

# Youths, Democratic Participation and the Nigerian Electoral Process in 2023: Prospects and Challenges

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**Abstract:-** Political participation remains one of the significant features of democracy, and youth participation in democracy in increasingly experienced all over the world. This expected in Nigeria as the 2023 general elections draws closer. This has informed this paper with the objective to appraise youths, democratic participation and the Nigerian electoral process. The aim of the paper is to consider the prospects of youth participation in 2023 in relation to their antecedents to political participation through Nigeria's democratic history; as well as the challenges faced by the youths and generally Nigeria's democratic process as will be tested in 2023. Secondary data was used to get insight into the current situation of youth activities and their drive towards improved political participation in electoral process. The selection of literatures was carefully done by accessing university data bases, academic peer review journals sites and other articles. The literatures chosen were those whose objectives were coherent with the interest of the current paper; particularly those that effectively discussed youths' participation in the democratic and electoral processes. The findings of the paper as derived from literatures reviewed indicated that Nigerian youths have been active participants in the political process of the country from independence till date, and even through different forms of government (Military and Civilian). There are pointers to the prospect of a possible good outing for youths in 2023 going by series of activities leading to increasing consciousness of the youths and driving them to become active participants. From the Not too young to Run campaign, to the EndSARS protest and the youth concerts encouraging youth registration for PVCs are a pointer that the youths might now be ready to take advantage of the numerical strength in deciding the outcome of the elections in 2023. However, the paper also discovered that challenges such as poverty, godfatherism, age limitations etc. have been the impediments to youth participation in electoral process in Nigeria. The paper recommended that empowerment programmes directed at the youths, access to education; employment opportunities and sensitizations on religious tolerance amongst the youths should be developed so as to help the youths sustain the current momentum towards the 2023 general elections.

**Keywords:-** *Youths, Democracy, Political Participation, Electoral process, Nigeria Prospects, Challenges.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Every country employs a system of government geared toward delivering the desired level of good governance for people. Monarchy, Democracy, Oligarchy, Autocracy, and Theocracy have all been used as forms of government in various parts of the world, according to researchers. Democracy has recently gained widespread recognition and is gradually being adopted by more countries around the world, making it one of the most often used forms of government (Adeosun, 2014). Even if the definition of democracy varies from one nation to the next, democracy establishes itself as a system that ensures that individuals' rights are upheld while decisions are made and policies are carried out by the people. Democracy can be defined as a form of government where decisions are made by and for the people in an electoral process (Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton, 2020). Researchers have highlighted that democracy is derived from the Greek language and alludes to "government by simple majority." Thus, it is sometimes described as the general public's choice made through an election process that ensures that citizens have the ability to associate with the aim of upholding their standards and defending and advancing their advantage (Akindele, 2016). Therefore, essentially, the goal of any community is to rebuild and renew itself while enhancing its own capabilities, educating, and energizing its inhabitants, including children, young adults, and elderly individuals, and they should continue to allow themselves to be educated and prepared in case the real benefits of democracy are supported through cooperation and the extension of value in the social fabric of any society through political engagement.

Uncustomary involvement was once thought to be a rebellious minority's action opposing government initiatives (Soloman, 2018). However, in modern times, participating in protests, demonstrations, picketing, and boycotts, for instance, has become much more common and has a much wider range of potential goals, including entrepreneurship, organizations, and trying to influence popular belief and conduct (Vite, 2018; Hern, 2016; Norris, 2018). As a result of modern technology in democracy and the exponential growth it has given to correspondence (communication) and association [organization], the agencies of involvement have also proven to be far more varied than previously believed (Vite & Dibang-Achua, 2019b).

According to history, young people's contributions to Nigeria's liberation from colonial authority and the maintenance of democracy cannot be disregarded. According to Chika & Onyene (2020), Nigerian youths began founding local newspapers in the 1920s, including the "Lagos Daily Newspaper" by Herbert Macaulay and the "Nigerian Daily Times" by Richard Barrow and Adeyemo Alakija in 1925 and 1926, respectively. This is when Nigerian youths first began participating in the democratic process. These publications helped Nigerian youths become more politically aware, and Herbert Macaulay launched the Nigerian National Democratic Party in 1934 as a result (Omoiya, 2018). Since then, political organizations have grown in number such as the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF), the TIV Youth Organization (TYO), and the Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC), to name a few, and they have persisted in raising and agitating for problems that impact the country's political environment. As a result of these long standing efforts, the National Assembly recently passed the "not too young to run" bill with the intention of promoting youth involvement in politics. The nascent democratic process in Nigeria is nevertheless not without obstacles; there is still widespread electoral agitation, political violence, and ethnic-related unrest that are carried out by youths on the orders of political elites and leaders (Adeosun, 2014). As a result, the youths are used as weapons against the development of democracy in the country. This assertion is supported by the presidential election in 2019, which was preceded by widespread political violence and youth-led ethnic unrest across the nation. If the nation is to experience genuine democratic dividends and national progress, these activities must be addressed as they further endanger the survival of democracy in the country.

