

## SCHOOL AND FAMILY AS PREDICTORS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' COMMITMENT TO CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN ADO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EKITI STATE

<sup>1</sup>Adeoluwa Olufemi Victor & <sup>2</sup>Adeyi Moruf Olugbenga

<sup>1</sup>Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Faculty of Education, Department of Vocational and Technical Education

<sup>2</sup>Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Faculty of Education, Department of Social Science Education

### Abstract

*The study examined the school and family as predictors of secondary school students' commitment to civic participation in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. The population for the study were all secondary school students, in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Five public and five private secondary schools were selected using stratified random sampling technique. A total sample of 200 secondary school students were randomly selected for the study. The instrument used for the study was a self-constructed questionnaire titled Civic Participation Scale (CPS). The study revealed that school and family relatively and jointly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation, the findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of secondary school students' commitment to civic participation in public and private schools. It was therefore recommended that socialization of a child should not be limited to the parents alone, family member should also partake in the upbringing of a child. Also, Schools should intensify efforts in ensuring students' participation not only in academic activities but also extra-curricular activities.*

**Keywords:** Family, School, Civic Participation, Civic Commitment.

### Introduction

There is a growing concern on the apathy of adolescents towards civic responsibilities. This has reflected on the social problems which Nigeria is experiencing in recent times. Constitutional democracy according to Vontz, Metcalf and Patrick, (2000) requires informed, effective, and responsible citizens for its maintenance and improvement. This, if the society is to survive and thrive, citizens must have adequate knowledge of its principles and institutions, skills in applying this knowledge to civic life, and dispositions that incline them to protect individual rights and to promote the common good of the society.

Citizens' robust participation in community issues, working on community problems, collective engagement with government agencies are fundamentally important components of life in a democratic society (Flanagan & Gally, 2007). However, Nigerian citizens most times complain that their rights and entitlements as provided in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are being denied by government neglecting the fact that rights and duties are two sides of the same coin. A lot of Nigerians have been making demands on the state without fulfilling their basic civic and ethical obligations. For example, citizens expect good infrastructural facilities and social amenities such as good road networks, health

services, pipe-borne water and so on from the government while boycotting the payment of taxes.

It has however been observed that commitment of citizens to civic participation is low especially among the younger generations in Nigerian society. Adolescence being a period of development that corresponds roughly to the period between the ages of 10 and 19 years, which is consistent with the World Health Organization's definition, acknowledging that characteristics of this stage may extend up to age 24, and that adolescent well-being is also determined by early child development before age 10 is an important time for identity formation. The identity development process involves discerning one's roles and responsibilities in society and deciding which values, beliefs and goals are most essential to one's core self (Erikson cited in Tenelle, 2013).

Civic commitments could be measured on scales that tap the extent to which citizens feel dedicated to certain goals such as; serving their country and community (patriotism), improving inter-group relations and understanding (tolerance), promoting equality or social justice, working diligently in harmony for the betterment of the community (hard work and cooperation) etc.

Attention tends to increase when there are concerns about generational replacement, specifically about whether the younger generations are motivated and skilled in the civic domain such that they will

replace their elders as engaged citizens and institutions such as family and schools based organization where civic dispositions and skills for action can be nurtured are up to these tasks.

For instance, the preparation of citizens according to Galston (2001) is a stated goal of many schools' mission statements and a primary concern of many citizens. However, it has been observed that the knowledge of whether and how schools actually fulfill the democratic aims of education remains quite limited. The guiding principle of education in Nigeria is equipping every citizen with such knowledge, skills attitudes and values as to enable him /her to derive maximum benefits from his/her membership in society.

Education appears to be an instrument for achieving a specific objective such as socialization and means of social mobility as well as means of inculcating a particular ideology. For example, civics education may have a role in helping prepare future engaged citizens and Social studies education can provide applied civic experiences and opportunities for students to engage with their communities (Kinloch, 2009), which appear to lead to improved academic performance and increased participation in their school and community

From a different perspective, Yusuf (2005) observed that the school should not be used as an instrument for training in citizenship only, rather it should be directed at the training of the mind and the development of the intellect. However, many educationists and social studies educators such as Metzeobi (2000), are of the opinion that education is an effective instrument for citizenship and the schools have always been used to perpetuate the tradition of the society. Schools have been observed to serve as major channels for inculcating in its members' independence, self-reliance, responsibility and moral uprightness. Probably that is why Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) has as one of its educational objectives, the inculcation of right type of attitude for the survival of individual and the Nigerian society.

