socialization at the educational institutions and political participation ( $P < .00$ ,  $\rho = 0.419$ ), access to public media and political socialization ( $P < 0.01$ ,  $\rho = 0.284$ ) and attitude to political participation and political participation ( $P < 0.01$ ,  $\rho = 0.351$ ). Nonetheless, only political socialization at the family/educational institutions, attitude to political participation and rating of the information on public news media can predict the future direction of political participation in the regions. In contrary, there is low level of political participation, political socialization in the educational institutions, significant level of unfavourable attitude towards political participation and public news media in the regions. For the improvement of democracy in this region the study recommends the enhancement of neutrality in the public news media and encouragement of political socialization via the educational institutions in the regions.

## INTRODUCTION

For democracy to be more meaningful and sustainable, political participation is necessary and needs to be encouraged [1-3]. The Nigerian political landscape has witnessed since 1999 a tremendous change which came in form of democratic improvement both in strength and self-sustainability since 1960 compared to other democratic dispensation since the Nigerian independence [4]. Political parties increase by season and political candidates emerge from different directions and ethnic groups from and within the numerous ethnic groups in the nation. Although to some extent, we may admit that there is somewhat negative correlation between the development of democracy in Nigeria and voters turn out during elections [4,5], there is still an evidence to show that individuals and groups are still becoming part of the political process and the progression of democracy in Nigeria and by implication, requires more in-depth understanding of how and why

the individuals and groups willingness to admit democracy in their various activities are not directly reflecting on the extent of overt political participation. Virtually every political incidence that took place at the federal government level and at the state level even at the local government levels have been observed on the social media with hundreds of individuals if not thousands commenting or reacting to the incidence [6]. Liberal democratic governance is not an automatic thing but require some level of understanding among the people who have different cultures in terms of political histories and experiences [7,8]. It is Nigeria, where you can find a number of traditional and indigenous political orientations, that in principle are antithetical to the modern liberal democracy among hundreds of ethnic groups who made up the country and this in essence show the amount of time and resources required to incorporate every citizen into the somewhat new political orientation (Principles of liberal democracy), which ought to be done with carefulness [9,10]. Despite the fact that Naira politics has made it somehow necessary for everyone to get interested in the national happenings and the national political calendar, it is still necessary that the citizens of the nation get to voluntarily participate and appreciate the tenets of democracy as an evidence that the political system acknowledges human rights which is the bases of modern liberal democracy. Presently it is unknown the extent to which certain basic phenomenon in the social system interact with the Nigerian democratic development specifically, the media and the social media outlets, in order to fathome how these could be used to empower and foster democracy in Nigeria. Public and social media outlets have been the most powerful instrument for strengthening democracy in the developed world and still lagging behind in the developing nations in bringing democracy to the forefront of the social activities among the citizens especially, the youth [11-15]. The extent of usage of the social media among the Nigeria youth especially, the undergraduate students are growing ceaselessly and by implication becoming a huge opportunity for increasing political participation and enlightenment across the nation for the promotion of modern democracy and political participation. The interest of this study is specifically to investigate the youth (students) access to public and social media and their relationship with the youth participation in politics in Nigeria. Again the study aim at unraveling other factors associated with political participation such as political socialization, indigenous political orientation and other socio-economic factors, and their relationship with political participation in Nigeria; in sum, to trace the causative factors for the low turnout of voters in Nigeria and inconsistent relationship between the ever growing political arguments on social media, the access to public media and relatively low motivation in carrying out the citizens' obligation of voting and other meaningful political activities. In the last election in Nigeria, the South-South and South East of Nigeria were among if not the only regions with the lowest voters' registration and collection of the electronic voter's card recently introduced in the political system. To the best knowledge of the authors, no research of this magnitude has been carried in these particular regions especially, as they are the most significant part of the present day Nigeria with some level of impact on the political and economic landscape of the country. This study is focus to chart a course for the government, individuals and the Non-Governmental Organizations who are interest in the political system of the nation, in developing and promoting more inclusive political system by tackling the factors responsible for nonchalant attitude to political participation in the region especially among the youth.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the extent of political participation in the South-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria?
- What is the attitude towards political participation in Nigeria among the youth in the Southern-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria?
- What is the direction of the relationship between political participation and attitude to political participation among the youth in South-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria?
- What is the extent of political socialization by the parents and the educational institutions to the youth in the regions?
- What is the direction of the relationship between the extent of political socialization among the youth and political participation in these regions?
- What is the extent of accessing the information on public and social media among the youth in these regions?
- What is the direction of the relationship between the access to public and social media to political participation?
- What are the factors that can likely predict political participation in Nigeria?

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The Global objective of this study is to ascertain the relationship between access to public and social media by the youth and political participation. Specific objectives of the study include:

- To discover the extent of political participation in the South-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria among the students within voting age.
- To ascertain the extent of attitude towards political participation in Nigeria among the youth in the Southern-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria.

- To evaluate the direction of the relationship between political participation and attitude to political participation among the youth in South-Southern and South-Eastern Nigeria.
- To evaluate the extent of political socialization by the parents and the educational institutions to the youth in the regions.
- To decipher the direction of the relationship between the extent of political socialization among the youth and political participation in these regions.
- To understand the extent of accessing the information on public and social media among the youth in these regions.
- To unravel the direction of the relationship between the access to public media to political participation.
- To discover the factors that can likely predict political participation in Nigeria.

### POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The beauty of modern liberal democracy is the involvement of all and sundry at various capacities, to make governance meaningful and to ensure more accountability<sup>[13,16]</sup>. Political participation both direct and indirect is such an ingredient of liberal democracy that makes it more or less a government by consensus. It may surface as willingness to vote others into the power corridor, partaking in political contest, actively involving oneself in political argument aimed at strengthening the governance<sup>[2,17]</sup>. When the citizens (both the leaders and the led) have a common ground and a favourable atmosphere to share views and sentiments about the business of governance, the political system is strengthened and the citizens at all levels and capacities are encouraged to take part in the effort of moving the state forward either as contestants or supporters. However, having a medium of interaction for the sharing of political views, interests and sentiments can have both negative and positive implications such as discouraging reactions from some uninformed electorate there by creating negative impression about politics on one hand, and strengthening political participation on the other hand.

Political participation is a subject to the dominant political culture among a particular group or nation<sup>[16]</sup>. While some nations/countries have advanced political culture, most developing nations/countries are still struggling with bleak political culture which is in-between the traditional political culture and the foreign political culture and by implication renders such nations to inconsistent political progress and democratic development<sup>[17]</sup>. In any case, the involvement of individuals or group in politics (Political participation) happened to be related to the traditional political history and sentiments among the groups (Ethnic groups and Tribes) making up a nation especially in the developing nations. A number of studies have confirmed that to a large extent, the domineering political culture plays a role on individual attitude to political participation. Again a few number of studies have affirmed the fact that individual's attitude to political participation is a subject to family political orientation which in itself is a subject to culture and indigenous traditional political system<sup>[18-20]</sup>. Political participation in Nigeria both at individual and group levels have been discovered to toe the line of ethnicity, class and religion<sup>[10]</sup>. However, the emerging issues between politics and other phenomenon such as media and social media among the youth remain a factor to be unraveled especially, in Nigeria as one of the developing nations and young democratic nation among other nations across the globe where, political participation has been found generally low and discouraging among the electorates<sup>[10]</sup>.

### SOCIAL/PUBLIC MEDIA AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Public media is one of the most important platform for both political interaction between the elected and the electorate as well as the platform for discussing political issues which indirectly create opportunity for political awareness<sup>[12,21,22]</sup>. In the developed countries, the public media plays the role of political enlightenment and public orientation on political matters. At the same time, the public media plays a role of activating political consciousness among the citizens<sup>[23]</sup>. In most developing nations, the public media have played the role of socializing individuals into a particular political orientation owing to the fact that the politically powerful get hold of the media when they are elected and make them the instrument for projecting themselves before the citizens usually, their "assumed perfect image". In most African nations like Nigeria, the news media and other public media are teleguided by the political leaders as they dictate the type of news that are good for public consumptions. In most cases, the news media that fail to adhere to the government dictate end up losing their operational license. Currently in Nigerian political landscape, it is still a contested matter at the parliament, the issue of freedom of access to information and spread of information (The so call Private Information Bill). Of paramount interest here is that the controllers of the public media use these to continually project their interest before the public and at the same time relegating to the background, the information that does not favour their interest no matter how truthful they are. This situation is among the factors that are towing Nigeria on the line of one party system irrespective of the countless number of political parties being registered by seasons. Similarly, this situation becomes a problem to the way the citizens view the media outlets and political matters being displayed by these news media; this to a large extent, affects the chances of media outlets becoming a platform of motivation to political participation among the citizens especially the youth.

## **POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Politics as a social phenomenon fall among the Talcott Parsons' AGIL type (Adaptation; Goal maintenance; Integration and Latency maintenance). This by implication is an inalienable part of the social system which, must be appreciated by the members of the society for its proper functioning. For it to be appreciated in any society the citizens must be socialized into it otherwise, it becomes the business of the few who grab it by chance other than by orientation. Political socialization is actualized through a number of avenues conventionally known as agents of political socialization. Among them are the family, the school, peer group, mass media, professional organizations and the political parties. While the family takes the rudimentary part of political socialization which entails majorly, the introduction of the child to the phenomenon of leadership and power struggle in the society <sup>[24,25]</sup>, it is also important to understand that the role of the family in the modern democratic society has gone beyond the mere introduction of the child to the political system as a phenomenon. It currently involves in the modern democracy, the inculcation in the child, political values of the society in particular and practically motivating the child into political participation through vicarious learning. Empirical findings have shown that children and youth who follow their parents to the polling station to vote subsequently picked interest in involvement in political activities <sup>[26, 27]</sup>.

Educational institutions especially at the earlier stage (such primary and post primary levels), technically introduce the children, the youth and the adult to the intricacies of politics as part of the social system without bias or sentiments about any political party or group. As a way of introduction, the educational institutions expose the individuals and groups to the imperatives of politics as part of the social system and for the survival of the society in general; the role of the citizens and the role of the society in sustaining and reinforcing the sanctity of the political system. Beyond the theoretical outlook of the role of the educational institutions in political socialization, the utilitarian value of such is appreciated in the way it guides the citizens into the political system as contestants and electorates <sup>[28,29]</sup>.