As a result, this paper aims to examine how young people in Nigeria contribute to the maintenance of democracy. Therefore, this essay will examine the prospects and challenges of young people, democratic involvement, and the Nigerian electoral process in 2023.

## II. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

### A. *Youths*

Youths can be characterized as anyone between the ages of 18 and 30 (Igbo and Ikpa, 2016). In present projections of population, it is assessed that more than one billion of the total populace are youths (Kura, 2018). They are the proprietors and leaders of tomorrow (Onyekpe, 2017). Researchers have kept on buttressing the significance of youths to economic and political turn of events (Ahmed, 2014). As per Kura (2018) previously, individuals were not trusting of the capacities of youths. This became a hurdle for youths to overcome to achieve their actual potentials. Nonetheless, disregarding their doubt and difficulties, the commitments of the youths to cultural improvement have kept on expanding. Anasi (2020) hypothesized that their innovative capacities, work power and direction characterize the level, security and speed of improvement of a country.

According to Arubayi (2015) they are possibly and are basically the essential assets deserving of speculation by any country and as such they are at the focal point of practical improvement of any nation and any country that really tries to accomplish significant public advancement should ensure the potentials of the youths. In Nigeria, according to the National Population Commission referred to in Akinyemi and Isiugo-Abanihe (2014), it is suggested that the number of youths is around 70% of the total population (Akinyemi & Mobolaji, 2022). Their demographical importance in the Nigerian setting make them significant contributors as accomplices, partners, coordinators, business people as well as essential impetus for societal progression.

In the political scene, going by the age section that youths command, they address a huge level of the electorates. According to Anasi (2020) the adolescent out-number the aged and the moderately aged in the society. Thusly, their job in the electoral process can't be over underscored. Khasan (Khashan, 2016) proposes that they are the mobilizers of political transformations and changes and this has seen them in developed nations take up political appointments. The Leader of France, Emmanuel Macron, State head of Ireland; Leo Varadkar, and previous Leader of Nigeria Nnamdi Azikiwe and a lot more regular models where youths have embraced politics and strengthening the course of their society. However, advocates have featured the negativities related with youths in regards to politics (Anasi, 2020). This has consequently impacted their disposition towards existing political and hierarchical settings along these lines influencing their participation in politics (Onyekpe, 2017). In non-industrial nations this experience is even deteriorated by joblessness, absence of employment opportunities, poverty and marginalization. These circumstances can be especially found in the Nigerian democratic framework.

### B. *Concept of Electoral Process*

Elections across the globe carry out the vital role of selecting leaders in light of the decision of the electorates and consequently a significant component of democratic governance (Boix and Stairs up, 2013). Nkwede (2016) places that the Electoral process is the technique by which elections are conducted and people are chosen into public office. Reynolds, Reillywith, Asmal, Birch, Carey, Makram and Sundberg (2005) noticed that an electoral framework should decipher the votes cast in an overall election into seats won by parties and competitors. The above hence highlights the centrality of the electoral process in democratic governance. Duruji (2020) contends that the electoral process connects with the whole cycle going from the organization of voter education to the dissolution of the National. It alludes to all the pre and post-election exercises without which an election is trivial. The process incorporates the enlistment of political factions, survey of voters' register, depiction of bodies electorate, goal of electoral debates, return of chosen delegates, swearing those agents. The electoral process likewise incorporates the standards that guide the direct of election, and significant exercises that make up an electoral process (EU Election Perception Mission, 2015).

