

THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL EFFICACY AND CITIZENSHIP NORMS ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Not many attempts are made in previous studies to conceptualize and validate a model using PLS in the context of civic engagement research. However, the adoption of partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) is progressively more accepted for its expediency in unravelling structural models. This study presents result of civic engagement research that utilised the PLS-SEM to analyse how political efficacy and citizenship norms affect civic engagement of students. A total sample of five hundred and eighty-four (584) young people from eight universities sited in north-west geopolitical zone, Nigeria were involved in the study. Students completed a self administered questionnaire that was anchored on a 5- Likert-scale. The results signify an acceptable validity and reliability outcomes and all of the hypothesised relationships were confirmed. This suggests our study established a considerable relationship between DCN and CVE, ECN and CVE, with PEB and CVE. Therefore, we extend empirical research in the civic engagement sphere.

Keywords: Citizenship Norms, Political Efficacy, Civic Engagement; Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM), Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Researches on civic engagement have continued to grow among researchers because of its expediency in democratic system. Such that Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti (1994) promulgate it in their famous book of 'Making Democracy Work'. Accordingly, civic engagement has become trendy in political discourse, on the pages of newspapers, academic journals and books, as well students are encouraged to study it in educational institutions (Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Putnam et al., 1994). Some scholars like Dalton, (2008) and Copeland, (2014) clearly argued that young people's perception of civil involvement determines and is imperative to civil action (e.g. voting, lobbying, protesting and volunteering). Thus, citizens who are engaged are said to be good citizens (citizenship norm). People's norms are in real a key determinant in civic engagement, because of its dominant motivating force in influencing individual's behaviour to participation (Dalton, 2006; Pateman, 1970). Hence, citizenship norm is seen to play an essential function in helping to explain how and why people's behaviour in civic and political life differs (Theiss-Morse, & Hibbing, 2005).

To put simply, individuals' interests in civil activities are as a result of their views about good citizenship. Apart from norms of citizenship, other factors responsible for making people partake in civil activities amongst which entail political efficacy, civic knowledge, democratic classroom climate, volunteerism, pro-social values and activities, and political socialization (Dalton, 2008; Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Manganelli, Lucidi, & Alivernini, 2014). Political efficacy concerns a person's ability to be able to change the society for better, which are generally documented as central to democratic outlook and actions (civil participation) in young adults. Although, scholars have reservations on how they visualize civic engagement (Berger, 2009). However, Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan (2010) acknowledged that arguing differently on the same concept is not the issue but clarifying the basis for argument

like (providing adequate answers to research and methods adopted). In general sense, civic engagement are those activities that focused people's attitudes, main beliefs, opinions, as well as behaviors that indicate their support for communal welfare (Amnå, 2012) whether inactive or protest for unjustly actions (Chan, Ou, & Reynolds, 2014). As a result, civic engagement can be used for instilling in students attitudes for compassion thereby valuing collective interest (Pascarella, Ethington, & Smart, 1988) which subsequently make them to be civically engaged due to democratic ideals (Putnam, 2001). Despite all conducted studies there are several aspects of the phenomenon that remain blurred. This research therefore examined the relationship between political efficacy, norms of citizens (duty and engaged) considering their dimensions as defined by Howard, Gibson, & Stolle (2005); Scheidegger & Staerklé (2011) with civic engagement. This is because, what seems to matter most and more urgent in the course of fostering participation particularly among students, is their sensitivity and confidence in civil action (Gastil & Xenos, 2010; Manganelli et al., 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is one of the key features that makes self-governing successful, because of its dominant motivating factor that sprout human beings into action (Voight & Torney-Purta, 2013). It is generally agreed that civil engagement is sturdily related with political participation (Wagle, 2006). Civic engagement is therefore defined as the interest which makes people involved in citizenship roles and become bothered about other citizens' wellbeing whether as an individual or a group in society (Berger, 2009). Perception of civic norms is seen to play a vital role in the commitment of belonging either individually or together to carry out certain actions for the common public concern (Lenzi, Vieno, Pastore, & Santinello, 2013; Weissberg, 2005). Thus, citizens' participation is an important factor for providing good predictive power for engaging in civil actions (Amnå, Ekström, Kerr, & Stattin, 2009; Pateman, 1970). Understanding citizenship norm is therefore crucial when envisaging civic engagement (Copeland, 2014; Dalton, 2008). Moreover, the function of civic engagement is also accepted to be relevant in the political science, educational and sociological literatures (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010).