Among the peer groups, discussion of political issues and interests based on individuals' level of knowledge about politics and background is yet another accelerating factor in pushing into appreciating the political system as a phenomenon and subsequently, into political participation. Interactions among the members of peer group and deliberation on political matters before, during and after elections and other political events operate as a rejuvenating factor in drawing the youth to political participation as well as shaping their political orientation <sup>[29,30]</sup>.

Mass Media create a favourable opportunity for both politically active and politically inactive citizens to be informed on utilitarian value of political participation. In the developed nations where, media outlets operate without bias and the media freedom guaranteed for the spread of factual information about the government activities and programme, the individuals and groups are carried along and by implication encouraged into political participation. Statutorily, the media channels in the society especially in the modern democratic society is expected to be a connecting valve among the political class, the government, the electorates and the electoral system for more valuable interactions and active political participation.

Professional organizations in more Sociological parlance, are the tertiary orientation platform for the individual members. Politically, this group plays the role of informing the members about the relevance of political sentiments based on the interest of the group in question. These in essence result to the members of different groups aligning themselves to a particular political ideology and political parties. In sum, the role of the professional organizations tends to inform the individuals about the individual and collective benefits of participating in politics technically.

Indeed, the aforementioned agents of political socialization are unique instruments to encourage political participation however; the situation is not practically possible as it sounds theoretically in all nations especially, among the developing ones. All things being equal, if all the agents of political socialization are utilitarian as they sound theoretically, they will constitute a centripetal force in encouraging political participation. In the developing nations such as Nigeria, political socialization as a phenomenon meet with stiff resistance in most families as politics is generally perceived as the activities of the few who are morally corrupt. In addition, from the family background the children tend to receive negative impression about politics and governance and by implication see politics as uninteresting except for the monetary attachment to it such as sharing of money during voting and stealing the public fund when one have access to power.

Among the educational institutions from primary to tertiary institutions political socialization is trivialized as the impression run through the institutions that, the individuals does not count in Nigerian politics whether you vote or not. In the long run, this produce youth who are anti-political participation in nature and agents of reinforcement of the problem of political godfatherism. The same impression infiltrates the peer groups among the youth and reinforce negative attitude towards political participation. The members of every peer group are the product of families and educational institutions in terms of political socialization and in essence, display the attitude and sentiments which they have been exposed to them.

The public media channels in Nigeria are in theory, statutorily charged with the responsibility of objective reporting of political events, programme and activities; and the level playing ground for all the political parties and ideologies for the

projection of their abilities and weaknesses. However, the public media outlets in Nigeria have turned to teleguided instruments of the few dominant individuals and political parties there by raising a doubt about the public media objectivity in the country. This image of the public media in the country in one way or the other is connected to the attitude of the individuals and groups to political participation as the public media outlets serve as somewhat instrument of political socialization. This is because; the public outlets ought to serve as a level playing ground for the government and the political parties to motivate people into political participation.

Meanwhile professional organizations and the political parties, which ought to create a platform to strengthen political participation, are engulfed by individual, religious and ethnic sentiments in Nigeria. Instead of encouraging political participation, these groups because of individual, religious and ethnic domination have become the ground for neutralizing the consciousness for political participation in Nigeria. While the political parties in Nigeria plays on the cord of hatred and bitterness, the professional organizations play on the cord of destabilization in the interest of which individual, religious group or ethnic group that has dominant influence over the organization.

From family to school and peer-group interactions, individuals are informed about the power exchange and exchange hands of power which is the onus of political activities in the society. These influence from the parents and other members of household, the educational institution and the peer influence become a shaping factor in the individuals' and even a groups' understanding and appreciation of the issue of power struggle in the society<sup>[31]</sup>. Where the individual is cut in-between liberal democracy and poor political orientation, political participation becomes a problem requiring almost total reorientation of the individual involved. Empirical evidences abound about the voting behaviours of the parents and their children (youth) attitude towards voting as two factors in direct relationship<sup>[25-27]</sup>. Other findings about political behaviour has emerged with results showing that the voting behaviour of the youth which are carried over to the latter part of their lives are majorly rooted in the early stage of their lives as they observe their parents and members of their households vote or discuss and interpreted political issues<sup>[32,33]</sup>. Similarly, empirical evidence has pointed to the relationship between peer influence and political participation such as choice of political party, participating in voting and contesting for political office<sup>[34]</sup>. Nonetheless, tertiary orientations such as job place orientation and membership of professional organizations have been connected to individual's precepts for political involvement.

Although there may be variations in the way and circumstances in which an individual may be influenced to political participation, there is still the indication that different levels of political socialization are the conglomeration of the different families' political orientations, making the family more or less the major germinating ground for political orientation and socialization both in the developed nations and developing nations. More than anything, the relationship between political socialization, access to media and political participation is yet to be ascertained in the developing nations such as Nigeria as a young democratic nation<sup>[35]</sup>.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out among the universities in the South-East and South-South parts of Nigeria among the undergraduate (final year) male and female students. Again, the final year students were chosen because; the admission into Nigerian Universities requires that a student must have attend at least the age of 16 before he/she will be admitted for studies.

The study adopted cross sectional survey design which focuses on the immediate eliciting of information from the respondents about an ongoing phenomenon.