The electoral process accordingly is integral to democratic governance. This suggests that when these processes are rebranded by making them more dependable and less awkward to the majority and different partners by the electoral administration bodies, the negative impression of the majority about the techniques or methodology embraced in leading elections will diminish (Ayo, Oluranti, Duruji and Omoregbe, 2015). Further, acknowledgment of the ultimate result of elections which the majority had until recently accepted isn't intelligent of their command will be on the increment. The impact of this will be further developed participation in the electoral process and the rebuilding of the certainty of individuals in the sacredness and validity of elections accordingly lessening the frequencies of vote purchasing and political disregard (Gberevbie, 2014). As per Agbu (2016), the following makes up the electoral process: Campaign, Voting and Election Results.

### *C. Democracy in Nigeria*

Nigeria, located in the western part of the African continent is the most populated country in Africa with in excess of 200 million people (Omoiya, 2018). The Nigerian democratic experience is an exceptional one. When portrayed as one of the fortifications of military tyranny in Africa, the nation has turned into an excellent figure of the democratic practice in the African continent (Adeosun, 2014). Preceding the tactical interference of the democratic arrangement of government, the nation acquired its political freedom in 1960 under a democratic parliamentary framework which has since developed into official arrangement of democracy that has created four republics crossing quite a while. The social variety of the Nigerian populace has introduced particular socio-political difficulties for the country's political scene and has seen nepotism; identity, tribalism and debasement gear its monstrous head in a country with more than 350 unmistakable ethnic gatherings. These feelings have been passed down across ages and has seen youths effortlessly influenced into viciousness because of doubts towards one more clan that have been mixed by political and strict figures. Because of this the nation is continually overcome with dread of ethnic and strict conflicts, uncertainty presented by jobless youths, fight by youths, fear based oppressor assaults, militancy hostilities, for example, oil pipeline blasts and kidnapping by youths to mention a few.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

The paper adopted a qualitative method of data gathering. In this method, literatures were sourced, sampled and reviewed based on the subject matter concerning the key variables of the paper and some quantitative data were sorted as part of a larger ongoing thesis dissertation. Therefore, these of data were considered and the literature review conducted provided insight on the prospects and challenges of youth participation in Nigeria's democratic and electoral processes as we move towards the general elections in February 2023.

### **IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

As most concept in the social sciences, there are myriad of theory that have been used to explain various social and political phenomenon. From the elite theory, to the Social Contract theory, to Social Conflict theory just to mention a few. The theoretical underpinning of this paper is the Empowerment theory posited by Zimmerman (2000) and argued that when individuals are provided with opportunities to be active members of the society, they can be influential in the process of development. There can contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of the society. The youths in Nigeria have been sidelined by design, policies, opportunities and economic challenges, therefore when deliberate policies of inclusiveness, empowered with jobs, economic ability and consciousness to succeed, they can be active participants in politics owing that the major challenge of poverty, criminality, poor leadership and equitable representation would have been addressed.

### **V. YOUTHS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA; TOWARDS THE 2023 GENERAL DECISIONS**

It consents to scarcely any contestation that youths have assumed significant and critical parts in the social and political associations of society across the different ethnicities and groups in Nigeria, from the memorable to later times. These jobs have ridden the pre-pilgrim to pioneer and post-provincial periods, with congruities and varieties to various degrees. The different native frameworks of administration set up through customary establishments, while distinctively built from the more current unavoidably perceived legislative designs, were essentially used in the organization of individuals in prior times (Akinrinde and Omitola, 2020). These made and considered notable jobs for the young people who, in such a delegate test as the Hausa society, played out these as per the assurance of frameworks of power at the ward, region and emirate levels (for example, under the Mai Gida). Comparable jobs were brought out through various age grade affiliations and the overall congregations in Igbo people group, and through the Egbe Odo or youth wings in the Yoruba framework (Akinrinde and Omitola, 2020).

In the succeeding colonial period, a large part of the patriotism illuminating the missions and battles regarding a scope of entertainers and organizations against government, and towards decolonization, tracked down articulation in the exercises of young people. These, thus, prompted the meeting of young people, which dovetailed into political activation and association, the arrangement of developments, and from there on the mission for political power in the recently free country.

