

***IS YOUTH REPRESENTATION REAL IN POLITICAL GOVERNANCE? AN EMPIRICAL
REVIEW OF MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA.***

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Abstract

Individuals aged 18 to 35 constitute around 44% of Mombasa County's population; yet, their participation in official political governance frameworks is restricted and frequently symbolic. Despite Mombasa having one of the highest youth populations in Kenya after Nairobi City County, gaps in meaningful youth engagement persist. While the constitution of Kenya (2010), Article 55, and national frameworks such as the National Youth Development Policy (2019) recognize youth as key actors in governance processes, youth engagement at the county level remains low, unstructured, and temporary, most of the time faintly visible during the electioneering period. Increased exclusion thus raises important areas of concern not only about the quality but also of inclusivity of political governance spaces, more so within a devolved system, which essentially was meant to enhance citizen participation and fair representation. This study thus explores the complex relationship between youth engagement practices, which would generally increase youth engagement and political governance outcomes in Mombasa County. The study focuses not just on whether youth participate but also on exploring the tangible effects of such engagements on political governance efficacy. The research is anchored on four main areas of youth engagement: representation of youth in elective and appointive positions, participation in formal forums such as one on the County Development Plan (CIDP), Youth – led advocacy spearheaded by youth led and centered organizations such as Swahilipot Hub Foundation and Her Narrative CBO; and resource mobilization- financial, technical and institutional that support sustained engagement. Both Good governance and the social capital theory are used to steer the research proposal. The paper presents the effectiveness of networks, trust and collective action in increasing political participation and governance. The study is based

on a descriptive research design, using the youth population in civil society organizations and political parties, and people who are in elective or appointive positions as well as some Mombasa County Government officials involved in governance and participation issues. Youth respondents will be selected by use of random sample and selective selection will be used to select the elected and appointed youth as well as significant officials. The information received with the assistance of the structured questionnaires and Google Forms will be analyzed with the assistance of the descriptive statistics and presented in the table and figures. The study findings shall offer practical information on the manner in which practices of youth engagement can enhance political governance in the Mombasa County and in which policies can be strengthened to promote inclusive, accountable and participatory governance.

Key words: Youth Representation and Political Governance

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of study

1.1.1 Youth Engagement Practices

Participation of youth in political management is critical towards a vibrant and efficient democracy. Substantive youth participation other than symbolic participation where the youth actively influence decisions, policies and institutional processes which shape their social, economic and political conditions. However, the participation of young people is often limited or token, especially in the political processes that are largely dominated by the elites. In its definition of youth, the Constitution of Kenya (2019) recognizes youths as people aged 18-35 years old and as key players in national development in Articles 10 and 55. Despite these constitutional provisions, the roles of adolescents in the governance systems (both national and county levels) are limited and institutionalized insufficiently. Lack of access to decision-making platforms. There is a lack of mentorship and proper institutional structures that lead to under-representation. As a result, the viewpoints of youngsters frequently do not significantly influence policies that impact them directly.

Across the world, there is a general consensus that you can actually have no effective governance without the participation of the youth, although what constitutes being involved differs widely. According to the OECD (2020), youth engagement is critical to the good governance which is responsibility, openness, and responsiveness in the performance of the public authority. Theoretically, the Civic Voluntarism Model indicates that political participation is contingent on the availability of the means to turn out, including time, skills, financial ability, political interest and recruitment via social networks and not merely the desire to do so. Recent researches by Hassan Minja (2024 in Kenya) point out that despite interest and limited level of knowledge, resources and specifically finances and access to information continues to present a significant challenge, especially to the marginalized youth. Despite the rising awareness through civic education programs, these programs have not always resulted to active participation in governance because of poor institutional follow up.

At the regional level, other frameworks like the African Youth Charter and Agenda 2063 focus on the strategic role of youth in governance, peacebuilding, and sustainable development (African Union, 2020; African Union Commission and UNECA, 2022). On the same note, the East African Community Youth Policy (2019) requests institutionalized mechanisms that go beyond rhetoric and entrench the youth in the real leadership and decision-making systems. The Kenya experience has shown that there has been an implementation gap. Ambrose, Nzioka, and Lumadede (2022) have concluded that although youth training programs enhance the awareness of governance, they do not necessarily translate to long-term engagement unless they are associated with formal structures. This indicates the need to institutionalize youth councils and

also empower youth networks, hence important in terms of maintaining the influence. Youth engagement needs to be concerted and long-term plans that are sufficiently funded and politically championed.

1.1.2 Political Governance

Political governance entails the exercise of authority. Decisions are executed, and public resources are administered to foster accountability, openness, inclusion, and responsiveness. Effective governance guarantees that public institutions promote the common good and facilitate substantial possibilities for citizen engagement in policy development and supervision procedures (OECD, 2020). The Constitution of Kenya (2010) entrenches public participation and inclusivity as core governance principles, requiring public institutions to facilitate citizen involvement in decision-making. Political governance denotes the mechanisms and frameworks by which authority is wielded, decisions are rendered, and public resources are administered for the collective benefit. It includes concepts such as accountability, openness, inclusion, the rule of law, and responsiveness.

Effective governance requires participatory mechanisms that allow citizens, including youth, to contribute meaningfully to policy formulation and oversight processes. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) embeds public participation and inclusivity as core governance principles, requiring state institutions to facilitate citizen involvement in decision-making.

National policies like the National Youth Development Policy (2019) and Nationally Youth Council Strategic Plan (2023- 2027) are designed to enhance the representation of the youth so that their voices can be heard in the processes of governance and development. Systems such as the National Youth Council were put in place in a manner that would institutionalize the involvement of the youth and bridge the divide between the government and the youth. However, some difficulties persist, especially on county level, as in most cases, governance systems do not have systematic mechanisms of involving young people in planning, budgeting, and supervising areas. Ineffective youth engagement programmes are caused by weak institutional connections and inadequate accountability systems. This constrains the level at which the youth can influence the policy outputs or keep the leaders in check.

