

THE ROLE OF PARENTS' PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENS NORMS IN YOUTH'S CIVIC PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of parents' participation and citizens norms on civic participation of youth. Three hundred and seventy five (375) students from three universities located in the northwest region of Nigeria participated in the study through stratified proportionate method. They completed a questionnaire that anchored on a 5- Likert-scale. This quantitative study administered the instruments in a cross-sectional survey. The SmartPLS 3 software was utilized in analyzing the data collected. The results supported the hypothesized direct effect of parents' participation, dutiful norms, and engaged norms on students' civic participation. This suggests a substantial effect, thus extending empirical research in the civic participation sphere.

Keywords: Parents' participation; citizens norms; civic participation; university students; Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM).

INTRODUCTION

The participation of youngsters in civic and political affairs according to scholars like Flaganan (2010) and Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins and Delli Carpini (2006) has been the hub of studies across diverse disciplines (sociology, psychology, political science, and education) recently. The powerful thesis about a crisis in participation levels has been considered very often as an unquestionable fact for many researchers, policy makers and citizens (Morrell, 2005). Putnam's description of American society as disconnected from family, associates, neighbours and democratic structures, contributed mainly to this image about society (Putnam, 2001).

Participation is defined as taking part in an event of public interest (Talò & Mannarini, 2014). Civic participation covers a wide array of activities in which citizens participate in the prescribed and informal political processes that address communal needs, searching for how to improve the worth of life for persons, groups and the whole society. Thus, it is argued that autonomous structure as well as the basis of civil society are strengthened via civic participation (Putnam, 2001) by promoting persons' assurance of civil skills (Van der Meer & Van Ingen, 2009). Civic participation equally creates cohesion within people (Mayer 2003) and makes those who partake speak in the identity of de-privileged groups.

Preceding literature indicates a positive relationship between parental civic activities and that of their siblings in the United States (Andolina, Jenkins, Zukin, & Keeter, 2003; Beck & Jennings, 1982). Likewise, in some particular nations of Europe (Cicognani, Zani, Fournier, Gavray, & Born, 2012; Sani & Quaranta, 2015). In particular, very little is acknowledged on the relationship stuck between the civic participation of parents and children in recently democratized nation (Nigeria). This research fills the study gap via emphasising the relationship between the civic involvement of parents and their young adult children in three

northwest (Nigerian) universities. Hence, understanding the role of parents in civic participation is imperative because the findings of the previous studies can be extended to Nigerian context.

Extant studies point towards civil activities of citizens as determined by various societal situations (education, parental rearing and ethnic values). That is, each of these determines to some level how youngsters behave when they interact with their contemporaries. Though, essential measures have been taken to recognize how committed they are, as well as being confident. However, lots of the phenomenon has remained unclear. That connotes, not much evidence was provided on the effect of common civil actions of students. This reveals that the link among civic participation, parents' participation, and citizens norms have frequently been studied in isolation. Thus, limiting our understandings of how these factors relate to inspire students' civic participation.

Based on the import accredited to the different forms of engagement in the perception of civic participation, as well as the limited chances of young adults to participate as active citizens even as they are mostly of age, scholars have frequently focused on their potentials to participate instead of their actual behaviours, in view of potential predictive engagement. Many scholarships on particular forms of political participation focused on political discussion and voting to examine the effects of citizens norms and parents' participation. Although, voting did not offer sufficient information about the effect on students' overall civic commitment (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014). This perhaps was because it did not put into consideration the various newer forms of civic and political participation thus, needs clarification. This article investigates the effect of parents' participation and citizens' norms on civic participation in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Civic Participation

The phrase 'civic' participation indicates voluntary activity that focused people helping others willingly in their community to accomplish a public good (Zukin et al. 2006) through resolving an issue of concern. That is, civic participation is advanced as a form of (latent) political participation relating to a kind of political concern for involvement in trade unions, political parties, and other pressure groups that shield diverse individual welfare (Ekman & Amna, 2012; Martiniello, 2009).

Civic participation signifies activities like politics within the societal context and comprises of recognized and casual groupings or organization's membership, individual actions, voluntary activities, political activities aimed at bringing societal progress. However, there is no conformity on a particular explanation of civic participation, because it has been frequently mixed with civic engagement as Zaff, Boyd, Li, Lerner, & Lerner, (2008) stated. This research study adopts an operational definition akin to the one provided by Starosta (2010) which focuses on the manifestations of civic behaviours. This indicates civic participation is viewed as activity accomplished by citizens' actions in the political, associative as well as communal spheres from the behavioural approach.

