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**MEDIA LITERACY COMPETENCE AND USE OF NEW MEDIA FOR  
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
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## Abstrak

Terdapat kebimbangan mengenai risiko pendedahan belia dalam persekitaran media baharu di Nigeria. Di samping itu, wujud pemerhatian bahawa belia tidak menggunakan media baharu untuk terlibat dengan isu-isu penting dalam masyarakat. Hal tersebut menimbulkan persoalan berhubung kecekapan literasi media dan kewajipan penglibatan sivik dalam kalangan belia. Sehubungan itu, kajian ini menyelidiki kecekapan literasi media di kalangan belia dan penggunaan media baharu untuk empat jenis penglibatan sivik dalam talian. Teori Kognitif Literasi Media dan Model Keterlibatan Kewarganegaraan menjadi teori asas kajian ini. Kajian ini adalah suatu kajian keratan rentas dengan 503 belia di kawasan luar bandar dan bandar di Kwara State, Nigeria dipilih sebagai responden melalui persampelan sistematik. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Permodelan Persamaan Berstruktur Kuasa Dua Terkecil Separa. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan pemahaman kritikal dalam kalangan belia berada di tahap rendah yang turut menjelaskan sebab golongan belia terdedah kepada risiko persekitaran dalam talian. Kajian mendapati wujud penggunaan media baharu yang signifikan untuk penglibatan sivik berdasarkan jenis media. Hasil analisis juga tidak mendedahkan perbezaan yang signifikan dalam penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik berdasarkan sosio ekonomi dan lokasi geografikal. Walau bagaimanapun, keputusan analisis menunjukkan bahawa pendidikan media adalah signifikan sebagai penyederhana hubungan antara kebolehan komunikasi dan penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik. Secara khusus, dapatan kajian ini menyumbang kepada pembentukan model hubungan antara dimensi kecekapan literasi media dan penggunaan media baharu untuk penglibatan sivik dan peranan pendidikan media sebagai penyederhana hubungan. Ini mengesahkan andaian teori berhubung perkaitan literasi media untuk membina warganegaraan dalam kalangan belia yang aktif. Dapatan tersebut bakal menjadi panduan kepada dasar kerajaan tentang peranan kecekapan literasi media dalam penggunaan media baharu untuk memaksimumkan peluang dan mengurangkan risiko dalam persekitaran media baharu di Nigeria.

**Kata kunci:** literasi media, penglibatan sivik, media baharu, belia Nigeria

## Abstract

There have been concerns about youths' exposure to risks in the new media environment in Nigeria. Alongside this is also the observation that the youths are not using the new media to engage important issues in society. These raise issues about the media literacy competence of the youths and their civic engagement obligations. Therefore this study investigated media literacy competence among youths and the use of new media in four types of online civic engagement. Cognitive theory of Media Literacy and the Model of Engaged Citizenship served as underpinning theories for the study. The study is a cross sectional survey with systematic sampling of 503 youths in rural and urban areas of Kwara State, Nigeria. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicated low level of critical understanding among youths which explains why the youths are exposed to risk in online environment. The study found significant use of new media for civic engagement across new media types. The results did not reveal significant differences in the use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of socio economic and geographical location of the youths. However, it showed that media education significantly moderated the relationship between communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement. These findings specifically contribute to modeling the relationship between dimensions of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement and the moderating role of media education in the relationship. It confirmed the theoretical notion of the relevance of media literacy to building active and engaged citizenship among the youths. This outcome will guide government policy on the role of media literacy competence in the use of new media such that user maximizes opportunities and minimizes risks in Nigeria's new media environment.

**Keywords:** media literacy, civic engagement, new media, Nigerian youths

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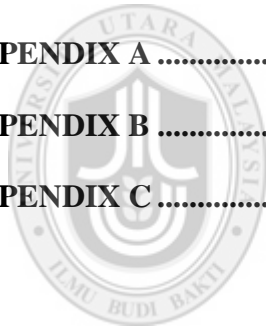


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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 An Overview**

This research is focused on the relationship between media literacy competencies (access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities) and use of new media for civic engagement among youths. This chapter introduces the background to the research and the problem statement. Following them are the research objectives and the research questions that guided the design of the study. The concluding parts of the chapter highlighted the rationale for the study; the significance of the study and definitions of the terms used in the study. The orientation of the study is to investigate the relevance of media literacy to use of new media in a way that avoid risks and help to cultivate active and inclusive participation of youths in socio political process.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

Media literacy has become a necessity and hardly a luxury if the society must produce active citizenship in the twenty first century (Kahnee,Ullman & Middaugh, 2011). The advent of the new digital media environment has made it imperative for society across the world to reconsider the practice of citizenship and media relationship. This imperative is much more pronounced in the particular case of the youths. The youths not only need to be active and engaging but also act responsibly in the new media environment. The idea of active or engaging citizenship that is also responsible is encapsulated in the concept of civic engagement. In traditional term, civic engagement refer to the degree to which people become involved in their community, both actively and passively, including such activities as political participation, community

development, humanitarian services and social advocacy against the ills of society. Putting these civic engagement activities in the online media context, Wilson and Johnson (2014) observes that the new digital media open up younger people for political participation and community engagement in a scale and dimension different from the pre-digital environment. Young people can engage the authorities through online petition, organized protests, and production of self created content and volunteer work for varieties of purpose like humanitarian services (e.g. seeking donation to support persons with health issues with little financial capability). At the level of social activism where citizens' actions are geared towards holding government and public official accountable, online citizen journalism is changing the face of civic engagement. With ubiquitous smart phones enabled with camera and connected to the internet, citizen and especially young people are assuming the role of journalist raising the possibilities of being a journalist an essential parts of the requirement of citizenship (Wilson & Johnson, 2014).