The study randomly selected ten Universities among the 20 federal and state universities in the regions. Among the 10 Universities are: University of Calabar (Federal university), Ebonyi State University, University of Uyo (Federal University), Bayelsa State University, University of PortHarcourt (Federal University), Federal University of Technology Owerri, Delta State University, Micheal Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike, University of Nigeria Nsukka and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (Federal University). The sample size of this study was based on the National University Commission recommendation bench mark that all recognized Universities should admit 5000 students in single academic session. Therefore, all things being equal all the 10 Universities selected for the study were estimated to have at least 5000 students who are in their final year of study and total of 50000 students in their final year studies. The sample size for this study was statistically determined using Taro Yamane (1967:886) statistical formula. The Yaro Yamane formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \text{ Where } n = \text{Sample size } 1 = \text{constant } N = \text{the finite population } e = \text{level of significance (or limit of tolerance error). Therefore } N = \frac{50000}{1 + 5000(0.04)^2} = \frac{50000}{1 + 5000(0.0016)} = \frac{50000}{5000(0.0016)} = \frac{50000}{80.0} = 625.$$

In view of the above, the sample size for this study was 625 respondents.

The study adopted both random and modified random sampling techniques in selecting the respondents. All the Universities selected were equally represented in the study as well as the male and female students by adopting equal probability sampling technique. In each of the 10 Universities selected 5 faculties were selected using simple random sampling technique (balloting). Among the 5 faculties, 2 departments were selected from each of the faculties using balloting. Among the 10 departments selected, at least 1 respondent was selected from each of the departments using modified random sampling in total, at least 12 students were selected from each of the faculties selected while a total of 62 respondents were selected from each of the selected University. The instrument for the study was survey questionnaire developed on nominal scale. The questionnaires were self-administered with some guidance from the researchers where the respondents requested for assistance.

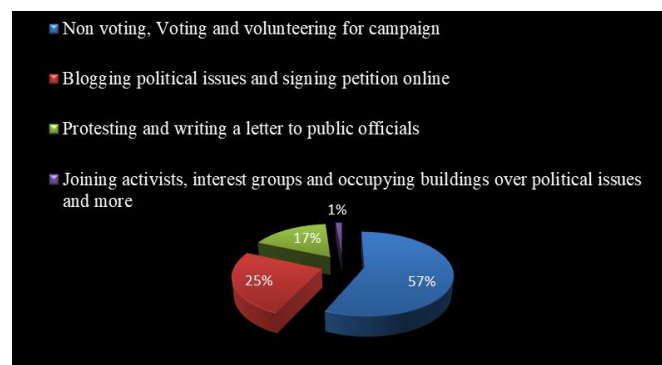
The data collected were coded and analyzed using Social Science Statically Package (SPSS) while the hypotheses guiding the study were tested with inferential statistics such as Logistic Regression and Linear Regression.

## RESULTS

### Data Presentation and Analysis

In the scale of analysis here, the respondents were allowed to choose among the scale of political participation with the highest level as joining activists, interest groups, occupying buildings over political issues and more. Among the 625 respondents who participated in the study, about 57% are on the lower rung of political participation scale ranging from nonvoting to volunteering for campaign. Another 25% of the respondents are involved in political activities at the level of blogging political issues and signing petition online. About 17% can involve themselves in political activities by protesting and writing a letter to public officials while only 1% can involve themselves in political activities by joining activists, interest groups and occupying buildings over political issues and other politically related activities.

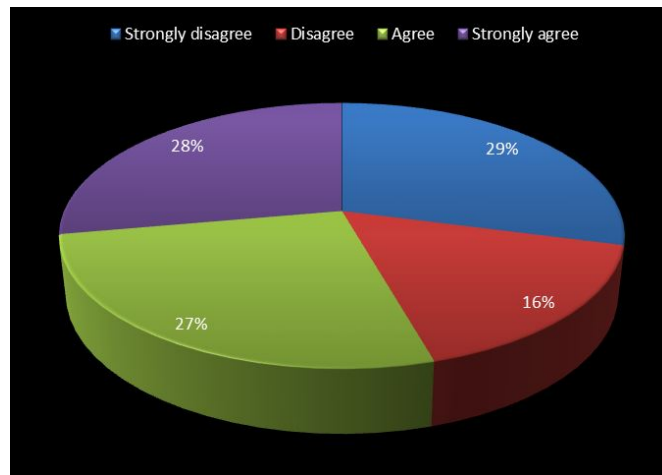
The figure further shows the level of political participation and its implication to the development of democracy in Nigeria. In the current study, the effort was focused on the investigation about how willing the youth especially the undergraduates can be in the political activities in the country especially in the era where the electorates overwhelmingly contribute to the survival and progress of democracy.



**Figure 1:** Distribution of the respondents on their level of Involvement in political activities (Field Survey, 2017).

With the present result, there is an indication that Nigerian democratic governance is still facing with the wave of political apathy or in sum, weak political participation among the youth. This of course is a serious challenge to the objective democracy as the youth especially the students who will soon take over the system are found to be less interested in the more advance level of political participation (**Figure 1**).

The above figure displayed the attitude of the respondents to political participation. Among the 625 respondents, 29% strongly disagree that every citizen of the country should participate in the political activities of the nation. Another 28% strongly agree that the citizens should participate in the political activities of the nation, 27% agree that the citizens should participate in the political activities of the nation while 16% disagree that all citizens should participate in the political activities of the nation. In sum, 45% of the respondents were on the negative side of the scale showing unfavourable attitude towards political participation in the nation while, 55% are of favourable attitude towards political participation. In view of the interest of the present study, though majority of the undergraduate youth (55%) are on the positive side of the attitude scale adopted for this study, the more important issue is the extent of negative attitude towards political participation after 18 years of uninterrupted democratic governance in the country.



