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Ethnic Minority, Marginalisation And Democratic Participation In Oke-Ogun, Oyo State: Exploring Barriers To Political Inclusion

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines the impact of marginalisation on political participation among ethnic minorities in the Oke-Ogun region of Oyo State, Nigeria. The research adopts a quantitative approach to explore the extent to which marginalisation affects democratic engagement among minority groups within the region. Data were collected from a total of 100 respondents drawn from five local government areas: Kajola, Iseyin, Saki West, Saki East, and Orelope. The sample consisted of diverse community stakeholders, including artisans, media practitioners, youth leaders, civil servants, women leaders, and community leaders. These categories were selected to capture varied perspectives on political participation and the barriers faced by minority groups. Three research questions guided the study: (1) What is the level of political participation among ethnic minorities in the Oke-Ogun region? (2) How does perceived marginalisation influence political participation among ethnic minorities? (3) What are the major barriers to political participation faced by ethnic minorities in democratic processes? Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between perceived marginalisation and political participation ($r = -0.67$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of marginalisation are associated with lower levels of political engagement. The study also found that 68% of respondents reported low levels of political participation, while common barriers included lack of representation, limited access to political offices, and exclusion from decision-making processes. Based on these findings, the study recommends the implementation of inclusive political policies, strengthening democratic institutions, and designing targeted programmes to enhance political participation among ethnic minorities in the Oke-Ogun region.*

Word Count: 250

Keywords: Political participation, ethnic minorities, marginalisation, democracy, Nigeria

Introduction

The foundation of democratic government is political participation, which gives people the chance to affect political outcomes and processes (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 2018). However, major obstacles frequently prevent ethnic minorities from meaningfully participating in democracies (Dancygier & Saunders, 2019). Scholars refer to the systematic exclusion of minority communities from political, economic, and social opportunities as "democratic deficits" (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2021).

With more than 250 ethnic groups, Nigeria, the most populous democracy in Africa, offers a complicated picture of ethnic variety (Osaghae, 2020). The Bariba, Fulani, and other northern Nigerian settlers make up the majority of the Oke Ogun region of Oyo State, which offers a distinctive setting for investigating the effects of marginalisation on political engagement (Adejumo, 2019). These populations frequently face isolation from decision-making processes, restricted access to government resources, and low representation in political offices (Olayode, 2021).

Putnam's (2017) social capital theory and Dahl's (2020) polyarchy framework, which highlight the significance of inclusive participation for democratic legitimacy, serve as the theoretical underpinning for this investigation. According to recent research, marginalisation leads to "participation gaps" that compromise democratic representation (Strolovitch, 2022). To ensure fair political representation and to build democratic institutions, it is essential to comprehend these dynamics.

By presenting empirical data on the effects of marginalisation on political involvement in a Nigerian setting, this study adds to the body of knowledge and offers insights applicable to other multiethnic democracies around the world.

Clarification of Concepts

The study's main concepts Ethnic Minority, Marginalisation, Democratic Participation, and Political Inclusion are explained in this section. By making these ideas more understandable, the research's purpose, scope, and context are established, and the study's usage of these terms is made evident.

Minority Ethnicity

A group of people who differ from the dominant or majority group in a society due to shared cultural, linguistic, religious, or ancestral characteristics is referred to as an ethnic minority. Ethnic minorities may have unique customs, dialects, and social identities, and they are frequently lower in number than the dominant population. There are numerous ethnic minority groups in

Nigeria, such as Oke-Ogun in Oyo State, where different subgroups uphold distinctive traditional customs and identities. Ethnic minorities, according to Kymlicka (2018), are groups with collective identities formed by a common language, history, and cultural customs. They frequently look to the greater state for protection and recognition.

Because it influences how groups engage with political institutions and society at large, the idea of ethnic minority is important. Due to their smaller populations and less political clout, ethnic minorities may experience systemic exclusion, discrimination, and under-representation in governing structures. Unequal access to resources, political positions, and social opportunities may result from this. Scholars of minority rights contend that acknowledging ethnic minorities is crucial for democratic stability and fairness since ignoring diversity can lead to social unrest and political instability (Parekh, 2000).

Ethnic minorities in Oke-Ogun are groups that face particular sociopolitical difficulties in the larger Yoruba-dominated area. These groups' capacity to actively engage in democratic processes may be hampered by their lack of visibility in political decision-making. In order to investigate how identity, culture, and group status affect political involvement and inclusion in Oke-Ogun, it is essential to comprehend the idea of ethnic minority.