Many evidence of the use of new media for political participation and civic engagements are emerging across the world. The widely reported Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has underscored the potentials of social media for political action and civic engagement among the citizenry (Safranek, 2012). In Malaysia, Salman and Hasim (2011) reported in details how the new media were used by the opposition party to gain a remarkable ground during the 2008 elections. Also in both 2011 and 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria, the new media played significant role in the campaign and voting process. Specifically, the new media were used by different stake holders depending on their statutory function or assigned civic responsibilities. For example the citizens used the new media for sharing information

about the election process; the politician and aspirants to elective offices used the new media as campaign tools and for mobilizing supporters; while the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) used them for dissemination of information and getting instant feedback about its performance on the fields (PLAC, 2012).

The new media environment has brought enhanced participatory culture for citizens to be part of the socio-political process. This participatory culture according Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robinson and Weigel (2006) is a situation where there is relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement; where there is strong support for creating and sharing what you create with others; a kind of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced gets passed along to newbies and novices; a feeling among members that their contributions matter; a degree of social connection with each other, at least, to the degree to which they care what other people think about what they have created.

Other features of the participatory culture, according to Jenkins et al. (2006) consists of affiliation through formal and informal membership in online communities whose activities revolve around various forms of social media; creative self-expressions and collaborative problem solving through working together to complete task and gain new knowledge as well as circulation of messages that shape the flow of new media of podcasting and blogging.

However, van Hamel (2011) examined the transformation being brought into the contemporary world by the new digital media and concluded that “taking active role in civic activity nowadays is highly likely require skills like coordinating efforts in

networked environment, producing multimedia text for an invisible audience and exerting ‘virtual’ but very real pressures on leaders”(van Hamel,2011 p.16). These technical and cognitive abilities are succinctly referred to as digital media literacy skills.

Similarly, Hobbs (2010) argues that

When people have digital and media literacy competencies, they recognize personal, corporate and political agendas and are empowered to speak out on behalf of the missing voices and omitted perspectives in our communities. By identifying and attempting to solve problems, people use their powerful voices and their rights under law to improve the world around them (p.17)

Kahnee, Lee and Feezell (2010) posits that online media expands youth civic activities through self created content and engagement in dialogue. Also when youth participate in online, there is like hood of increasing their civic acts including raising money for charity, volunteering, joining political discussion and voting.

However, online civic engagement is not with all positive potentials. It is observed that online environment encourages participant to enter into what is referred to as ‘echo chamber’; a situation created when individual chose what they read, with whom they interact with and interact with those who share their ideological viewpoints (Kahnee, Lee & Feezell, 2010). A more poignant negative impact of new media is the exposure of users to risk of myriad consequences. Livingstone, 2009 and Livingstone and Helsper, 2007, have documented this range of risks. As a matter of facts, young people are implicated both as victims and as perpetrators of on online risks. In the case of Nigeria some of these online risks take the form of online stalking that in some cases leads to death and act of financial swindling (Ajibade, Olowookere & Ibukunoluwa, 2014).

Another issue of concern as highlighted by Hargittai (2010) is the emergence of “second level” digital divide attributed to socioeconomic and geographical location of the youths. This observation resonates with the Nigerian situation as many citizens are still excluded from participation in the new media culture, in spite of the continued penetration and popularity of the new media. The reason for this exclusion may be attributable to inability to access the technology or inadequate technical skills to use the new media.

A contemporary approach for dealing with new media saturated environment with wide ranging issues, is media literacy competence which is conceived as “a critical thinking skill that enables audiences to develop independent judgments about media content” (Silverblatt, 2001, p.2) and “as one of the key pre-requisite of active and full citizenship in order to prevent and diminish risk of exclusion from community life” (Ding, 2011, p.1).

The new media have created opportunity for enhanced citizens’ participation in government process and also have expanded discursive spaces for citizens in the media landscape of Nigeria (Kperogi, 2011). The new media have the potential to empower the youths for democratic participation in civic and political process. Media literacy is connected to democracy and active citizenship in the sense that such skills help to bolster the citizens’ ability to acquire informed opinion and also to express personal perspectives to socio-political process. Media literate citizens can better exercise civic and political rights of expressing their opinion as individual and as a collective (Livingstone, Couvering &Thumim, 2006). Media literacy also imbue the citizens with critical thinking skills that serve as protection in the face of the

encounter with potential risk materials in the online environment (Kelner & Share, 2007).

It is observable that, many Nigeria citizens including politicians, elected officer, public figures and youths have been creating their own content through the platform of Twitter and Facebook profiles or by belonging to chat groups on Facebook (Jideonwo, 2012; Fayemi, 2012). However, outside of election period and the episodic occurrence like the protest against fuel hike, there have been observations that majority of Nigerian youths that are using the new media to upload meaningful content. The popular claim is that the youths are active on the online media for less serious matters and not for civic engagement challenges confronting Nigeria. It is not uncommon to be confronted in Nigerian public media, seminar and workshop with the assertion that youths who post content on Facebook and Twitter are not consciously engaging in issues and discourse that reflect the existentialist challenges of modern Nigeria (Amadi, 2012). The immediate past minister of youths affairs in Nigeria refer to this trend as “farcical engagement and participation of youths in new media” (Abdullah, 2012, p.3).

These anecdotal observations among Nigerians about the use of new media by the youths highlight issues that have not been empirically addressed by research in Nigeria. While remarks in seminar and public discourse in Nigeria are acknowledging growing use of new media among the youths for civic engagement that are mostly political event-centric like elections or protest; there is the need to empirically examine both political and non political civic engagement activities of the youths. According to Park and Perry (2008), the term civic engagement has both political and non political

aspects. That is why Kim, Kavanaugh and Hult (2011) pointed out that new media on the internet can facilitate exchange of ideas and information between citizens and government, help accountability and serve as means through which citizens make input into governance process. At the same time it can enhance communal spirits and help build social capital among the citizens. The assertion of the former Minister of Youths that the use of new media by the youths is farcical (Abdulahi, 2012) suggests that the potentials of the new media for civic engagement are not being fully realised among the youth. In other words, the youths are not engaging government and elected officers in meaningful interactions as well as using the new media for interactional purposes along the line of civic engagement.