A portion of the young developments framed utilized on the political experiences benefited to African adolescents who had gone to look for the Brilliant Downy in a spot like Britain, who then met up to lay out an omnibus West African Understudies Association (WASU) in August 1925 (Afolayan, 2018). This Association, catered for understudies

from nations across the sub-locale, and sharpened them about the ills of colonialism, while filling in as a tension gathering for the security of their inclinations, had in its enrollment such remarkable Nigerians as Herbert Macaulay and Julius Ojo-Cole, close by the Ghanaian, J.B. Danquah. WASU consequently surrendered to the powers of whittling down and dispersal, respecting the development of different gatherings like the Gold Coast Youth Meeting in Ghana and the Nigerian Youth Development (NYM) in Lagos. As perhaps the most conspicuous youth gathering of its time answering enemy of frontier patriotism, the NYM was established in 1934, and had as driving lights any semblance of Samuel Akinsanya, Eyo Ita, Adeyemo Alakija, and Kofo Abayomi, who was once its leader. Additionally, Ernest Ikoli, who turned into its VP; and H.O. Davies, its secretary; Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and Samuel Ladoke Akintola, were additionally individuals from the NYM at covering focuses. While it had as vital to its objective the cultivating of political headway and upgrade of the social and monetary prosperity of Nigerians, it was similarly rumored just like a multi-ethnic gathering that had an exceptionally public standpoint (Afolayan, 2018).

As it changed into a political faction that challenged the 1938 elections into the Lagos Town Chamber, disturbing the strength of Herbert Macaulay's Public Democratic Coalition in that election, the NYM filled in as precursor for the development of other youth developments into political factions in the nation (Ibezim, 2019). These incorporated the Public Gathering for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in 1944; the Activity Gathering (AG) in 1950; the Northern Components Moderate Association (NEPU) in 1950; and the Northern Nation's Congress (NPC) in 1949. In that capacity, the vast majority of the pre-Freedom political factions drawing in any semblance of Anthony Enahoro, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Obafemi Awolowo, and Ahmadu Bello, were all already youth developments engaged with the counter pilgrim battle. Also, those referenced, close by numerous others, were youths who assumed vital parts in the rise of what became independent Nigeria. As a case, Anthony Enahoro was just 30 when he moved a movement for the freedom of Nigeria in 1953. Additionally, Aminu Kano was 30 when he established NEPU, similar to Isaac Adaka Boro, who was in his late 20s when he framed the Niger Delta Volunteer Power to battle for the right of his kin in the 1966. As the nation draws nearer to the 2023 general elections, the power of the youths as seen during the new INEC long-lasting voters' card enrollment may simply be rebirthed (Ibezim, 2019).

Since the approach of Freedom, youths inside the political and governance space have had genuinely complicated, in the event that not disconnected, jobs that were both moderate and not exactly lucky (Ibezim, 2019). They involved both a messianic and disastrous continuum. The youths took over government from the frontier powers, and besides the fact that they drove enormous public headway, with regards to human and infrastructural improvement, it was similarly a young, matured 29, Significant Kaduna Nzeogwu, who drove the primary military upset on January 15, 1966. This became understood across a part of the nation as some type of ethnic purifying

of Northern pioneers, consequently setting free the tide of recriminations that propelled the counter-upset of July 1966. This emphasized the dangerous slide of Nigerian politics into the ethnic cauldron. It was likewise youths who at first drove the progress from regular citizen to military rule, in the overthrow quickly following the activities of Nzeogwu and his partners in January 1966. Power had then briefly come under the control of General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, till the July of that year. Emanant upon the counter-upset of July 1966, it was a Nigerian youth, Significant General Yakubu Gowon, in his mid-30s, who turned into the Head of State, and drove the country through a three-year nationwide conflict with the powers of the Republic of Biafra. Similarly, states headed by the young Commanders, Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo, had stressed the uniqueness and significance of Nigeria on the worldwide scene (Omoju and Abraham, 2014).

In this period, numerous youths were all the more so in the cutting edges of revolutionary politics in the country, through the understudies' association development across a large number of Nigeria's tertiary training foundations. While the period of activism of Nigerian understudies had started in 1956, with the establishing of the Public Association of Nigerian Understudies (NUNS), which likewise came after the unwinding of the West Africa Understudies Association (WASU), the uncommon dissident job of NUNS in the Ali-Must-Go fights of 1978, its resulting expulsion, and the setting up of the replacement Public Relationship of Nigerian Understudies (NANS), situated the country's youths in the vanguard of moderate social activity. However, it was during the Subsequent Republic, beginning in 1979, that the cutting edge public jobs of youths started to decrease, as the period of hold on pioneers, who amusingly emerged to drive in the Main Republic as youths, started. From there on, youths were dispatched to "youth wings" of political coalitions (Amzat & Abdullahi, 2016).