Earlier contributions show that citizens' participation have the ability to predict both latent actions based on personal or political interest (Ekman & Amnå, 2012), and manifest actions in terms of campaigning, voting, making contacts with highly placed government officials, lobbying, consumerism (boycotting and buycotting) and protest activity (Schlozman, Page, Verba, & Fiorina, 2005; Teorell, Torcal, & Montero, 2007). Consequently, it is generating the interest of political scientists, psychologists as well as sociologists in appreciating and predicting civic engagement as a vital element to succeed in national affair (Sherrod et al., 2010). This is evident as in a study among university (Asian American) students illustrating how essential civic commitment was when the effect of civic participation on their growth was noticed. In other words, as learners interacted with other individuals they got to learn about several talents related with commune deeds, ways of conveying their beliefs as well as directing the grouping they fit in as associates (Chan, 2011; Pearce & Larson, 2006; Schmidt, Shumow, & Kackar, 2007). According to some scholars like (Manganelli et al., 2014; Torney-Purta, Wilkenfeld, & Barber, 2008) the intention to demonstrate civil engagement could be affected by a number of cognitive factors, for example, (values, attitudes, behaviour and norms). The significance of cognitive variables in understanding the individual choice has been pointed out by researchers like (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990; Vecchione et al., 2014). Therefore, the cognitive perspective makes understanding the risky

progression of engagement uncomplicated. In other circumstances, models were utilized that entails personal attributes, characteristics, values, customs and demographic factors to illustrate the basis why some persons will engage in civil behaviour while others will not (Gastil & Xenos, 2010; Husfeldt, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2005). Since the interest to be an engaged or dutiful citizen is an outcome of intricate mental processes, the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) is mostly useful to clarify this vague mental process consequential to participating in civil activities. Scholars like (Caprara, Vecchione, Capanna, & Mebane, 2009; Hope & Jagers, 2014; Mannarini & Legittimo, 2008; Vecchione et al., 2014) have employed the theory to clarify the choice in civic participation. Hence, established that the intention to become actively engaged is as a result of individuals' attitude, their sensitivity of citizenship norms, and the perceived civic context that influence to be or otherwise a responsible citizen (duty or engaged).

Political Efficacy and Civic Engagement

The vital role of Political efficacy as a core aspect of human activity that empowers people to act in order to realize their desired capability has attracted the attention of psychologists, political scientists and recently civic engagement scholars. Political efficacy a person's belief in his personal ability to apply information and skills to act in a social or political manner (Craig et al., 1990) has the connotation of motivational beliefs, particularly intense activist view (Morrell, 2003) has been defined in various ways by scholars, for example, (Beaumont, 2010) defined Political efficacy as a person's conviction in likely political variation that has the capacity of bringing meaningful changes in the society through one's purposeful decisions and actions. Caprara et al. (2009) on another hand expressed Political efficacy as individuals' judgments concerning their abilities to take an agentic role to better their country. Political efficacy therefore influences the prospect of students' involvement in civic and political activities. (Kahne & Westheimer, 2006). Political efficacy in the political science literature is hypothesized as essential for political support, and particularly, political Participation (McCluskey, Deshpande, Shah, & McLeod, 2004; Valentino, Gregorowicz, & Groenendyk, 2009). Consequently, if people consider their potency as quite fundamental to successful participation in self rule, then, it is only logical that this is enhanced prior to or made to be involved in activities that will boost it.