Civic participation is essential in determining the level of involvement needed to result in other constructive behavioural changes for young people. Thus, assessing the regularity of civic involvement provides an opportunity to examine whether the correlation is strong or weak. This implies whether youth can become under or over-involved civically. Besides,

most studies that have examined civic participation have not considered the means by which youngsters may benefit from involvement. Studies by scholars like Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, (2000) have established that participation strengthens positive social values as well as potential civic activity. While, others like Campbell (2005) and Hope & Jagers, (2014) have stated that it lessens the unstructured free time that youths might otherwise engage in counterproductive ways. This study focuses parental participation and citizens norms may interrelate to enhance youth's civic participation.

Civic participation is perceived as an individual or collective action in form of collaboration or joint action intended to ascertain how people can be able to solve problems that bother them in their immediate and distant environment (Weissberg, 2005). Besides, Lenzi, Vieno, Pastore, and Santinello (2013) visualise civic participation as how a person becomes engaged civically. This implies, having a sense of duty that determines how someone contributes to the wellness and progress of his society. For example, this could be through voluntary service in the community or formal activism.

Given this, civic participation can be seen as the enthusiasm or passion with which an individual partakes in the active role of citizenship, being bothered about other people's wellbeing at both the individual and societal levels (Ekman & Amna, 2010; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998). Consequently, civic participation is considered as a process in making vital judgment in and for the society. Also, it is one of the focal values of democratic system, since it is the citizens' rights and responsibilities to be concerned about the community. Thus, civic participation facilitates useful democratic decisions in a community.

Parents' Participation and Civic Participation

Some scholars have acknowledged parents as a basic socialization agency which instils societal and political attitudes in offspring. Several studies have established likeness between parents and children in terms of political engagement (Niemi & Hepburn, 1995) civic behaviours (Andolina et al., 2003), and attitudes (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009). Parents that act as character models, reinforce volunteering behavior in their offspring, as well as partake in common civil activities with their children and have children that are expected to get engaged in civil activities either voluntarily or otherwise as scholars like Dunham & Bengston, (1992); Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, (1998); Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, (2000) acknowledged.

Based on empirical literature, parents' participation in civic activities is purported to influence adolescents' decision to engage in civic participation (Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, 2000). In other words, there is a body of scholarship describing the relationship between parental participation and various forms of civil participation. Perhaps the most robust research in this area has come from analyses of a study among (4,057) Chicago students on if civic learning promoted prominent development in commitments to civil participation, Kahne (2008) observed that parents' who act and talk about contemporary actions and politics with their children impacted on their degree of commitments to civic participation which ultimately boost their efficacy belief.

Putnam (2001) acknowledged Parental and familial connections as an essential factor that constantly predicts civic participation. This became obvious when Rabaglietti et al. (2012) in a study of 175 samples on the link among family support, youth values and group

participation (volunteering) practising productive activities reported that a positive relationship existed between the impact of parents and the values students hold in civic related activities. Thus, explains that family is an important agent responsible for instilling positive values and determining the civic attitudes and worth of their adult children.

In addition, Duke, Skay, Pettingell, and Borowsky (2009) demonstrated that parents' participation has a significant connection with the way youths perceive their social ideas, tasks and volunteering. To put simply, parents function as role models to their children when it comes to instilling democratic values of respect, tolerance, cooperation, hard work and loyalty, this in turn illustrates to siblings how to apply as well as conform by it.

Sani and Quaranta (2015) on another hand reiterated a significant positive effect of parents' role especially that of mothers on their youngsters' behaviours in political activities when they conducted a study on if parents' participation was related with that of their children's participation. This is evident in a context where mothers were not protagonists in political life and yet are responsible for most children's upbringing. In partial opposition to political learning literature, parental education is not related with children's participation once parental participation is controlled for. Thus, implies that what is more pertinent to predict the engagement of Italian children is indeed what parents do politically, not their educational resources. However, only a few studies have examined the significant role of parents in determining youths' decision to engage in civic activities.

Ha (1): There is a significant positive relationship between parents' participation and civic participation.

Citizens Norm and Civic Participation

Studies considering citizenship as a predictor of participation considered norms of citizenship as the perceived set of rights and of responsibilities (Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2009), which comprises civic, political and social elements. Furthermore, the definition of citizenship implies the possibility that citizenship norms vary across nations in terms of forms, strength and relationship with forms of participation (Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2013). Dalton (2008) states that norms of citizenship are the set of norms of what individuals think they should do as good citizens, and thus they are essential to understanding the civil behaviour of people.