Marginalisation

The process of pushing people or groups to the margins of social, economic, and political life, which restricts their access to opportunities, resources, and decision-making authority, is known as marginalisation. It entails discrimination, unfair treatment, and exclusion from mainstream institutions that make it difficult for the group to fully engage in society. Young (2000) defines marginalisation as the systematic exclusion of a group from social and political processes, which results in social isolation and less prospects for upward mobility. In political settings, marginalisation frequently takes the form of low involvement in governance, poor access to public services, and limited representation.

Marginalisation is a political phenomenon in addition to a socioeconomic one. Deliberate policies or systemic injustices that favour some groups over others may be the cause. Institutional biases, ethnic favouritism, and an uneven allocation of political power can all contribute to marginalisation in democracies. According to studies, marginalised groups frequently have low political efficacy and trust in the government, which makes them less inclined to take part in civic engagement and elections (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Therefore, marginalisation has an impact on a group's political engagement and behaviour in addition to its social standing.

Neglect in development planning, under-representation in government institutions, and unequal access to political offices are examples of marginalisation in the Oke-Ogun environment. Low democratic involvement may result from ethnic minority populations in the area feeling left out of mainstream political processes. For this study, an understanding of marginalisation is essential because it clarifies the structural obstacles that prevent ethnic minorities from participating in political processes.

Democratic Involvement

The active involvement of citizens in political processes and decision-making within a democratic system is referred to as democratic participation. Voting, going to political gatherings, joining political parties, taking part in community development projects, and participating in advocacy or protests are just a few of the many actions that fall under this category. Because it guarantees that citizens' opinions are heard and that public policy reflects the will of the people, democratic participation is essential to democracy's operation. According to Dahl (1989), the degree to which citizens may engage in and have an impact on political decisions is what defines democracy.

Participation includes civic participation and public discussion in addition to formal electoral actions. Participation in community affairs, public debates, and social movements with the goal of influencing governmental policies are all examples of civic engagement. In this way, democratic engagement functions as a means for accountability and transparency in governance and is both a right and a duty of citizens. High levels of democratic involvement are linked to better governance, stronger democratic institutions, and more social cohesiveness, according to research (Putnam, 2000).

In Oke-Ogun, social, cultural, and political elements such as marginalisation, identity politics, and resource access influence ethnic minorities' involvement in democracy. Ethnic minority groups may encounter obstacles such low political mobilisation, discrimination, and lack of representation that restrict their ability to participate in elections and civic affairs. Thus, comprehending democratic participation in this research aids in determining minorities' degree of participation and the variables affecting their involvement in democratic governance.

Inclusion in Politics

The process of providing equal opportunity for all members of society, irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, or social standing, to engage in political decision-making and hold public office is known as political inclusion. It entails making sure that political structures and procedures are fair, equal, and represented. Political inclusion is strongly related to the idea of political rights and citizenship, where all people are entitled to participate in governance, voice their ideas, and run for office without facing prejudice. According to Sen (2009), inclusion guarantees that all groups have a say in the policies that impact their lives, which is crucial for democracy and progress.

Beyond only granting formal rights, political inclusion also entails removing obstacles that keep some groups from meaningfully participating. Discriminatory legislation, unbalanced resource distribution, and socioeconomic disparities that limit access to political platforms are a few examples of these obstacles. Institutions in inclusive democracies are built to support diversity and guarantee that minority groups are represented and have a say in governance. According to research, by resolving grievances

and guaranteeing that marginalised groups are included in the political system, political inclusion improves social cohesiveness and lowers the likelihood of violence (Lijphart, 2004).

Political inclusion is essential in Oke-Ogun in order to solve the difficulties encountered by ethnic minorities who might feel left out of mainstream political processes. The study looks at how political inclusion is impacted by marginalisation and looks for ways to encourage fair involvement. Therefore, assessing the degree of minority representation in local administration and suggesting ways to improve democratic participation in the area require an understanding of political inclusion.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses a theoretical framework to explain how ethnic minorities' political engagement in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, is impacted by marginalisation. The framework concentrates on the institutional and social elements that restrict minorities' access to political representation, resources, and decision-making procedures. The study aims to explain why ethnic minorities in Oke-Ogun may have low political engagement and how obstacles like weak social networks, a lack of civic resources, and institutional exclusion limit their democratic participation by anchoring the research in pertinent theory. Thus, the theory chosen offers a solid foundation for comprehending the mechanisms of marginalisation and directing the interpretation of the study's results.

