

Gender and Location as Factors Determinants of Secondary School Students Civic Engagement in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The research adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population consisted of 411,912 public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria's urban and rural areas. The study sample consisted of 600 public secondary school students' selected using multistage sampling procedures, including simple random sampling techniques and stratified random sampling techniques. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire titled 'Students' Civic Engagement Questionnaire' (SCEQ). The instrument's validity was established through the face and content validity while the instrument's reliability was determined using the Cronbach alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics of the t-test to test the hypotheses formulated. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed no significant difference between male and female students' attitudes towards civic engagement, but there is a significant difference between the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas. It was recommended that students be enlightened and encouraged to participate in civic obligations especially in urban areas such as community service to develop positive attitudes towards civic engagement.

Keywords: Civic attitudes, Civic education, Civic engagement, Gender, Location

Introduction

It seems gender and location are part of the factors determining student's civic engagement in Nigeria, especially in Oyo state where the students in urban areas attitudes towards engagement were negative. Students should leave the schools to understand that they can use the knowledge and skills of their degree a career and for the public good (Jake, 2016). Kehinde-Awoyele et al. (2012) perceived that Nigeria youths had been fingered to be at the nerve center of the country's social, economic, and political problems. Fabiyi (2009) opined that Nigeria is currently facing the problem of incivility and immorality. Mofoluwawo et al. (2012) observed that youth incivility had become the order of the day, while civic virtues in all

spheres of life have declined. Events of the recent past have indicated that Nigeria is facing the trend of losing its much-cherished sense of nationhood, cultural identity, and indeed, hospitable spirit.

According to Agu (2009), there is a need for urgent value re-orientation and engagement of the youths in a more articulated way through Civic Education because of these negative trends' far-reaching impact on national development. Azebamwan (2010) noted that the need arises for Nigeria to seek a solution to pressing problems of national importance. The solution is to create a society where unity, peace, tolerance, honesty, respect for human dignity, and patriotism (Mofoluwawo et al., 2012).

Literature review

Civic engagement

Coley and Sum (2012) civic engagement varied across educational attainment age, and income: engagement rates were positively correlated with higher education and income levels and increases in age. Youniss (2011) found that certain school practices such as promoting classroom discussions, offering students government and other extra-curricular activities, and incorporating service-learning into the curriculum, can build student knowledge of history and government and encourage their civic engagement.

According to Sherrod et al. (2010), Civic engagement generally is taken to represent a larger set of activities and engagement that includes political participation but extends beyond it to include activities in civil society. Civic engagement historically has come in many sizes and shapes, and this review of civic engagement in the US includes activity in politics and public affairs, engagement in community associations clubs and religious bodies, and work-related organizations, such as unions and professional societies, and informal associations and activities (ranging from bowling leagues to picnics and parties). Other clubs where youth can participate in structured activities include sport and cultural organizations, which imply minimal engagement in improving the community (e.g. organizing real events). Thus, community organizations can be placed on a continuum based on their degree of civic purpose and community improvement activity. Based on the type of organization in which youths are involved, it is possible to assume a different amount of civic engagement: maximum when young people volunteer or participate in political activity in the community, minimum when they participate in a sportive or cultural organizations. According to Davila and Mora (2007), group differences in adolescents' civic participation focus on the demography characteristic of gender and race. Utilization data from the 1988-1992 NELS (with a sample of 15,340 high school students) the researcher found that female adolescents had higher participation rates in community service and student government than males. Supporting Davila and Mora's findings in another research study, Zaff et al. (2011) determined that the expression of civic engagement differed by gender. Specifically, through multiple group second-order confirmatory factor models, the authors found that girls had a higher civic engagement average than boys. Extant research confirms these findings that girls tend to have a more pro-social orientation and thus are more civically involved than boys (Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2009). However, the researcher

acknowledges a lack of research that determines the mechanism through which these gender differences manifest. This study offers a preliminary explanation of how gender may moderate the interplay among adolescents and family, school, and peers.

