

Is Political Disengagement the Fault of the Youth?

This study examines whether youth political disengagement is caused only by young people's lack of interest or by broader structural factors. Although low voter turnout among youth is often criticized, election data show that turnout has declined across all age groups, suggesting that the problem extends beyond the younger generation.

Two key factors help explain this trend. First, the sense of duty to vote appears to have weakened over time. While older generations may view voting as a social responsibility, younger generations despite greater access to information through digital media may feel less obligated to participate.

Second, changes in cabinet approval ratings show a possible connection with voter turnout. In several cases, turnout increased when approval ratings declined from the previous year, whereas it decreased when approval ratings rose. Although this pattern does not prove causation, it suggests that shifts in public evaluation of the government may influence citizens' motivation to vote.

In addition to these trends, structural issues also discourage participation. A lack of transparency in politics, sometimes described as a "*Black Box*", reduces public trust. At the same time, while social media makes political information more accessible, it requires strong information literacy to avoid misinformation.

An interview with a former city council member further highlights that each vote represents the people's will and that politics directly shapes daily life. Therefore, this study proposes a four-step cycle using social media to promote reliable information, discussion, action, and continued engagement.

Overall, youth political disengagement is shaped not only by individual attitudes but also by institutional and social conditions. Strengthening transparency and political communication is essential for a healthier and more inclusive democratic society. Reconsidering youth disengagement as a structural issue rather than a generational flaw is key to building such a society.