1.1.3 Mombasa County

The county of Mombasa offers a topical background to question youth engagement practices and political governance, as the statistics at the 2019 census show that the youth population in the county is around 44 percent (572,000 out of 1.2 million people) (KNBS, 2019). Although they have a huge demographic, youth have been underrepresented in elective and appointive leadership. More importantly, the lack of an extensive youth policy framework to inform

organized interactions and participation is likely to rely on informal initiatives instead of formalized systems.

The involvement of the youth in major governance forums such as the public participation forums and the public barazas is continually described as rather nominal than real. Youth matters are not always mainstreamed in the county plans, policies, and budgets, and integration of citizen involvement is still disjointed. Research shows that young people's activities in the county are mostly unstructured and informal (SFCG,2020; RSI International, 2021). Young organizations like Swahilipot Hub Foundation and Her Narrative CBO, though they do advocacy, contribute to accountability and civic engagement efforts, are still challenged by a lack of sustainability because they lack financial support and good integration with formal governance systems. It is therefore important to understand the interactions of the youth representation, participation, advocacy initiatives, and mobilization of resources in this context in order to enhance accountability, inclusivity, and responsiveness in the political system in Mombasa County.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The participation of youth in the governing processes of Mombasa County is minimal and disorganized. Although the youths are observed to be involved during the elections when they are mobilized or even as voters, their involvement is limited after the elections. The youths are underrepresented in the County Assembly and other decision-making forums, such as the institution's board members. The lack of a formal county youth policy or framework to guide, coordinate, and maintain the youth involvement has been a source of fragmented activities and ad hoc endeavors. The mechanisms like County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) consultations via fora of public participation and public barazas usually do not have any meaningful involvement of young people, and the involvement is more often a turn-up and not a turn-in consultation.

Neither has the youth representation been effectively fulfilled through the political party youth wings, which, in theory, form training grounds for future leaders and a platform of youth political expression. In most instances, these wings have been hijacked by the top officials of the party, and they are mobilized in the elections instead of being developed as leaders or taking part in policy-making. This leads them to strengthen patronage politics instead of allowing the youth to play their role in governance procedures in a meaningful way. This disparity arises from several sources. The lack of proper access to resources, financial, informational, and technical constraints the capability of youth to be involved. The poor political effectiveness, poor civic consciousness, and low rates of mentorship diminish confidence and discourage civic engagement. Besides, the poor institutional connection between the youth-based organizations, civil society, and the formal governance institutions prevents the cooperation and sustenance of engagement activities.

Therefore, older elites continue to dominate the politics of Mombasa County, thus continuing with the exclusion and the perception that politics is a domain that is not accessible to the youth. The absence of organized youth inclusion in the formal governance and the political party systems compromises the democratic principles of accountability, inclusivity, and responsiveness. This paper is thus aimed at exploring the focus elements that affect youth participation in governance in Mombasa County and give solutions that will help to enhance youth responsive, participatory and accountable governance systems at the county level.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Empirical Literature

This section reviews empirical studies on youth engagement practices and their influence on political governance, with a focus on Kenya and, where relevant, the East African region. The review is organized around the key dimensions of youth engagement examined in this study: youth representation, youth participation in public forums, youth-led advocacy, and resource mobilization.

2.1.1 Youth representation and political governance

Youth representation is a vital component in advancing inclusive political governance. Various studies conducted in several Kenyan counties highlight that the presence of young people within formal structures can ultimately increase responsiveness to youth needs particularly at the county level Odanga (2022). However, even with the establishments of formal structures such as the youth leagues within political parties, youth often remain marginalized within political parties in decision-making platforms limiting their ability to shape policy and governance outcomes. Inadequate representation of youth not only affects the relevance of policies that affect them directly but also discourages them from engaging in political processes creating a cycle of exclusion and disengagement as highlighted by UNICEF (2021). Globally, Furlong and Cartmel (2019) also argue that meaningful representation requires more than just a seat allocation; it demands mechanisms that enable substantive participation and decision-making.

The effectiveness of the youth representatives in the governance processes is still undermined by political violence, which is highly based on the leadership hierarchies and patronage networks (Wende, Matanga, and Odhiambo, 2024). The role of youth leaders in most cases is in the shadow of the senior politicians and this limits their independence to make their own decisions or represent the interests of the youth. Other countries the same is true of transitional democracies around the world, where young representatives are occasionally co-opted to justify the status quo instead of delivering substantive reforms. This type of co-optation undermines the trust of young people and discourages greater involvement of young people, strengthening the belief that political representation is symbolic and not transformative (Kaito & Njoroge, 2023). Without effective institutionalisation, organised mentorship systems and independent venues for young advocacy, engagement practices would remain merely performative, as noted by Guna Spurava, Jari Varsaluoma, and Kaisa Väänänen (2024). Contrary to the views of other researchers, both local and international researchers highlight that the empowerment of young leaders needs a protective mechanism that ensures that these leaders can express themselves without fear of intimidation. Youth representation needs intentional and systematic assistance to convert its influence into a practical impact of governance.

As much as there is formal structure with youth committees, advisory boards and public participation forums in various counties in Kenya, their performance is limited by structural and resource factors (Jepkemboi Chirchir Abigael, 2025). Such problems as insufficient mentorship, insufficient financial and technical support, and youths often have to make their way through political and administrative structures through which the older generations of elites predominate. It is not the case with Kenya alone, as Hart (2019) notices that tokenistic involvement usually thrives in those areas where the weakest institutionalization is present; youths are allowed to voice their opinions but not to influence the consequences. The Kenyan situation is not an exception as the representatives of youth are often invited in consultative forums which lacks actual influence on decision-making, which makes the difference between the symbolic and actual involvement. The accessibility to information and power inequalities are further strengthened by the fact that there is little networking with senior decision-makers. Gaithuma et al. (2025) Is a relatively simple argument that youth involvement should be sustainable, with mentorship being organized, leadership and multisectoral cooperation being actively encouraged. These components should be reinforced with the aim of enhancing transparency, accountability, and general effectiveness of youth representation in devolved systems of governance.

Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Good Governance Theory

The idea of good governance offers a significant analytical framework for understanding the functioning of political systems and the exercise of power within public institutions. Unlike conventional political theories associated with individual theorists, the notion was extensively promoted by the World Bank in the early 1990s, defining governance as the traditions and structures through which authority is acquired and exercised. The principles of good governance are founded on accountability, transparency, involvement, rule of law, and responsiveness. These principles ensure that actions made by individuals are grounded in shared interests and promote societal wellbeing (World Bank, 1994).

Researchers also believe that institutional structures are not sufficient to bring good governance. According to scholars like Hyden (1999), political governance can only be effective when the public leaders practice fairness in the distribution of the public resources. In this respect governance should be coupled with the involvement of the citizens, fair policy formulation, and systems that enable the marginalized groups to contribute to the policy formulation. This view is affirmed by UNDP (2002) which notes that governance works optimally when the decision-makers are accountable to the populace and when the citizens are free and avenues to influence policies.

The relevance of the Good Governance Theory to political governance is based on the fact that it addresses power relations, behavior at institutions, and participation of citizens. This theory relegates the governance as a process of interaction as opposed to a government-oriented

activity. It acknowledges that inequalities are usually perpetuated in political spaces, more so among different groups like the youth, women, and persons with disabilities. In this kind of situation, the inclusive structures and governance systems would be vulnerable to encouraging symbolic mobilization and not real influence. Therefore, the theory points to the necessity of reforms that would increase access to the civic platforms and reinforce the accountability of the population.

In the framework of youth and political governance, Good Governance Theory holds that youth inclusion will not be achieved by chance but needs to be institutionalized. This involves the participation of the youth in the processes of planning, budgeting, monitoring, and control of the counties and national levels. When the youth are given clear channels, positive legal systems and decision-making avenues, then democratic governance becomes stronger. The theory thus coincides with the literature which highlights that citizen participation enhances better governance results and fosters fair delivery of the services to the citizens.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological strategy to be employed in the investigation. This outlines the research concept, target demographic, sampling procedures and sample size, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations adhered to. This section outlines the sequential stages employed in the data collecting analysis to ensure that the research process is conducted systematically, coherently, and methodologically sound. Collectively, these elements provide a lucid conceptualisation of the study's execution.

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research approach suitable for examining the relationship between youth involvement behaviours and political governance in Mombasa County. An investigative approach that suits the research on pre-existing conditions and relationships between variables without control over the study variables is descriptive (Kothari, 2018). The study aimed at measuring the representation of youth, their participation in the process of making decisions within the society as well as in advocacy and mobilization of resources in the process of governance. A non-experimental design was better because the research was aimed at cognizing current practices, as opposed to providing an intervention. The design selected thus enables the researcher to systematically gather the way the youth participation is taking place in the county governance structures.

The application of descriptive research is common to social sciences and governance studies since it allows gathering the detailed information about the opinions, experiences, and behaviors of the people (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). In this regard, it helped to analyze the relationship that is present between different elements of the youth engagement and the accountability, inclusiveness as well as responsiveness in political leadership. It is also possible to collect information in all the six sub counties of the Mombasa County through its design. This adds credibility and applicability of the results.

In addition, descriptive designs are useful in creating detailed portraits of the person, groups and institutional processes (Mugenda, 2020). This is critical towards determining trends, loopholes and institutional constraints influencing youth participation in governance. The design will facilitate comparisons among different responder groups, including adolescents and county government officials. It also provided a definitive framework for the arrangement, analysis, and interpretation of the obtained data. The descriptive research methodology offered a methodologically sound and methodical approach to assessing the extent of youth participation in political governance within counties.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study will be conducted in the County of Mombasa, a coastal county in the urban center and one of the most active politically counties in Kenya. Mombasa has 30 wards and 6 constituencies with distinctive socio-political characteristics which shape how the youths are involved in the governance processes. The place is an ideal location to learn about the youth engagement practices because of its large population density, cultural diversity and vibrant political environment.

The population is young and a significant number of the residents in Mombasa have problems with unemployment and lack of political representation and access to decision making arenas. Meanwhile, new youth-led organisations, civic movements and digital advocacy platforms have emerged in the county, offering new opportunities to proactively engage youth in governance. As systems of engagement, including community forums and social media campaigns, evolve, they can provide a good background to the analysis of how youth can play a role in the political processes.

The county is also the center of political discussions in the country as it is a key economic hub and a history of civic engagement. With Kenya devolved system, Mombasa has even more become open in terms of space of participatory governance although there is uneven youth participation in different constituencies and wards. This diverse topography is a successful source of the investigation of the obstacles and the innovative practices that are influencing youth participation in political governance in the county.

3.4 Target Population

The sample of the proposed study will include young people and the major stakeholders in governance in Mombasa County who are interested in or are directly affected by the youth involvement in political governance. The target population will consist of the youth between the age of 18 and 35 years representing the selected sectors related to governance as shown in the following table. Moreover, the study will include ward administrators, county government officials, the representatives of the civil society, the leaders of the youth-led organizations, and the community influencers, who are involved in the county-level governance and policy-making processes.

Table 1: Target Population

Stratum	Population
Youth in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	100
Youth in Elective/Appointive Positions	60
Youth in Political Parties	80
Youth in General Community	160
Total	400

Source: researcher

3.5 Sampling techniques and sample size

3.5.1 Sampling Techniques

Sampling procedures are essential in research since they provide the selection of a population subset that accurately represents its characteristics. Sampling, as defined by Kombo and Tromp (2006), is the process of selecting a subset of a population that accurately reflects the characteristics of the entire group. Creswell (2014) states that proper sampling increases the representativeness, validity and reliability of the study results. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to sample the youth respondents aged 18-35 in the six sub-counties of Mombasa County, where each member of the target population has an equal chance of being sampled. This strategy is the least biased and optimizes the applicability of the results to the entire young population across various youth groups in the country (Kothari, 2014). The sample will be classified into distinct layers for meaningful representation: youth actively engaged in civil society organisations (CSOs), youth who hold elected or appointed positions, youth involved in political party structures, and youth from the general population.

Also, purposive sampling will be focused on the representatives of county governments and other important stakeholders directly engaged in the process of public participation and governance, which will allow gathering deep and information-based data (Palinkas et al2015). The stratified random sampling of the youth and purposive sampling of the officials will yield wide coverage and in-depth information, making the study findings more credible and comprehensive.