As potent as these observations are, the available literature (Ende & Udende, 2011; Amobi, 2011) have not focused on this dimension to provide empirical basis of this assertion. One of the issues of interest to this study is the extent to which participation in new media by the youths for civic engagement activities reflect their socio-economic status, geographical location and digital media literacy competence in the use of the wide range of media applications on the internet such as You Tube, Face book, Twitter and Weblog.

### **1.3 Statement of Problem**

There is growing attention of the scholarship about the new media and the youths especially on the relationship of media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement. The concern reflects both optimism and pessimism. The optimists claim that new media will assist the youth to participate in the socio-political process (Browning, 2002; Corrado, 1996; Rheingold, 1993; Dahlgren, 2012). The pessimists

on the other hand, argue that the new media reinforce and aggravate existing divide in society (Kavanaugh, 2002; Norris, 2001; Davis, 2005). The third position posits that the new media have brought another type of digital divide attributed to skill and usage differences (Hargittai & Walejko, 2008; Hargittai, 2008; DiMaggio, Hargittai, Neuman, & Robinson, 2001; Delli Carpini & Keeter 2003). This is referred to as the second level digital divide. In the midst of these scholarship engagements, proponents of media literacy competence claim that media literacy has the potential to advance civic engagement, address digital divide and help in preparing the youths in using the media in an ethical and responsible manner (Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Mihailidis, 2013; Jenkins et al, 2006).

While there is growing academic interest in the western world on the relationship of media literacy and the use of new media for civic engagement and participatory culture (Kahne, Lee & Feezell, 2012; Jacobson & Culver, 2012; Valenzuela & Zuniga, 2011; Livingstone, 2007) little is known about the issue in the context of Africa. In Africa and Nigeria in particular, few studies have focused on the impact of media literacy competence on civic engagement through the new media on the internet (Onumah, 2012). Most studies presently in Africa, especially in Nigeria; that are related to media literacy and new media focus attention on ownership and availability of new media (Amobi, 2011; Olatokun, 2007) use of new media such as the mobile phone and You Tube among students on campus (Amali, Bello, & Hassan, 2012; Ahmad, 2011); use of new media in crisis and protest situation (Wyche, Schoenebeck & Forte 2013; Mercycorps, 2012) as well as for monitoring election (Jega, 2012). Other related study like that of Ende and Udende (2011) who



studied media literacy among youths reported that most of the youths were not using the new media for significant issues like civic engagement.

In addition, there is geographical bias in the focus of most of these studies in Nigeria. It is observed that a common trend to all these studies is that they draw their population from the urban areas. For example Ende and Udende (2011) studied the youths in Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria where there is some level of infrastructural services while Amali, Bello and Hassan (2012) and Amobi (2011) focused on students in university campuses. These studies have not provided us with the situation in the rural and semi urban areas where there are different socio economic and infrastructural challenges. Whereas, media literacy competence is part of the sources of inequality in society especially in relation to digital media usage; there are few studies that focus on the impact of socio economic and geographical location on media literacy skills that can limit citizens' participatory culture in digital environment (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2010; Hargittal, 2008; Livingstone, 2007).

In view of this, the present study builds on these past studies (Wyche, Schoenebeck & Forte 2013; Mercy Corps, 2012; Jega, 2012; Amobi, 2011; Ende & Udende, 2011; Olatokun, 2007) by focusing on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among youths across socioeconomic and geographical location.

Media literacy is also about communication abilities of citizens which is the use of the new media for social relation, civic participation and collaboration online and content creation (Jenkins et al., 2006). In recent times, there is growing evidence of the use of new media for civic engagement by the youths. The new media are being employed to

pursue civic engagement in politics, economy and social life, although most common activities are for political issues (Kahnee et al., 2012). This may be good but is not enough as civic engagement because as Shirky (2011), insightfully submitted that “social media’s real potential lies in supporting civil society and the public sphere which will produce change over years and decades, not weeks or months” (p.1).

At the conceptual and theoretical levels, Martens (2010) observed that media literacy scholars attempt to connect media literacy to the field of applied research by connecting media literacy with issue of active citizenship, civic engagement or issues of public health. However, few studies have provided empirical evidence that measure and test the relationship of media literacy with the use of new media for civic engagement. Scholars of the media literacy assert further that effective use of new media is shaped by the level of media literacy of the users. According to Celto and Tornero (2009), two dimensions of media literacy of individual competences and environmental/contextual factors affect access and use of the media generally and new media in particular. Despite the considerable conceptual postulations and empirical studies (Buckingham, 2000; Kahnee, Lee & Feezell, 2012, Livingstone, 2010; Jenkins, et al, 2006) on new media, civic engagement and media literacy, there exists gap in knowledge on the role of the individual dimensions of media literacy in relation to online civic engagement. In other words how do the factors of access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities influence or relate to use of new media among the youths who are regarded as digital youths.

As discussed above, each of these dimensions of media literacy has different influence on exposure to and use of digital media for different purposes including

civic engagement. It is pertinent to examine the trend and how each of these dimensions influences the use of new media among youths.

The second issue of interest to the study is that most of the studies on online civic engagement focus on political participation whereas civic engagement includes community participation, social activism and humanitarian activities. This study is interested in finding out whether the youth are interested in other aspect of civic engagement that goes beyond political participation. The objective is to extend knowledge in this area by including the other aspects of civic engagements besides political participation. In addition to extending knowledge, it has practical implication for policy formulation on use new media for pro-social use and benefits by the government.

The third issue of interest is how difference in socio economic and geographical location is associated with differences in the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among youths. As shown in the findings of Kahne, Lee and feezell (2012), Amobi, 2010), Hargittai, (2010) socio economic and geographical location are factors that influence level of digital skills and use of new media. But in the context of Nigeria, there is fast penetration of new media into the rural areas due to growth in mobile phone usage. Therefore there is need to investigate the present situation in both the rural and urban centres.