Davila and Mora (2007) gender requires us to ensure that policy, programs, services, and delivery models are responsive to the needs of women, men, girls, and boys in all their diversity. Gender refers to women and men's socially constructed characteristics such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviors including interacting with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities, and workplaces. When individuals or groups do not fit established gender norms they often face stigma, discriminatory practices, or social exclusion - all of which adversely affect health. It is important to be sensitive to different identities that do not necessarily fit into binary male or female sex categories.

Gender norms, roles, and relations influence people's susceptibility to different health conditions and diseases and affect their enjoyment of good mental, physical health and wellbeing. They also have a bearing on people's access to and uptake of health services and the health outcomes they experience throughout the life course. World Health Organisation, (WHO, 2017).

Gender and location

Gender is a socially constructed definition of women and men. It is not the same as sex (biological characteristics of women and men), and it is not the same as women. Gender is determined by the conception of tasks, functions, and roles attributed to women and men in society and public and private life. The Gender approach is distinct in that it focuses on women and men and not on women in isolation. It highlights the differences between women's and men's interests even within the same household and how these interact and are expressed. The conventions and hierarchies determine women's and men's position in the family, community, and society, whereby men usually dominate women. The differences among women and men, based on age, wealth, ethnic background, and other factors.

The way gender roles and relations change, often quite rapidly, as a result of social, economic, and technological trends (Wijk & Francis, 1999).

Gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources, and rewards. Gender equity does not mean that women and men become the same, but their opportunities and life chances are equal.

Gender Analysis takes into account social and economic differences between women and men at each stage of policy development to reveal the potential differential impact of policy, program, and law on women and men; Ensuring equal results for women and men, boys and girls, in measures design and implementation (Cambridge University Dictionary, 2018).

Gender may also contribute to the students' civic engagement it may be because of physiology associated with physical development this may affect their attitude where the male is behaving and contributing differently to female.

According to Gersmehi (2008), the location and place of the term in geography are used to identify a point or an area on the earth's surface or elsewhere. The term location generally implies a higher degree of certainty than place, the latter often indicating an entity with an ambiguous boundary, relying more on human or social attributes of the place of identity and sense of place than on geometric. A location settlement or populated place is likely to have a well-defined name but a poorly defined boundary varies by context. London, for instance, has a legal boundary, but this is unlikely to match with general usage completely. An area within a town, such as Covent Garden in London, also almost always has some ambiguity as to its extent. *Absolute location*, however, is a term with little real meaning, since any location must be expressed relative to something else. For example, longitude is the number of degrees east or west of the prime meridian a line arbitrarily chosen to pass through Greenwich London. Similarly, latitude is the number of degrees north or south of the equator. Because latitude and longitude are *relative* to these lines, a position expressed in latitude and longitude is a relative location.

Location can influence students' civic engagement; location can be rural or urban. Students in urban may have access to infrastructural facilities than the students in rural areas, which may influence their civic engagement in community participation and national development.

Statement of research the problem

It has been observed that there are some indices of civil disobedience exhibited by secondary school students in Oyo State which impede national development and nation-building. Students are not actively participating in community development neither students show interest in engaging with civil society organizations. This study, therefore, aims at investigating gender and location as factors determinants of secondary school students' civic engagement to know how they manage civic information including socio-economy issues that determines or are about to determine important facets of their lives, their attitude towards the knowledge they acquire and their level of engagement in becoming good and function citizens in the state.

Purpose of the study

This study examined civic knowledge and attitude as determinants of civic engagement of public secondary school students in Oyo State. This study specifically examined:

Gender and location determinants of secondary school students' civic engagement in Oyo State.

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female students' attitudes to civic engagement in a secondary school in Oyo State.
2. There is no significant difference in civic engagement between students living in rural and urban areas in Oyo State.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female student's civic engagement in Oyo State secondary school.
4. There is no significant difference in the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas in Oyo State.

Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, instrument validity, instrument reliability, instrument administration, and data analysis.

The descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted in this study. Descriptive research was considered appropriate because the study does not require the manipulation of any variable, but seeks students' responses using questionnaires on gender and location as factors determinants of secondary school students' civic engagement. It is also to obtain in-depth information participants' viewpoints and provides information for analyses.

The population for this study consisted of all the students in all public secondary schools in Oyo State. According to the Oyo State Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM), there are 411,951 students. 204,545 are Male, while 207,406 are Female, also there are 618 public secondary schools in Oyo State this study.

The sample of this study consisted of 600 students in SS11 selected using a multistage sampling procedure. The first stage involved a simple random sampling technique to select two senatorial districts out of three in Oyo State. A simple random sample technique was used to select two Local Government Areas from each of the two Senatorial Districts. The third stage involved a simple random sampling technique to select five schools from each Local Government Areas selected. The last stage involved a stratified random sampling technique to select 30 students from each of the selected five schools.

A questionnaire designed by the researcher tagged the 'Students' Civic Engagement Questionnaire' (SCEQ). The instrument is divided into four sections. Section A sought respondents' bio-data such as sex, class, name of the school, and location. Section B consists of twenty (20) structured questions that sought civic knowledge. It measured the general understanding and familiarity of the students with Civic Education. The test adopted a 4-multiple - choice items response ranging from A-D. Section C consists of 15 items that measured respondents' civic attitudes. It measured the extent to which the students react to civic education and its impact on their life in and out of the school environment. The scale adopted a 4-point scale format ranging from SA = strongly agree to SD = strongly disagree.

Section D consisted of 15 questions on respondents' level of civic engagement. It measured how the students engage in civic activities and civic education. The scale adopted a 4-point scale format ranging from VO = very often to N = Never.

The instrument's validity was ascertained by specialists in Social Studies and experts in Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation. The experts determined the face and content validity of the instrument by rejecting some questions in the instrument and replacing it with the appropriate ones, they ensured that the items in the instrument were appropriate to measure gender and location as factors determinants of secondary school students' civic engagement in Oyo State.

The instrument's reliability was estimated using of Cronbach Alpha in trial testing. The instrument (SCEQ) was administered to 20 Senior Secondary School (SS11) students from two schools. The students were drawn from a co-educational school but not part of the sample. Cronbach Alpha was applied to the students' responses to estimate the internal consistency of the items. The formula yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.72 which was adjudged high enough to make the instrument reliable and useful for the study.

Two research assistants were trained to assist in administering instruments to the students. The researcher visited schools for the study and sought permission from the principals and the teachers. The researcher also discussed the relevance of the research with them. This enables the researcher to solicit their cooperation and request the date and time convenient to administer the instrument. The instrument was administered to the students by the researcher with the help of trained research assistants. The researcher retrieved all the questionnaires back immediately from the students.

The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics of the t-test. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female students' attitudes to civic engagement in secondary school in Oyo State

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to the attitude of male and female secondary school students towards civic engagement were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 1 t-test Analysis of Gender and Attitude of Secondary School Students towards Civic Engagement in Oyo State.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t _{cal}	Sig.
Male	286	45.66	4.785			
Female	314	46.32	5.664	598	1.528	0.127

Table showed that t_{cal} (1.528) is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies no significant difference between male and female secondary school students' attitudes towards civic engagement.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in civic engagement attitudes between students living in rural and urban areas in Oyo State.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to the attitude of secondary school students living in urban and rural towards civic engagement were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 2 t-test Analysis of Location and Attitude of Secondary School Students towards Civic Engagement in Oyo State

Location	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t_{cal}	Sig.
Rural	292	46.69	5.464			
Urban	308	45.36	5.001	598	3.116*	0.002

