

**THE WILLINGNESS OF STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GENERAL
ELECTIONS**

A CASE STUDY OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF STATISTICS AND
PLANNING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF BACHELOR'S OF SCIENCE IN QUANTITATIVE ECONOMICS OF
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY.**

FEBRUARY, 2026

DECLARATION

I, Ojuka Noah , certify that this research report titled the willingness of students to participate in the general elections: a case study of Makerere University, is my original work and it has never been submitted for consideration for any academic award to any academic institution.

Signed:

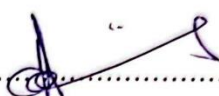
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APPROVAL

This is to confirm that this research report titled “the willingness of students to participate in the general elections case study of Makerere university has been written by Ojuka Noah under my supervision and is now ready for submission to the to the school of statistics and planning for further approval.

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My sincere thanks go to the Almighty God for his mercy upon me, protection and provisions to enable me accomplish this work.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor whose guidance and assistance enabled me to successfully go through this study.

I also thank the management and the staff of Makerere University for the knowledge and skills given to me. Without skills, I would not have managed to do this research report.

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Finally, I acknowledge the assistance rendered to me by whoever I have not been able to mention their names above. Your support, advice and encouragement is highly appreciated.

God bless you all!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to my beloved parents who have struggled so much as I pursued my academic studies.

May God reward them abundantly!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	3
1.3 Objectives.....	3
1.3.1 General Objective	3
1.3.2 Specific objectives.	3
1.4 Research hypotheses	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	4
1.5.1 Subject Scope	4
1.5.2 Time Scope	4
15.3 Geographical Scope	4
1.6 Significance of the study	4
1.7 Conceptual frame work.....	5
CHAPTER TWO	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.0 Introduction	6
2.1 Political participation	6
2.2 Willingness among students to participate in general elections.....	7
2.2 Demographic factors that influence student political participation.....	8
CHAPTER THREE	11
METHODOLOGY	11
3.0 Introduction	11
3.1 Research Design	11
3.2. Area of Study.....	11
3.4 Sample size determination	11
3.3 Sampling procedure	12
3.3.1 Random sampling technique	12

3.5 Data Collection methods and tools.....	12
3.6 Data management and analysis.....	12
CHAPTER FOUR	13
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	13
4.1 Introduction	13
4.2 Descriptive statistics	13
4.3 Bivariate Analysis	17
4.4 Multivariate analysis	19
CHAPTER FIVE	20
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	20
5.1 Introduction	20
5.2 Discussion.....	20
5.2.1 level of Willingness to participate in general elections	20
5.3 Conclusion.....	20
5.4 Recommendations	21
5.5 Areas for Further Research	21
References	22
Appendix A: Questionnaires for students.....	23

ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS

MUK – Makerere University

USA – United states of America

UK – United Kingdom

SPSS – Statistical Package for the social sciences

LIST OF TABLES

Figure 1: Conceptual framework, showing the interrelationships of political participation among Makerere university students.	5
Figure 2 Graph showing the gender of the Respondents	13
Figure 3 Graph showing the Education level of the Respondents	13

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 1 showing results on demographic characteristics of respondents	14
Table 2 showing respondents' views on level of Willingness to participate in general elections at Makerere University.	15
Table 3 showing respondents' views on Psychological and institutional factors that encourage students to participate in general elections at Makerere University.	16
Table 4: showing results from respondents on political participation	16
Table 5 showing the association between demographic and socio-economic factors and students political participation in general elections at Makerere University	17
Table 6: showing the association between the dependent variable (political participation) and independent variables (level of willingness and demographic and socio-economic factors) students political participation in general elections at Makerere University	19

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to assess the willingness of students to participate in the general elections. The population under study included the students in Makerere university. In order to determine the sample size, a convenience sampling technique was used in this study. The sample size consisted of 80 respondents. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design with a quantitative approach. This was appropriate for gathering data from a large sample at a single point in time, which facilitated comparisons and analysis of variable relationships. It also engaged the use of structured online questionnaires that were pilot tested in order to ensure that there was data validity as well as reliability. The online questionnaires were filled in by the respective respondents and later the descriptive statistics was generated for instance the pie charts. The results were then presented in tables.

Looking at the study findings, it revealed that that majority of the respondents had undertaken the humanities course (35%), the second group of the respondents were those in technology (22.5%), those in business studies (15%) and engineering (13.75%) were also part of the study. Lastly the medical (7.50%) and natural sciences (6.25%) students also were part of the study and responded to questions accordingly. Year two (36.25%) followed by year three (27.50%) had the majority of the respondents, followed by those in year one (16.25%) and year four (11.25%). A few of respondents from year five (8.75%) were reached out to because of their low participation in the different political activities. Hostels (37.50%) and university halls (33.75%) had the majority of respondents residing from there followed by those commuting from home. A few respondents were observed renting around campuses (7.50%).

