

Challenges of youth participation in governance amid Commercialised politics: insights from Lukashya constituency, Zambia

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the challenges of youth participation in governance amid commercialised politics in Lukashya Constituency of Northern Province in Zambia. The specific objective was to determine the challenges faced by the youths involved in governance amid Commercialised Politics. To conduct this research, the researchers employed a qualitative approach under phenomenological design. Maximum variation sampling was used to sample 42 participants drawn from the three selected wards of Lukashya Constituency. Individual and focus group interview guides containing open-ended questions were used to collect qualitative data from the participants who were individually interviewed on face-to-face basis, and focus group discussions. Data was analysed thematically, based on themes that emerged from the huge amount of data collected. The study captured expensive nomination and adoption fees, expensive campaigns, exclusive organisational structure and candidate selection and inadequate civic education as key challenges faced by most young people to fully participate in governance. Findings of this study may inform policy and practice. The study recommends the need for the government through the Electoral Commission of Zambia to enhance civic education programs and political literacy in communities, beyond the classroom teaching, reduce adoption and nomination fees to allow more youths to participate in governance issues, for them to have a voice in matters such as; the amendment of the constitution to pave way for a proportional representation system, a measure to increase youth participation in national governance.

Keywords: Challenges, commercialized politics, governance, participation, youths

INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation in governance is an important element of good governance and a recipe for an inclusive political society. There is an increase in global attention to issues of representation and participation of young people in governance at parliamentary and local government levels, (Masooma and

Jimena, 2021, suggesting that young people have considerable potential. Despite this commitment and the growing interest among young people in taking part in the decision-making processes, young people's representation and participation in governance remain very low. Particularly in the National Assembly, the representation of young aged 30 is only 0.6% of Members of

Parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU], n.d.; UNICEF, n.d.).

Seemingly, in Zambia, youths continue to be marginalised in political and socioeconomic activities despite constituting a larger part of Zambia's population (CSO, 2022). The CSO (2022) report indicates that young people in the age range of 18-35 constitute 27.5 % while the older cohort in the age range of 41-65 constitutes a poultry 1.7 %. According to Rocha (2020), the cornerstone of good governance is inclusive participation in political processes by all actors including young people. This is because it determines the dynamics of the structure and distribution of political power and the consequent nature of political and economic institutions that shape the political and economic trajectory of the society (Smith, 2018). However, politics in Zambia like many other countries are highly commercialised (Banda, 2020), as such, youth participation in governance in Zambia has eroded with time. The participation of young people in governance remains limited and worrisome. The limited participation of young people in politics is attributed to the commercialisation of politics which has consequently resulted in various challenges for young people to participate in governance (Wardle,2016).

The commercialisation of politics in this study entails a highly expensive electoral process that requires one to spend huge amounts of money to participate as a political candidate (Mbanga,2015). Participation in this context, refers to the active involvement of young people in political and governance processes, which includes; running for office, engaging in campaigns, and influencing decision-making, amid commercialised politics.

Despite many studies such as; Dezelan *et al.*, 2023; Karlsson, 2017; Mbanga, 2015; and UNDP, 2012, demonstrating the importance of youth participation in governance, the participation of young people in governance is seriously threatened by multiple challenges. However, little was known regarding the actual challenges young people encounter in the political arena amid commercialised politics. Thus, it was imperative to conduct

this study to ascertain the specific challenges that young people faced in commercialised politics, focusing on three selected wards of the Lukashya Constituency in the Northern Province of Zambia. This research sought to address the question, 'What are the specific challenges of youth participation in governance amid commercialised politics in three selected wards of Lukashya Constituency of Northern Province in Zambia?'

Statement of the problem

The problem that this research sought to address resulted from commercialised politics (Ali 2020; Wahman 2022) which has hindered most youths from participating in governance issues in Zambia (Banda 2020). The Participation of youths running for local government and parliamentary offices remains low due to the commercialisation of Politics (Banda 2020). If the problem of commercialised politics is left unchecked, most youths will still be hindered from participating in governance. There is a need to decommercialise politics in Zambia to attain an inclusive political society where youths will have a fair chance and opportunity to participate in governance. However, many researchers such as Ali (2020) Banda (2020), Elis (2018), Guaba (2018) and Wahman (2022) have explored the importance of youth participation in governance and have also analysed the cost of politics, but there is still limited documented information on the specific challenges encountered by young people amid commercialised politics. Based on the gap identified regarding the dearth of literature on the challenges, it was important to conduct this study to ascertain the specific challenges youths faced in commercialised politics in Zambia. Hence, an attempt to address the problem and fill the gap identified in the literature.