Extant studies propose citizenship norms as a factor that elucidates civic participation. More so, literature on civic engagement has recognized the vital role citizenship norms play in illuminating the dynamics of people's behaviors in both social and political life (Dalton, 2006). Likewise, Campbell (2005) was supportive when he discovered that citizens norms increased students' partaking in civil activities. That is, such norms encouraged students' interest in civic duty in the course of service learning and activism.

While using data from America, Copeland (2014) established citizens' norms as explaining the bond involving political consumption like (boycotting and buycotting) which is a form of civil participation. This further reveals changing norms of citizens clearly expressed the import of current civil involvement rather than the long-established factors like income, interest and education. Aptly put, patterns of civic participation is obviously changing, in part because notions about politics and citizenship are as well altering. Following this perspective, recently some authors have started to include views about politics, and particularly visions about society and a "good citizen", as predictors of participation.

The main argument is that if people will engage in politics and public affairs in ways consistent with their norms of citizenship (van Deth, 2007), patterns of participation may be changing because norms of citizenship also changed (Bilewicz & Wójcik, 2010; Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2009; 2013; Dalton, 2008; Rahim, Pawanteh, & Salman, 2012). As citizenship norms may shape expectations of our role as citizen in political processes, or even the role of government and institutions, it is necessary to consider what specific values predict current patterns of participation (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

More so, Bolzendahl and Coffé (2013) with Theiss-Morse and Hibbing (2005) support this notion and propose that measures of citizens norms are central to explaining disparity in participatory behaviour. In spite of its relevance, few studies have investigated the link between various citizenship norms and different modes of political behaviour in detail (Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2013). However, the studies that have done so, found similar results about the role of citizenship norms in citizens' participation (Ahmadu, Don, and Amzat, 2016).

Dalton (2008); Hooghe and Oser (2015); Rahim, Pawanteh and Salman (2012) and Scheidegger and Staerklé (2011) identified a twofold dimension of citizens norms (i.e. engaged and duty) that can impact on peoples' behavioural attitude to civil participation. As proposed by Copeland (2014) as well as Raney and Berdahl (2009) since norms of engaged citizenship influence civic and political conducts it therefore becomes an essential aspect of democratic citizenship.

Although, research often links civic duty to a concern for community, Dalton argues that concern for community relates more strongly to engaged citizenship than to citizen's duty. He suggests further that these norms reflect contrasting views of what being a "good citizen" means, subsequently producing qualitatively different effects on general behaviour of politics (Dalton, 2008). For instance, scholars like Dalton (2008) and Nygård and Jakobsson (2013) established an affirmative link amid older Americans' citizen duty activities (voting) that is counterbalanced by an increase in engaged citizenship and more direct forms of activity (such as protesting), especially among the youngsters and better educated.

Given this, the engaged norms of citizenship is mainly preoccupied with an individual's notion of participatory acts. That is more of a personal ideals considered meaningful. For example, being involved with student unionism, whether as an adherent or a leader on campus. Apart from union membership a person might be interested to belong to a choice association (i.e. tribal or religious) based on his social or spiritual inclination. More so, citizen movement is another area where a person joins union for the sake of mounting pressure on organisations or government to comply with civic decisions, thus, a correlate of civic participation. Hence, this study hypothesized that citizens norms is positively related to civic participation.

Ha (2): There is a significant positive relationship between dutiful norms and civic participation.

Ha(3): There is a significant positive relationship between engaged norms and civic participation.