The fourth issue of interest is the moderating role of media education on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic for civic engagement. Scholars of media literacy and use of media have noted that media

education is an important factor that affect media literacy competence and use of new media (Venwynsberghe, Pulussen & Verdegen, 2011; Celot & Tornero 2009). This type of education is different from having formal education. Even though, possession of high education at secondary or university level can facilitate quick learning of the media skills. However, those with opportunity to be trained in the use of new media have tendency to exhibit effective usage as compared to those who did not have the opportunity. Theoretically, media education is conceived as the scaffolding needed by the youths to firm up their media and communication skills in the new digital media environment (Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Kellner & Share, 2007; Buckingham, 2003). Such postulations need to be incorporated into a research model and tested empirically. Besides, which dimensions of the media literacy does media education strengthen is not known from the existing literature. In the context of Nigeria, few youths have had opportunity to have undergone training in media literacy either through formal or informal means (Onumah, 2011, 2014: ACMIL, 2011). Thus, how this situation influences the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media among the youths is of interest to this study. Therefore, the study seeks to determine the moderating role of media education on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media among youths using the Nigerian youths as population of study.

The focus of this study can be summarized as follows.

1. The conceptual and theoretical postulation of media literacy is that it advances citizen active participation in socio-political process. Few studies have attempted to empirically test and validate this model.
2. Studies on civic engagement largely focused on political participation; whereas civic engagement involved other aspect of life. These are no less

important because they hold the society together especially in a multi ethnic, multi religious society like Nigeria. It is important to examine how the youths are using the new media for humanitarian, social advocacy and community participation.

3. The level of media literacy especially critical understanding is a means to understanding why the youths are prone to online risks as is being witnessed in Nigeria. Data from the study will inform policy formulation on the new media orientation of the youths.
4. Media education is a means of strengthening the existing level of media literacy competence among media users. How often are the youths exposed to this type of education and how does media education moderates the use of new media for civic engagement? These are not yet studied in the existing literature of media literacy and in the context of Nigeria.
5. Media literacy competence is one of the sources of digital divide that has been dubbed second level digital divide (Hargittai, 2008). Differences in socio economic and geographical location can limit citizen participation in the use of new media for civic engagement. This study intends to investigate the present situation among Nigerians youths that will update knowledge and inform policy formulation.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the level of media literacy competencies in term of access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities among youths?
2. What is the trend of using different new media for various civic engagements among the youths?

3. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competencies of access and usage abilities and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?
4. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competence of critical understanding and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?
5. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competence of communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?
6. Are there significant moderating difference in the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement based on educational, gender and socioeconomic status of the youths?
7. Are there significant moderating difference in the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement based on geographical location of the youths?
8. Does media education reveals significant moderating effects on the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The objective of this study is to determine the relationship of media literacy competence on use of new media for civic engagement based on the media literacy dimensions: - access/usage competence, critical understanding and communication abilities. Also the study seeks to determine the moderating influence of media education/training on the relationship of media literacy competence on use of new

media for civic engagement. This study seeks to determine the differences in the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement based on educational, gender and socioeconomic status background of the youths. It is argued (Vanwynsberghe, Paulussen, & Verdegem, 2011) that before the government or society can do something about digital inequality (both first and second level), it is pertinent to have good understanding of the state of the media literacy. Therefore, the objective of the study includes the following.

The specific study objectives are:

1. To examine the level of media literacy competence in term of access and usages skills, critical understanding and communication abilities among the youths.
2. To determine the trend in the use of different new media for civic engagement among the youths.
3. To determine the relationship between media literacy competence of access and usage skills and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths.
4. To determine the relationship between media literacy competence of critical understanding and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths
5. To determine the relationship between media literacy competence of communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths.
6. To find out if there is significant differences in the use of new media based on educational, gender and socioeconomic status of the youths.
7. To find out if there is significant differences in the use of new media based on geographical location of the youths.

8. To find out if media education significantly moderates the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths.

### **1.6 Rationale for the Study**

Without an empirical basis on the influence and impact of socio-economic and geographical location of citizens on the media literacy competence and use of new media, it is difficult to assert the level of inclusion or exclusion of youths' participation in civic engagement in the new media environment. In contemporary culture of information and communication technology, the factors of access, usage skills, and critical understanding and communication abilities are essential indicators of the type of citizens that will come out of that society.

The optimistic and pessimistic perspective about use of new media needs empirical confirmation across different cultures and socio-political context. This study provides research context to examine the perspectives. In this study, by looking at the media literacy competence of the youths and their civic engagements the goal of producing good media consumers and good citizen can be examined empirically. The basis for innovation in the use of the new media will depend on the knowledge members of the society have about the level of media literacy among the citizenry such as the youths.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

By examining the individual dimensions of media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement, this study extent knowledge in literature linking



media literacy and online civic participation. Thus, the study will provide perspectives on media literacy and civic engagement from African perspective. Nigeria with its huge population of over 180 million represents one out of every four Africans. It is located in the heart of the African continent and a central player in its socio-economic and political life. More importantly is the fact that Nigeria has the fastest growing users of the new media and the internet. By the end of 2014, the internet users have risen to 57 million and are predicted to reach 84 million in 2018 (ITU, 2014; Aderibigbe, 2014). Furthermore, given the importance of media literacy to effective function of citizens in new media environment, it makes sense to examine the distribution of media literacy skills among youths and their behaviour in relation to online civic engagement.

The practical relevance of this study is derived from the fact that media literacy is the modern strategy to build informed and active citizenship that is necessary for democratic culture and development of the society. Since the youths form critical segment of the society, there is need for understanding their media consumption pattern and the skill to access, analyse, evaluate and creation of content of the media that enhance civic culture. This requirement is heightened in the context of the contemporary multi content and multimedia environment. The data from this study contributes to policy formulation and adoption of media literacy in Nigeria. The outcome will also be of great value to scholars whose academic focus is on the youths and new media environment. At the same time, youths who intend to or are already using the new media will find in the study relevant information on the requirements for effective use of the new media for their social, economic, communal and political participation in the context of the new media.