Table showed that t_{cal} (3.116) is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the attitude of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas towards civic engagement.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between male and female students civic engagement in secondary schools in Oyo State.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to the civic engagement of male and female secondary school students were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 3 t-test Analysis of Gender and Civic engagement of Secondary School Students in Oyo State

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t_{cal}	Sig.
Male	286	10.42	3.391			
Female	314	10.34	3.242	598	0.304	0.761

The table showed that t_{cal} (0.304) is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies no significant difference between male and female students' civic engagement in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas in Oyo State.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 4 t-test Analysis of Location and Civic engagement of Secondary School Students in Oyo State

Location	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t _{cal}	Sig.
Rural	292	9.97	3.342	598	2.953*	0.003
Urban	308	10.77	3.241			

The Table showed that t_{cal} (2.953) is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies a significant difference between the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas.

Discussion

The finding revealed no significant relationship between secondary school students' knowledge of civic duties and engaging in civic duties. These findings go in line with the submission of Banks (2005) who endorsed that an important criterion that can be used for designating influential citizens is their outstanding performance in the situation which require them to exhibit potentialities and abilities in the art of cooperating for a variety of societal needs and demands.

The finding further showed a positive and significant relationship between secondary school students' attitudes towards civic duties and civic engagement. In this finding, secondary school students can improve their school, neighborhoods, and the broader society by volunteering in community-based organizations, and through engagement in the community, life can promote psychological, social, and intellectual growth for young citizens. This finding corroborated Fredricks and Eceles (2006), who believed that secondary school students' civic engagement could provide services to the local community, thus promoting the effective functioning of society. Findings also revealed no significant difference between male and female students' civic knowledge in secondary school. This finding contradicted the finding of Zaff et al. (2011), which determined that the expression of civic engagement is different in gender.

In addition, findings showed that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary school students' attitudes towards civic engagement this finding expatiates the finding of Davila and Mora (2007) who submitted that the way gender roles and relations often change quite rapidly as a result of the social-economic and technological trend.

The finding also showed a significant difference between the civic knowledge of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas. These findings corroborated the findings of Coley and Sum (2012) that engagement varied across educational attainment age,

and income rates of engagement were positively correlated with higher education and income level and increase in age. The findings further explained a significant difference in secondary school students' attitudes towards civic engagement in rural and urban areas. Findings also revealed no significant difference between male and female secondary school students' civic engagement. These findings align with Youniss (2011), who found that certain school practices such as service-learning room discussions, offering students government and other extra-curricular activities, and incorporating service-learning into the curriculum can build students' knowledge of history and government encourage their civic engagement.

The finding implies a significant difference in the civic engagement of secondary school students living in rural and urban areas. This finding is in line with the finding of Thomas (2000) he opined that civic engagement is a critical outcome of civic knowledge and responsibility, is defined as working to make a difference in the civic life of our community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes. Mofoluwawo et al. (2012) observed that youth incivility had become the order of the day, while civic virtues in all spheres of life have declined.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary school students' attitudes towards civic engagement and that civic engagement is more in rural areas than the urban centers. Also, it was concluded that students' civic attitude is more in the rural areas than the urban centers perhaps, this accounted for why civic engagement is more in the rural areas than the urban centers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

1. Students should be enlightened and encouraged to participate in civic engagement, especially in urban areas such as community service and others, to develop positive attitudes towards civic activities.
2. Government should frequently organize seminars and workshops for the teachers of civic education to refresh their brains and learn new methods and techniques of imparting knowledge this will complement the effort of the government to re-introduce civic education to Nigeria's educational system in 2009.
3. Parents and Guardians should encourage their children/wards to participate in community development fully.
4. Parents and Guardians should allow their children/wards to join civil society organizations such as Girls Guide, Man 'O War, Peace Corps, Boys Brigade, etc., in order to engage in nation-building.
5. Non- governmental organizations should intensify their effort in a campaign and promote civic duties awareness for the citizens.

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