From that point, the jobs of Nigerian adolescents changed into those of apparatuses in the possession of the political first class, who have been involving them as hooligans and implementers during brutal electing efforts, and as specialists of destabilization through political viciousness, and so on, from that point onward. Additionally, because of the apprehension that has encircled the presence of numerous adolescents because of various shortfalls of the state, they have likewise been related with fretfulness in regions like Northern Nigeria, the Niger Delta, and the South-East, while further twisted into the builds of 'region young men', 'agberos', the 'Yan Daba' in different zones of the country. It has been called attention to that, basically, it was the sending of young people as vectors of savagery that prompted the end of the First and Second Republics (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016). Regardless of the prior, the absolute noblest jobs played by Nigerian adolescents were those down and dirty as pushback contrary to tyrant military rule and the attack to opportunity and basic freedoms, during the long stretches of the beetle. From the exercises of youth activists in the understudies' association development, common society and expert gatherings, the media, and so on, the Nigerian young people situated

themselves as a sturdy defense against persecution, disregarding the various results they bore for this.

There are assumptions that the 2023 general races is set to encounter a staggering expansion in youth support because of their trip during the long-lasting electors' card enlistment that finished in July 2022. The endeavors of common society gatherings like Yiaga Africa with the #YouthVoteCountNG Super Shows in Lagos and Abuja, #SixtyPercentOfUs and #RunToWinNG Ventures which looked to increment youth enrollment, PVC assortment and citizen turnout towards the 2023 Races as well as endeavors by ABENOL, TASCK, #YVoteNaija and #GoNigeria added to making mindfulness on the significance of the constituent cycle. A mixed drink of these variables added to the flood of youthful Nigerians who kept on swarming the elector enlistment focuses to enroll so they can take part in the 2023 Races by casting a ballot their decision competitors (Faruk, 2022).

## VI. NOT TOO YOUNG TO RUN AND PROSPECT OF YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

A significant contextual investigation flagging endeavors being made for the reappearance of virile political support by the adolescents of Nigeria, relates to the Not Too Young To run (NTYTR) development and the alteration to the Constitution of the Government Republic of Nigeria 1999 that it roused and achieved. This has really been prefigured in the earlier area, however it would be explained upon as of now (YIAGA Africa, 2019a).

The Not Too Young To Run development is an alliance of over 100 youth and civil society groups trying to integrate the youths into the process of electoral politics in Nigeria. Depicted as "Nigeria's biggest and best youth development as of late" for its exceptionally careful, calculated and coordinated rally of political partners and foundations of governance towards the fulfillment of its motivation, the development considered a significant passage highlight reestablished youth participation in electoral politics, as the chopping down of the age prerequisites for looking for elective workplaces in Nigeria, to advance more prominent consideration. Going before 2016 when it initiated its backing, the age necessities for contender to the workplace of the President was 40 years; for governorship, 40 years; participation of the Senate, 40 years; the government Place of Delegates, 30 years; and the state Places of Gathering, 30 years too. For the development, the satisfactory period of bid considering better consideration of the country's youths in the political process and designs of navigation, should have been: for President, 30 years; State lead representative, 30 years; Senate, 30 years; the government and state Places of Get together, 25 years. Urgent to the NTYTR development's contention is that youths have not just assumed an extremely huge part in the democratic development of Nigeria, however that assuming that the Constitution perceives the period of qualification to cast a ballot as 18 years, and afterward the age necessity to be decided in favor of into elective office is 40 years, what the lawful ground standard has empowered is a fractional establishment of the youths.

Also, this must be oppressive and unreasonable (Bamidele, 2021).

As per the NTYTR, more prominent youth participation in the electoral process is demonstrative of the development of the nation's majority rules government; and it is as of now not just about filling in as the reason for the electoral triumph of others, however having the option to partake in and win elections for themselves, and consequently having portrayal in designs of direction. The excursion towards the renegotiation of the space for the more extensive participation of youths in the Nigerian political process, began with the sponsorship of a sacred revision charge in May 2016, to eliminate the age limitation, by YIAGA Africa, a common society stage shows to the redoubtable pair of Samson Itodo and Cynthia Mbamalu, which was consequently ventured into a mass youth development, the NTYTR (Bamidele, 2021).