3.5.2 Sample size allocation

Determining an appropriate sample size is crucial to ensure that the study's results are representative of the target population and statistically valid. Yamane (1967) proposes a formula commonly employed for calculating the sample size of a finite population:

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

where n is the size desired of the sample, N is the population and e is the margin of error, which is commonly taken to be 0.05 (a 95% confidence level) The population of the youth in the Mombasa County between the age of 18 and 35 years is estimated at 572,000 in this study. Applying the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} e^2 &= 0.05^2 = 0.0025 \\ N \cdot e^2 &= 400 * 0.0025 = 1 \\ 1 + N \cdot e^2 &= 1 + 1 = 2 \\ n &= \frac{400}{2} \approx 200 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the estimated sample size to use in this study is around 200 youth respondents. Stratified random sampling will be used to ensure representativeness and the youth population

will be divided into various groups, which include those who work in civil society organizations (CSOs), those who hold elective or appointive positions, those who work in political parties structures, and those in the general population. The sampling will be done randomly with each stratum represented proportionally and will be diverse and reduced sampling bias (Bryman, 2016; Daniel, 2006).

Table 2: Stratum Sample Size

Stratum	Population Proportion	Sample Size (n)
Youth in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	25%	50
Youth in Elective/Appointive Positions	15%	30
Youth in Political Parties	20%	40
Youth in General Community	40%	80
Total	100%	200

Source: Researcher

Purposive sampling will be utilised for Mombasa County government officials and other key stakeholders directly involved in youth engagement and public participation, alongside the youth sample (Palinkas et al., 2015). This involves officers in the Departments of Youth, ICT and Innovation, Social Services and Governance who are in close contact with youth forums, advisory boards and consultative forums. The target population will be made up of approximately, 15 to 25 officials depending on their availability and willingness to take part. The stratified random sample of youth and the purposive sample of officials will guarantee proper representation and a great source of information, which will make the conclusions of the study valid, reliable, and comprehensive.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The main source of first hand, credible and accurate information of the target population was mainly primary data used in this research. The study will use quantitative data to collect information to provide a comprehensive and triangulated analysis of youth involvement practices and political governance in Mombasa County. Structured questionnaires that are distributed in two parallel forms will be used as the main data collection tools: paper-based questionnaires will be distributed in person and online using the forms of Google. The two formats are to ensure as many of the different youths and government stakeholders are reached and responded to. The sampled population of 200 respondent youth aged between 18-35 years will be used to fill questionnaires that will yield quantitative information on the variables of youth representation, presence at public forums, advocacy participation, and the access to resources. The questionnaire will be Likert-scale based in perceptions and closed-ended based in demographic and behavioral information, but with few open-ended questions to guarantee the likelihood of a qualitative information. Likewise, the questionnaire will be designed in such a way that the institutional and administrative views are collected through scaled and multiple-choice questions that allow statistical comparison and analysis. Each of the instruments will have few optional open-ended

questions to attract more contextual comments, but they will be quantitatively analyzed using the content categorization method and frequency counts to ensure methodological consistency.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

A questionnaire will be developed by the researcher to gather the necessary information by transforming the study variables into specific and quantifiable questions. Respondents will be randomly chosen in various sub counties within Mombasa County and these questionnaires will be administered to them. The identified Mombasa County Government officials will also be administered specific questionnaires depending on their positions in the public participation.

A research assistant will facilitate the distribution of questionnaires to the respondents. The questionnaires will include an introductory letter detailing the completion process. The questionnaires will be filled out immediately, with the researcher or assistant there to collect them, ensuring timely and complete responses from the participants.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The study will provide quantitative results in the form of a standardised closed-ended questionnaire, which will be distributed in both hardcopy and online forms, i.e. Google Forms. After obtaining the data on collection, it will be analysed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. The demographic variables of the youth respondents will be summarised with descriptive statistics; frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to depict the extent of the youth representation, involvement of the populace, advocacy and mobilisation of resources.

The multiple regression analysis will determine how the independent variables, namely, youth representation, public participation, youth-led advocacy, and mobilization of resources, affect the dependent variable, political governance. A multiple linear regression model will be used to evaluate the overall effect of youth involvement practices on political governance. The given technique is suitable to the investigation because there are multiple independent factors forecasting one continuous dependent variable.

The regression model will be specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Political Governance (measured as a composite index of accountability, transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness)

β_0 = Constant (Intercept)

β_1 = Regression Coefficients

X_1 = Youth Representation

ε = Error Term

The R² (Coefficient of Determination) will show the percentage of political governance as explained by the four factors of young engagement. The two beta coefficients will indicate the magnitude and direction of the specific influence that the two independent variables have on political governance, holding other variables constant. The statistical significance of each predictor will be reflected in P-values with a cut-off of $p < 0.05$. The F-statistic will evaluate the overall significance of the regression model that is whether the combination of independent variables is predictive of the dependent variable.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0: Introduction

This chapter provides presentations, analysis and discussions of the study findings. It starts by highlighting the overview of the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents and then scrutinize the findings in relation to the research objectives.

4.1: Response rate.

The study had an intended sample size of 200 in the county. To mitigate the effect of possible non- response and preserve the desired sample size and margin error 257 questionnaires were administered. All the 257 questionnaires were successfully completed and returned yielding to a response rate of 128.5%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2020), a response rate above 70% is considered excellent for analysis and reporting. The high response rate resulted from administering additional questionnaires to strengthen the study. This was necessary because there were relatively few young people represented in some youth engagement areas such as political party participation when the research commenced.

Table 3: Response Rate

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned Questionnaires	257	100.0
Unreturned Questionnaires	0	0.0
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

4.2: Demographic information and characteristics of the respondents.

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the study on youth engagement practices and political governance in Mombasa County, Kenya. The demographic information collected from the respondents includes their gender, age, sub-county of residence, education level, and employment status. These characteristics are key in understanding the profiles of the various participants as well as provide a basis for interpreting the study findings. The results are presented in the subsections below.