Theory of Social Capital

Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam are credited for popularising social capital theory in political science and sociology. While Coleman (1988) highlighted the function of social capital in enabling coordinated acts for mutual benefit, Bourdieu (1986) established social capital as resources associated with participation in social networks. By emphasising how networks of civic involvement, trust, and shared norms support democratic governance and collective action, Putnam (1993, 2000) expanded on the concept. The value ingrained in social interactions, such as trust, cooperation, and shared norms that facilitate productive teamwork, is essentially referred to as social capital. When it comes to political engagement, social capital explains why certain communities are more politically engaged because they have robust networks and trust that promote participation in public affairs.

The way people mobilise through associations, community groups, and unofficial networks to influence political decisions is an example of how social capital theory is used to political engagement. Social capital is frequently low in nations where ethnic minorities are marginalised because systemic exclusion restricts access to powerful networks and erodes confidence in democratic institutions. According to Putnam (2017), communities with poor social capital encounter obstacles to group action, which results in low involvement in civic gatherings, elections, and advocacy. Because ethnic minorities may not have the social networks and support systems that promote involvement, social capital theory helps to understand the relationship between marginalisation and political disengagement.

Because the Oke-Ogun region is home to a variety of ethnic groups whose political participation is impacted by social networks and ties, this theory is quite pertinent to the current study. Citizens' motivation to participate in political processes can be diminished by marginalisation, which can erode social cohesiveness and trust. Social capital theory is used in this study to investigate if poor civic relationships, a lack of trust, and a lack of community networks are factors in ethnic minorities' low political engagement. Additionally, it offers a methodology for evaluating how Oke-Ogun's political participation and democratic involvement may be improved by bolstering social networks and community-based associations.

Political Participation and Marginalisation

The multifaceted process of excluding people or groups from meaningful engagement in social, economic, and political life is known as marginalisation. Social inequality is reinforced not just by a lack of resources but also by the denial of opportunities and rights. Due to their restricted access to public services, work, healthcare, and education, marginalised people frequently face poverty and social isolation (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2021). Under-representation, discriminatory legislation, and limited access to political offices and decision-making platforms are examples of how marginalisation appears in the political arena. As a result, marginalised people often lack the voice and power to change laws that impact their life, which feeds the cycle of exclusion (Strolovitch, 2022).

The research has demonstrated a strong link between marginalisation and political engagement since exclusion lowers citizens' motivation and ability to participate in democratic processes. Voting, going to civic gatherings, participating in political debates, joining political parties, and running for office are all examples of political participation. However, people are less inclined to trust institutions or think that their involvement would result in significant change when they feel politically ignored or socially excluded. This frequently leads to low civic engagement, low voter turnout, and little participation in local decision-making (Strolovitch, 2022). Experiences of marginalisation are linked to lower political engagement because exclusion reduces civic effectiveness and erodes trust in democratic systems, according to empirical research conducted in a variety of contexts (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2021).

Ethnic minorities in sub-Saharan Africa encounter particular obstacles to political engagement because of institutional bias, cultural marginalisation, and historical patterns of exclusion. Minority groups are marginalised and find it challenging to successfully participate in democratic processes due to language obstacles, cultural disparities, and unequal access to political networks (Osaghae, 2020). Ethnic minorities in Nigeria frequently face poor inclusion in policy-making platforms, unequal allocation of government resources, and restricted representation in political offices (Adejumo, 2019). These circumstances not only make them less visible, but they also strengthen the idea that being involved in politics is pointless. Political power disparities and regional injustices may

exacerbate these obstacles in Oke-Ogun, resulting in low participation rates among minority groups. Therefore, resolving democratic inadequacies and advancing inclusive governance in the region require an understanding of marginalisation as a critical driver of political participation.

Obstacles to Political Engagement

A variety of institutional, cultural, and psychological obstacles that restrict ethnic minorities' access to democratic processes influence their political participation. These obstacles frequently combine to create a complicated climate where minority groups find it difficult to participate actively in politics. Institutional structures and political systems that harm minorities either directly or indirectly are referred to as structural obstacles. Language, morals, and social conventions are examples of cultural barriers that limit minority' full participation. Psychological barriers are internal attitudes and beliefs that weaken political drive, such as emotions of distrust or isolation. In order to design measures that support inclusive governance and to explain the low political engagement of ethnic minorities in Oke-Ogun, Oyo State, it is imperative to comprehend these obstacles.