Theoretical framework

The study was guided by the Elite Theory of Power. The elite theory is closely linked to Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and Robert Michels between 1848 and 1923. This theory posits the idea that power in society is held by a small number of individuals. These elites are

thought to come from the upper classes and often have access to more resources than others do. Elite theorists argue that these few individuals have control over key decision-making areas, such as politics, economics, education, and media (Johari, 2018).

The basic characteristics of this theory are that power is concentrated in the hands of the few elites who are unified while the non-elites are diverse and powerless. Elite theory opposes pluralism which emphasises how multiple major social groups and interests influence various forms of representation within more powerful sets of rulers thereby contributing to representative political outcomes that reflect the collective needs of society (Johari, 2018).

This study adopted the Elite Theory of Power because it relates well with the Zambian political society which is not very inclusive. Power is widely concentrated in the hands of the few economically sound old people leaving out the young ones who are financially weak despite constituting 36.7% of the country's population (UNICEF, n.d.; (UNFPA). (n.d.).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature has been reviewed from global, regional and local perspectives, regarding the importance of youth participation in governance and politics, the ability of youth to solve problems in governance, the extent of youth participation in governance and barriers involved in youth participation.

According to Gregory *et al.*, (2023), the term youth is generally used to refer to young people in the range of 18 to 35. In line with this age range and the CSO (2022) report, it is believed that the youth constitute a larger part of Zambia's population. This further entails that there is a need to involve them in various disciplines of governance. Gregory (2023) further guides that national governments should integrate youth policies and programmes and strengthen channels of communication so that young people are fully incorporated.

In Europe, Kitanova (2020) examined youth political participation in the European Union

(EU), exploring structural and social factors influencing engagement in both formal and informal activities. Using cross-national data from the European Social Survey (ESS) and Eurobarometer, the study highlights that education, political efficacy, and inclusive institutions enhance youth participation, while low trust in political systems leads to disengagement. Recommendations include promoting civic education, enhancing institutional inclusivity, and addressing systemic inequalities to encourage political engagement among youth. However, the study focuses primarily on developed democracies, overlooking contexts with political instability and socio-economic challenges.

Other European studies support these findings, with Hoskins and Mascherini (2009) emphasizing the role of civic competence and political engagement opportunities for youth in Europe, and Sloam (2016) exploring how political efficacy and digital platforms enhance youth engagement across EU states. While these insights align with Kitanova's conclusions, they do not account for challenges faced in less stable political contexts.

There is wide consensus of literature on the importance of youth participation and involvement in politics and governance. It is believed that youth participation and involvement in politics and governance help to build youth role models for other young people and marginalized groups encouraging them to participate in politics and even contest future elections (Bessant and Grasso, 2018).

Despite Bessant and Grasso (2018) demonstrating the significance of youth participation in governance, Gitahi *et al.*, (2019) note that youth participation in political processes in Africa is limited and often motivated by the need for entertainment and money such that many youths lose their candidature during campaigns as a result of lack of financial resources. This study is in agreement with the findings of the study above, except it seeks to add that young people have interest and the necessary civic skills required for them to take a leading role in governance, but they are hindered by

financial challenges coupled with other subsequential factors. There is a need to underscore the challenges encountered by young people leading to under-representation. Increasing youth participation in governance at local government and parliamentary levels will help in achieving a fair and inclusive political society.

Although political participation is important, scholars such as (Lahusen, 2021; Willoughby, *et al.*, 2021; Ellen, 2012) have argued that there is a need for citizens to have appropriate political attitudes. Political attitudes refer to an individual's or group's sentiments regarding certain political issues. Political attitudes shape citizen's interest in politics and a citizen's assessment of the performance of the local government councillor influences the ability and willingness to participate in processes that have an impact on governance

Lahusen (2021) documents six key political attitudes namely; passive, radical, reformer, conformist, populist and synthesizer. Each of these attitudes has a specific implication for society as a whole. The attitudes guide what action is to be taken during a particular time in governance. Although the above-reviewed study by Lahusen has provided sound guidance on important political attitudes necessary for political participation, there is a need for this study to add other factors that help effective participation such as interest and resources (time, money and strong civic skills like effective communication and analytical skills) and support anchored on public acceptance, accommodative policies and institutions(Lahusen, 2021).