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

Table 4: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	135	52.5
Female	118	45.9
Prefer not to say	4	1.6
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

Table 4.2 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. The results indicate that out of the 257 respondents, 135 (52.5%) were male while 118 (45.9%) were female. Only 4 respondents (1.6%) did not disclose their gender. The findings show that male respondents were slightly more represented in the study. This indicates that the study achieved relatively balanced gender representation which enhanced the diversity of views on youth engagement practices and political governance in Mombasa County, Kenya. The slightly higher representation of male respondents suggests that young men were more forthcoming in participating in the study. This could be associated with their greater participation or visibility in some political and civic engagement spaces.

4.2.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 5: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–24 Years	104	40.5
25–30 Years	96	37.4
31–35 Years	57	22.1
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

Table 7 shows the age distribution of the respondents. The results indicate that 104 (40.5%) of the respondents were aged 18–24 years, 96 (37.4%) were aged 25–30 years and 57 (22.1%) were aged 31–35 years. The results indicated a gradual decrease in participation with age. The highest participation were recorded by respondents in the age group of 18–24 years (40.5%), while the age group 25–30 years came second at 37.4%. The lowest participation was among those aged 31–35 (22.1%). This shows that younger people were more forthcoming in participating in the study than older youth. Although there were differences between the age groups in terms of participation, the inclusion of participants from all three age groups ensured that the study included contributions from all young people between the ages of 18 and 35.

4.3. Demographic information

Table 6: Sub-County Distribution of Respondents

Sub-County	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mvita	46	17.9
Kisauni	51	19.8
Likoni	42	16.3
Changamwe	39	15.2
Jomvu	37	14.4
Nyali	42	16.3
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

The distribution of the respondents by sub-county is presented in table 8. The study covered all the six sub-counties in Mombasa County. The highest number of respondents were from Kisauni with 51 (19.8%) and Mvita 46 (17.9%). Likoni and Nyali each had 42 respondents (16.3%) while Changamwe had 39 (15.2%) respondents and the least were in Jomvu with 37 respondents (14.4%). The results indicate that Kisauni and Mvita had the highest level of interest in taking part in the study. This is indicated by their larger percentages of respondents than the other sub-counties. These relatively high rates of participation suggest a higher level of engagement with the study of youth engagement practices and political governance among young people. The differences between the six sub-counties were, however, not very significant. This resulted in a good distribution of respondents across the county and that the study reflected the views of all geographical areas of Mombasa County.

4.3.4 Highest Level of Education

Table 7: Highest Level of Education of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	18	7.0
Secondary	72	28.0
Certificate	91	35.4
Undergraduate Degree	61	23.7
Postgraduate Degree	11	4.3
Other	4	1.6
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

The educational qualification of the respondents was different at varying levels of education. The majority (91, or 35.4%) had certificate qualifications, while 72 (28.0%) had secondary education and 61 (23.7%) had undergraduate degrees. 18 (7.0%) respondents had primary education

qualifications, 11 (4.3%) had postgraduate education qualifications. The remaining 4 (1.6%) respondents indicated other types of education.

The results show that the participants had a variety of educational backgrounds. The majority of respondents had reached a post-secondary level. Certificate holders formed the largest proportion of the respondents, suggesting that young people with certificate holders demonstrated considerable interest in issues relating to youth engagement and political governance. This was followed by respondents with secondary school education and undergraduate qualifications. This educational attainment allowed the respondents to draw on a broad range of knowledge and experiences which facilitated their understanding and their ability to express opinions on youth engagement practice and political governance. Including secondary and primary education respondents ensured perspectives from a variety of educational backgrounds were included. This diversity helped to reinforce the views in the study.

4.3.5 Employment Status of Respondents

Table 8: Employment Status of Respondents

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Employed (Formal)	61	23.7
Self-Employed/Informal	88	34.2
Student	54	21.0
Unemployed	47	18.3
Other	7	2.8
Total	257	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026)

The employment status of the respondents shows that 88 (34.2%) were self-employed or engaged in informal employment. This was the highest segment of the respondents. 61 (23.7%) respondents were in formal employment and 54 (21.0%) respondents were students. Another 47 (18.3%) were not employed and 7 (2.8%) indicated other employment.

The results show that the respondents' employment and socioeconomic statuses were found to be diverse. The higher proportion of self-employed and informally employed youth indicates a high level of informal economic activities among the youth of Mombasa County. The representation of formally employed youth, students and unemployed youth also indicates that the study was conducted at various stages of the economic process for the youth. This was significant since employment status has the potential to affect young people's experiences and opportunities for civic and political involvement. The variety of work experiences thus enriched the study as it offered diverse views on Youth engagement practices and political governance in Mombasa County.

4.3.6 Current Engagement Category of Respondents

Table 9: Current Engagement Category of Respondents

Engagement Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Youth in a Civil Society Organization	67	21
Member of a Political Party	51	16
Youth in Elective/Appointive Position	25	8
Youth in General Community (Other, none, CBO/Youth Group)	170	54
Total	313	100.0

Source: Researcher (2026),

Note: Percentages are based on the total number of responses, as some respondents identified with more than one engagement category.

Results indicate that youth engagement was more focused in community-based and informal platforms. Youth involved in the general community, through CBOs, youth groups and other informal settings made up 54% of the responses (170 youth). This was followed by involvement in youth groups in civil society organizations (67, 21%) and in political parties (51, 16%). The proportion of youth who held elective and/or appointive positions was the smallest, at 25 (8%).

Young people were more active in community and civil society platforms than through formal political structures, as shown in the distribution. Relatively small numbers of youth are represented in elective and appointive leadership roles, indicating low representation of youth in formal leadership positions. The results of the study thus underscore community-based organizations, youth groups and civil society organizations as significant venues in which to engage young people. These platforms offer youth with opportunities to participate in civic engagement and contribute to community and governance processes (in ways that are not formal political).

4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

The descriptive analysis was done to investigate the perceptions of the respondents of the study variables as per the research objectives. Means and standard deviations are used to present the results which give information about the average of the responses and the degree to which the respondents varied. The results are discussed in the following sections.