Another quite interesting aspect of the recent definition of Political efficacy is the issues concerning the individual's autonomy (ethical action), democratic courage and ability to perform in the political sphere are directed towards activities that are of importance to social order and hence more enduring (Dalton, 2008; Pateman, 1970). Autonomy concerns the obvious that is, if one has no control over situations he should do what needs to be done to the best of his ability to make an impact despite the challenge so that he feels he has tried (Denters, Gabriel, & Torcal, 2007). This shows that autonomy will differ among individuals, leading to Citizens engaging in particular civil activities they identify more personally with, and refraining from the actions which they are not committed. However the intense activist behaviour and the activity central to autonomy as well as democratic courage are embedded in the political efficacy domains of internal, external and collective (Manganelli et al., 2014; Mannarini & Legittimo, 2008). According to Becker, (2004) findings have constantly stated that internal political efficacy was responsible for predicting how people engage in civil participation. To corroborate Becker, (2004) position, Lee, (2006) in a study on relationship between political efficacy and political participation in Hong Kong among a sample of 800 discovered that enormous internal efficacy is a circumstance leading to both collective and external efficacy which subsequently has significant effect on persons' political attitudes

and actions. Consequently, a feeling of political efficacy can be seen as a personal quality that is important, not just as a means for increasing political participation, with political efficacy comes a political confidence that makes a person confident, and ready to take action to try to change the things that he finds wrong in a society (Mattei & Niemi, 2005). Considering how such quality could impact the community, Nuangchalerm, (2014) in a study on one hundred and ninety six (196) persons in college (belonging to both first and second years of university schooling) who investigated to find out if encouraging students in service learning through civil engagement venture would affect self efficacy. Their result revealed that the students have soaring self-worth. This in turn advanced their levels of civil participation through the activities they performed in the community. Thus, suggesting that young adults who have high sense of political efficacy experienced added intimate attachment with their society which is essential for human development. In summary, Political efficacy is envisioned to be at the centre of civic engagement. It impacts on the prospect of students' interests in performing their civic responsibility. That is, the less efficacious students feel about not able to deal successfully with both political and civic issues, the greater the probability of their non-participation in civil action.

H1: Political efficacy is positively correlated with students' civic engagement and or participation.

Citizenship Norms and Civic Engagement

Empirical studies proposed that citizenship norms is considered as a factor that authenticate civil and political participation. In a longitudinal study involving adolescent students, result revealed citizens' norms conceptualized as school norms improved students' commitment to civil activities. For example, robust school norms encourage students' interest in civic duty through service learning and activism (Campbell, 2005). This suggests that school is a civic community where interpersonal interactions occur among peers and other agencies of socialization. This in turn impacts its norms of citizenship in students. Literature on political engagement has recognized the vital role citizenship norms play in illuminating the dynamics of people's behaviour in both social and political life. According to Copeland, (2014) norms of Citizenship imply the views people hold as what is the meaning of a good citizen. Simply put, before anybody is considered responsible he needs to possess certain qualities like obedience to law as well as partaking in voting or political campaign regarding duty norms, while assisting the needy as in engaged norms (Dalton, 2006; Feezell, Conroy, & Guerrero, 2013). In other words, norms of citizenship is defined as those common beliefs of people about civic responsibilities (Kotzian, 2014), which make them act as members of a particular grouping or locality.

Although, Dalton, (2008) clearly argued that citizenship norms elucidate the notion people have about disengagement in civic activities is often misconstrued. This is because people's approach to being engaged in terms of public affairs has now taken a new turn from what it used to be in the past. For example, American people responded to their civic duties with less urgency when it comes to voting or abiding by the laws as citizens (Putnam, 2001). Hence, they are now more preoccupied with what they believed individually in terms of volunteering and service to the community as responsibilities (Jacoby, 2009) not minding the interpretation it is given by some other persons. Given this, norms of citizenship offer a basis to comprehend the ways and forms changes occur in civic roles as in duty or engaged citizens. Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, (2005) clearly indicated the importance of norms in civil engagement when they stated why volunteers' behaviour cannot be connected with good

citizenship in how change occurs, due to the fact that citizenship discouraged participation in political activities because involvement in civic activities propagates peaceful coexistence rather than democratic dispute. Thus, suggesting that deliberate associations are usually identical, hence do not teach democratic training (e.g. chaotic, inept, and disruptive) which is imperative for good citizens. In addition, Rahim, Pawanteh, & Salman (2012) investigated to find out the connection between norms of citizenship and political participation in a study of 1,697 youths (21-40 years). Their result revealed that youngsters clinch to norms of engaged-citizenship than duty-citizen norm. This point out that change (affirmative) in behaviour to a greater extent determines how one embraces and contributes to communal progress. Therefore, citizens should be made to realize how significant their interests and contributions to public affairs are with regards to self governance. Thus, proposed these hypotheses.