## **1.8 Scope and Delimitation of Study**

The scope of this study is limited to media literacy in relation to use of new media for civic engagement among youths in Nigeria and more specifically the Kwara State of Nigeria. The choice of Kwara State was informed by a number of factors. First, there is penetration of use of new media for varying activities comparable to all other states in Nigeria. Also Kwara has four universities located in both rural and urban areas which are driving youth population into these locations. In addition, the high mobile phone enabled with Internet access is another factor that is enhancing use of new media among youths in Kwara State. Like in other parts of Nigeria, stakeholders are expressing different concerns about how youths are using the new media and their influence on the lives of these youths. Aside the technological factors, there are socio-demographic factors that recommend Kwara State, among other states in Nigeria as suitable location for the study of new media in relation to civic engagement. Kwara State has both cultural traits of northern and southern Nigerian present within its border. Residents of Kwara State speak Hausa, Fulani, and Yoruba, Batonu, Bokobaru and Nupe different parts of the State. It is a state with fair distribution of both rural and urban settlements. These configurations would allow the researcher to achieve the research objectives of measuring the literacy competence of the youths and how they are using the new media in both urban and rural settings in Nigerian community for significant issue of civic engagement.

## **1.9 Conceptual Definition**

### **1.9.1 Civic Engagement**

Conceptually civic engagement refers to the degree to which people become involved in their community, both actively and passively, including such political and

organizational activities as political rallies, and network of interpersonal communication patterns or as individual or collective behaviour aimed at resolving problems of the community (Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins & Delli-Carpini, 2006). Thus, civic engagement in this study is the use of Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, personal Weblog among Nigerian youths for civic activities such as community participation and political participation, humanitarian services and social advocacy.

### **1.9.2 Media Literacy**

Media literacy is a term that is viewed from different conceptual orientations. Potter, (2011) conceives it as a set of perspectives from which media users exposed themselves to the media and upon which they based their interpretations and the meaning of the messages which they encountered through the media. Media literacy is seen as a multifaceted concept involving the ability to access the media in terms of ownership and usage skills, as well as abilities to analyse, evaluate and create messages across varieties of contexts (Livingstone, 2004; Aufderheide, 1993). From critical perspectives, media literacy provides critical thinking skill and empowers the media users and audiences to deconstruct the information that they receive through the channels of mass communication. Media literacy empowers media users to develop abilities for independent evaluation of the content of media ( Silverblatt & Eliceiri, 1997). More specifically, critical media literacy involves the politics of representation in which the form and content of media messages are interrogated in order to question the ideological bias and the connotations explicit and implicit in the representations (Kellner & Share, 2005).

The conceptual definition of media literacy in this study is the ability of youths in rural and urban areas to access, analyse, evaluate and create messages across varieties of web based media such as Facebook, Twitter, personal Weblog and You Tube by Nigerian youths as measure by the media literacy assessment criteria developed by European Commission (Celot & Tornero, 2009, 2011).

### **1.9.3 Media Literacy Competence**

This study align with the argument of Venwynsberghe, Pulussen and Verdegem (2011) that “The terms ‘competence’ and ‘key competence’ are preferred to ‘basic skills’ which was considered too restrictive as it was generally taken to refer to basic literacy and numeracy and to what are known variously as ‘survival’ or ‘life’ skills. ‘Competence’ is considered to refer to a combination of skills, knowledge, aptitudes and attitude, and include the disposition to learn in addition to know-how.” (p.9). Therefore, the operational definition of media literacy competence in this study is the demonstration of combination of skills of access and usage, critical understanding, and online communication abilities for social relation, civic engagement and content creation among youth in rural and urban areas.

### **1.9.4 New Media**

The term new media generally refers to emerging communication technologies and applications, while simultaneously acknowledging the fact that all media formats at various points in time have been considered new (Marvin, 1988). In contemporary terms, new media include all forms of computer-based applications and mobile technology that make convergence possible (Penman & Turnbull, 2007). In this study new media refer to web based media such as Face book, Twitter, Weblog and

You Tube, that are accessible on the internet or Internet enabled mobile devices such as GSM mobile phones and Smartphone devices.

### **1.9.5 Use of New Media**

Use of new media refers to active use of modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as GSM phones, Smartphone, internet, and their many applications such as e-mail, text messaging, social media, social networking sites and user generated content like You Tube Blogs, Commentary Boards on news websites etc (Rheingold, 2008). In this study, it is operationally defined as ability to and frequency of creating content, share or distribute for civic engagement on web based media by the youths across socioeconomic status and geographical locations among Nigerian youths.

### **1.9.6 Youths**

According to UNESCO (2001), youth is regarded as transition from childhood dependence to adulthood's independence when one becomes aware of his/her interdependence as members of a community. It is an age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment. Although UNESCO uses different definition, depending on the context, it generally regards youths as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. For certain socio economic reality, the Nigeria government and the Africa charter regards those between the ages of 18 to 35 as youths. For the purpose of this study, youth refers to those men and women who are between the ages of 15 to 35 and living in the urban, and rural areas of Nigeria are considered to be youth. In other words, the study combines and adopts the UN and the Nigeria definitions of youths.

### **1.9.7 Media Education**

According to UNESCO (1999) media education deals with all education and training that make it possible for the people to increase their level of awareness of media and to acquire operational skills; learn how to analyse, critically reflect upon and create media texts; identify the sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial and/or cultural interests, and their contexts; interpret the messages and values offered by the media; select appropriate media for communicating their own messages or stories and for reaching their intended audience; gain or demand access to media for both reception and production” (UNESCO, 1999, ). UNESCO regards this type of media education as part of basic entitlement of every citizen in every country of the world. This form of education can be acquired both formally and informally—in school, seminar workshop and through lifelong learning (Livingstone, 2007). Following this, we operationally define media education as the exposure to acquisition of skills of usage, critical understanding, and communication abilities for social relation, participation in public sphere and content creation among youth in rural and urban areas.