4.4.1 Youth Representation and Political Governance

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements relating to youth representation in governance structures within Mombasa County.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Youth Representation

Statement	SA F (%)	A F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	Mean	Std
Youth in political positions effectively advocate for issues affecting young people	25 (3)	304 (41)	297 (40)	88 (12)	33 (4)	2.89	1.067
Youth leaders often act independently from older political elites	4 (2)	70 (27)	79 (31)	74 (29)	30 (12)	2.78	1.02
There are clear pathways for young people to ascend to leadership in my area	2 (1)	61 (24)	74 (29)	79 (31)	41 (16)	2.63	1.039
I feel that young leaders in my county are accountable to the youth	4 (2)	69 (27)	83 (32)	67 (26)	34 (13)	2.77	1.036
Youth are adequately represented in county governance structures.	1 (0)	51 (20)	80 (31)	104 (40)	21 (8)	2.63	0.904
The county provides opportunities for youth to hold appointive or advisory positions	1 (0)	57 (22)	92 (36)	87 (34)	20 (8)	2.73	0.906
Composite Mean/Std						2.74	0.989

Source: Researcher (2026)

As far as youth in politics advocating for issues that involve youth, 25 respondents (3%) strongly agreed, and 304 respondents (41%) agreed. Another 297 respondents (40%) were neutral, while 88 (12%) disagreed and 33 (4%) strongly disagreed. The average score is 2.89, and a standard deviation is 1.067 suggesting a moderate perception of the effectiveness of youth leaders in bringing issues affecting the youth to the fore. which indicates moderate variation in the responses. The relatively high percentage of those who agreed indicates that some youth leaders are perceived as promoting youth concerns. But the moderately strong neutral reaction suggests that this perception is not very entrenched among all respondents. This suggests that youth leaders need to be more responsive and have a better sense of the impact of youth advocacy. This finding concurs with Odanga (2022), who argues that youth representation within the county governance structures can improve government responsiveness to youth needs. Nevertheless, the moderate perceptions reported within the study suggest that representation alone does not translate into effective advocacy for issues affecting young people.

With regard to the youth leaders acting independently of older political elites often, 4 respondents (2%) strongly agreed and 70 respondents (27%) agreed. 79 (31%) respondents were neutral, 74 (29%) disagreed, and 30 (12%) strongly disagreed. The mean of 2.78 with a standard deviation of 1.020 represents a relatively low level of youth leaders' independence from older political elites. The responses show some moderate variation, It is interesting that more respondents disagreed than agreed that youth leaders are full-fledged political actors, indicating that many young people do not see youth leaders as full-fledged political actors. There is concern regarding the level of influence of entrenched political interests on young people's leadership and decision-making opportunities.

Regarding clear pathway for youth to rise to leadership, 2(1%) strongly agreed and 61(24%) agreed. 74 (29%) were neutral, 79 (31%) disagreed, and 41 (16%) strongly disagreed. The overall mean score of 2.63 and a standard deviation of 1.039 indicates a somewhat low level of perceived access to leadership paths. The higher percentage of those who disagreed or strongly disagreed indicates that opportunities for young people to advance in leadership are seen as being limited. This suggests there is a need for better leadership development, mentorship and institutional arrangements to facilitate young people getting into formal leadership positions.

Regarding the responsibility of youth leaders towards the youth they represent, 69 respondents (27%) agreed and 4 respondents (2%) strongly agreed. 83 (32%) were neutral, 67 (26%) disagreed, and 34 (13%) strongly disagreed. The average score of 2.77 with a standard deviation of 1.036 reflects relatively low confidence in accountability of young leaders. The relatively high neutral rating indicates that many respondents were not sure whether youth leaders keep good accounts of their action and decisions. The outcome highlights the need for more robust systems to enable youth leaders to regularly consult, communicate with and be accountable to the young people that they represent.

As for the extent of youth representation in the governance processes of county governments, 1 (0%) strongly agreed, and 51 (20%) agreed. 80 respondents were neutral (31%), 104 disagreed (40%) and 21 strongly disagreed (8%). The score of 2.63 is the mean with a standard deviation of 0.904, suggesting a lower perception of adequate youth representation in county governance structures which was relatively low, indicating that responses were more consistent on this issue than on most of the other statements. This indicates that the existing form of county governance has not been effective in ensuring meaningful representation of youth in the decision-making process.

In regards to the county offering opportunities for youth to hold appointive or advisory positions 1 respondent (0%) strongly agreed and 57 respondents (22%) agreed. There were 92 respondents (36%) who were neutral, 87 respondents (34%) disagreed, and 20 respondents (8%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.73 and the standard deviation of 0.906 means that there is a

relatively low perception of opportunities for young people to occupy an appointive or advisory role which represents relatively small variation in responses, meaning that there is a fairly consistent perception of the respondents. The percentage of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed implies that opportunities for youth to engage in governance through appointive and advisory positions exist as a low percentage. This underscores the importance of developing intentional and accessible pathways for youth to be involved in policy development and decision making at the county level.

Across the six indicators, the lowest mean scores were recorded for the availability of leadership pathways and adequacy of youth representation in county governance structures. These results point to concerns not only about the presence of young people in governance but also about the extent to which they have meaningful access, influence and opportunities to advance into leadership. The findings therefore suggest that strengthening youth representation requires more than increasing the number of young people in political spaces. It also requires effective leadership pathways, accountability mechanisms, greater independence and deliberate inclusion of youth in county decision-making structures.

4.4.5 Political Governance

This section presents descriptive statistics for the dependent variable, political governance.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Political Governance

Indicator	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	Std
I believe I can understand county government issues (Internal Efficacy)	10 (4)	45 (18)	71 (28)	83 (32)	48 (19)	3.44	1.099
I believe that I can influence county government decisions (Internal Efficacy)	10 (4)	48 (19)	69 (27)	83 (32)	47 (18)	3.42	1.105
I believe county leaders care about what people like me think (External Efficacy)	28 (11)	74 (29)	91 (35)	48 (19)	16 (6)	2.81	1.061
Voting is an effective way for young people to bring about change	4 (2)	8 (3)	24 (9)	80 (31)	141 (55)	4.35	0.889
Composite Mean/Std						3.50	1.039

Source: Researcher (2026)

Political governance among the respondents reflects a relatively positive perception of their own ability to understand and participate in county governance, although confidence in the

responsiveness of county leaders is considerably lower. The composite mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 1.039 indicate a moderately high perception of political governance. The overall standard deviation shows some variation in the experiences and perceptions of respondents across the different dimensions of political governance.