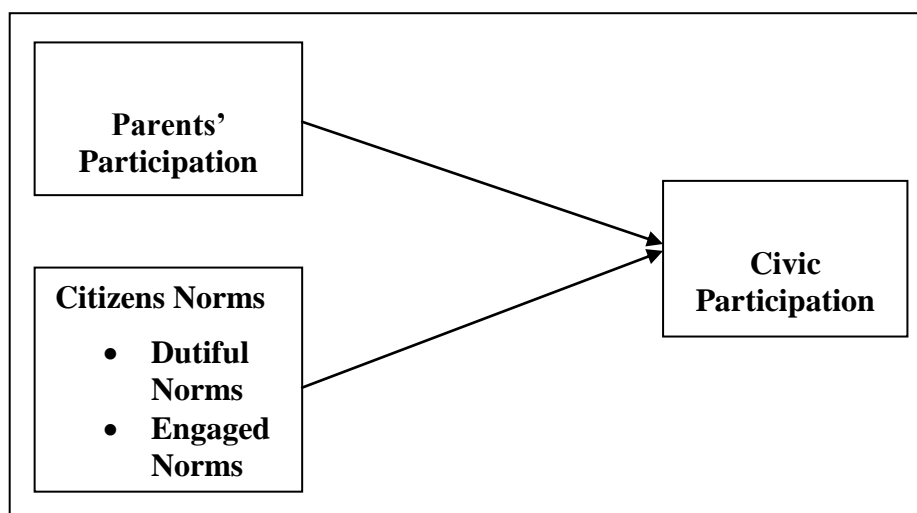


Figure 1: Research framework

Methodology

In a survey research, questionnaire were administered and collected from a population sample of 375 students drawn from three diverse Nigerian universities. These institutions entail Bayero University; Umaru Musa Yar'adua University; and Usman Danfodio University. The respondents have all participated in the compulsory citizenship course offered by the University. Items of the variables in this study was adapted from different sources.

Items for the perception of Parents' Participation was adapted from (Weber, Weber, Sleeper, & Schneider, 2004) having 6-items assessed by a 5-point Likert-type instrument of 'strongly disagree' as (1) and 'strongly agree' as (5). The measure for the citizenship norms dimensions (i.e. dutiful) was adapted from Howard et al. (2005), has 5-items. While, engaged citizens norms has seven items adapted from Scheidegger & Staerklé (2011). Thus, these (12) items are measured by a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagree (1), and strongly agree (5) respectively. The 8-items that measured civic participation was adapted from Schulz & Sibberns (2004) such as "I take part in a peaceful march or rally".

After measuring items on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree =1, strongly agree =5. Analysis was conducted with SmartPLS 2.0 where we approximated the model's measurement through all the necessary requirements for measurement and there after the model was assessed structurally.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

In assessing the model, items loadings were checked and only those items that loaded above the threshold value of 0.70 were maintained as suggested by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Conversely, the internal consistency was calculated by composite reliability, having reached the satisfied criteria, the minimum is .78 and the maximum is .85. Further, in examining the constructs' Average Variance Extracted (AVE), all values indicated they have met the least requisite of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) with the values that ranged from .524 to .583.

Construct validity is basically ascertained when measuring a model prior to calculating the model structurally that aims at testing the hypotheses. Given that the measurement model

encompasses relationships concerning the latent constructs with their indicators. Thus, the entire items in the measuring model need to exhibit ample convergent and discriminant validity as a circumstance for ascertaining how valid the constructs are. As recommended by Hair, Tatham, Anderson, & Black, (2006) factor loadings, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were used to assess convergent validity. Besides, Table 1 enumerates the loadings of indicators, reliabilities as well as the AVE for all the items registered in the model. To put simply, all constructs' (composite) reliability values demonstrated they exceeded the proposed norm (0.70) as they were checked (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009; Ringle, 2006). In particular, the values of latent variables are between .78 and .85 which Hair *et al.*, (2014) sees as satisfactory reliability.

Table 1 Factor Loadings and Reliability (Measurement Model Results)

Constructs	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Parents' Participation		0.814	0.525
PP01	0.688		
PP04	0.625		
PP05	0.797		
PP06	0.775		
Dutiful Norms		0.807	0.583
DN02	0.709		
DN04	0.799		
DN05	0.780		
Engaged Norms		0.771	0.531
EN05	0.650		
EN06	0.705		
EN07	0.821		
Civic Participation		0.846	0.524
CP01	0.712		
CP02	0.756		
CP04	0.769		
CP06	0.722		
CP08	0.652		

We recognized and reported the discriminant validity of constructs via comparison between correlation matrix and the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) across diagonal. Using the Fornell & Larcker, (1981) standard the values of the square root of AVE surpassed that of the inter-correlation amongst the constructs in the model. Table 2 exemplifies the result of constructs' discriminant validity.

Table 2: Discriminant validity of latent variables

Latent Construct	1	2	3	4
Civic Participation	0.724			
Dutiful Norms	0.495	0.763		
Engaged Norms	0.374	0.405	0.729	
Parents' Participation	-0.513	-0.416	-0.306	0.724

Note: Diagonal elements represent the square roots of average variance extracted

Structural Model

Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) path modelling using SmartPLS 2.0 application package (Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005) was also applied in testing the hypotheses (i.e., Table 3 and Figure 2). As predicted in Hypothesis 1, Parents' participation is significantly related to civic participation (7.916; $p < 0.001$). Hence, hypothesis 1 was supported. As well the relationship involving the dutiful norms and civic participation was significant (t-value, 5.768; $p < 0.001$). Likewise, the correlation between engaged norms and civic participation was found to be significant (t-value, 3.853; $p < 0.001$). Table 3 portrays the result of the hypothesis findings. In examining the R^2 of the model (e.g. the endogenous construct), it confirmed that the value of 37.8% obtained was acceptable since it is higher than the 10% recommended by (Falk & Miller, 1992). This suggests the R^2 value attained from the analysis was 0.378 thus denotes 38% of variance in civic participation that expressed the whole (exogenous) variables in the model.