### **1.9.8 Socio-economic Status**

Socio-economic status refers conceptually to factors of age, gender, income, employment status, race, ethnicity that predict access or use facilities in society (Hargittal, 2010, 2007; Di Maggio et al., 2004). In this study, we operationally use socio-economic status to cover the influence of gender, income level on usage differences on media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagements among youths in Kwara State in the North Central zone of Nigeria using the instrument developed by Celot and Tonnero (2009, 2011) as adapted for this study.

### **1.9.9 Geographical Location**

Geographical location conceptually refers to place of residence of citizens that determine or predicts access or use of facilities in society or differential access quality (Hargittal, 2010, 2007; Di Maggio et al, 2004). Operationally, geographical location is used in this study to refer to different place of residence of youths as denoted by urban and rural areas of Kwara State.

### **1.9.10 Chapter Summary**

In summary, this chapter identified that studies on media literacy and new media in Nigeria have focused on urban youths with little attention on urban and rural areas. Whereas, the advantage of new media for civic engagement lies in its potentials to increase participatory culture among citizens; the focus on urban youths leaves gap in understanding new media uses and media literacy competence across socio economic status and geographical location. Secondly, even among the urban youths that have been studied, the attention was not on the issue of skills and usage differences that may influence effective participation of youths in the new media environment.

The new media environment provides both opportunities and risks which needs the critical understanding skills among the users. These two sides of new media are already manifesting in Nigeria as chronicled in the preceding sections but little is known about the analytical and evaluative skills of the youths in the new media environment.

At the level of civic engagement, the new media enhances discursive opportunity structures among Nigerian which points to the potentials of new media for civic engagement in the Nigeria media landscape. However, studies in Nigeria have not provided enough empirical research beyond anecdotal commentaries in public discourse. Therefore, there is need to determine how the youths are using the new media in their daily activities for civic engagement apart from episodic or event oriented one like protest or election purposes.

Similarly, scholars of media literacy and new media have noted that socioeconomic and geographical location can influence the level of media literacy and usage differences in the use of new media. However, those with opportunities to be exposed to formal or informal media training will exhibit higher media literacy competence, thus positioning media education as having potential to moderate the influence of socioeconomic and geographical location on the level of media literacy and use of new media.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter contains a review of literature that is considered relevant to the major concepts of this study. The review starts with the concept of civic engagement and media literacy by highlighting the approaches/conceptions underlining the study and scholarship. Thereafter, the major variables of the study derived from the conceptual/theoretical component of media literacy competences of access and usage, critical understanding and communication abilities were reviewed. These were complemented with a review of the Cognitive Theory of Media Literacy which further explicates on the concept of media literacy. Hypotheses were generated on the basis of these reviews. Also there is a review of literature on youths and new media cultures while the review on civic engagement as the dependent variable and how it connects to media literacy. The review was concluded with an over view of new media environment in Africa and Nigeria.

#### **2.2 Definition and perspectives on study concepts**

##### **2.2.1 Civic Engagement**

The root of the concept of civic engagement is traced to the latin word *civis* which is used to refer to city and citizens. Civic engagement therefore is used to mean the activities of men and women living in a city, acting and speaking together as citizens. By implication, civic engagement means publicly done work, in concert with others and of benefits to others (Adler & Goggin, 2005). The term civic engagement exemplifies the conception of the citizenship in society because it typifies participation of citizens in the life of a community by having in mind the objective of

improving the condition or shaping the community's future. In other words, civic engagement is the recognition of the need and actual working for the community in order to make a difference in the life of the people by developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make the difference (Oryx, 2000). However, Park and Perry (2008) have pointed out the tendency to treat political participation as synonymous with civic engagement whereas civic engagement encompasses other social activities that are distinct from political behavior.

Adler and Goggin (2005) noting that conception of civic engagement depends on the definer's interest identified different types of civic engagement. From community participation perspectives, civic engagement is the level to which individual embraces his or her responsibilities as citizens. It involves the way the individual perceives the imperative of active participation alongside other compatriots, to provide volunteer service and similar activities with a view to strengthen his immediate local community. At the social level, civic engagement denotes the coming together of the people to perform their role as citizens. When conceived from political participation point of view, Adler and Goggin (2005) assert that civic engagement differs from an individual ethic of service because the individual person mobilises or joins collective action with the objective of solving challenges confronting the society through the political process.

In this regards, Adler and Goggin (2005) concludes that civic engagement exemplifies the active citizenship involving collective action that goes beyond individual behavior. It is a social skill-based activities demanding collaboration and

intense joint activities among the community members that cut across variety of issues, sectors, institution and government.

This range of activities forming the elements of civic engagement was put in broader, collectives definition which Adler and Goggin (2005) noted was provided by political scientist Michael Delli Carpini. He says:

Civic engagement is individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem, or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighbourhood association, writing a letter to an elected official or voting (p.5).

### **2.2.2 Online Civic Engagement**

Online civic engagement is the use of varieties of new media gadgets and online platform for participation in public affairs. These online platforms include Face book, Twitter, You Tube, Weblog and other numerous technologies on the internet.