In Africa, Abdulyakeen, (2021), conducted a study in Nigeria on Youth Participation in Democratization and Governance Processes. The scholar's study examines the barriers to youth participation in governance caused by commercialised politics, using mixed methods to gather data from youth and political stakeholders. Findings reveal that financial constraints, patronage, and corruption significantly hinder youth inclusion in governance, with recommendations

emphasising policy reforms, youth empowerment, and stricter laws to curb commercialisation. Similar studies across Africa, such as those by Egwu (2016) on "godfatherism" in Nigeria, demonstrate how financial patronage systems limit young leaders' opportunities in governance. Resnick and Casale (2011) in South Africa highlight the role of grassroots organisations in mobilising youth for municipal governance despite systemic exclusion. Meanwhile, Kanyinga and Long (2012) in Kenya underscore how high campaign costs disproportionately disadvantage young aspirants, reinforcing existing barriers to youth participation.

In Zambia, the participation of young people in governance is limited and seasonal due to various challenges that they encounter in a bid to take part in governance especially contesting for seats such as council chairman or member of parliament (Phiri, 2018; and Zangh, 2020). Despite the National Youth Policy (2015), advocating for youth participation in elections at various levels, the policy has undermined the challenges faced by young people as a result of commercialised politics yet most young people are rural-based and only engaged in subsistence farming without decently paid jobs to enable them to participate directly as candidates (Bessant and Grasso, 2022).

Although the literature reviewed above clearly demonstrates the importance of youth participation in governance, there is a need to understand the challenges and barriers to effective youth participation in governance especially in the era of commercialised politics.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach under phenomenological design (Young *et al.*, 2020). Maximum variation sampling (Hamed, 2022; Robert: 2018), was used to sample 42 participants drawn from the three selected wards of Lukashya Constituency. To arrive at the sample size of 42. Creswell (2014) suggests that qualitative studies often involve

smaller sample sizes, typically ranging between 5 and 50 participants, depending on the research design, as such, this study arrived at a sample size of 42 in that it adopted a phenomenological design where participants had similar characteristics. Interview and focus group guides containing open-ended questions were used to collect qualitative data from 18 participants who were individually interviewed on a face-to-face basis. The other 24 participated in three focus group discussions, one group containing 8 members (Ghosh, 2018), from each of the three selected wards. The 18 individuals individually interviewed were arrived at based on the saturation method (Kivunja, 2023). According to Kivunja, (2023), data saturation can be reached by interviewing between 12 and 24 individuals, and conducting 3 to 6 focus groups (Guest, Namey, and McKenna, 2017; Krueger and Casey, 2015), respectively. Data was analysed thematically, based on themes that emerged from the huge amount of data collected (Ivankova, Plano, and Clark, 2018). The trustworthiness of the data collected was achieved through triangulation (Ahmet and Surucu 2020, Ghosh, 2018, Lawrence, 2018).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study carefully observed and adhered to such ethical precepts as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity at all stages of this study in order to give trust and confidence to respondents and participants (Kumar and Mandhar, 2020 and Kang, 2023).

STUDY FINDINGS

In this section, the study findings are presented based on specific challenges of youth participation in governance amid commercialised politics in the Lukashya Constituency of Northern Province in Zambia, following the objective that this study sought to achieve. The themes that emerged from the huge qualitative data were: lack of adequate civic education and political literacy, organisational structure and biased candidate selection process, expensive adoption process, expensive nomination fees, expensive electoral campaigns, lack of solidarity among the youth, lack of political interest, low levels

of education and poor performance, lack of resources and unemployment. The aforementioned themes have been presented in the subsequent sections below:

Lack of Civic Education and Political Literacy

Civic education and political illiteracy as a theme emerged as a challenge facing young people in governance. The theme was reported in terms of limited awareness among the youth about their civic rights, roles, and responsibilities, as well as an inadequate understanding of political systems and governance structures, which often leads to apathy and let-down. Many young people also depend on political patronage, viewing politics as transactional and dominated by money, which discourages genuine engagement. Additionally, insufficient access to civic education leaves the youth vulnerable to misinformation, propaganda, and exploitation by politicians.