Table 3 Path Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta	Std Error	t- value	p- value	Results
H1	Parents' Participation - > Civic Participation	-0.346	0.044	7.916***	0.001	Supported
H2	Dutiful Norms -> Civic Participation	0.290	0.050	5.768***	0.001	Supported
H3	Engaged Norms -> Civic Participation	0.151	0.040	3.853***	0.001	Supported
R^2		0.378				
Q^2		0.181				
Effect sizes (f^2):						
Parents' Participation		0.155				
Dutiful Norms		0.100				
Engaged Norms		0.030				

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (one tailed)

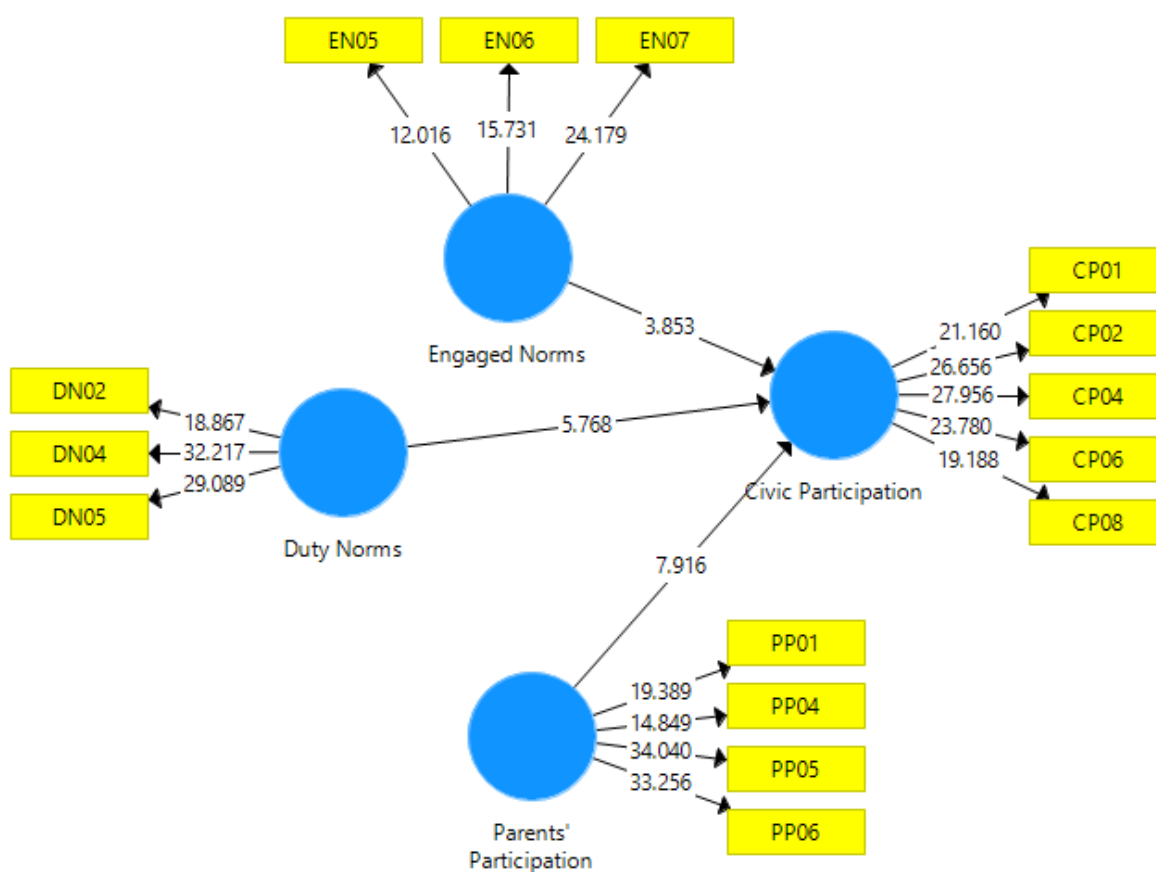


Figure 2 Results of the structural model analysis

DISCUSSION

The study was determined to examine the relationship between two citizen norms domains (dutiful and engaged norms) and civic participation. We also investigated the role of parents' participation on students' civic participation. We found a significant relationship between parents' participation (PP), dutiful norms (DN), and engaged norms (EN) with civic participation (CP) as hypothesized earlier. The significance level was determined by the t-values and p-values attained from the analysis. For hypothesis one, the relationship between PP and CP was supported ($t\text{-value} = 7.916$, $p < 0.001$). Hypothesis two (DN \rightarrow CP) was supported ($t\text{-value} = 5.768$). The third hypothesis also sustained there was a connection between engaged norm (EN) and civic participation (CP) as depicted by the result ($t\text{-value} = 3.853$, $p < 0.001$).

Drawing upon Bandura's (SLT) theory (1977) that suggests parents are character models for their young children because they instil citizenship norms through observation, and representation as Jennings et al., (2009); Dalton, (1980); and Flanagan, (2013) acknowledged. When this happens it promotes parent-child steadiness in values, behaviours and attitudes which in turn encourage and build citizenship self-efficacy (Manganelli et al., 2014), leading to active civic participation of students. In the same way, Quintelier, Hooghe, & Badescu, (2007) reiterated that the talk as well as associations within the family unit have a potent effect on adolescents' involvement patterns. Our finding of significant correlation between parental participation and civic participation is not surprising because it is consistent with

prior studies indicating that perceptions of parents' participation enhances the chances of civic participation in young adults as recognized by Rabaglietti et al. (2012) and Sani and Quaranta (2015).

Dutiful norms have considerable relationship with civic participation thus supporting the arguments of some scholars like Cunningham, (2002); Pateman, (1970); Putnam, (2001) who acknowledged good citizens are expected to participate in democratic deliberation, discuss political matters with other citizens and preferably comprehend their opinions symbolizing essential aspects of influential citizenship (Denters et al., 2007). Not only that they should be informed about happenings in and outside their environs which help in making crucial autonomous decisions. Dutiful citizenship encouraged people to accomplish their political