The advent of internet and mobile technologies has transformed the nature of social interaction including civic engagement. Through the online media, interest groups are formed just as the ICT facilitate deliberation on socio-political issues (Aukalniene, 2012). Unlike in the pre digital era, new media environment offers media wider platform for civic activities through its two-way interactive communication and instant messaging. The impacts of these potentials of new media have been viewed by scholars from different perspectives of optimism, pessimism and skepticism. The optimists argued that the new media increases participation of citizen in civic activities by stimulating their interest in politics and propel them into new ways of information sharing. Furthermore, the new media provides wider

exchange of ideas and deliberation among citizens and by-passed the control and restrictions often experienced in the traditional and analogue media era. The optimists envisage the new media as cultivating informed citizenry who will source information in both new and traditional media. In contrast, the pessimists observed that rather than emancipate the citizenry, the new media tend to aggravate their existing disadvantage position in society. They point to the danger of information overload, unequal access to the technology thereby worsening the digital divide; commodification of information, exposure to risks of fraud, cyber bullying and manipulations of media contents. The media literacy scholars have also identified second level digital divide to the list of challenges facing the citizens in the new media environment. According to Hargittai, (2008), second level digital divide arise as a result of skill and usage differences along socio-economic lines.

The skeptics' however, maintained unaligned position but rather cautioned that the internet neither facilitate nor undermine civic engagement. To them the new media merely reflects things as they are as usual in society (Park & Perry, 2008).

The foregoing argument and the various empirical studies carried out to validate each of the positions is an indication of the fact that there is no single line of influence and/or impact of the new media on aspects of the society.

### **2.2.3 Civic Engagement and Citizenship**

An important factor that influences how citizen behaves in society either through technology or in normal life is the citizen orientation as taught in home and schools. These orientations inform how the citizens use the new media for civic engagement.

In examining citizens' orientation, Westheimer and Kahnee (2004) identified three kinds of citizen orientations as discussed in the following section.

#### **2.2.3.1 The Personally Responsible Citizen**

According to Westheimer and Kahnee (2004), a citizen whose orientation is to be personally responsible citizen would act responsibly in his/ her community. He would engage in civic acts like picking up litter, giving blood, recycling, volunteering, and staying out of debt. He dutifully discharges his civic responsibilities by promptly appearing at work place and paying taxes, obeying laws, and helping the needy when crises such as snow, storms or floods occurs. A citizen who wants to live to his billing as personally responsible citizen would donate food or clothing items and volunteers in helping the unfortunate. He is most likely to contribute money or spare his time for charitable organization. In the context of online civic engagement the personally responsible citizen manifest his characters by using his Face book page, Twitter handle or Weblog as contribution to support community service or humanitarian concern. He or she uses the new media in ethical ways by emphasizing honesty, self discipline and handwork (Westheimer & Kahnee, 2004).

#### **2.2.3.2 The Participatory Citizen**

Participatory citizens though exhibits the trait of the personally responsible citizen, he goes beyond that realm. He actively participates in the civic affairs and the social life of the community at local, state, and national levels. While the personally responsible citizen may be contented with donating blood to victims of accident or donating clothing items to the homeless people, the participatory citizens will, in addition, mobilize and organize for the donation. Most online civic activities that

exemplifying this kind of citizenship is the creation of Face book page, Blog post or Twitter handle for the purpose of supporting a cause. In short, the participatory citizen places emphasis on planning, organizing and participation in pushing for the cause of the people in need or promoting a social cause e.g. changes in policy. As pointed by Westheimer and Kahnee (2004), the participatory citizen sees his/her role in civic participation beyond issues located within a particular community alone.

### **2.2.3.3 The Justice-Oriented Citizen**

A point of departure in citizen orientation from the personally responsible and the participatory citizens is the Justice-oriented citizen. Westheimer and Kahnee, (2004), describe this kinds of citizens as, “One that calls explicit attention to matters of injustice and to the importance of pursuing social justice goals. Justice-oriented citizens critically assess social, political, and economic structures and consider collective strategies for change that challenges injustice and, when possible, address root causes of problems.” (p.3). Although the justice-oriented citizens resemble the participatory citizens by emphasizing on the importance of collective efforts in tackling community issues, he is critical of the structural factors that are responsible for the situation. While acknowledging and commending the participatory citizens for organizing the food drive and the personally responsible citizens for donating food, the justice-oriented citizens are equally asking why people are hungry, why are citizens not focusing on the social, economic, and political structures that generate the problems in the first instance? The Justice-oriented citizens critically analyse the issues and act on their findings. Most internet users referred to as elites or mentors on the cyberspace will fall into this category (Jenkins et al., 2006).

However, the effectiveness of the citizens in using the new media for civic engagement is largely affected by the levels of new media literacies he or she possesses. The next section elaborates on the concept of media literacy.

### **2.3 Media Literacy: Meaning and Perspectives**

A detailed review of literature on media literacy shows an accumulation of research and perspectives from varieties of background. From the cultural and ideological fields are scholars who believe that the audience needs protection from the media whose messages are perceived to be conduit for spreading undesirable contents. On the other hands, other scholars conceived media literacy as means of empowering the audience to be able to cope with media content and messages (Potter, 2001; Buckingham, 1998, 1990; Meyrowitz, 1998; Zettl, 1998; Messaris, 1994). These two perspectives are motivated by ideological motives (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009). A large number of works, understandably, came from the field of education with attention on the need to institute media literacy in the curriculum (Buckingham, 1998; Hobbs, 1997; Christ & Blanchard, 1994).

In all these, it is clear that media literacy evolved out of the concern to protect the children and the young ones from the presumed negative influence of media on the lives of children, youth and audience generally (Buckingham, 1998; Christ & Potter, 1998). The concept has now grown to encompass the wide range of audience skills in technical usage, abilities to analyse and evaluate the media contents, awareness and knowledge about media industry, about media regulations and potential risk in the media as well as abilities to use new media to empower the youths for civic participation (Hobbs, 1998). It seems that the conceptions of media literacy now

converge around Livingstone's (2009) definition of media literacy as the "Ability to access, analyse, evaluate and create messages across variety of contexts" (p.3). This definition has been slightly modified by European Commission as the "Ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and to create communications in a variety of context" (Ding, 2011, p.1).