After a progression of lobbies across entertainers and partners in the public and state parliaments, and a walk on the NTYTR Public Day of Activity, the Public Gathering passed the age decrease bill in July 2017. Following this, 24 out of the 36 state places of Gathering (a prerequisite for sacred correction in Nigeria) passed the bill on February 15, 2018. By Walk 1 of that very year, the established alterations of 34 state places of Gathering had been sent to the Public Get together, for ahead transmission to the President for the last phase of the sacred revision. On May 31, 2018, President Muhammadu Buhari marked the bill into regulation. From that point, the development led to another mission, the Prepared to Run, which is to move Nigerian youths to look for elective workplaces, going ahead (Bamidele, 2021).

## VII. ENDSARS, A FUTURE UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN DEMOCRATIC MOBILIZATION

#EndSARS was an activism that took off as a progression of mass fights the nation over, in light of a composite of the encounters of Nigeria's young individuals, who had endured ruthlessness in the possession of the Unique Enemy of Burglary Crew (SARS) unit of the Nigerian police; showing that the youths will never again remain self-satisfied despite legislative maltreatment and brokenness, as they know that change must be battled for, as it never comes around by simple wish-production or straightforward way of talking. SARS was a unit of the Nigeria Police Power entrusted with sending off secret tasks against brutal wrongdoings, including hijacking, equipped burglary, and so on, yet whose agents randomly depended on utilizing their power of pressure to profile those, predominantly young individuals, they considered as looking unconventional - whether as far as the garments, hairdos or tattoos they wore; or even the sumptuous vehicle models they drove; or the costly telephones, they utilized, and so forth. Individuals held by this unit for unwarranted examination, generally wound up either being blackmailed by the Police, which should safeguard them, or in most pessimistic scenarios, they got truly hurt, assaulted or even killed. The privileges bunch, Acquittal Worldwide had been

archiving the few many instances of infringement by this Police unit beginning around 2016 (Pardon Global, 2017).

This protest against Police brutality began in 2017 as a Twitter crusade, which pulled in the hashtag, #EndSARS, requiring the disbandment of the unit, because of its frightful reputation, and it got forward movement from early October 2020, spilling into protests across significant urban communities and via web-based entertainment. Also, there were fortitude conventions for the endeavors of the youths in the protests across significant capitals of the world. As the protests spread the nation over, the expected crackdown on protesters by the security powers began, prompting captures of a considerable lot of the activists, who were secured in Police cells in various conditions of the league. While the protests actually continued regardless of these, it started to profoundly influence monetary exercises in numerous metropolitan habitats, welcoming the business of exchanges with the #EndSARS development by concerned residents and common society entertainers (Bamidele, 2021).

Giving from this, a Contract of Requests, known as the 5-for-5, was drawn up by the development, which on the off chance that administration consented to, the protests would be ended. The 5-focuses brought up in the Requests were: (1.) Arrival of captured protesters; (2.) Equity for survivors of police brutality; (3.) Arraignment of police 'rotten ones'; (4.) Retraining of ex-SARS individuals; (5.) Police pay increment. While the public authority, through its discussion group, the Official Board on Police Change, immediately agreed to the requests of the young, as an approach to finishing the protests, it anyway appeared to be that the youths had gone through a reconsider, moored on two essential reasons: First, the historical backdrop of government untrustworthiness in prior talks, by which after protests are canceled, the specialists either back-followed on the arrangements or never really carried out the understandings came to. For example, that was the fourth time that the public authority was making misrepresentations at restricting the Police unit, as this never occurred in the genuine sense. Besides, having understood the possibilities of the mass activity set out upon, the youths who were for the most part and profoundly disillusioned with government, and all the more so the Buhari administration as of now, because of its various shortfalls in making pathways out of far and wide, joblessness, craving, wretchedness, and the shortfall of social provisioning, embraced the #EndSARS protests further as a stage for squeezing for the genuine location of their interests. Indeed, a segment of the elaborate youths were at that point requiring a change of the protests into a political development that would look for power in the interest of the youths, as others were calling for President Buhari to leave office, for being not able to execute the command given him by individuals. Thus, the principal Contract of Interest made was then increased into a more extensive interest for good governance and public responsibility. Be that as it may, the apparently lengthy drawn protest currently confronting a vague end was carried to an unfortunate dénouement with the legitimate shootings at the Lekki Tollbooth on the night of Tuesday, October 20, 2020 when the Nigerian Armed force was released on the protesters, prompting a bloodbath,

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### VIII. CHALLENGES TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTHS IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

#### A. *Challenges of inclusiveness youths and women*

While youths have been seen just like the predominant demography in the Nigerian electoral process, comprising north of 50% of enrolled citizens in the country (YIAGA Africa, 2018), and being exceptionally instrumental to political change, in any case different variables have limited their political participation in the previous many years.