In line with the above theme, male participant number 8 during the face-to-face interview stated that:

Citizens need to be politically knowledgeable to be able to analyse policies and political trends to guard against undemocratic tenets, norms, actions and ideals that may not be in the interest of good governance. Political literacy is very important in the modern political world which most of us youths are lacking.

In support of the above quote, a female participant number 17 during the face-to-interview had the following views:

There is a lack of serious civic education among the youth which is necessary to raise awareness about their rights, freedoms and roles in governance. Lack of civic education makes the majority of youths to depend on their adult leaders who seem to have no intentions of relinquishing power to younger generations. As a result of this, young people are usually misled or simply manipulated to remain tools of political violence.

Organisational Structure and Candidate Selection Process

This constraint came out in the study, during the focus group discussion, that due to centralised party organisational structure such as the National Executive and Central Committees and strong hierarchical culture in political parties, a low number of youths serve in the leadership positions in parties' organisational structure. The older politicians occupy almost all leadership positions within the parties, even in the youth wing itself. As for the youth, they only occupy positions that do not grant them access to the policy-making process. According to the youth respondents, the hierarchical culture impacts the parties' character which tends to be unfriendly towards the youth.

In line with the above finding, female participant number 1 asserted that:

The parties are structured in a way that automatically marginalises the youth from national executive committees, where key policies and decisions are made such as adoptions...

Political parties are highly centralised and have demonstrated less inclusive leadership selection processes. Undemocratic and unrepresentative leadership selection processes, therefore, have significant and often negative consequences on party unity and cohesion. This constraint is compounded by the growing trend that party positions in political parties in Zambia are usually divided between the party elites, usually among founders and those with the financial ability to sponsor party programmes and to put up robust and financially competitive campaigns in the era of commercialised politics in Zambia and Lukashya Constituency in particular.

Expensive Adoption Cost

The study established that seeking adoption on a party ticket is equally very expensive for candidates wishing to participate in an election on a political party of their choice. Political parties usually charge exorbitant nonrefundable application fees. This is coupled with travel expenses for scheduled

interviews at constituency, district and provincial levels. Therefore, one ought to be financially sound to secure their adoption into a political party of their choice.

However, one female participant during a focus group discussion in Ward 3 argued that:

Candidates are also subjected to compliance costs. These costs come in the form of contributions to political party functions such that the fees become compelling for candidates seeking adoptions. Thus, candidates are left with no choice, but to part away with such funds demanded by the party leadership to show compliance.

Expensive Nomination Fees

Expensive nomination fees refer to the high costs associated with registering as a candidate in an election. These fees can include the payment required to submit candidacy documents, secure endorsement from political parties, or fulfil other legal and administrative requirements to run for a political office. High nomination fees can serve as a barrier, particularly for youth or individuals with limited financial resources, preventing them from participating in the electoral process. Such fees often favour wealthier candidates, reinforcing the influence of money in politics and reducing the chances of fair competition.

In line with the above theme, one of the male youths in Ward 2 during a focus group discussion had the following to say:

As a young person, the nomination fees are simply too high for me to afford. It's discouraging because we have ideas and the passion to make a change, but the financial barrier keeps us out. Older candidates, who have more resources, easily go through this process, leaving young people like me sidelined.

Within the same line of thought, a female youth party representative stated as follows:

The nomination fees are a big challenge for young people like me. It feels like the system is designed for those who

already have money, not for those of us trying to break into politics with fresh ideas. Without the financial backing, it's nearly impossible to compete.

The above responses show how most youths are unable to manage the nomination fees to enable them to compete in governance positions. They reflect the sentiments of youth facing financial challenges in the political process due to high nomination fees

Expensive Electoral Campaigns

This study established the cost of electoral campaigns as one of the notable impediments challenging youth participation in governance. The study found that political campaigns are very expensive and require someone with strong financial muscle to compete with financially sound opponents. A candidate is required to campaign in vast electoral wards and constituencies. This also demands to set aside sufficient funds for running adverts on radio stations, Television and other powerful means of reaching the electorate. For example, Mano and Lutanda radios in Kasama charged not less than K5,000=00 for air space to political candidates who sought their services for each one-hour political interview. Political adverts also could not cost less than K500=00.