On the ability to understand county government issues, 10 respondents (4%) strongly disagreed with the statement, while 45 respondents (18%) disagreed. A total of 71 respondents (28%) remained neutral, whereas 83 respondents (32%) agreed and 48 respondents (19%) strongly agreed. The score of 3.44 represents a moderate level of confidence that respondents are able to understand county government issues. The standard deviation of 1.099 indicates that there is moderate variability in the responses. 51% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that over half of the youth surveyed could comprehend issues of county governance. This suggests that there is a relatively high degree of internal political efficacy, but that the majority of young people are not equally informed and confident.

When asked if they feel they can have an impact on county government decisions, 48 respondents (19%) disagreed and 10 responded strongly disagreed. Another 69 (27%) were neutral; 83 (32%) agreed; and 47 (18%) strongly agreed. The average score of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 1.105 indicates moderate levels of confidence in the ability of youth to influence decisions by county government. Perceptions of political influence vary among young people, as there are relatively even numbers across the response categories. Half of all respondents felt they could influence decisions; a significant number were unsure or felt they could not influence decisions. This indicates a disconnect between feeling confident about participating in governance and feeling like they have an impact on decision making.

Another pattern is in relation to whether county leaders care about what people like the respondents think. Twenty-eight respondents (11%) strongly disagreed and 74 respondents (29%) disagreed with the statement. A further 48 respondents (19%) agreed and 16 (6%) strongly agreed. The mean score of 2.81 with a standard deviation of 1.061 was the lowest of the four indicators with relatively low levels of confidence in the responsiveness of county leaders. When asked if many leaders in the county take young people's perspectives into account, many young people feel county leaders do not listen to them. This indicates a lower political efficacy on the outside and a lack of confidence in one's own political ability doesn't always mean a lack of confidence in government institutions.

The level of agreement for voting was the highest of all indicators. 8 (3%) Respondents disagreed and 4 (2%) strongly disagreed that voting is an effective way to change things for youth. Twenty-four more respondents 24 (9%) were neutral, while 80 (31%) agreed and 141 (55%) strongly agreed. The mean score was the highest at 4.35 and the standard deviation was the lowest at 0.889. The high mean suggests a high level of trust in voting as a way to effect political change. The low standard deviation indicates that the views of the respondents on this

issue were more uniform than with other indicators. This is reflected in the high level of agreement which shows a great faith in the importance of electoral participation as a means of engaging in political and governance processes and changing the political landscape.

Respondent A, “Giving youth a platform to speak is not enough, giving them real power to decide makes it meaningful to participate.”

Respondent B, “The need to give youth real decision-making power, not just a voice to be heard,”

Respondent C “Nothing for young people without young people.”

4.5 Inferential Statistics

4.5.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the combined effect of youth engagement practices including youth representation on political governance in Mombasa County.

4.5.2.1 Model Summary

Table 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.557	0.310	0.294	0.611

Source: Researcher (2026)

According to the model summary, there is a moderate positive relationship between the predictor variables that is youth representation and political governance. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.557$) indicates that Mombasa County has a positive relationship between the strength of youth representation and political governance outcomes.

The R Square value of 0.310 shows that the total variance in political governance can be accounted for by 31.0% of the youth representation, public participation, youth-led advocacy, and youth resource mobilization. This shows that the practices of youth engagement being selected including youth representation has a positive impact on political governance in Mombasa County. The outcome offers empirical evidence of the link between how young people are represented, how they participate in public processes, how they engage in advocacy and how they are provided access to resources and political governance outcomes.

In this study, 69.0% of the variability in the data is accounted for by the other factors (not considered in the four predictor variables). This is indicative of the multi-institutional, political, social and economic nature of political governance. The outcome, in other words, does not detract from the role of the variables studied. Instead, it shows that youth engagement is a part of a broader political governance system.

The standard error of the estimate was 0.611. This is the difference between the observed and the predicted values of political governance from the regression model. The value is indicative of a reasonable level of predictive accuracy when considering the study.

The overall model shows that youth engagement practices have a moderate joint association with political governance in Mombasa County. It offers empirical evidence that youth representation, public participation, youth-led advocacy and youth resource mobilization are relevant to political governance, and that other factors are also relevant to outcomes of governance. The study thus fills a void that provides an important empirical basis for understanding the contribution of youth engagement practices to political governance in Mombasa County.

4.5.2.2 ANOVA Results

Table 13: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28.023	4	7.006	18.770	0.000
Residual	62.369	167	0.374		
Total	90.392	171			

Source: Researcher (2026)

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 167) = 18.770$, $p < .001$. The regression sum of squares was 28.023, while the residual sum of squares was 62.369. The regression mean square was 7.006 compared with a residual mean square of 0.374. These results show that the model provided a statistically significant explanation of variations in political governance.

The significance value of $p < .001$ is below the 0.05 level of significance. This provides sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis that youth representation, has no significant relationship with political governance when considered together. The results therefore demonstrate that the four youth engagement practices collectively have a statistically significant relationship with political governance in Mombasa County.

The F-statistic of 18.770 further indicates that the overall regression model was statistically meaningful. This means that the combined contribution of youth representation, public participation, youth-led advocacy and resource mobilization is significant in explaining political governance among the respondents. The result provides empirical support for the study's focus on youth engagement practices as factors associated with political governance in Mombasa County.

4.5.2.3 Regression Coefficients

Table 14: Multiple Regression Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Constant	1.383	0.259		5.350	0.000
Youth Representation	0.082	0.086	0.078	0.956	0.340

Source: Researcher (2026)

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to look at the association between each youth representation and political governance, while holding the other variables in the model constant. The results are explained based on the coefficients, t-values and the significance levels shown in Table 27.