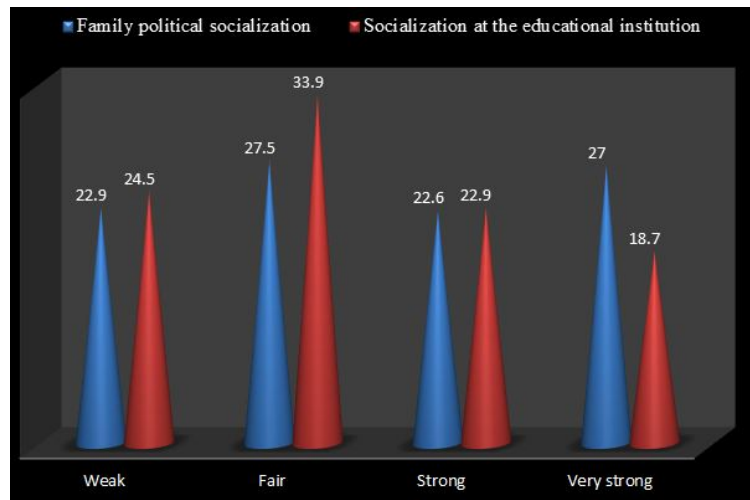
**Figure 2:** Distribution of the respondents on whether every citizen of Nigeria should be part of the political activities either as electorate or contestant (Field Survey, 2017).

In essence, what the present finding shows is the fact that in every 10 youth among the undergraduate students, about 4 persons are not interested or does not encourage the general participation in political activities of the nation among then southern and south-eastern Nigerians (**Figure 2**).

**Table 1:** Correlation examination of Political attitude and Involvement in political activities (N= 625) rho=0.351 2tail P<0.01 (Field Survey, 2017).

			Political participation	Attitude to political participation
Spearman's rho	Political participation	Correlation	1	0.351**
		Coefficient Sig.	.	0
		N	625	625
	Attitude to political participation	Correlation	0.351**	1
		Coefficient Sig.	0	.
		N	625	625
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

**Table 1** above is the distribution of the respondents' attitude to political participation and their involvement in political activities in the country as was measured with 4 point likert scales and political participation scale. Preliminary analyses were carried out to ensure no violation of assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The distribution showed a positive correlation of the respondents' attitude towards political participation and their political participation. According to the correlation cross examination, there is positive correlation between attitude to political participation and political participation among the undergraduate youth who participated in the study. Furthermore, attitude of the youth according to the result above explained the 12.3% of the youth involvement in politics in the south-south and south-east region of Nigeria. Again, in every 100 active political participants in the region, about 12 are encouraged by seeing political participation as his or her responsibility. Though it is on the positive direction, the result still revealed weak relationship between political participation and attitude towards political activities in the country when compared to the length of current democratic dispensation in the country which started by 1999 and again, the category of the citizens who are involved in the study. The youth are the hope of the continuation of democratic development in the country and any attitude they show to political participation is a concern to the chances of democratic development in the country.



**Figure 3:** Rating your political socialization in the educational institution and Rating your political socialization at home by parents and guidance (Field Survey, 2017).

The above distribution showed that among the 625 respondents, 27.5% indicated that their political socialization at the family was fair, 27% were of the view that their political socialization at the family was very strong, 22.9% indicated that their political socialization at the family was weak while 22.6 indicated that their political socialization at the family was strong. Nevertheless, 33.9% of the respondents indicated that there political socialization in the educational institution was fair, 24.5% said their political socialization at the educational institution was weak, 22.9% indicated that their political socialization at the educational institution was strong while only 18.7% indicated that their political socialization in the education institution was very strong. The scale for the data collection was developed on 4point where 1-2 is signifying weakness while 3-4 signifies strong and very strong. In cumulative analysis, the **Table 1** above showed that more than 58% of the respondents indicated that their political socialization in the educational institution was weak compared to their political socialization at the family (50.4). Furthermore, the distribution showed that the bulk of strong political socialization received by the respondents were more from the family (49.6%) compared to that of the educational institution (41.8%) (**Figure 3**).

**Table 2:** Correlation examination of Political socialization at the family & Involvement in political activities (N= 625) rho=0.451 2tail P<0.01 (Field Survey, 2017).

			Political participation	Political socialization at the family
Spearman's rho	Political participation	Correlation	1	0.451**
		Coefficient Sig.	.	0
		N	625	625
	Political socialization at the family	Correlation	0.451**	1
		Coefficient Sig.	0	.
		N	625	625

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above **Table 2** showed the cross tabulation of the respondents on their political socialization at the family and their political participation as was measured with researchers developed scale and political participation scale. Preliminary analyses were carried out to ensure no violation of assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The **Table 2** revealed a consistent relationship between political socialization at home and political participation. The cross examination with Spearman correlation coefficient showed strong positive correlation between political socialization at home and political participation (P<0.01 rho=0.451). Furthermore, the result indicated a slight difference to the previous result on the political socialization at the educational institution. In essence the results point to the fact that the family background of the youth are playing more role in motivating the youth into political activities and at the same time revealed the weakness of the educational institutions in carrying out the responsibility of socializing the youth into the



political activities of the country. Among every 100 youth involving the political activities in the country, about 20 persons are informed by the family members.