On whether respondents participate in protests and demonstrations, most of the respondents 33 (41.25%) agreed and 18 (22.50%) disagreed on the same. Only 9(11.25%) strongly disagreed and 20(25.0%) strongly agreed. This implies that there is majority of the respondents participate in protests and demonstrations. On whether respondents participate in campaigning and voting different, 41(51.25%) and 19 (23.75%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. Only 6 (7.5%) strongly disagreed and 14(17.50%) disagreed. On whether respondents understand and have the knowledge on political systems and the subsequent processes, majority of the respondents disagreed 29 (36.25%) and strongly disagreed 19(23.75%) while only 9 (11.25%) strongly agreed and 23 (28.75%) agreed. This implies that majority of the participants are not well knowledgeable with political systems and process.

According to the research findings, it was concluded that willingness of students and demographic and institutional factors significantly affect political participation of students at Makerere University. This implies that the higher the education level, age, community engagements, political affiliation, the more the number of students that participate in politics and elections.

Makerere University needs to provide high-quality service-learning opportunities for students, that is, service learning that supports the development of autonomy, responsibility, confidence, decision-making and planning skills in young people, and provides plentiful opportunities for in-class discussion and reflection, Provide citizenship education courses that require students to discuss and analyse politics and political issues in relationship to contemporary events. Furthermore, support students in formulating their own views about social and political issues after considering a diversity of perspectives and opinions on those issues and as well allow students to express their own opinions even when their opinions differ from those of other students and from those of the teacher

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter contains the background of the study, problem statement, general objective, specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study, and the scope of the study.

1.1 Background

Globally over the past years, the authority power had changed from few dictatorial individuals or groups to citizens. Human rights have become more important for the country's image and citizens' rights to select their representative became a priority. Particularly, the new international system forces governmental authorities' through-out the world to protect the freedom of citizens' opinion expression and for democracy application. The existence of individual's political participation in society is a fundamental key for the wellbeing and future of all countries' democracies (Shapland, 2017). The Commonwealth Secretariat highlights that youths between the age of 18 and 25 are still in a time of transition, and must rely on someone who is autonomous, particularly when participating in cognitive operations such as decision-making. Besides, young people are always regarded as "social groupings that are no longer fulfilling their role as children...but society still does not recognise the youth as adults" (Průcha et al., 2017). While the concept of youth participation has been subject to conceptual ambiguity (it is generally understood as 'a process in which children and young people engage in activities and decision-making which concern and affect their lives as individuals and as a group' (Bečević and Dahlstedt 2022). Since the 1940s, youth participation literature has grown with an evolving understanding of political involvement, which now includes both conventional and unconventional forms, with former following established norms such as voting and campaigning while the latter, emerged in the 1970s, operate outside formal institutions, such as protests, rejection and social movements, extending the definition of political participation to all citizen efforts aimed at influencing government. In the 1990s, political participation expanded to include civil activities like volunteering, extending beyond just governmental activities to involve other institutions. Importantly, political participation is frequently conflated with civic engagement. While the latter represents a more comprehensive concept that encompasses a wide range of citizen behaviours, irrespective of their political nature (Daskalopoulou 2018;),

Existing literature on political participation sheds lights on individual's motivation to participate in different political activities such as political crowd-funding (Kusumarani et al., 2019; Baber et al., 2020), voting intention (Alelaimat, 2019), and protest. In contrast, few studies have highlighted the political participation as a whole entity which encompasses all diverse activities such as casting votes, protest and demonstration, political campaign, and attending political parties. Furthermore, prior studies were focused on the role of political marketing on political behavior (Anim et al., 2019). Yet, limited research investigates the factors that influence citizens to participate in political movement. Moreover, most of the studies that address people's motivation to participate in political activities online and offline was conducted in western countries.

A country will be democratic if the role and activities of political parties are highlighted to engage citizens. Democracy is a participatory decision-making process that involves the people. A democratic system is defined by the people, who have the right to pick who will be the leader or representative of their government. Elected government leaders or representatives function as the legislature, enforcing the law and enacting policies in the country (Esa & Hashim, 2017).

In the African context, research into the nexus of higher education and multiparty democracy involves many dimensions, including student politics, which is important *inter alia* because 'investigations into student power and students' collective political behaviour contribute to a broader research theme of how human agency – individual and collective – shapes higher education policies, a theme which is still fairly underexplored within the field of higher education studies' (Klemenčič, Luescher and Jowi 2015). Most research in Africa has focused on student activism; only recently has scholarly attention turned to the study of student representation in higher education decision- making (Luescher, Klemenčič and Jowi 2016).

While youth participation is considered as a critical aspect of democracy, it is also contested due to the marginalisation of people on the basis of gender, ethnicity, race, and age. There are some spaces for youth participation such as youth parliaments and councils (Kuah 2022), public forums (Zihnioglu 2019). However, there is a growing criticism that these political spaces are rather limited due to the domination of adult conceptions. They also limit less trained voices (Kwon 2019), such as youth from immigrant, ethnic minorities, low-income backgrounds (Olivius 2017; Van Liempt and Kox 2023). Several factors can lead to such exclusion. Studying the way partisan relationships between student leaders and political parties

are established and maintained, and what their impact is on institutionalized student politics, is therefore an important part of seeking to understand higher education politics and its relation to higher education policy and the broader body politic.