In line with the above, one female participant during the focus group discussion in ward 3 stated that:

A particular candidate has to secure political materials such as 'chitenges' (wrappers) and well-branded T-shirts to help them in advertising and paying campaign staff like consultants and political strategists.

Lack of Solidarity among Young People

During this study, it was established that one of the challenges young people encounter in an attempt to participate in governance through national politics or elections is a lack of solidarity from fellow young people. However, several reasons why young people may not fully support fellow youth political candidates in the electoral process were advanced by respondents.

One participant during the focus group discussion in Ward 1 contended that:

Lack of experience is a critical reason associated with a lack of solidarity among youths who express interest in taking part in politics. Young political candidates are perceived as novices who lack the necessary experience and knowledge required to lead others...

Based on the above quote, youths usually find it easier to rally behind old political candidates rather than their fellow young contestants in the electoral process. However, the study did not establish fully the reasons why young people support old candidates due to their financial influence or not. It, therefore, remains a speculation of this study that this trend is a result of youth candidates lacking the financial capacity to secure the necessary support of their fellow young people.

Poor Performance

Related to and reinforcing the foregoing constraint is the constraint of low education levels among the youth. The majority of the youth politicians in Zambia usually underperform when entrusted with leadership.

Another participant during an individual face-to-face interview from ward 1 stated that:

Wards and constituencies are very wide under one leader yet resources required to develop such territories remain limited...

Lack of Resources and Unemployment

Lack of financial resources compounded by high unemployment levels among the youth was the major constraint that came out prominent in almost all the categories of the participants. Most youths lamented that the youths who aspire for leadership positions in political parties were not in formal employment and generally lacked financial soundness compared to older politicians who compete for those positions. This emerged as a disadvantage among others. They submitted that youth who aspire to leadership positions in political parties require the

utilisation of financial resources to campaign for the same.

The above response was more pronounced by a political party representative number 2 during the face-to-face interview who pointed out that:

Due to high unemployment and poverty levels among the youth in Zambia, they are often used by older politicians as tools of intimidation and violence instead of aspiring for political leadership.

The prevalence of unemployment leads to many youths not being able to have adequate resources to contest for leadership positions in national elections against resource-rich older politicians. The youth are relegated to slogan chanting and individual promoters of those with a bit of political clout and finances.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to ascertain the specific challenges faced by the youths involved in governance amid commercialised politics in Zambia. In addressing this objective and its research question, the following were established as key challenges that hinder youth participation in governance as contestants in mayoral and parliamentary positions. It was observed that lack of Civic Education and political literacy, organisational structure and biased candidate selection process, expensive adoption process, expensive nomination fees, expensive electoral campaigns, lack of solidarity among the youth, low levels of education and poor performance, lack of resources and unemployment were major challenges hindering youth participation in governance.

Lack of civic education among the youth is one of the challenges facing young people as they endeavour to participate in governance. Young people lack adequate civic education and political literacy to appreciate either their political rights or the need to participate in governance. In line with the above finding, civic education is viewed to provide the

necessary political knowledge, and analytical and disposition skills that young people need for effective participation in governance and contemporary politics (Mtonga *et al.*, 2024; Mtonga and Magasu, 2024a). Arising from the findings on the lack of civic education, there is a need that educators in schools to ensure that Civic Education is taught as a compulsory subject for young people to be equipped with the necessary knowledge in line with a study conducted by Mtonga and Magasu, (2024b). Civic education helps young people to avoid manipulation from sophisticated old politicians. This finding is in line with the work of Lahusen (2021) in which he encourages the formation of political attitudes to participate in Governance.

Exclusive Organisational structure and candidate selection process constraint came out as a theme in the study, that due to centralised party organisational structure such as the National Executive, Central Committees and strong hierarchical culture in political parties, a low number of youths is adopted during primary elections to stand as party candidates during national elections for positions such as Members of parliament. Non-adoption of young people by most political parties is consistent with the report of Ntsabane (2018) which indicates that character becomes unfriendly towards the youth during adoptions since young people have no numbers in Central committees to influence the process and decisions.

