

**PARENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF
CIVIC COMPETENCES OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

Mary Mojirade AYANTUNJI Ph.D.

Department of Social Work Education, Faculty of Social Science Education
Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria
Email: ayantunjimm@eauedoyo.edu.ng

&

James Gbemisoye OYEWOLE

Department of Social Studies, Emmanuel Alayande University of Education
Oyo, Oyo State

Abstract

This study investigated parents' environmental factors as determinants of civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State. A descriptive survey research design was used. The population of the study was fourteen thousand, five hundred and eighty (14,508) students and six hundred and twenty-five (625) civic education teachers, two thousand five hundred and sixty-nine (2,569) students were sampled with one hundred and ninety-two (192) civic education teachers. The study used Parents' Environmental Factor on Civic Competences Questionnaire (PEFCCQ) and adapted "Environmental Factors in Students Civic Competence Scales (EFISCCOS) to collect data. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results revealed that most parents engaged in modest occupation (49.7%) trading, students raised in stable family (79.6%), and level of parents' educational attainment played significant role in shaping students' potential aspirations. Also, peer influence was seen as the most prevalent environmental factor ($\beta = 0.177$, $P < 0.05$) affecting civic responsibilities of students in public schools. Likewise, students show moderate level of civic competences {citizenship ($\bar{X} = 3.05$), social responsibility ($\bar{X} = 2.84$), critical thinking ($\bar{X} = 2.73$), intercultural competences ($\bar{X} = 2.69$)}. Result showed that there was significant relationship between civic competences and environmental factors of students. {Peer influence ($r = 0.228$, $P_{(.001)} < .05$), substance abuse ($r = .173$, $P_{(.001)} < .05$), social media use ($r = .212$, $P_{(.001)} < .05$)} ($r = -.029$, $P_{(.186)} > .05$), Parents' educational level ($r = -.017$, $P_{(.313)} > .05$), Parents' occupation $r = -.022$, $P_{(.313)} > .05$) of students. (F – ratio of 1.009 was not significant, environmental factors (F – ratio of 67.628 was significant on civic competences of students. In conclusion environmental factors such as peer group, substance abuse and social media use demonstrated crucial role in shaping students, civic competences It was recommended amongst others that parents'

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environmental factors should be improved to shape students' civic competences. (PSESECCQ) ($r = 0.864$) (EFISCCOS) ($r = 0.0806$).

Keywords: Abuse, Critical, Competences, Environmental, Substance

Introduction

Civic competences are profoundly influenced by environmental factors that extend beyond traditional educational settings. Substance abuse, peer groups, social media, and street life are critical elements of the environment that can significantly impact the development of civic competences among individuals, particularly adolescents (Deb & Deb, 2023). Environmental factors play a pivotal role in shaping the civic competences of individuals, and several key elements deserve attention (Hwami & Bedeker, 2023).

Substance abuse, as an environmental factor, can have profound consequences on civic engagement. Individuals struggling with substance abuse may find it challenging to actively participate in civic activities, make informed decisions, and fulfil their roles as responsible citizens. Substance abuse can erode cognitive abilities and impair judgment, potentially hindering the development of critical thinking skills necessary for effective civic participation (Lerner; Lerner; Murry; Smith; Bowers; Geldhof & Buckingham, 2020.) Addressing substance abuse as an environmental factor within civic education is crucial to fostering a society of informed and engaged citizens.

Substance abuse poses a substantial threat to civic competences as it can hinder cognitive functioning, impair decision-making abilities, and undermine the sense of social responsibility. Individuals grappling with substance abuse may face challenges in actively participating in civic activities and may struggle to fulfil their roles as informed and engaged citizens (Amaro; Sanchez; Bautista & Cox, 2021). Addressing substance abuse within the broader framework of civic education is essential for promoting a society of responsible individuals capable of contributing positively to their communities.

The influence of peer groups is another significant environmental factor that impacts civic competences. Adolescents often develop strong connections with their peers, and these relationships can shape their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Quinn; Bromage & Rowe, 2020). Parent promotes character development in many ways; by cultivating a supportive relationship, modeling

the strengths they hope to cultivate, and through the ideals they communicate to their children. Psychological needs support and communication predicted global character across age groups. At older age, parenting practices evidenced greater specificity in promoting character strengths (Shubert; Wray-Lake Syvertsen & Metzger,2022). Conversely, negative peer groups, such as engagement in delinquent activities or disengagement from civic responsibilities, may impede the cultivation of civic competences. Understanding the dynamics of peer relationships within the context of civic education is vital for educators and policymakers aiming to create interventions that positively harness the influence of peer groups on the development of responsible citizens.