H2: There is a positive relationship between duty citizenship norms and students' engagement in civic activities.

H3: There is a positive relationship between engaged citizenship norms and students' engagement in civic activities.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Data was obtained from a sample of five hundred and eighty-four (584) students with a response (85%) rate. Young learners from eight (8) federal and state universities sited in the North-west Nigeria offered (elective) courses in citizenship education in line with the curriculum policy of University education. Universities were drawn using stratified probability sampling technique that comprises of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria; Kaduna State University (KSU) and Nigeria Defense Academy Kaduna. Kano University of Science and Technology Wudil (KUT); Bayero University are sited in kano state. Other higher levels of learning like the University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State ; Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, with Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (UDUS) were among.

Sample Characteristics

The characteristics examined are the gender, age, educational level of the respondents in university as well as the university type of the respondents. The responses obtained showed that of 584 participants, majority of the respondents in the sample; that is 394 (67.5%) were males, while the remaining 190, representing 32.5% were females. Majority of participants 343 were above 26 years old (58.7%) followed by 226 (38.7%) students with age range between 21 to 25 years and the remaining 15 (2.6%) were below 20 years of age. In terms of education a high proportion of the respondents 458 (78.4%) students were in federal universities while 126 (21.6%) were in state universities. A high proportion of the respondents comprised of 300 level students, which accounted for 386 (66.1%) respondents. This is followed by 98 respondents (approximately 16.8%) in 400 levels, while 91, representing 15.6% were in 200 levels. The remaining 9 representing 1.5% were in 100 levels.

Measures

We measured engaged citizenship norms using the subscale of Scheidegger & Staerklé (2011), a 5-item Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

Examples of item include "I partake in student union in order to influence civic decisions". On the other hand, we also measured duty-based citizenship norms using items adapted like "I always obey laws and regulations" from Howard et al. (2005), with 5-item instrument. While, political efficacy was measured with adapted scale from Craig et al. (1990) a five (5) item instrument which ranges from 1 – 5 respectively. "I know more about politics than most people my age" is an example of the items. The last instrument (civic engagement), was an 8-item scale adapted from Schulz & Sibberns (2004), such as "I take part in a peaceful march or rally", and appraised with an instrument on 5-likert point.

Technique

In this technique we approximated the measurement model by fulfilling all the needed conditions for measuring, and then the structural model was estimated. The PLS developed by Wold (1985) is a process for estimating path models that entails latent constructs which are either direct or indirectly measured by several indicators. To put simply, PLS approach is one of the structural equation models that assess relations through regression amongst latent constructs and between the latent constructs with their indicators. The appliance of PLS-SEM in this study came with several benefits as noted by (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014); PLS-SEM do not make assumptions about the underlying data, it can easily run data measured by both reflective and formative items. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is known to be highly efficient in estimating parameters which results to the outcome of high statistical power than the CB-SEM (Hair *et al.*, 2014), which have made the application of PLS-SEM encouraging to scholars in diverse circumstances of study.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

Essentially, validity of the construct should be ascertained first in the measurement model before calculating for the structural model that would test the hypotheses. This is because the measurement model comprises of relationships between the latent constructs with their different indicators. However, 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 .771 and .847 which (Hair *et al.*, 2014) sees as satisfactory reliability.