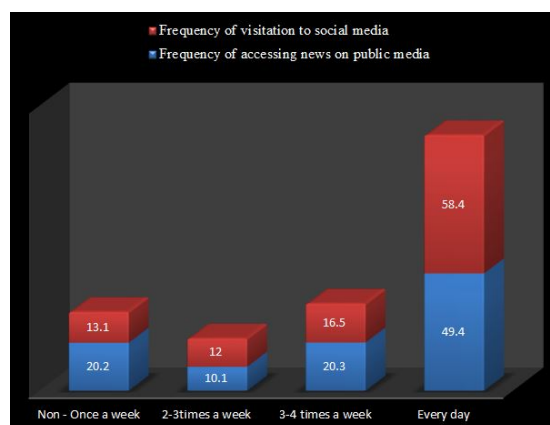
**Table 3:** Correlation examination of Political socialization at the educational institutions & Involvement in political activities (N= 625) rho=0.4192tail P<0.01 (Field Survey, 2017).

Spearman's rho	Political participation		Political participation	Political socialization in the education institution
		Correlation	1	0.419**
		Coefficient Sig.	.	0
		N	625	625
Spearman's rho	Political socialization at the education institution	Correlation	0.419**	1
		Coefficient Sig.	0	.
		N	625	625

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above **Table 3** showed the cross tabulation of the respondents on their political socialization at the educational institution and their political participation as was measured with researchers' developed scales and political participation scale. Preliminary analyses were carried out to ensure no violation of assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The table revealed a consistent relationship between political socialization at the educational institution and political participation. The cross examination with Spearman correlation coefficient showed strong positive relationship between political socialization at the education institution and political participation (P<.00 rho=0.419). However, in comparison to the political socialization at the family and political participation, the result showed slight difference from the result on the political socialization at the family and political participation at the education institution. More importantly, the result indicated that though there is some level of political participation in relationship with political socialization but socialization at home plays a crucial role in encouraging the youth into political participation. According to the result, political socialization at the educational institutions contributes about 17.6% of political participation among the youth in the zone. Nevertheless, the result indicated that out of every 100 youth participating in the political activities of the nation, about 18 of them are as a result of political socialization at the educational institutions.

The distribution above shows that majority of the respondents (58.4%) access the social media every day, 16.5% access the social media 3-4times in a week, 12% access the social media 2-3times a week while 13.1% either do not access the social media at all or access the social media once in a week. Among the 625 respondents, 49.4% access the public media every day, 20.3% access the public media 3-4 times a week, and 20.2% either do not access the public media or access the public media once in a week. In comparative evaluation, the distribution showed that the respondents access the social media more than the public media for instance, while 58.4% of the respondents access the social media every day, only 49.4% of the respondents access the public media every day.



**Figure 4:** Distribution the respondents on frequency of accessing news on public media & Frequency of visitation to social media (Field Survey, 2017).

Again, while more than 20% of the respondents either do not access the public media or access the public media once in a week, only about 13% of the respondents fall in that category in respect to the social media (Figure 4).

**Table 4:** Correlation examination of Frequency of accessing news on public media & Involvement in political activities (N= 625) rho=0.284 2tail P<0.01 (Field Survey, 2017).

Spearman's rho	Political participation		Political participation	Frequency of accessing news on public media
		Correlation	1	0.284**
		Coefficient Sig.	.	0
		N	625	625
Spearman's rho	Frequency of accessing news on public media		0.284**	1
		Correlation	0.284**	1
		Coefficient Sig.	0	.
		N	625	625

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above Table 4 showed the cross tabulation of the respondents on their access to public media and their political participation as was measured by researchers' developed scale and political participation scale. Preliminary analyses were carried out to ensure no violation of assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The table revealed a consistent relationship between accessing the public media and political participation. The cross examination with Spearman correlation coefficient showed strong positive relationship between access to public media and political participation (P<0.01 rho=.284). In essence, access to public media explained 8.1% of the political participation among the undergraduate youth in the south-south and south eastern Nigeria. According to the finding above, in every 100 youth within the region who are strongly involved, in political activities of the nation, 8 persons were likely informed by the public media.

**Table 5:** Linear regression on political participation and other variables.

Model	Unstandardized/Standardized Coefficients			t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.581	0.134		4.323	0
Frequency of accessing news on public media	-0.005	0.041	-0.006	-0.123	0.902
Frequency of visitation to social media	0.025	0.046	0.025	0.546	0.585
Rating of information from Nigerian news media	0.11	0.054	0.108	2.054	0.04
Political socialization at the family	0.196	0.055	0.204	3.597	0
Political socialization at the educational institution	0.204	0.056	0.199	3.643	0
Attitude to political participation	0.097	0.047	0.107	2.076	0.038
Attitude to zoning of presidential candidate in the country	-0.096	0.053	-0.092	-1.817	0.07

Y. Dependent Variable: Involvement in political activities  
 F Value =26.49  
 R = 0.481  
 R2 = 0.231  
 Adjusted R square = 0.223  
 Note: Result is significant at .05