Social media use represents additional environmental factors that significantly impact civic competences. In the digital age, social media platforms play a central role in shaping opinions, disseminating information, and influencing civic discourse (Ausat, 2023). However, the influence of social media on civic engagement is complex, as it can either facilitate informed participation or contribute to the spread of misinformation and polarisation. Similarly, engagement with street life, especially in urban settings, exposes individuals to various social dynamics that may influence their perspectives on civic responsibilities (Wray, Lake & Abrams,2023). Addressing the implications of social media-use on civic competences requires a refined understanding of these environmental factors and the development of strategies that leverage their influences positively for the cultivation of informed, active, and responsible citizens.

Moreover, the pervasive impact of social media use on civic competences cannot be understated. In an era dominated by digital communication, social media platforms play a significant role in shaping opinions, disseminating information, and influencing civic discourse (Bhagat & Kim, 2023). However, the digital environment also presents challenges, including the spread of misinformation and the potential for online spaces to become breeding grounds for apathy or divisive ideologies. Effectively addressing the implications of social media-use on civic competences requires a comprehensive understanding of these environmental factors and the development of strategies that leverage these influences positively for the cultivation of informed, active, and responsible citizens (Junaidi; Basrowi; Sabtohad; Wibowo; Wibowo, Asgar & Yenti2023).

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In the same vein, citizens' involvement with religions is associated with increased trust, volunteering, and perceived cooperativeness suggesting that religion can play a vital role in building social capital and promoting pro-social behaviour. A comparative study explores the influences of religious beliefs on civic competences among Muslim and Christian youth, revealing differences in civic engagement and attitudes towards social responsibility (Aksoy & Wertz,2024).

Positive effects of religious attendance might point to the fact that religious associations are somewhat different from other associations. Religious associations are characterised by strongly shared worldviews and cross-generational ties that can be very effective in transmitting social values and norms. Religious groups are very often abundant with community feelings and social commitment. Religion has great potential to build social capital since it promotes both intra-generational and inter-generational networks which can strengthen moral commitments by providing role models or influencing the plausibility structure of the moral commitments. Youths who are not members of religious organisations often lack such ties and thus are more easily influenced by peers who exhibit antisocial behaviours. All religions to some degree have a social ethic that emphasises pro-social behaviour, that is, respect for social norms and the public goods (Pavic,2021).

Religious teachings can shape individuals moral and ethical beliefs by providing a set of values and beliefs to guide their actions. Many religions emphasise the importance of treating others with respect, compassion, and kindness, which can lead to more positive and ethical behaviour. Ideally, religion serves several functions as it gives meaning and purpose to life, reinforces social unity and stability, it serves as an agent of social control, promotes psychological and physical well-being and may motivate people to work for positive social change. It also improves health, learning, economic well-being, self-control, self-esteem and empathy. It reduces the incidences of social pathologies, such as out-of-wedlock births, crime, delinquency, drug and alcohol addiction, health problems, anxieties and prejudices (Elsayed, Lestari & Brougham,2023).

Previous studies have worked on parents' socio-economic status and environmental factors. However little or nothing has been done on parents' socio-economic status and environmental factors in relationship to civic competences.

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Therefore, this study investigated parents' socio-economic status and environmental factors as determinants of civic competences among public secondary school students in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study investigated environmental factors as determinants of civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria. The objectives were to:

- i. identify the most prevalent environmental factors (substances abuse, peer group and social media use) affecting the civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria;
- ii. determine the significant relationship between environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media use) and civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria;
- iii. determine the significant moderating effect of religion on the relationship among parents' environmental factors and civic competence of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses stated below were tested at 0.05 level of Significance:

H₀₁: There will be no significant relationship between environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media use) and civic competences of public secondary school Students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There will be no significant joint contribution of (parents and environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group and social media use) on civic competence of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

H₀₃: There will be no significant relative contribution of parents (parents' income, parents' educational level and parents' marital status) and environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media use) on civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey research design. The design seeks to find out Parents' environmental factors as determinants of civic competences among public secondary schools' students in Oyo State, Nigeria without manipulations of the "dependent" and "independent variable". A descriptive

study was used in order to generalize the findings from a representative sample to a larger target population.

The population of the study comprised of all the fourteen thousand, five hundred and eight (14,508) students and six hundred and twenty-five (625) Civic education teachers in all the public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. As at the time of the study there were a total of six hundred and twenty-five (625) public secondary schools in Oyo State. The schools were spread across the three (3) senatorial districts which were Oyo Central, Oyo North and Oyo South. Oyo Central comprises of eleven (11) local government areas with a total number of two hundred and forty-four (244) schools, Oyo North comprises of thirteen local government areas with a total number of one hundred and seventy-one schools (171), while Oyo South comprises of nine (9) local government areas with a total number of two hundred and ten (210) schools.