1.2 Problem Statement

Thus, while we know that political participation is essential to maintain the foundation of any country's democracy, there is growing concern about the low levels of young adult political engagement (Yamamoto et al., 2017). Young adults have limited knowledge of the impact of civic engagement and less confidence in collective actions, such as voting. Uganda's youth continue to be absent from decision making. Often many of them are dismissed as amateurs, inexperienced, inefficient and naïve. Participation of youth in electoral processes is undermined by their apathy and ignorance of the implication of their lack of participation. They do not bother to register as voters, few of them hold a membership card of a political party and although they may be aware of the link between good governance and employment, they do not seem to realize that they could influence decisions. Hitherto, there has been little deliberate effort to increase the participation of young men and young women in politics and governance. In order to reverse this trend, emphasis must be placed on increasing the civic knowledge of young adults. This can be partially accomplished through providing students opportunities to participate in shared governance where they may put civic education and democracy into action.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the level of willingness among Makerere university students to participate in general elections.

1.3.2 Specific objectives.

1. To assess the level of willingness among Makerere University students to participate in general elections.
2. To establish the demographic and socio-economic factors associated with participation of students in elections at Makerere University.

1.4 Research hypotheses

Ho: there is no significant relationship between level of willingness and political participation

Ho: there is no significant relationship between gender and student political participation

Ho: there is no significant relationship between level of education and student political participation

Ho: there is no significant relationship between age and student political participation.

Ho: there is no significant relationship between course pursued and student political participation

1.5 Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Subject Scope

The study is based on assessing the willingness of Makerere university students to participate in general elections. The study focused on the level of willingness among Makerere University students to participate in general elections, the demographic and socio-economic factors of student participation in general elections.

1.5.2 Time Scope

The study took a period of 1 month and the researcher considered a one-on-one question and answer segment. The researcher based on those records to draw a conclusion in the process of compiling a report.

15.3 Geographical Scope

The study was carried out at Makerere university located in Kampala, Uganda.

1.6 Significance of the study

It is therefore hoped that this study will help the policy makers understand the significance of student's political participation, the opportunities that this comes with and how to respond to challenges hindering student's full political participation and this would trigger increase in mobilization, sensitization and advocacy of equality and improvement of the quality of their discussions in decision making thus leading to the socio-economic and political development of their communities.

The study would help the researcher in gaining the practical and theoretical knowledge, skills and understanding of research techniques and methods applied during the research. The researcher selected the topic based on the gap in the leadership positions, student leaders are very few and their contribution during the deliberation of council meetings is wanting due to the political incapacity and power relations they face in the society. The study would also help

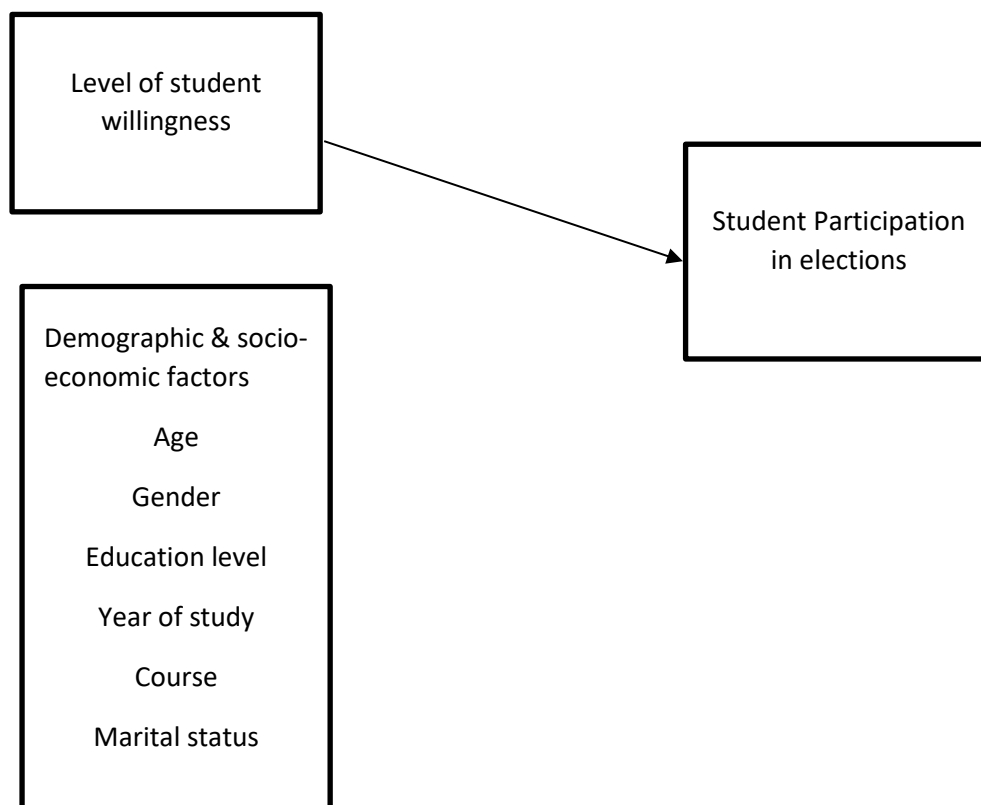
the researcher to be awarded a Bachelor's of science in quantitative economics as it is part and partial of the requirement

In fact, all interested groups like researchers, government etc. will benefit immensely. This project will equally serve as a reference to students who may be interested to embark on research of this nature.