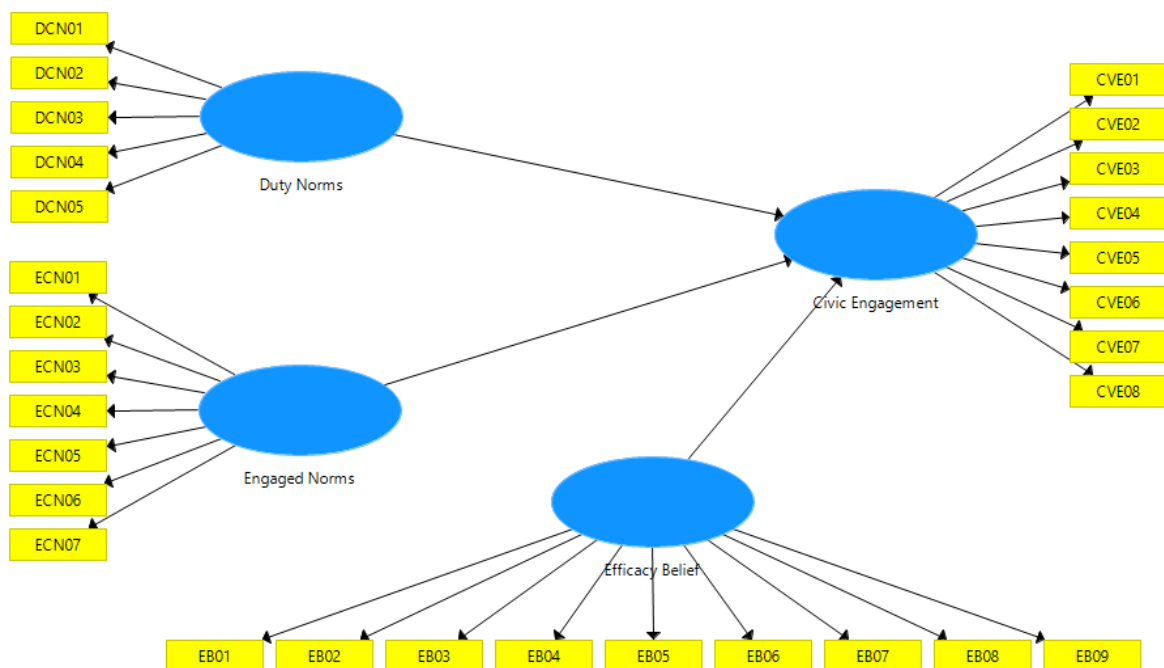


Figure 1: Research model

In measuring the model, items loadings were checked and only those items that loaded above 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 .771 and the maximum is .847. More so, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were examined, all of which have met the least requirement of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) with the values that ranged from .503 to .583. These are depicted in table 1.

Table 1 Factor Loadings and Reliability (Measurement Model Results)

Construct/Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Duty Norms		0.807	0.583
DCN02	0.710		
DCN04	0.799		
DCN05	0.779		
Engaged Norms		0.771	0.531
ECN05	0.650		
ECN06	0.705		
ECN07	0.821		
Political Efficacy		0.834	0.503
PEB02	0.701		
PEB03	0.692		
PEB04	0.680		
PEB05	0.665		
PEB06	0.800		

Civic Engagement		0.847	0.526
CVE01	0.725		
CVE02	0.762		
CVE04	0.773		
CVE06	0.724		
CVE08	0.634		

To substantiate whether or not the discriminant validity has been achieved, the inter-construct correlations were contrasted with the square root of AVE across the diagonal. using the Fornell & Larcker, (1981) standard the values of the square root of AVE exceeded that of the inter-correlation amongst the constructs in the model. Table 2 illustrates the discriminant validity result of the constructs.

Table 2: Discriminant validity Results (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

S/No.		1	2	3	4
1	Duty Norms	0.763			
2	Engaged Norms	0.405	0.729		
3	Political Efficacy	0.397	0.270	0.709	
4	Civic Engagement	0.493	0.373	0.479	0.725

Note: Diagonal elements are the square root of the AVE of the reflective scales while the off diagonals are the squared correlations between constructs

Structural Model

In assessing the structure of the model, it involves the hypothesized association between exogenous and endogenous variables with its quality criteria. The model hypotheses testing demonstrate that, the relationship between the duty norms and civic engagement was significant (t-value, 6.271; $p < 0.001$). Relationship between engaged norms and civic engagement was found to be significant (t-value, 4.381; $p < 0.001$). Finally, the relationship between political efficacy belief and civic engagement was also significant (7.575; $p < 0.001$). Table 3 portrays the result of the hypothesis findings. In examining the R^2 of the model (e.g. the endogenous construct), it shows that the value of 36.1% obtained was acceptable since it is higher than the 10% recommended by (Falk & Miller, 1992). This suggests the R^2 value obtained from the analysis was 0.361, indicating that 36.1% of variance in civic engagement can be explained by all the exogenous variables in the model.