Another variable examined in this study is family context. In families with more economic resources, students appear to have easier access to organized activities because they can afford the costs of participation for example, membership dues, transportation and so on. Parent characteristics such as socio-economic status, academic qualification and practices may influence students' civic participation and commitment through the

modeling of civic behaviors and discussion of current events, social issues, and political topics. Also, students with parents who volunteer are more likely to volunteer themselves as well as be active in a group, vote, follow politics, boycott products, and sign a petition (Andolina, Jenkins, Zukin & Keeter, 2003). Young people from homes with frequent political discussion appear to have higher levels of civic involvement and civic knowledge. Not only does more frequent youth-parent discourse relate to increases in youth civic knowledge, but the relationship may be enhanced if parents have higher civic knowledge.

It has been observed that there is worldwide change in the conditions in which the young ones prepare for adulthood. Individuals tend to explore adult roles outside the protection of authoritative figures such as parents and teachers. However, this exploration appears to pave way for the future behaviour of the individual as the decisions made during this period have been observed to have far-reaching consequences for the younger generations.

With the variety of possibilities available to adolescents, the choices they make most times are becoming increasingly complex and confusing as they exhibit low level of civic commitment and engage in anti-social acts. Notable among these acts include disrespect for elders, lack of right attitude to work in form of lateness to or laziness at work, examination malpractices, cultism, gangsterism, thuggery and indiscriminate utterances on the social media (facebook, twitter, Instagram.t.c) depicting unpatriotic act. It is also a common habit found among adolescents to complain, criticize indiscriminately or abuse the government. In addition, there is rampant greediness, perverseness and lack of commitment to a sound ethical base, loss of value, negative attitude to national issues, and a host of other indiscipline practices, which have made other countries to despise Nigerians and subject them to inhuman treatment. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the school and family as predictors of secondary school students' commitment to civic participation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the:

1. Joint and relative prediction of school and family on secondary school students' commitment to civic participation
2. Difference between students of private and public secondary school in their commitment to civic participation

- Influence of secondary school students' socio-economic background on their level of commitment to civic participation

### Research Hypotheses

- School and family will not jointly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation
- None of school and family will best predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation
- There is no significant difference between private and public secondary school students in the level of commitment to civic participation
- Socio-economic background of students will not significantly influence their level of commitment to civic participation

### Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive design of the survey type. The population for this study consisted of all secondary school students both public and private in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select five public secondary schools and five private secondary schools while simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty senior secondary school students in each selected schools. Therefore, the sample for the study was two hundred respondents. For the purpose of data collection, a 20-item questionnaire titled Civic Participation Scale was constructed and used for the study after validation. A reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained using test retest. The researcher personally visited the sampled schools to administer the questionnaires which were collected and scored on Likert type rating scales. Data collected were analyzed using regression analysis, t-test and ANOVA.

### Results

Hypothesis 1: School and family will not jointly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation

**Table 2:** Regression analysis showing relative prediction of school and family on secondary school students' commitment to civic participation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	15.669	1.625		9.645	.000
School	.216	.025	.239*	8.573	.000
Family	.193	.033	.151*	5.919	.000

Dependent Variable: Commitment to Civic Participation \*  $p < 0.05$

**Table 1:** Regression analysis showing joint prediction of school and family on secondary school students' commitment to civic participation

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-Value	Sig.
Regression	21425.458	2	4285.092	.619	.282	.272	36.575	.000*
Residual	34445.162	198	117.169					
Total	55870.620	200						

$P < 0.05$

Table 1 revealed that there is a positive multiple correlation between the predictor variables and commitment of secondary school students' commitment to civic participation ( $R = .619$ ). This implied that all the predictor variables are factors that can predict commitment of secondary school students to civic participation. The value of the coefficient of determinant ( $R^2 = .282$ ) indicates that all the predictor variables jointly accounted for 28.2% of the total variance in the commitment of senior secondary school students to civic participation while the remaining 72.8% unexplained variation could largely be due to other variables not examined in this study. This implies that there are other variables that account for commitment of secondary school students to civic participation. The F-ratio (36.575) was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the predictor variables jointly provide a significant explanation for the variation in the commitment of secondary students to civic participation. Thus, the hypothesis that school and family will not jointly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: None of school and family will best predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation

The regression result in the table 2 revealed that the school has the higher contribution to the total variance in the commitment of secondary school

students to civic participation ( $\beta = 0.239$ ) while the family has the least predictive strength on secondary school students' commitment to civic participation ( $\beta = 0.151$ ). This implies that the school best predict the commitment of secondary students to civic participation. Thus, the hypothesis that none of the contextual variables will best

predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between private and public secondary school students in the level of commitment to civic participation

**Table 3:** t-test analysis of school type and commitment of school students to civic participation

	School Type	N	Mean	SD	df	$t_{cal}$	$t_{table}$	Sig.
Commitment to Civic Participation	Public	91	41.75	7.107	198	0.863	1.960	.388
	Private	109	42.04	5.950				

Table 3 revealed that  $t_{cal}$  (0.863) is less than the  $t_{table}$  (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the level of

secondary school students' commitment to civic participation in private and public schools.

Hypothesis 4: Socio-economic background of secondary students will not significantly influence their level of commitment to civic participation

**Table 4:** One-way ANOVA showing the difference in the socio-economic background of secondary students and their level of commitment to civic participation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	$F_{cal}$	Sig.
Between Groups	106.654	45	3.047	1.156	.297
Within Groups	305.741	154	2.636		
Total	412.395	199			

Table 4 revealed that the  $F_{cal}$  (1.156) was not significant at  $p > 0.05$  level. Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that socio-economic background of secondary students did not significantly influence their level of commitment to civic participation.

## Discussion

It was revealed that school and family relatively and jointly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation. Family members play significant roles in the development of civic orientation. A child's first point of contact in the society is family, thus tend to behave in line with those values cherished in the family. School on the other hand is a place where educational practices that can increase students' civic and political knowledge take place. This knowledge has been observed to improve the quantity and quality of civic participation. However, the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of secondary school students' commitment to civic participation in public and private schools. The reason behind these findings may probably owe to the fact that the secondary school curriculum is universal nationwide irrespective of the type of school. There is no difference in the curriculum implemented in public secondary schools and that of the private secondary schools. The study revealed also that socio-economic background of secondary

students did not significantly influence their level of commitment to civic participation.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, one major conclusion that could be drawn is that school and family significantly predict secondary school students' commitment to civic participation. Thus, the following recommendations were made:

1. Family members have great roles in the upbringing of children in the society, thus, the socialization of a child should not be limited to the parents alone.
2. Schools should intensify efforts in ensuring students' participation not only in academic activities but also extra-curricular activities. This could enhance the sense of responsibility in the students.
3. Government agencies and Non-Government agencies should organize regular orientation workshop for the students in order to further create awareness on the importance of civic participation to the society.

## References

- Andolina, M. W.; Jenkins, K.; Zukin, C. & Keeter, S. (2003). Habits from Home, Lessons from School: Influence on Youths' Civic Engagement. *Journal of Political Science and Politics*. 36(2): 275 – 280.

- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). National Policy on Education, Lagos.
- Flanagan, C. A. & Gallay, L. S. (2007). School and Community Climates and Civic Commitments: Patterns for Ethnic Minority and Majority Students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 99(2): 421-431.
- Galston, W. A (2001). Political Knowledge, Political Engagement and Civic Education. *Annual Review of Political Science*. 4: 217 – 234.
- Kinloch, V. (2009). *Harlem on our Minds: Place, Race, and Literacies of Urban Youth*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Metzeobi, E. C. (2000). *Issues of Nigerian Values*. Owerri, Versatile Publisher.
- Tenelle, J. P. (2013). *Moral and Political Identity and Civic Involvement in Adolescents*. Stanford University, USA.
- Vontz, T. S.; Metcalf, K. K. & Patrick, J. J. (2000). Project Citizen and the Civic Development of Adolescent Students in Indiana, Latvia, and Lithuania. Bloomington, IN: The ERIC Clearing house for Social Studies/Social Science Education.
- Yusuf, A. (2005). The Effect of Cooperative Instructional Strategy on Students' Performance in Junior Secondary School Social Studies in Ilorin, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*. 8(1 & 2): 23 – 36.