1.7 Conceptual frame work

This study focuses on political participation; the conceptual framework was developed based on a previous study conducted by Kusumurani et al., (2019). Moreover, the researcher proposed this framework by adding further factors, as shown in Fig. 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework, showing the interrelationships of political participation among Makerere university students.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the review of literature related to the study. The literature to underpin the study was got from different data bases.

2.1 Political participation

The concept of political participation has been widely discussed for at least two decades. However, recent studies have focused on political participation, particularly in the areas of people's political behaviour, democratic legitimacy, "democratic functioning coupled with the emergence of populist emotion," civil society, and electronic revolution (Oser & Hooghe, 2018; Sairambay, 2020). Because political participation is at the "heart of modern democracy," it is essential to democracy's legitimacy (Eder & Stadelmann-Steffen, 2017).

A prevailing view in the literature suggests that political behavior is imparted to individuals through various socialization agents (Hatemi & Ojeda, 2021). Beyond the influences of family, school, and peers, consistent assertions have been made regarding the significant role that institutionally organized volunteering opportunities play in the political development of young people (Lundberg & Abdelzadeh, 2022; Ødegård & Fladmoe, 2020;). Extracurricular activities, popular among youth, are frequently recognized as instrumental in shaping political behaviors and attitudes Heath et al., 2022). These activities serve as foundational experiences where young people develop the skills, values, networks, and beliefs necessary for later political participation (Rotolo et al., 2020; see also Buckley & Lee, 2021; Simpkins et al., 2023).

Van Deth (2016) lists eight main characteristics to identify political participation: (i) actions or activities involving basic interests; (ii) activities that voluntary without involving encouragement and coercion; (iii) voluntary action appearing in a non-professional group; (iv) non-professional group activity that does not exclude political elements; (v) activity targeted at the sphere of government/ state/ politics; (vi) activity that is aimed at addressing community problems and fighting for issues of people's interest; (vii) activity that is oriented to political issues; and (viii) platform for the community to achieve political goals and struggles.

2.2 Willingness among students to participate in general elections.

Social interaction enhances the political participation of youth in different ways (Khalid, 2017; Mahmood et al., 2018; Tariq et al., 2017). In the context of social networks, several dimensions intertwine with political participation including information dissemination, i.e. individuals sharing political news, opinion, and analysis of others' political perceptions, online activism platforms that support and organize groups to raise awareness about social and political issues, through social networks individuals can share and influence their opinion, doing digital campaigning to invite and gather voters and engagement with politicians. These intermediaries have been researched in many other countries, including, the Philippines (Cruz et al., 2020), Pakistan (Ittefaq, 2019), India (Kumar et al., 2019), Spain (Pérez-Escoda et al., 2020), and Lebanon (Geha, 2020). However, some of the most intense studies of these social networks and political participation can be found in Indonesia, the third-largest democracy in the world.

Furthermore, the decision of youth to engage in political and civic activities is contingent upon the opportunities available to them and their ability to participate in these activities. A pivotal finding in the literature is that young people's sense of efficacy influences their intention to act politically (Stattin, 2024). This concept, known as internal political efficacy, refers to an individual's confidence in their abilities to understand and effectively participate in political activities. Research has shown that internal political efficacy is positively associated with a broad spectrum of political behaviors, including political participation and civic engagement (Maurissen, 2020). Furthermore, it has been established as a crucial predictor of future political engagement across various contexts (Myoung & Liou, 2022; Oser et al., 2022).

Community engagement is defined as the interactions between individuals' that have common interests and attitudes. It helps individuals to accept, refuse, produce, use and publicize political information. consider that community engagement is one of the powerful aspects that drive individuals to partake in political life. Extant studies revealed that community engagement has a positive effect on individuals' intentions to participate in political crowd-funding as a form of political participation (Kusumurani et al., 2019; Baber 2020). According to the mentioned review, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Finally, behavioural intentions among young people do not develop in isolation but are influenced by the broader socio-political environment (Oser et al., 2022;). Within this framework, self-selection is often cited alongside key agents of political socialization (Rotolo et al., 2020). For example, individuals from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds

typically face fewer barriers to political participation, which facilitates their self-selection into certain political activities or affiliations unlike those encountering structural impediments (Dahl & Abdelzadeh, 2017). While both self-selection and political intentions reflect elements of individual agency within the political sphere, they are distinct concepts. Self-selection is generally viewed as an expression of existing prosocial attitudes and political orientations that influence political behavior. (Rotolo et al., 2020). It involves individuals gravitating towards political activities or affiliations that align with their established preferences, values, and experiences. In contrast, political intentions are more directly associated with an individual's plans, desires, or inclinations to engage in specific political behavior or activities in the future. These intentions may, in turn, be shaped by various factors including individual beliefs, values, and a sense of political efficacy.

2.2 Demographic factors that influence student political participation

Homana (2018) indicated the impact of age on political participation. The ratio of participation varied among different age groups, such as young, adults and older people. The low voting turnout was with the young people group, especially university students. The reluctance of students to participate was attributed to their lack of interest in political issues and their poor involvement in community activities. In addition, their aversion from the activities of the parties. Most important, young people did not see any role or tangible achievement of the elected councils.