The effect size (0.02, 0.15, and 0.35) values are representing small, medium, and large effects that signify different impact levels on the exogenous latent variable correspondingly as (Cohen, 1988) stated. Hence, in this study, the exogenous constructs DCN, ECN, PEB have the effect size values of 0.106, 0.036, and 0.128 respectively (see also 3). To put simply, the effect sizes of all these exogenous constructs on the CVE (endogenous) construct are small. Ultimately, the predictive relevance was also checked as a way of judging the structural model in addition to estimating the magnitude of the R^2 values. This is signified by the Stone- Geisser criterion Q^2 values obtained by running a blindfolding procedure with an omission distance of 7 based on 584 cases. However, a technique of cross-validated redundancy was employed in line with Hair *et al.* (2014) suggestion, the (reflective) endogenous construct has confirmed a predictive relevance as its value of Q^2 is beyond zero. In particular, the Q^2 value is 0.177.

Table 3: Summary of the Structural Model

Hypothesis	Relations	Beta	SE	t-value	p-value	Results
H1	Duty Norms -> Civic Engagement	0.301	0.048	6.271***	0.000	Supported
H2	Engaged Norms -> Civic Engagement	0.166	0.038	4.381***	0.000	Supported
H3	Political Efficacy -> Civic Engagement	0.315	0.042	7.575***	0.000	Supported
R2		0.361				
Q2		0.177				
Effect sizes (f2):						
Duty Norms		0.106				
Engaged Norms		0.036				
Efficacy Belief		0.128				

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

DISCUSSION

This paper aimed to present some insights on how political efficacy, citizenship norms (duty and engaged) affect civic engagement of university students in Nigeria. In particular, this study investigated the impact of political efficacy and citizenship norms (duty and engaged) as proposed by Howard et al. (2005) as well as Scheidegger and Staerklé (2011). The findings revealed a significant relationship between duty norms, engaged norms and political efficacy with civic engagement as hypothesized earlier. The level of significance was determined by the t-values and p-values obtained from the analysis. For hypothesis one, the relationship between DCN and CVE was supported (t-value= 6.271, p<0.01). Hypothesis two (ECN---->CVE) was supported (t-value=4.381). Hypothesis three also supported the relationship between PEB and CVE (t-value=7.575, p<0.01).

Drawing upon democracy theory (Cunningham, 2002; Pateman, 1970; Putnam, 2001), duty citizenship norms seem to have considerable relationship with civic engagement supporting the arguments of some scholars since 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 e.g. through using the internet for voting, and other worthwhile activities (Feezell et al., 2013). Though voting, obedience to law 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. The positive link between engaged citizenship norms and civic engagement seems to be explainable, as the emphasis of this norm in terms of participatory actions denote a change in political involvement which is far from voting during elections and party activity (Dalton, 2008) that

are considered institutionalized terms of duty citizen. Therefore, engaged citizenship extend beyond patterns of self-expressive values described in advanced industrial societies (Inglehart, 1990; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). To put it simply, engaged citizens may still vote, but this is not a priority to their perception of citizenship. Besides, participation in other forms of accomplishment ought to be frequent since the aspect of solidarity in engaged citizenship may also support volunteerism and improved mutual activity in the society (Obradović & Masten, 2007). Amnå, (2013) has corroborated to refute the notion that engaged youngsters are disconnected from political engagement. Furthermore, the strong relationship between political efficacy and civil engagement also supports Nuangchalerm, (2014) study on university students who acquired soaring efficacy belief from the service learning venture they enrolled. This in turn widens their participation through the activities they performed in the community. The result of this study also supported prior research of Lee, (2006) indicating that youngsters having high sense of political efficacy improved their political attitudes and actions because of experienced added intimate attachment with their society which necessitated human development. Although, efficacy plays a role in political involvement but it is essential to encourage it amongst citizens (Manganelli et al., 2014).

CONCLUSIONS

Though, this study presently centred on the influence which political efficacy and citizens norms have on civil engagement of university students in Nigeria. As an extension to this study, potential scholars could conduct longitudinal studies that trail the civic engagement of students in universities especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Nonetheless for now, this study has provided a glimpse of how political efficacy and norms of citizenship make students to be civically engaged. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide some useful insights for those who seek understanding how factors link up to students' civic engagement make them shy away from values considered not fit for the fatherland.

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