Institutional and systemic obstacles that restrict minorities' access to political resources and decision-making platforms are referred to as structural barriers to political participation. Minority representation in legislative bodies is frequently diminished and minority candidates are deterred from running for office by electoral methods that favour majority groups, such as winner-take-all systems (Dancygier & Saunders, 2019). Furthermore, political parties may not have inclusive structures, with dominant ethnic groups controlling leadership and candidate selection procedures, making it challenging for minorities to win nominations or party support. Minority participation is further hampered by limited access to political networks, campaign funding, and media attention all of which are necessary for successful political mobilisation. As a result, structural barriers discourage political participation by decreasing minority representation and strengthening the belief that political systems are biassed against them.

The socio-cultural factors that influence minority groups' interactions with political institutions and procedures are known as cultural barriers. Language barriers are a significant challenge because political campaigns, discussions, and information are frequently presented in dominant languages that minority groups could not completely comprehend (Kim & White, 2021). This results in a communication gap that decreases participation and restricts access to political knowledge. Political activity can also be influenced by cultural norms and beliefs; in certain minority populations, formal political processes may not coincide with traditional leadership structures and collective decision-making, resulting in a lack of experience with contemporary democratic involvement. Stereotyping and cultural discrimination can also lead to social marginalisation, which lowers minority confidence in participating in politics. These cultural hurdles frequently lead to the marginalisation of ethnic minorities in political life and sustain systemic injustices.

Internal beliefs and attitudes that affect political motivation and action are known as psychological obstacles. Due to ongoing marginalisation and under-representation, political efficacy the conviction that one's actions can affect political outcomes is frequently poor among marginalised groups (Craig & Maggiotto, 2020). Ethnic minorities may grow suspicious of the government and feel cut off from the political community if they believe that their opinions are disregarded or that political institutions are unresponsive. Voting, engaging in civic activities, and running for office are all less likely when one feels alienated. According to studies, people who suffer marginalisation internalise sentiments of helplessness and exclusion, which considerably reduces their psychological preparedness for political participation (Henderson & Peterson, 2021). In the case of Oke-Ogun, these psychological obstacles could be the reason why a large number of minority residents decide not to participate in democratic processes, despite chances.

Research Gap

Even while there is a large body of research on political involvement, most of it is focused on Western democracies, where frameworks for minority rights, electoral procedures, and institutional structures are very different from those in African contexts. Formal mechanisms like proportional representation, multicultural policy, and civil society engagement are frequently highlighted in studies conducted in Europe and North America, although they could not fully reflect the political realities of sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, little is known about the elements that affect minority involvement in these settings, including historical marginalisation, ethnic politics, and unequal development. This restriction is especially noticeable in Nigeria, where studies have concentrated more on national identity, ethnic conflict, and resource control than on the distinctive ways that ethnic minorities participate in local democratic systems (Olayode, 2021). Because of this, little is known about how marginalisation affects minority communities' political activity in Nigeria's varied sociopolitical context.

This disparity is much more noticeable in Oyo State's Oke-Ogun area. In terms of political representation, access to resources for development, and participation in state-level decision-making, the region has historically been marginalised. However, there is no empirical data regarding how these factors affect ethnic minorities' local political involvement patterns. Previous research frequently ignores the distinct political dynamics in Oke-Ogun by generalising minority issues without concentrating on particular communities or local government districts.

By examining how marginalisation impacts ethnic minorities' political participation in Oke-Ogun, examining the particular obstacles they encounter, and evaluating how these obstacles affect their involvement in democratic processes, this study fills this vacuum. By doing this, the study advances knowledge of minority political inclusion in Nigeria and provides policy recommendations for boosting grassroots democratic engagement.

Research Questions

The following enquiries serve as the basis for this investigation:

1. To what extent do ethnic minorities in the Oke Ogun region participate in politics?
2. What impact does perceived marginalisation have on ethnic minorities' political engagement?
3. What obstacles must ethnic minorities overcome in order to participate in democratic processes?

Research Objectives

The following are the study's goals:

1. To evaluate ethnic minorities' political engagement in the Oke Ogun area
2. To investigate the connection between ethnic minority' perceived marginalisation and political engagement,
3. To determine the obstacles that ethnic minorities encounter when trying to participate in democratic processes

Methodology

Research Design

In order to investigate the connection between political engagement and marginalisation among ethnic minorities, this study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Statistical study of correlations between variables and extrapolation of results to a larger population are made possible by the quantitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Area of Study

Five local government areas such as Kajola, Iseyin, Saki West, Saki East, and Orelope were included in the study, which was carried out in the Oke Ogun region of Oyo State, Nigeria. This area was chosen because of its sizable ethnic minority inhabitants and past political marginalisation (Adejumo, 2019).