Multi-stage sampling procedure which involved more than one stage was used to arrive at the sample size for the study. At the first stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select eleven (11) local government areas distributed across the three (3) senatorial districts in the study area. This is to enable even distribution of respondents. The procedure was done in such a way that local government areas were selected on the table based on an odd number of three (3) beginnings from the first local government area. It indicated that for every three (3) local government areas on the table, one local government area was chosen beginning from the first local government area on the table.

The instruments that were used for data collection for this research were self-constructed questionnaires titled “Parents’ Environmental Factor on Civic Competence Questionnaire” (PEFSCCQ) To determine whether operationalization of a construct actually measures what it tends to measure, the study instruments were validated based on face and content validity. The experts were shown the questionnaires in order to ascertain the instruments’ face and content validity in social studies education. The experts examined if the instruments used were appropriate for measuring what they were intended to measure and checked to make sure the instruments contained the proper items that might genuinely elicit the desired responses on parents’ environmental factor as determinants of civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Based on their suggestions, modifications, and comments,

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necessary corrections were done before subjecting the instruments to reliability test.

The reliability of the instruments was determined by using cronbach’s alpha method. A mini fieldwork termed ‘pilot study’ was carried out involving fifteen (15) public secondary school teachers and twenty-five (25) public secondary school students in Atiba Local government area which is not part of the selected local government area of the study. After the instruments were retrieved, the data were subjected to cronbach’s alpha statistical analysis to obtain reliability coefficient values of the instruments. The reliability coefficient values of 0.864 and 0.806 were obtained for both instruments respectively. When the obtainable values were interpreted via psychometric testing, they were found to be internally consistent (reliable) and could be used for this research work. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency count and simple percentage for mean and standard deviation for the research questions

Results

Presentation of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) and civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 1: Zero Order Correlation Showing the Relationship between Environmental Factors and Civic Competences of Students

	Civic Responsibilities	Peer Group	Substance Abuse	Social Media
Civic Responsibilities	1			
Peer Group	.228* (.001)	1		
Substance Abuse	.173* (.001)	.386* (.001)	1	
Social media	.212*	.162*	.261*	1

	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	
Mean (X)	62.47	98.62	38.26	74.11
Std. Deviation	11.90	14.77	3.78	27.22

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Sig. at 0.05level

Table 1 showed that there was a significant relationship between civic competences and peer group ($r = .228$, $p (.001) < .05$), substance abuse ($r = .173$, $p (.001) < .05$), and social media ($r = .212$, $p (.001) < .05$) respectively. Hence environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) influenced civic competences of students in public secondary schools in this study. The hypothesis was therefore rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant joint contribution of (parents' level of income, parents' educational level, and parents' marital status), and environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) on civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing Joint Contribution of Parents' Environmental Factors on Civic Competences of Public Secondary School Students in Oyo State, Nigeria

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
.345	.119	.116	11.18602

A N O V A

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	36148.098	6	6024.683	48.149	.001	Sig.
Residual	268272.220	2144	125.127			
Total	304420.318	2150				

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 showed that the joint contribution of (parents' income, parents' educational level and parents' marital status), and environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) on civic competences of public

secondary school students was significant. The table also showed a coefficient of multiple correlation ($R = .345$ and a multiple R^2 of $.119$). This means that 11.9% of the variance was accounted for by six predictor variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at $\alpha = 0.05$. The table also showed that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 48.149 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

H₀₃: There is no significant relative contribution of (parents' income, parents' educational level and parents' marital status), and environmental factors (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) on civic competences of public secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing Relative Contribution of Parent's Environmental Factors on Civic Competences of Public Secondary School Students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	32.052	2.662		12.038	.001
<i>Parents' Societal factor</i>			.127		
Parent's income	0.761	.126	.217	6.043	.001
Parents' educational level	1.216	.158	-.056	7.716	.001
Parents' marital status	-0.255	.130		-1.956	.051
<i>Environmental factors</i>			.017		
Peer group	0.019	.033	.059	0.579	.562
Substance abuse	0.185	.071	.176	2.589	.010
Social media	0.077	.009		8.283	.001

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Discussion of Findings

This research investigated parents' environmental factors as determinants of civic competences among students in public secondary schools, Oyo State, Nigeria. The discussion of findings synthesizes the results from various analyses, highlighting their implications in the area of previous studies. In this study, information of the respondents (teachers and students) was analyzed, and three hypotheses were tested. Additionally, the environmental factors such as peer group and substance abuse were reported, indicating a complex interplay that affects students' civic engagement (Riyanti,2020). This is consistent with prior research that emphasizes the importance of peer groups in shaping adolescent behaviour and attitudes towards civic responsibilities (Santoso,2021).