Pyeatt and Yanus (2018) have also concluded that the difference of regions within the same country and the ethnic or racial diversity affect voting in elections. The ethnic diversity impacts cultures and political orientations. In addition, ethnic groups feel that they are marginalized within society, and they do not receive adequate political attention, So, they are reluctant to participate in voting. In the same context, the regional affiliation affected voting. For example, refugees in any country, who are granted the right to vote in elections, while they are suffering from the shortage of basic services, they would feel discontent and in turn they would disregard voting in the elections.

Gender. Political participation of females in most societies is less than that of males, not only in developing countries but also in developed countries. In addition, unemployment high rate of female makes them reluctant to vote in elections (Roth and Saunders, 2019). Moreover, the electoral system of the country affects the political participation of women. As the participation

of female in voting in the electoral list system was high which led to reducing the gender gap between males and females voting in the elections.

Pyeatt and Yanus (2018), discussed how to overcome the gender gap in voting. They concluded that the sociopolitical interest of young females could help to overcome this problem, education could be one of the solutions, as political participation of females increases, when they are aware that political events would directly affect their lives. To solve this problem, females have to overcome their psychological beliefs that their equality with men is impossible.

Family income. Pyeatt and Yanus (2018), indicated that the difference in family income affected political participation. The present study focuses on money (income). the individual needs money to be able to participate in political activities. Consequently, high-income families can support the candidate who they chose. This, in turn, increases their political participation (Leigh, 2018).

The review article *The Nature and Trends of Student Activism in Contemporary African Higher Education* (Mukasa, 2025) considers protest, strikes, student movements in African higher education — highlighting that student activism is shifting in focus, strategies and outcomes. Student activism is often tied to issues like fee increases, academic freedom, governance transparency, infrastructure deficits. For example, in Uganda, the article *Understanding the Complexity of the Causes of Student Activism in Higher Education using the Case of Makerere University* (Mukasa, 2024) finds that student activism is driven by demands for transparency, better infrastructure, tuition concerns.

In South Africa, University students' media use and political participation in South Africa (Badaru & Adu, 2020) found that among university students, high levels of internet, TV, newspaper use correlated with greater political participation (e.g., student-representative council voting). In another South African study, *Influence of social media usage on students' political participation in a selected university in South Africa* (Vukani & Obioha, 2024) show that social media use (especially WhatsApp) influences student political participation (debates, campaigns) — though female students were found to participate less via social media.

A further significant influence on youth civic and political engagement is the mass media. As we saw in Chapter 2, ICCS 2016 revealed that, on average, 66% of 14-year-olds watch television at least once a week to obtain information about political and social issues, 31% use the Internet at least once a week to obtain information about such issues, while 27% read newspapers at least once a week (Schulz et al., 2017). In other words, despite the widespread

use of social media by 14-year-olds, they are twice as likely to use television rather than social media for obtaining information about political or social issues.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter three is organized under the following sub headings: research design, area of the study, sampling procedure, sample size determination, data collection methods, Data management, Data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher employed a descriptive cross sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional study using quantitative method was conducted among students from Makerere University. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to identify members to participate in the study using questionnaires. The researcher used a descriptive cross-sectional study design because it enabled the researcher to study the variables simultaneously which also helped him to save time and costs during the study.

3.2. Area of Study

The research site is the area in which the study will be conducted. The research site that is chosen is Makerere University. Makerere University is an academic institution that is within the academia industry, situated in Kampala Uganda. Makerere University is a major key player in the academia sector. The main reason of this choice was because the author was familiar with the industry's operations.

3.4 Sample size determination

A study sample size is comprised of part of the items of the study population. It is part of the total population under study that is taken and considered for the study in order to make conclusions about the entire population (it is a representation of the population) from which generalization are made about the entire population

The sample size was determined by use of Slovene's formulae from the target population of respondents. The sample size was got by using Slovene's formula as shown below. Slovene's formula;

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

Where: n Unknown sample size

N Total population of the study, (e) level of significance (0.05) constant

$$n = \frac{100}{1+100(0.05)^2} = 80 \text{ respondents}$$

3.3 Sampling procedure

3.3.1 Random sampling technique

This is a probability sampling method where every member of the study population has the same chance of being chosen so that it is possible to confidently make estimates about the total population based on the sample results. This method is selected and preferred for data collection as it minimizes the bias on the side of the researcher while selecting respondents (Maxwell, 2005) and gives an equal chance to each of the individuals in the sample population to be picked to take part in the study.

3.5 Data Collection methods and tools

Data collection was done using quantitative methods. Quantitative data was collected using semi structured interviews/ questionnaires.

3.6 Data management and analysis

Quantitative data was consolidated and edited, making sure that all questionnaires have proper identification numbers and that they are all complete. Data was entered and analyzed using a statistical computer package, called SPSS version 20.0 and analysis was restricted to univariate analysis in form of graphs and frequency tables, Bivariate analysis and Multivariate analysis.

Qualitative data as well was edited, making sure that all notes have proper identification numbers and that they are complete. Thematic approach was used to analyze the qualitative data following the chronology of the research objectives. Reports were organized in relation to the themes. Best quotes from the views of the participants were presented and this helped the researcher to support the emerging issues related to employee engagement on the organizational performance.