Sample and Population

Ethnic minorities in the designated local government regions made up the target population. 100 respondents from six categories artisans (20), media professionals (15), youth leaders (20), government servants (15), women leaders (15), and community leaders (15) were chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Within ethnic minority communities, this selection strategy guaranteed participation from a variety of leadership and vocational groups.

Data Collection Instrument

Based on a thorough examination of the literature and verified tools from earlier research, a structured questionnaire was created (Verba et al., 2018; Dancygier, 2020). There were four sections to the questionnaire:

Information about demographics

A 12-item scale of political participation

The 15-item perceived marginalisation scale

The 10-item barriers to participation scale

Every scale employed a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 5 denoting "strongly agree." Three political science specialists validated the instrument's content, and 20 respondents who weren't part of the primary study participated in a pilot test.

Validity and Reliability

The political involvement scale ($\alpha = 0.84$), perceived marginalisation scale ($\alpha = 0.89$), and barriers scale ($\alpha = 0.82$) all showed strong internal consistency according to Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Pilot testing and expert evaluation were used to demonstrate content validity.

Procedure for Gathering Data

Over the course of four weeks, data was gathered by trained research assistants who were conversant in the local languages and customs. All participants gave their informed consent, and voluntary participation, confidentiality, and withdrawal rights were ethical concerns.

Analysis of Data

SPSS version 26.0 was used to analyse the data. Respondent characteristics and variable distributions were compiled using descriptive statistics. Relationships between variables were investigated using Pearson correlation analysis. Group differences were examined using ANOVA and independent samples t-tests. Factors influencing political participation were identified using multiple regression analysis. A significance criterion of $p < 0.05$ was established.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic Characteristics

One hundred respondents with a range of demographic traits made up the sample. The distribution of genders was 42% female and 58% male. 32% of respondents were in the 25–35 age range, 38% were in the 36–45 age range, and 30% were beyond 45. Secondary education accounted for 28%, post-graduate education for 27%, and higher education for 45%. Bariba (35%), Fulani (28%), Hausa (22%), and others (15%) made up the ethnic composition.

Research Question 1: Level of Political Participation

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Political Participation

Political Participation Items	Mean	SD	Level
Voting in elections	2.3	1.2	Low
Attending political meetings	2.1	1.1	Low
Contacting elected officials	1.8	0.9	Low
Participating in campaigns	1.9	1.0	Low
Joining political parties	1.7	0.8	Low
Community organising	2.5	1.3	Moderate
Overall Political Participation	**2.05**	**0.98**	**Low**

Results revealed significantly low levels of political participation among ethnic minorities (M = 2.05, SD = 0.98). Only 32% of respondents reported high political participation, while 68% demonstrated low to moderate participation levels. Community organizing showed the highest participation (M = 2.5), while joining political parties had the lowest (M = 1.7).

Research Question 2: Relationship Between Marginalisation and Political Participation

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3
1. Political Participation	1.00	—	—
2. Perceived Marginalization	-0.67	1.00	—
3. Barriers to Participation	-0.54	0.72	1.00

Note: p < 0.01.

A strong negative correlation was found between perceived marginalization and political participation ($r = -0.67$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2. This finding aligns with theoretical predictions and previous empirical studies (Strolovitch, 2022).

Table 3: Regression Analysis – Predictors of Political Participation

Predictors	Beta	t	p	R^2
Perceived Marginalisation	-0.48	-5.23	<0.001	—
Age	0.12	1.34	0.18	—
Education	0.19	2.05	0.04	**0.52**
Gender	-0.08	-0.89	0.37	—
Barriers	-0.31	-3.67	<0.001	

Note: $R^2 = 0.52$ for the model (shown beside Education as the overall model fit).

Multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived marginalization ($\beta = -0.48$, $p < 0.001$) and barriers to participation ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$) significantly predicted political participation, explaining 52% of the variance.

Research Question 3: Barriers to Political Participation

Table 4: Barriers to Political Participation

Barriers	Mean	SD	Rank
Lack of financial resources	4.2	0.8	1
Language barriers	3.9	0.9	2
Discrimination by political parties	3.7	1.0	3
Limited access to information	3.6	0.9	4
Cultural differences	3.5	1.1	5
Lack of education/civic knowledge	3.4	1.0	6
Geographic isolation	3.2	1.2	7
Time constraints	3.1	1.1	8
Fear of persecution	2.9	1.3	9
Lack of trust in government	2.8	1.2	10

The most significant barriers were financial constraints (M = 4.2), language barriers (M = 3.9), and political discrimination (M = 3.7). These findings support Hypothesis 3 and align with literature on minority political participation challenges.