Besides being a sizeable democratic coalition, they are still to a great extent blocked from partaking straightforwardly in the dynamic processes that accompanies political portrayal in a vote based system. They are the citizens who the framework set up doesn't permit to be decided in favor of, because of different limitations they have experienced, from legitimate and political designs. Moreover, they are barred as huge recipients of political direction, as their interests are never the essential contemplations of the political world class, subsequent to being casted a ballot into power.

The minimization and restricted political participation of the Nigerian youth is obvious in the realities that since the arrival of a majority rules government to the country in 1999, alluded to as the start of the Fourth Republic, the cupboards at the bureaucratic level have not been "youth-accommodating". A large portion of the individuals from the Bureaucratic Chief Boards have been more established legislators, who had served in government in some structure since the 1970s. The typical age in the cupboards has been 50, with different individuals being in their 60s, and some in their 70s. Likewise, it has been noticed that from 1999 to 2016, no Clergyman for Youth has been a young (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016). Disregarding having a Public Youth Strategy that spreads out an extremely strong vision for bridling the possibilities of youths, and signs how procedure could be worked for engaging the demography to make broad commitments to public development, yet no substantial job has been intended for youths to achieve political power.

#### B. *Widespread Poverty and Cost of Nomination Forms by Political Parties*

Some of the key elements ruining the political participation of youths have included poverty, due to the inability of the state to take care of the welfare of individuals, which is the basic role of government. Accordingly, the absence of sufficient social provisioning for schooling, wellbeing and respectable lodging has put the young in a difficult situation of being essentially occupied by existential issues. Notwithstanding, when projects and plans are assembled to handle neediness, the diligence of debasement diminishes these projects from working ideally in accomplishing their ideal targets. Connected to neediness

is what is happening of youth joblessness, seeing many needing admittance to the chances for giving definitively to themselves, and the people who rely upon them. However most of the youths are not adequately equipped with the skills that make them employable, others are yet regularly churned out from tertiary institutions into non-existent work markets, which were annihilated by the poor monetary strategies of government. This has filled in as reason for some in the political tip top to consider youths as just being appropriate for jobs as political implementers, purveyors of savagery and other loathsome purposes (Amzat and Abdullahi, 2016).

The Nigerian youths are financially disappointed to bear the cost of the ridiculous expense of running for any office during elections in Nigeria. As of late, the All Dynamic Congress (APC) has fixed its official designation structure at 100,000,000 Naira (NGN100 million), as well as the swelled expenses of running a political mission for any elections in Nigeria with figures answered to be pretty much as high as one billion Naira to organize a moderate mission. It's easy decision concerning why elections and challenging for elective positions are to a great extent viewed as the select hold for richer, more associated people, a significant number of whom fall into the more seasoned age segment. Running for elections in Nigeria isn't modest, not by a significant length (Adejoro, 2022).

Besides, the commercialization of politics, which is presently viewed as a business with expected returns and at this point not principally about open help, has put the political selection process at the prudence of traders of force, the back up parents, who employ close to outright command over political coalition hardware and processes. This has been a persevering through type of limitation, expecting hopefuls to fall in line of endorsement of these adoptive parents, as the principal course to underwriting and political participation. Godfatherism, controls the result of our public elections, consequently subverting the whole democratization process thus, we are confronted with what can be depicted as cash based politics and organization, accordingly bringing about young individuals being not able to challenge this request as far as having lower monetary assets and lower organizing capacities with respect to challenge the head honchos during elections. Every one of these have brought about the colossal plundering and wastage of the monetary asset of Nigeria and Nigerians.