The study also has established that seeking adoption on a party ticket is equally very expensive for candidates wishing to participate in an election. Political parties usually charge exorbitant nonrefundable application fees. This is coupled with travel expenses for scheduled interviews at constituency, district and provincial levels. Therefore, one ought to be financially sound to secure their adoption. Adoption fees are usually accompanied by compliance fees where candidates are required to fund party activities. This finding satisfies the Elite theory and the financial well-being of those who aspire for positions (Johari, 2018).

Young people also face the challenge of expensive nomination fees where the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) has since 2016 increased nomination fees exorbitantly making it financially decapitating for many struggling youths. For example, in 2021 there was a surge in nomination fees for Zambia's 2021 general elections. Presidential Fees were increased to K150,000 (\$ 8,260) from K60,000 while nomination fees for parliamentary candidates increased to K25,000 from K7,500, the same for those vying for mayorship (Wahman, 2022). By interpretation, this means that only the elite can participate in governance and it makes it difficult to achieve a democratic and inclusive political society

This study further identified the cost of electoral campaigns as one of the notable impediments challenging youth participation in governance. Political campaigns are very expensive and require someone with strong financial muscle to compete with financially sound opponents. A candidate is required to campaign in vast electoral wards and constituencies. This also demands to set aside sufficient funds for running adverts on radio stations and television and to secure political materials to attract the electorate.

During this study, it was established that one of the challenges young people encounter in an attempt to participate in governance through national politics or elections is a lack of solidarity from fellow young people. This is partly due to the belief that young people lack experience. Not only do the youth electorate perceive their fellow young candidates as novices, but also believe young candidates lack the necessary financial capacity to win elections. This also favours old competitors coming from the Elite Class.

Poor performance is another key challenge facing young people in governance. Resources for development are limited to cater for various development needs in their jurisdiction. The majority of youth politicians in Zambia usually underperform when entrusted with leadership at the ward or parliamentary level. One of the reasons attributed to underperformance is that wards

and constituencies are very wide under one leader yet resources required to develop such territories remain limited. For example, all the nine wards in the Lukashya constituency are vast yet they all have development priority projects that all depend on a limited Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

Lack of financial resources is rampant among the youth as findings have shown. Most young people are not employed while a majority of those in employment are underemployed. Obviously, this makes it difficult for the youth to raise resources needed for political investment such as adoption, nomination and campaigns in commercialised politics. Like other factors, this too gives an advantage to those with money to go through.

CONCLUSION

The study has revealed some challenges faced by the youths involved in governance amid commercialised politics in the Lukashya constituency in the Northern Province of Zambia. The number of youths serving in national leadership portfolios is very low because political leaders are not open to the concerns, interests, and involvement of young people despite their significance in the country's electoral process as they constitute the majority in number. The participation of young people in governance amid commercialised politics is almost relegated to mere voting. Concerning candidate adoption and nomination processes, the study established that it is very difficult for young people to take part in governance since they face serious financial challenges. The personal limitation factors include lack of interest because the satisfaction of the youth regarding the performance of politicians in Zambia was low. This scenario made them disinterested in politics and political leadership. This was because the political landscape in Zambia was characterised by political violence and corruption where competitors were willing to do anything to acquire power. Addressing these issues would require targeted policy interventions, promoting inclusivity, enhancing civic education, and creating platforms that may

empower the youth to engage more effectively in the political process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made based on the key findings:

1. The Electoral Commission of Zambia should come up with a law to regulate campaign financing through parliament. This will help to reduce the commercialisation of politics and elections which has been cited as a hindrance to youth participation in politics.
2. The government through the Electoral Commission of Zambia should consider reducing nomination fees to allow more youths to participate and compete for elective positions.
3. Political Parties should also remove requirements for adoption fees for young people contesting for the first time and those who have not won elections before or make primaries as cheap as possible.
4. The government should facilitate the amendment of the constitution to introduce a proportional representation electoral system. This may increase the number of youth in parliament compared to the current system.
5. The government should roll out Community Civic education or Political Literacy to fight negative cultural norms and stereotypes that challenge youth participation in governance.

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