CHAPTER FOUR

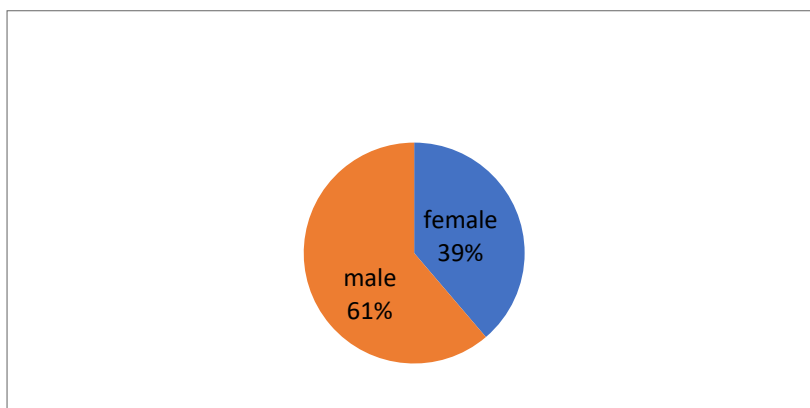
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzed and interpreted data collected from the field. Data analysis and interpretation was based on the research objectives. Below are the data presentations and analysis of research findings.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

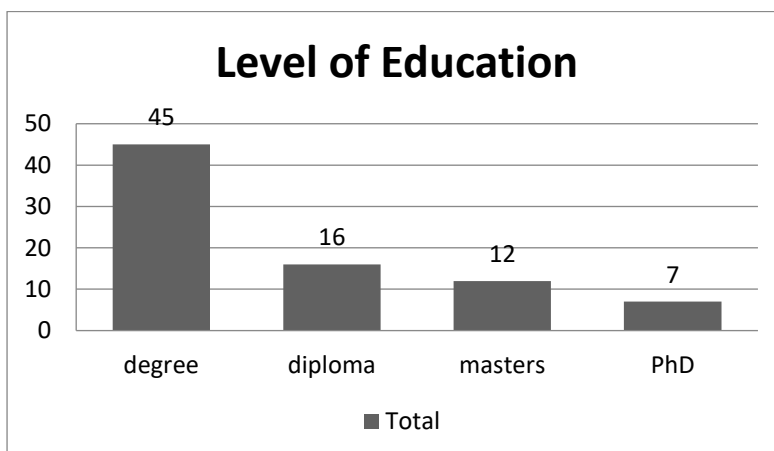
Figure 2 Graph showing the gender of the Respondents



Source: primary data, (2025)

Results in graph 4.3 indicates that majority of the respondents represented in this study were Male (61%), followed by female respondents (39%). This is in line with Lawless, Atkeson (2003), and Koch (1997) who emphasized on the impact of gender on political participation. They pointed out that the political participation of females has always been less than males.

Figure 3 Graph showing the Education level of the Respondents



Source: primary data, (2025)

Results in graph 4.3 indicates that majority of the respondents represented in this study were degree holders (45), followed by diploma respondents (16), whereas respondents pursuing a masters (12) and lastly those pursuing a PHD (7). Hence all categories in the level of education bracket were sampled. These results are in line with Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Emler & Frazer, 1999; Nie, Junn & Stehlik-Barry, 1996; Niemi & Junn, 1998; Verba et al., 1995; Zukin et al., 2006 who stated that the higher the level of education, the more likely it is that a person will have high scores on measures of civic and political engagement.

Table 1 showing results on demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Year of study		
Year five	7	8.75
Year four	9	11.25
Year one	13	16.25
Year three	22	27.50
Year two	29	36.25
Course		
Engineering	11	13.75
Humanities	28	35.00
Medical	6	7.50
Natural sciences	5	6.25
Technology	18	22.50
Business studies	12	15.00
Place of residence		
Commuting from home	17	21.25
Hostels	30	37.50
Renting	6	7.50
University halls	27	33.75
Marital status		
Cohabiting	25	31.25
Married	10	12.50
Single	45	56.25
Total	80	100.0

Source: primary data, 2025

Table 4.2.3 shows that majority of the respondents had undertaken the humanities course (35%), the second group of the respondents were those in technology (22.5%), those in business studies (15%) and engineering (13.75%) were also part of the study. Lastly the medical (7.50%)

and natural sciences (6.25%) students also were part of the study and responded to questions accordingly.

Year two (36.25%) followed by year three (27.50%) had the majority of the respondents, followed by those in year one (16.25%) and year four (11.25%). A few of respondents from year five (8.75%) were reached out to because of their low participation in the different political activities.

Hostels (37.50%) and university halls (33.75%) had the majority of respondents residing from there followed by those commuting from home. A few respondents were observed renting around campuses (7.50%).

Level of willingness

Table 2 showing respondents' views on level of Willingness to participate in general elections at Makerere University.