There are likewise the qualification limitations keeping youths from participation in the country's political processes. In Nigeria, this had fundamentally been seen by a segment of the youths as the impediments for looking for political office based on the age model. Before the alteration of the Nigerian constitution in 2018, the age necessity for those competing for the workplace of the President was 40 years; that of lead representative was 40 years; congressperson, 40 years; enrollment of the government Place of Delegates, 30 years; and the state Places of Get together, 30 years. The conflict here was that assuming the youths comprised the biggest democratic coalition in the nation, and that as per the Constitution, the democratic age is put at 18 years, meaning sufficient intellectual ability and

development for that specific direction, why then, at that point, should the qualification mature for challenging political office be entirely different, interesting to an alternate standards and signposting segregation? Basically, as currently emphasized, the youths can be an imaginative power supporting development in politics and governance in the public eye, yet when they are distanced from politics and the dynamic process, they can similarly be made to loan their abilities and energies to illegal demonstrations, for example, electoral brigandage and savagery (YIAGA Africa, 2019a).

## IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young individuals play essential parts in guaranteeing that they bring about change to their society. This they do by political participation through plan of political factions, competing for political offices as well as decision in favor of other people who challenge elective positions. However, political commitment rely upon the financial and political environment with which politics is played. In Nigeria, politics is costly, and larger part of the youths are poor. A lot of them are threatening because of the way of life of savagery which has described the framework throughout the long term. Similarly, the strength of the decision and political class whom they frequently re-cycled have all impacted youth political commitment to Nigeria by and large.

Ignorance, ethnic feelings, joblessness, poverty, poor governance, orientation predisposition among others challenges the food a majority rules system in Nigeria. Youths through their exercises as workforce, mobilizers for elections, casting a ballot strength, tumults for asset control, frailty (Grabbing, cultism, outfitted burglary), electoral savagery and upsetting financial exercises (pipe line defacement) among others influence the food of a majority rules government in Nigeria. The youths of the nation are exceptionally clear in how they might interpret the way that politics is destiny, as displayed in the genuinely different backings of the two cases embraced. However, the two show various conceivable outcomes.

On its part, the Not Too Young To Run crusade, which shows up apparently harmless to the framework from a crucial perspective, and in this way more manageable to take-up, is properly pivoted to a political reason in elections and portrayal. The other methodology, addressed by the #EndSARS protests, is more unassuming in what it is equipped for accomplishing, regardless of whether characteristic of conceivable outcomes, for however long not organized in a way adjusts to a political reason that makes its targets more feasible, past the statement of discontent. The NTYTR lobby has shown the potential outcomes of the rise of another classification of youth pioneers and political delegates, from the demonstration of the evacuation old enough limitation for challenging office from our regulations.

From the documentation done by YIAGA Africa (2019), following the 2019 general elections, after the age constraint revision in 2018, it shows that youths participation in those elections rose to 34.2 percent, as against 21% in 2015. Additionally, 13.5 percent of young people competed for the Senate, and 27.4 percent for the house of representatives. Furthermore, though just 6.8 percent of the members elect in the house of representatives were youths, 22 out of them 68 were beneficiaries of the NTYTR Act.

It is based on this perception that, this paper suggests that strengthening programs directed at the youths, admittance to training; employment opportunities and refinements on strict resilience among the youths and so forth are measures that can be utilized to support the growth of democracy in Nigeria.

If the Nigerian youths are to put forth a statement in 2023, the thought is that we ought to look past empowering them to "just vote" and on second thought vote deliberately - vote right. A shift to ideology base politics ought to direct the enthusiasm. With a heft of the democratic number resting in the possession of youths, the focus ought to move away from deciding in favor of the those who basically have all the cash to spend to finding competitors with youth-centered strategies and plans for more inclusion. Political sensitization drives aimed at accomplishing other things than just reassuring individuals to get their PVCs are required. There is need to have a general arousing toward finding what the interests of the youths are, finding the competitors who share comparative feeling and forcefully casting a ballot and choosing said up-and-comers. Past democratic still, we likewise need to find out about open responsibility; something horribly ailing in the present politics. At the point when you have the main part of the democratic power, you're intended to perceive your job as the referee of exemption from those officials.

Past every one of these, the Nigerian youths should move from the transient reasoning of "stomach framework" to participation in politics and the electoral process that cherish manageable financial development in the country. Along these lines, vote purchasing can be obliterated; Godfatherism, defacement and thuggery will likewise be lowered. Grasping that by the day's end, choosing the perfect individuals will accomplish other things to serve the youths and the country overall.

There's a ton of chance for youth consideration in Nigerian politics. What's more, that resurgence of the youths is opportune and focuses to some even out of trust heading into 2023. The 2020 #EndSARS protest is a significant pointer to the force of an engaged, enthusiastic and charged youth coalition.



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