Youth representation recorded ($\beta = 0.078$, $t = 0.956$ and $p = 0.340$). The positive coefficient indicates that an increase in youth representation is associated with an increase in political governance when the other variables are held constant. However, the relationship was not statistically significant because the p-value was above the 0.05 level. This indicates that the study did not establish sufficient statistical evidence of a significant relationship between youth representation and political governance within the model. A one-unit increase in youth representation is associated with a 0.082-unit increase in political governance, although this relationship was not statistically significant.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1: Introduction

This chapter contains the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The findings and analysis from Chapter Four inform the conclusions, which are based on the objectives of the study. The study aimed at analyzing the effect of youth involvement practices on political governance in Mombasa County, Kenya. Recommendations and suggestions for further research based on the findings of the study are also made in the chapter.

Summary of findings.

The study found that youth representation has a role to play in political governance in Mombasa County but this role alone does not yield remarkable governance outcomes. The findings showed that there was a relatively low perception of youth representation in the county governance structures. Participants expressed concern about county leadership structures that are independent and accountable, about clear pathways to youth leadership and about the representation of youth in county governance structures. While youth representation was positively associated with political governance, its influence was not significant when considered alongside other dimensions of youth engagement. This study thus indicates that while young people are included in governance structures, this is not always linked to better governance outcomes if other aspects of youth engagement are taken into account.

The study also provided a basis that public involvement positively affects political governance in Mombasa County. Respondents noted that there are opportunities for public participation and that they feel like they can make a contribution at public forums. However, concerns were raised regarding the extent to which youth views are incorporated into the final decisions and the limited feedback provided after the public process of participation. This finding thus shows that meaningful participation in governance processes enhances political governance.

Moderate challenges were identified for youth participation in political governance in relation to resource mobilization. The lack of information regarding available opportunities and limited personal financial resources were the most prominent barriers, and the lack of skills and knowledge, mentorship and community support were also cited as barriers. The correlation analysis revealed that political governance and resource mobilization did not have a strong positive correlation. This implies that while resources may be important in enabling youth to participate, there is no statistical relationship between resource mobilization and political governance in the study context.

Overall, the study found that youth engagement practices as a whole are significantly related to political governance in Mombasa County. The findings revealed that together, youth representation, public participation, youth-led advocacy and resource mobilization have an influence on political governance although it varies across the different dimensions. The relationships between public participation, youth-led advocacy and political governance were statistically significant and positive, but youth representation and resource mobilization were not.

The results therefore suggest that there is a relationship between active forms of youth engagement and political governance outcomes in Mombasa County, such as governance through participation in governance processes and youth-led advocacy.

5.3: Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that youth representation is a determinant on political governance in Mombasa County, but was not statistically significant when analyzed with the other dimensions of youth engagement. Meaningful representation is more than having young people in leadership roles. The independence, accountability and influence of young leaders in governance structures needs to be improved.

The study concludes that the different aspects of youth engagement have varying impacts on political governance. The regression model is statistically significant and youth representation, participation of the public, youth-led advocacy and resource mobilization account for 31.0% of the variation in political governance. There are strong positive relationships with political governance with public participation and youth-led advocacy. Therefore, strengthening participatory spaces, youth-led advocacy platforms and institutional spaces for youth influence can help towards more inclusive, accountable and responsive political governance in Mombasa County.

5.4: Recommendations for policy and practice.

The County Government of Mombasa needs to enhance the institutional structures where youth can meaningfully represent themselves in County government. It should be more than just the number of young people in leadership, it is about making a clear and transparent roadmap for young people to move to leadership. The county should enhance mentorship initiatives and create accountability measures for youth leaders. Young leaders should also have the space to engage independently in decision making and to be able to champion issues of concern to young people. These measures would help to foster substantive youth participation and decrease the likelihood of youth participation being symbolic.

Mombasa County Government should also do more to involve the youth in public forums and other decision-making processes. Public forums should be planned at times and places convenient for young people and information about upcoming opportunities should be disseminated via easily-accessed platforms for youth. There is also a need to further develop feedback mechanisms that will illustrate the impact of young people's views and contributions in policies, plans and development decisions. This would enhance linkage between participation and decision-making, and transparency, accountability and trust in county governance processes.

There is also an urgent need to enhance access of youth to support services to join and engage in governance processes effectively. County Government, along with other stakeholders, should

ensure that information is shared in a timely fashion on avenues for public participation, leadership and civic engagement, and boost mentorship and capacity-building initiatives for youth. Special effort also needs to be made to decrease financial access constraints that may restrict participation. Descriptive results indicated that in terms of political governance, lack of information and financial resources are still significant obstacles to youth participation, although they were not statistically significant in the regression analysis. Ensuring greater access to these resources would then make governance more conducive to meaningful participation by youth. Lastly, there is a need to boost coordination efforts within the County Government of Mombasa and other pertinent stakeholders in supporting youth engagement through increased collaboration between government institutions, youth-led organizations, civil society organizations and development partners. This partnership would enhance the information sharing, mentorship, public participation and leadership development activities. A coordinated approach would also offer more regular opportunities for young people to be involved in governance institutions and to influence decision making processes. These measures would together enhance the quality of youth participation and improve the quality of political governance in Mombasa County, to be more inclusive, accountable, transparent and responsive to youth.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

Other factors likely to affect political governance of the youth should be investigated further as the four youth engagement practices investigated in this study only accounted for 31.0% of the variance in political governance. The political leadership, institutional responsiveness, political culture, socioeconomic conditions, access to technology and influences of political parties might also be included in future research to gain a fuller picture of the factors influencing youth participation and political governance.

Also, it would be interesting to explore why the youth representation was not statistically significant in the multiple regression model. Qualitative research may be conducted to gain insights into the experiences of young leaders and explore whether factors like weak decision-making power, political appointment, accountability and institutional mechanisms have an impact on young leaders' capacity to shape governance outcomes. This would give a better understanding of the gap between youth in leadership and their role in governance.

Lastly, there is a need to carry out similar studies in other counties in Kenya to find out if the patterns found in Mombasa County can be applied elsewhere. Comparative studies across counties could offer a wider picture of the influence of variations in political, institutional and socioeconomic conditions on youth engagement and political governance. Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to determine if trends in engaging youth over time have an impact on political governance outcomes.

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