Parameters	SD	D	A	SA
I participate in protests and demonstrations	9 (11.25%)	18 (22.50%)	33 (41.25%)	20 (25.0%)
I participate in campaigning and voting different leaders	6 (7.50%)	14 (17.50%)	41 (51.25%)	19 (23.75%)
I understand and have the knowledge on political systems and the subsequent processes	19 (23.75%)	29 (36.25%)	23 (28.75%)	9 (11.25%)

Source: primary data, 2025

On whether respondents participate in protests and demonstrations, most of the respondents 33 (41.25%) agreed and 18 (22.50%) disagreed on the same. Only 9(11.25%) strongly disagreed and 20(25.0%) strongly agreed. This implies that there is majority of the respondents participate in protests and demonstrations.

On whether respondents participate in campaigning and voting different, 41(51.25%) and 19 (23.75%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. Only 6 (7.5%) strongly disagreed and 14(17.50%) disagreed.

On whether respondents understand and have the knowledge on political systems and the subsequent processes, majority of the respondents disagreed 29 (36.25%) and strongly disagreed 19(23.75%) while only 9 (11.25%) strongly agreed and 23 (28.75%) agreed. This implies that majority of the participants are not well knowledgeable with political systems and process.

Table 3 showing respondents' views on Psychological and institutional factors that encourage students to participate in general elections at Makerere University.

Parameters	SD	D	A	SA
I am a member of a certain political party in the university	11 (13.75%)	14 (17.50%)	33 (41.25%)	22 (27.50%)
I engage and volunteer in local activities such as community events	4 (5.00%)	19 (23.75%)	37 (46.25%)	20 (25.00%)
I take part in discussions about university policies and involve in advisory boards	22 (27.50%)	42 (52.50%)	15 (18.75%)	1 (1.25%)

Source: primary data, 2025

On whether respondents are members of a certain political party in the university, most of the respondents 33 (41.25%) agreed and 22 (27.5%) strongly agreed on the same. Only 11(13.75%) strongly disagreed and 14(17.50%) disagreed. This implies that majority of respondents are members of a certain political party in the university

On whether respondents engage and volunteer in local activities such as community events, 37(46.25%) and 20 (25.0%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. 19 (23.75%) disagreed and 4(5.0%) strongly disagreed.

On whether respondents take part in discussions about university policies and involve in advisory boards the job provides steady employment, majority of the respondents disagreed 42 (52.50%) and strongly disagreed 22(27.50%) while only 1 (6.2%) strongly agreed and 15(18.75%) agreed.

Political participation

Table 4: showing results from respondents on political participation

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Levels of political participation		
Civic engagement	23	28.75
Innovative approaches	7	8.25
Traditional forms	50	62.50
Benefits provided to participate in elections		
Material goods & services	11	31.25
Money	28	68.75

The table above shows that majority of the respondents engage in traditional forms of political participation (62.50%), the second group of the respondents was those that knew about the civic engagement (28.75%) and lastly the innovative approaches (8.25%).

In regards to benefits provided to participate in elections, money (68.75%) was the major benefit highlighted by the respondents followed by material goods and services (31.25%).

4.3 Bivariate Analysis

This section presents the association between the dependent variable and each of the selected background factors. The findings are displayed in table below.

Gender and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between gender and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between age and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between education level and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between course pursued and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between year of study and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between place of residence and political participation

Ho: there is no significant association between place of residence and political participation of students in elections

Ho: there is no significant association between place of residence and political participation of students in elections

Table 5 showing the association between demographic and socio-economic factors and students political participation in general elections at Makerere University

Variables		Political participation		Total	%ge	P-value
		Material goods & services	Money			
Gender	Female	1	30	31	38.75%	0.000
	Male	24	25	49	61.25%	
Education level	Degree	8	37	45	56.25%	0.000
	Diploma	0	16	16	20%	
	Masters	11	1	12	15%	
	PhD	6	1	7	8.75%	
course	Business studies	0	12	12	15%	0.002
	Engineering	6	5	11	13.75%	
	Humanities	7	21	28	35%	
	Medical	5	1	6	7.5%	
	Natural sciences	0	5	5	6.25%	
	technology	7	11	18	22.5%	
Year of study	Year five	4	3	7	8.75%	0.667
	Year four	8	1	9	11.25%	
	Year one	6	7	13	16.25%	
	Year three	0	22	22	27.5%	
	Year two	7	22	29	36.25%	
Place of residence	Commuting from home	0	17	17	21.25%	0.089
	Hostels	17	13	30	37.5%	
	Renting	5	1	6	7.5%	
	University halls	3	24	27	33.75%	
Marital status	Cohabiting	17	8	25	31.25%	0.000
	Married	1	9	10	12.5%	
	Single	7	38	45	56.25%	
Level of willingness (Participate in campaigning and voting different leaders)	Agree	7	34	41	51.25%	0.001
	Disagree	0	14	14	17.5%	
	Strongly agree	18	1	19	23.75%	
	Strongly disagree	0	6	6	7.5%	
Age						0.008
Total				80	100%	

Gender (0.000), age (0.008), course pursued (0.002), education level (0.000), level of willingness (0.001), marital status (0.000) were statistically significant since their P-values are less than 0.05 association between gender and political participation. We reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relation between gender, education level, level of willingness, course pursued, marital status and student political participation at Makerere University.