activities by means of the internet to determine their choice of candidates, as well as other worthwhile activities (Feezell et al., 2013). Though voting, compliance with laws and norms of social order are considered as duties and responsibilities of citizens which often are enshrined into the laws of the land (Dalton, 2008) especially in democratic states. Similarly, the finding of this study showed a significant positive relationship between dutiful norm and civic participation, extending the few empirical studies that have investigated the relationship of dutiful citizens norm to students' civic participation (Ahmadu, Don, and Amzat, 2016).

The significant positive relationship between engaged norms and civic participation further corroborated the findings of Rahim, Pawanteh, and Salman (2012) on engaged-citizenship norms which was highly correlated with civic participation especially among the (Malays and Indian) students as they tried investigating why the trend of citizenship norms is altering amongst young populace. Besides, they concluded that young cohorts have extended their paths of involvement in an independent setting by adopting novel norms of engaged citizenship, that is now connecting them to voluntary activism more than before and apart from the conventional casting of votes. This finding is not surprising because it is consistent with studies by Dalton (2008); Flanagan (2013); Norris (2011); and Sloam (2014) whereby younger age groups place more emphasis on actively helping out in their community in a non-institutionalized manner.

Equally, engaged citizens norms with considerable relationship with civic participation tap on traditions that are beyond voting. This spurs people (i.e. students) to partake in political consumption like boycotting, buycotting, or demonstrations for reasons (like civil or ethics), controversial action as well as internet activism. Also, it is alleged that a busy citizenry are relatively well educated (Katz, 2011), similar to the sample of undergraduates in this research, which explains why engaged norms influence students civil activities. Thus, suggesting youngsters are energetic in volunteering, but not consistent in voting.

CONCLUSIONS

This research study supports the consideration of parents' participation in enhancing civil participation of university students, and further provides support for the influence of citizens norm in predicting civic participation, it is vital to state its limitations. Firstly, data for this study was gathered via self-report, which could be linked to prejudice. As well, a cross sectional design was utilized in this research even though it does not permit causal inferences made from the people sampled. Hence, to extend to this study, potential scholars could conduct longitudinal studies in order to measure the theoretical constructs of students' civic participation in universities sited in other regions especially in developing Nigeria at different

points in time. Nonetheless, this study has provided a glimpse of how parents' participation and citizens norms encourage students' involvement civically.

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