The above Table 5 displayed the linear regression explaining the relationship between political participation (The dependent variable) and the and other variables such as Frequency of accessing news on public media, Frequency of

visitation to social media, Rating of information from Nigerian news media and Rating your political socialization at home by parents and guidance. Others included rating your political socialization in the educational institution, attitude towards political participation and political party zoning in Nigeria. The overall power of the model in explaining political participation is 48.1% (R value) while the individual variables (independent) contained in the model contributed at various levels in the overall explanation. According to the standardized coefficient values (Beta), political socialization at the family contributed the highest value to the model explanatory power (0.204), followed by political socialization in the educational institution (0.199), rating of information from Nigeria news media (0.108) attitude to political participation and others. According to the t value, there is a negative relationship only between political participation and accessing of the public news media at a significant level ( $t = -0.123$ ) and public perception of party zoning in Nigeria (-1.817). On the contrary, there is a positive correlation between attitude to political participation, access to social media, political socialization at the family and in the educational institution etc.

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Democratic development in the developing nations such as Nigeria is a matter of importance to the nation, Africa and the entire globe as this contribute to the overall analysis of global political development involvement in decision making by the electorate who bore the full burden of political failures. Nigeria returned to democracy in the year 1999 after years of intermittent democracy and the incessant military coups and domination of the governance by military. After 1999, the citizens gradually take over the governance from the military with major interest in increasing political participation by the common man however, since 1999 till date the issue of political activities have rested with almost those who removed the military uniform to join the civilian rule making the ordinary citizens more or less the observers other than participants. In the case of the youth, the Nigerian political setting has made the youth mere puppets of the people in power who use them at will to pursue their political interest even at the detriment of the youth in particular. In the south-south and south-east Nigeria, most individuals prefer collecting money to vote or commit electoral violence than to objectively participate in the political activities to decide their fate. Among the youth, the case is worst as there are indications that most youth in the region see political activities as the business of the rich and the rugged. While the rich are to use their money to buy election and occupy the political positions, the rugged are the youth who are ready to take the risk of electoral violence and get paid by the political demagogues. Therefore, the common citizens find it difficult to see political activities as a genuine citizenship obligation; this reflected in the last general election in 2015 in which only 30% of the southerners comprising the south-south and south-east, were able to collect their electronic voting cards while the northerners were estimated to have collected about 60% of the available voters cards made available to them as at the same time.

Among other things, the present study was interested in unraveling the factors that are responsible for some level of visible political apathy in the region. Adopting a scale of 1-4 of political participation scale, the study tested the rate and level of political participation among the youth in this regions (South-south and South-East Nigeria); the result revealed that the majority of the youth who participated in the study (57%) were mostly at the lowest rung of the scale which involved nonvoting to voting and involvement in campaign while only insignificant percentage (1%) has come to the advanced level of political participation according to the scale. This reveals the level of ignorance and fear about political participation among the youth in the region and the paltry benefits which the political demagogues make them to see about politics and democracy. For instance, there in so many cases in which people have voted only because of they were giving money and others were they came out for campaign because of sharing of money by the political candidates. Nonetheless, the result further show the extent at which ignorance and fear have made the electorates (the youth) to ignore the aspect of political participation which is for their own good. For instance, involving in political activities by protesting and writing a letter to public officials; involving in political activities by joining activists, interest groups and occupying buildings over political issues are some of the factors which have changed political landscape of many European and American nations in the interest of the masses.

About 45% of the respondents in sum disagreed that every citizen ought to participate in political activities in the country either as electorate or contestant. This revealed the untold aspect of the citizens' imagination about political activities; such a significant percent of the youth indicating that political participation should not be mandatory is an indication of the extent of political apathy and indifference which are lying low among the youth and by implication, inform their extent of political participation in the nation. Meanwhile, the positive relationship that exists between other variables introduced in this study and the extent of the relationship also point to some other unresolved issues among the population. For instance, the educational institution is in the prominent position to enlighten the masses especially the youth on political participation however, the evaluation in this study revealed that the educational institution is lagging behind in that responsibility. This was revealed by the difference family institution gave the educational institution in motivating the youth into politics or boosting their attitude to political participation. Erroneously, what the average Nigerian think or imagine is that the educational institution is playing the role in the building of the future generation into

appreciating political activities in the nation however, the present study have shown that the educational institution has not taken that position firmly.

### CONCLUSION

Political participation and the public and social media are the interwoven factors for the development and growth of democracy especially in the developing nations, which ought to be observed with some level of keenness. Among the youth in the present era when technology has made information easy at various levels care needs to be taken. The way they utilize the information sources and their effects on their attitude to social phenomenon such as political participation is very important in order to see how such can be utilized as a strategy to actualize the global agenda of democratic development and human right security. The present study has examined the access to public media and attitude to political participation among the youth in the South-South and South-East Nigeria to find out the above mentioned phenomenon. The findings so far revealed some of the hiding factors which have affected the general political participation in Nigeria among which are political socialization at the family and educational institution, access to public and social media, perception of the news on the Nigerian public news media and attitude to party and political zoning at the national level. Based on the findings, much is left to be desired for such what could be done to encourage political participation in the country and to empower the youth for meaningful political engagement. On this note, the civic education, which the Nigerian government started to encourage citizenship education, should be accorded more recognition to political socialization, the public news media should be made more neutral to allow for objective political information. Finally, the family as the fourth estate of the realm should be encouraged to develop a good image of Nigeria political setting in the mind of the future generation.