Whereas place of residence (0.089) and year of study (0.667) were found to be statistically insignificant since their P-values are greater than 0.05. this indicates that we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relationship between place of residence, year of study and student political participation at Makerere university.

4.4 Multivariate analysis

Table 6: showing the association between the dependent variable (political participation) and independent variables (level of willingness and demographic and socio-economic factors) students political participation in general elections at Makerere University

Demographic variables by political participation			
Variables		Sig.	Exp(B)
	Gender_male	.000	.000
	Age	.008	.000
	Educationlevel	.000	
	educationlevel_degree	.000	7.051
	educationlevel_diploma	.003	.000
	Course_socialsciences	.937	.000
	Yearofstudy	.000	
	Yearofstudy_year2	.037	7.442
	Yearofstudy_year3	.000	2.595
	placeofresidence	.000	
	Placeofresidence_hostels	.000	7.029
	Placeofresidence_universityhalls	.257	2.579
	Maritalstatus_unmarried	.121	.000
	Levelofwillingness_Agree	.305	.000
constant		.000	6.527

The likelihood ratio chi-square of 69.1 tells us that our model is highly significant. The output above has two parts labelled with the categories of the outcome variable. They correspond to the equation.

From the findings above, age, education level, year of study and place of residence (hostels) had a significant relationship on student political participation at Makerere university.

Ultimately, marital status and course pursued and level of willingness had an insignificant association on student political participation at Makerere University.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents discussion of findings in relation to literature, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 level of Willingness to participate in general elections

According to the results, level of willingness is associated with political participation through students becoming members of certain political parties and participating in campaigns. This implies that an increase in the number of students joining parties and participating in campaigns increases political participation. This is in agreement with statin (2024) who states that the decision of youth to engage in political and civic activities is contingent upon the opportunities available to them and their ability to participate in these activities. A pivotal finding in the literature is that young people's sense of efficacy influences their intention to act politically.

5.2.2 Demographic and socio-economic factors and political participation

From the study, it was found out that marital status, age, gender and level of willingness are significantly associated with political participation of students at Makerere University. Education level, place of residence and course were insignificantly related to student political participation. This implies that the level of willingness of students, age and gender influence the level of political participation of students at Makerere University. This is in agreement with Homana (2018) who indicated the impact of age on political participation. The ratio of participation varied among different age groups, such as young, adults and older people. The low voting turnout was with the young people group, especially university students.

5.3 Conclusion

According to the research findings, the results highlighted willingness of students and demographic and institutional factors significantly affect political participation of students at Makerere University. This implies that the higher the education level, age, community

engagements, political affiliation, the more the number of students that participate in politics and elections.

Conclusively, the present study provides a basis and implications for further investigation on the willingness of student of Makerere University to participate in elections.

5.4 Recommendations

Basing on the findings, the administration of Makerere university needs to provide high-quality service-learning opportunities for students, that is, service learning that supports the development of autonomy, responsibility, confidence, decision-making and planning skills in young people, and provides plentiful opportunities for in-class discussion and reflection

Provide citizenship education courses that require students to discuss and analyze politics and political issues in relationship to contemporary events.

Support students in formulating their own views about social and political issues after considering a diversity of perspectives and opinions on those issues and as well allow students to express their own opinions even when their opinions differ from those of other students and from those of the teacher

5.5 Areas for Further Research

The researcher suggests that further research should be done on the willingness of students to participate in the general elections in different institutions. This will help in creating awareness among students in both the private and public institutions about benefits of ensuring political participation.

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Appendix A: Questionnaires for students

THE WILLINGNESS OF STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Dear respondent,

I am Ojuka Noah a student of Makerere University currently out in the field collecting data on the topic~ the willingness of students to participate in the general elections. Please you are requested to participate in this study by answering the given questions below.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

- 1) Male 2) Female

2. Age in complete years

.....

3. Level of education

1. Diploma 2. Degree 3. Masters 4. Others (specify)

.....

4. What course are you pursuing?

- 1 Natural sciences 2. Humanities 3. Technology 4. Medical

5. Others (specify)

5. Year of study

.....

6. Place of residence

1. University halls 2. Hostels 3. Renting 4. Others
(specify).....

7. Marital status

- 1) Single 2) Married 3) Cohabiting

SECTION B: WILLINGNESS AMONG STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN GENERAL ELECTIONS.

Rate yourself by circling on how often you do or feel about each statement below using the scales from 1-5 (Tick appropriately)

No.	Willingness to participate in general elections.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I participate in protests and demonstrations					
2	I participate in campaigning and voting different leaders					
3	I understand and have the knowledge on political systems and the subsequent processes					

SECTION C: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO VOTE

Rate yourself by circling on how often you do or feel about each statement below using the scales from 1-5 (Tick appropriately)

No.	Psychological and institutional factors that encourage students to vote	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I am a member of a certain political party in the university					
2	I engage and volunteer in local activities such as community events					
3	I take part in discussions about university policies and involve in advisory boards					

SECTION E: levels of political participation

1. Please tick below some of the forms of political participation that you know.

i) Traditional forms e.g. voting, running for office

☐

ii) Civic engagement e.g. youth civil society, protest movements

☐

iii) Innovative approaches

☐

2. What benefits are provided to participate in elections?

1. Money 2. Material Goods & services