Group Differences

ANOVA results revealed significant differences in political participation across occupational groups ($F(5,94) = 3.67$, $p < 0.01$). Civil servants showed highest participation (M = 2.8), while artisans had lowest (M = 1.6). Gender differences were not significant ($t(98) = 1.23$, $p = 0.22$), but age showed positive correlations with participation ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$).

Discussion of Findings

Level of Political Participation

Concerns regarding Nigeria's democratic inclusivity are confirmed by the discovery of low political involvement among ethnic minorities (68% indicating low participation). This is consistent with global research demonstrating a decline in minority involvement in democratic processes (Dancygier & Saunders, 2019). Minorities may participate more in local, culturally familiar activities than in formal political processes, as indicated by the comparatively higher level of community organising.

These trends are indicative of what Putnam (2017) refers to as the "bowling alone" phenomenon, in which marginalised people create parallel organisations for civic involvement outside of established political systems. Preferring community organising to official political engagement could be an adaptive reaction to being shut out of conventional political channels.

Effect of Marginalisation on Political Participation

The restricting consequences of marginalisation are strongly supported by the high negative correlation ($r = -0.67$) between marginalisation and political engagement. The social capital theory's predictions regarding how exclusion lowers political engagement are supported by this link (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2021).

Addressing marginalisation could significantly increase democratic participation, according to the regression study that shows marginalisation explains significant variance in participation ($\beta = -0.48$). This discovery has significant ramifications for legislative initiatives meant to boost minority political participation.

Obstacles to Political Engagement

Specific objectives for intervention are provided by the identification of financial limitations, linguistic hurdles, and political discrimination as the main obstacles. Financial obstacles are a reflection of ethnic minorities' wider economic marginalisation (Osaghae, 2020). The difficulty of carrying out democratic processes in linguistically varied countries is highlighted by language limitations.

Parties' political discrimination is an example of institutional barriers that call for systemic changes. Policymakers are given priority intervention points based on the ranking of barriers, indicating that improving language accessibility and economic inclusion could result in notable increases in political participation.

Implications for Theory

By showing how marginalisation produces domino consequences that lower democratic engagement, our findings advance the notion of political participation. The study highlights linguistic and cultural aspects that are frequently disregarded in Western-centered theories while supporting resource model predictions.

Higher community organising scores indicate that traditional metrics of political participation may not sufficiently describe minority engagement patterns. This result necessitates more inclusive definitions of political engagement that take into account culturally appropriate forms of civic engagement.

Conclusion

This study offers factual proof that ethnic minorities in the Oke Ogun region are severely limited in their ability to participate in politics due to marginalisation. According to the study, 68% of ethnic minorities have low levels of political involvement, which is mostly caused by their experiences of marginalisation and various institutional obstacles.

The democratic costs of denying ethnic minorities full society engagement are demonstrated by the high negative correlation ($r = -0.67$) between marginalisation and political participation. The main challenges that need for focused responses are financial limitations, language hurdles, and political discrimination.

These results provide insights that are applicable to multiethnic democracies worldwide, with ramifications that go beyond Nigeria. The study offers strategies for improving minority political participation and advances knowledge of how marginalisation threatens democratic inclusivity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

Policy Recommendations

1. **Economic Inclusion Programs**: To remove financial obstacles to political engagement, implement focused economic empowerment initiatives for ethnic minorities.
2. **Language Accessibility**: To get over language obstacles, create multilingual civic education programs and offer translation services for political procedures.
3. **Political Party Reforms**: Enact laws mandating that political parties use inclusive recruitment and representation strategies.

4. **Institutional Recommendations**
    1. **Electoral System Reforms**: Take into account proportional representation schemes that improve prospects for minority representation.
    2. **Strengthening Democratic Institutions**: Establish trust by implementing responsible, transparent governance procedures that show a dedication to inclusive democracy.
3. **Community Engagement Platforms**: Create official channels for integrating community-level organising into more general political procedures.
4. **Research Recommendations**
    1. **Longitudinal Research**: Track shifts in patterns of political participation over time by conducting longitudinal research.
    2. **Comparative Analysis**: Look for similar trends among other ethnic groups and areas of Nigeria.
    3. **Mixed-Methods Research**: Use qualitative techniques to gain a deeper understanding of marginalisation and involvement.

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