### REFERENCES

1. Diemer MA. Fostering marginalized youths' political participation: Longitudinal roles of parental political socialization and youth sociopolitical development. *Am J Commun Psychol* 2012;50:246-256.
2. Henn M and Foard N. Young people, political participation and trust in Britain. *Parliamentary Affairs* 2012;65:47-67.
3. Gonzales RG. Left out but not shut down: Political activism and the undocumented student movement. *Northwestern J Law Social Policy* 2008;3:219-239.
4. Jonathan EG. *I kept my word Speech Conceding Defeat*; 2015.
5. Akinsanya AA. *Inevitability of Instability in Nigeria*. Gratia Associates International, Nigeria; 2005.
6. Mahmud SS. *The 2015 General Elections: Voter Turnout, Voting Behavior and Democratic Consolidation In Nigeria*. The Post-Election Conference by The Electoral Institute, Abuja; 2015.
7. Vickie LE. A Theory of Participation for 21st Century Governance. *Int J Organiz Theor Behav* 2013;16:1-28.
8. Bryer TA. President Obama, Public Participation, and an Agenda for Research and Experimentation. *Int J Public Partic* 2010;4:5-11.
9. Kehinde OO. *The 2015 General Elections in Nigeria: The Real Issues*. National Conference on Organized by The Electoral Institute, Abuja; 2015.
10. Adeleke GF. Electoral Institutions and Voting Behavior of Educated Professionals in Southwestern Nigeria. *J Res Nation Develop* 2016;14:27-32.
11. Bennett LW and Iyengar S. A New Era of Minimal Effects? Changing the Foundations of Political Communication. *J Commun* 2008;58:707-731.
12. Dilliplane S. All the News You Want to Hear: The Impact of Partisan News Exposure on Political Participation. *Public Opinion Quart* 2011;75:278-316.
13. Wan A, et al. Political Attitudes and Voting Behaviour. *Int J Human Manag Sci* 2013;12320-4044.
14. Kila A. *Political Profile of Irrational Voters*. European Centre for Advanced and Professional Studies, England; 2011.
15. Balogun SK and Olapegba PO. Majority Carry the Vote: Psycho-Demographic Influence on Voting Behaviour. *Stud Tribes Tribals* 2007;5:5-7.
16. Javier EB, et al. *Conditional Cash Transfers, Political Participation, and Voting Behavior*. Institute for the Study of Labor, Germany; 2012.

17. Olsson SA. Corruption and Political Participation A Multilevel Analysis. The Quality of Government Institute, Sweden; 2014.
18. Dilliplane S, et al. Televised Exposure to Politics: New Measures for a Fragmented Media Environment. *Am J Politic Sci* 2013;57:236-248
19. Giger N, et al. The poor political representation of the poor in a comparative perspective. *Represent* 2012;48:47-61.
20. Leemann L and Wasserfallen F. The democratic effect of direct democracy. *Am Politic Sci Rev.* 2016;110:750-762.
21. Bartels LM. Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure. *Am Politic Sci Rev* 1993;87:267-285.
22. Miller JM and Krosnick JA. News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable Citizens Are Guided by a Trusted Source. *Am J Politic Sci* 2000;44:301-315.
23. Smith G and Searles K. Who Let the (Attack) Dogs Out? New Evidence for Partisan Media Effects. *Public Opinion Quart* 2014;78:71-99.
24. Abendschon S. Children's Political Socialization within the Family: Value Transmission and Social Milieu Factors. ECPR Press, Colchester. 2013.
25. Brady HE, et al. Political Mobility and Political Reproduction from Generation to Generation. *Am Acad Politic Soc Sci* 2015;657:149-173.
26. Gidengil E, et al. Her Mother's Daughter? The Influence of Childhood Socialization on Women's Political Engagement. *J Women Politic Policy* 2010;31:334-55.
27. Bhatti YO and Hansen KM. Leaving the Nest and the Social Act of Voting—Revisiting the Relationship between Age and Turnout among First-Time Voters. *J Election Public Opinion Parties* 2012;22:380-406.
28. Gabardi W. Contemporary Models of Democracy. Polity, London; 2001.
29. Hñnaff M and Strong TB. Public Space and Democracy. University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota; 2005.
30. Fowler JH and Kam CD. Beyond the Self: Social Identity, Altruism, and Political Participation, *J Politic*, 2013;69:813-27.
31. Johari JC. Contemporary Political Theory: New Dimensions, Basic Concepts and Major Trends. Sterling Publication PVT limited, New Delhi; 2012.
32. Green DP and Shachar R . Habit Formation and Political Behavior: Evidence of Consuetude in Voter Turnout. *Brit J Politic Sci* 2000;30:561-73.
33. Oberle CD and Valdovinos CA. Gender Differences in Parental Influence on the Next Generation's Political Orientations. *J Multicultur Gend Minor Stud* 2011;5:1-6.
34. Persson M. Review Article: Education and Political Participation. *Brit J Politic Sci* 2015;45:689-703.
35. Dilliplane S. Activation, Conversion or Reinforcement? The Impact of Partisan News Exposure on Vote Choice. *Am J Politic Sci* 2014;58:79-94.