The first hypothesis (H_01) tested the relationship between environmental factor (substance abuse, peer group, and social media) and civic competences of students in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The results indicated a significant R^2 value of 0.086, with an F-value of 67.628 ($p < 0.001$), highlighting that environmental factors collectively influence students' civic competences. This finding corroborates existing studies that underscore the role of peer groups and social media in shaping civic engagement among youth (LeCompte; Blevins & Riggers-Piehl,2020,). The results emphasize the need for interventions targeting these environmental influences to enhance civic competences effectively.

The second hypothesis (H_02) examined the joint contributions of various elements of parent environmental factor; the analysis indicated that, marital status, educational level, and income level had varying effects on students' civic competences, with none achieving statistical significance. While this aligns with previous studies that found education and income to be less impactful in certain situation, it also raises questions about the specific dynamics within Oyo State's educational environment (DiGiacomo,2020).

The joint contributions of environmental factors (substance abuse, peer groups and social media), with significant findings indicated that peer influence and substance abuse positively correlate with civic competences. The standardized coefficients of multiple correlation ($R = .294$ and a multiple R^2 of

.086), revealed substantial contributions from peer group and social media, suggesting that these factors play a pivotal role in shaping civic behaviours. This supports existing literature that emphasizes the importance of positive peer interactions in promoting civic responsibility and engagement among adolescents (Reisinger; Kovács & Róbert Szabó,2020).

The three hypotheses (H_03) tested whether environmental factors moderate the relationship between religion and civic competences. Peer group has the strongest contribution ($\beta = .177$), followed by social media ($\beta = .167$) and substance abuse ($\beta = .061$). These factors explain 8.6% of the variance in civic competences (adjusted $R^2 = 0.085$), and the model is statistically significant ($F = 67.628$, $p < 0.001$). The hierarchical regression analysis showed that while environmental factors significantly contributed to civic competences, the direct effect of religion became non-significant when environmental factors were included in the model. This finding aligns with some studies suggesting that while religion may provide a framework for civic values, environmental influences often moderate or modify its impact on civic engagement (Polizzi,2019).

Conclusion

The significant joint contribution of environmental factors, specifically peer group, substance abuse, and social media, demonstrated their crucial role in shaping students' civic competences. This finding reinforces the notion that students' social environments significantly impact their civic engagement and behaviours. Consequently, interventions aimed at enhancing civic competences should focus on promoting positive peer relationships and responsible media consumption. Among the environmental factors, peer group and substance abuse emerged as significant predictors of civic competences. This indicates that positive peer dynamics can enhance civic engagement, while substance abuse poses a risk to students' civic involvement. Lastly, the examination of environmental factors as moderators in the relationship between religion and civic competences indicated that while religious values are important, their influence on civic engagement may be moderated by environmental factors. This concludes that efforts to cultivate civic competences should not only focus on instilling religious values but also consider the broader environmental context in which students operate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Educational authorities should develop and implement a robust civic education curriculum that incorporates real-life scenarios and encourages active participation. This curriculum should focus on developing critical thinking, civic responsibility, and awareness of social issues to foster students' engagement in civic activities.
2. Schools should initiate programmes aimed at increasing parental involvement in civic education. Workshops and seminars can be organised to educate parents about the importance of their role in promoting civic values and competences in their children. This may help bridge the gap between home and school influences on civic engagement.
3. There is need to establish peer mentorship programs that encourage positive peer interactions and promote civic engagement among students. Older or more experienced students can guide their peers in community service, leadership, and responsible citizenship, creating a supportive network for civic development.
4. School management should implement awareness campaigns and educational programs targeting substance abuse in schools. These initiatives should educate students about the negative effects of substance use on their civic competences and overall well-being, promoting healthier lifestyle choices and responsible behaviours.
5. Schools and community organizations should harness the power of social media to promote civic engagement among students. By using platforms popular among youth to share information about civic opportunities, volunteer work, and social issues, schools can create a more vibrant civic culture that resonates with students.
6. Schools should collaborate with religious organizations to incorporate civic education into their community programs. These partnerships can help bridge the gap between religious values and civic responsibilities, encouraging students to apply their beliefs to community engagement and civic participation.

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