Despite wide and recurrent reference to Livingstone's definition in many publications, media literacy is perceived from different perspectives. As noted by Penman and Turnbull (2007) "while there is almost universal agreement that media literacy is a good thing, there is no universal agreement on what it is" (p.5). The reason for this, according to the authors, is attributable to the fact that media literacy is approached from different disciplinary and theoretical assumptions and framed in different cultural context. In addition, the continuous changing technological landscape has added to the challenge of what media literacy is. As a matter of fact, media literacy tends to take the coloration of regions and groups that are offering the perspectives about media literacy (Penman & Turnbull, 2007).

However, theory and policy formulation about media literacy tend to revolve around two philosophical world views: that the media have certain effects that are deemed undesirable for certain members of the society hence the need to be protected from the harmful impact of exposure to the media. This perspective is dubbed the protectionist approach (Buckingham, 1998). The second approach which is recent and it was in response to the protectionist movement posits that the realities of the new media environment have made the protectionist approach ineffective. It therefore advocates and promotes the preparatory/ empowerment approach. The goal



of such approach is to prepare and empower the media audience in general and youths in particular to be able to deconstruct the complex messages they are exposed to on daily basis through variety of media. Also it focuses on preparing the media users for citizenship role by being producers of their own messages (Kellner & Share, 2005).

In the light of the above, Penman and Turnbull (2007) remarked that there was little hesitation about the transformation of the concept of media literacy over the years in line with developments in media technology. They further assert that media literacy is likely to continue its morphology but that the compelling aims will remain constant. The authors rationalised that since educators and researchers are principally concerned with media literacy due to its potential to cultivate citizen to become competent in engaging societal and political issues, media literacy will continue to steer debates about the manner and purpose of public participation. In the context of this study, media literacy skills of access, usage critical understanding and communication abilities are important determinant of youth's civic engagement. Kahnee, Ullman and Middaugh (2011) emphasised the relevance of media literacy skills to cultivation of civic engagement among youths through participation in digital media environment.

## **2.4 Media Literacy Concept and Approaches**

### **2.4.1 Concepts**

Following from the observation of the changing character of media literacy, it is important to examine related concepts with a view to see similarity and differences. Such exercise will sharpen our understanding of the concept of media literacy. The

idea of media literacy stems from the concept of literacy itself. According to Kellner and Share (2005), literacy requires opportunities to gain certain skills, and knowledge that make it possible to read, interpret and to produce messages. Literacy provides intellectual tools and capabilities that facilitate participation in societal and cultural activities. In the context of new media environment, researchers and policy makers have acknowledged the necessity of acquiring multi literacy competence involving computer, media and communication skills. Consequently, a number of related concepts which have been identified by Collin, Rahilly and Richardson (2011) are discussed below.

(i) Audio Visual literacy; in the decades following the era of classical literacy of reading, writing and understanding there emerged interest in audio visual media of television and film with focus on the images and sequences of images. The need to properly relate with these media gave rise to setting up of film and television clubs across European countries. The major literacy skills of this era involved the critical skills to analyse and interpret the content of the media based on semiotics tradition. Until the advent of the digital technology, the audio visual literacy dominates the media studies. Digital literacy; since the emergence of digital technology in the 90s, the skills and knowledge associated with digital media has taken over the media landscape and discussion. Without equivocation, researchers and policy makers realised that it would be necessary to acquire new skills if citizens must cope with the new media environment. The attention is now on skills needed to manage modern digital tools. Since the US leads in the digital revolution, many countries abandon the European tradition of critical media literacy to embrace the new media and information society culture.

(ii) Technical literacy; the digital technology demand a new set of technical skills and knowledge to efficiently and effectively operate the computer, navigates the internet using the web browser and take full complement of the software programmes or application. For this reason, educators and researchers were compelled to focus on these demands.

(iii) Critical content literacy; according to Oxstrand (2009), refers to “the ability to effectively use search engines and understand how they “order” information; who or what organisations created or sponsor the information; where the information comes from and its credibility and/or nature” (p.2).

(iv) Communicative and social networking literacy; the new media environment requires acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of the varieties of communication modes and spaces available on the internet. To be competent communicator on the web; a considerable familiarisation with the formal and informal rules of behaviour about privacy and self disclosure are necessary in order to be protected. This conception is close to media literacy especially with the element of critical understanding except that media literacy includes content creation abilities.

(v) Creative content and visual literacy; this literacy relates to skills and knowledge to create, uploads, share and collaborate with others for self expression. In addition, an understanding and possession of remixing skills of online visual content and thereby “reconstructing” to suit one’s purpose is also a function of creative and visual literacy. Besides all these skills, is the need for knowledge about the appropriateness of content and respect for or avoidance of copyright violations.

(vi) Mobile media literacy; the new digital era has introduced the mobile phone technological devices with peculiar skills and forms of communication (for example text messaging), mobile web literacy, and an understanding of mobile phone etiquettes (Oxstrand 2009). The advent of mobile devices is especially attractive to developing countries where they experience acute electricity supply and poor internet infrastructures. Acquiring skills in the use of the mobile phone devices is considered a vital requirement for citizen participation in socio-political process.

(vii) Media literacy is the concept that appropriates all the preceding literacies and illustrates the transformation of the media landscape. The media environment is witnessing the merging of the digital literacy and the tradition of audio visual literacy. The contemporary media environment is where the technologies of broadcasting, digital and telephoning merge to erase the difference between digital and electronic media. These are the hallmarks of development in the world variously refer to as information society or knowledge society. As observed by the Centre for Media Literacy (2003), the concept is an attempt to provide analytical framework revolving around the abilities to access, analyse, evaluate and create multiplicity of media including video, audio and the new media on the Internet. The aim of media literacy is to help build citizens with requisite skills that can help create understanding across cultures in society using the media.

Table 2.1 provides a summary of the definitions of media literacy from different ideological and geographical orientation. It shows the breakdown according to source and the elements of media literacy.

Table 2.1

*Source and principal dimensions of media literacy*

Source	Access/Use	Understand	Create
<b>UNESCO</b> UNESCO-Paris agenda, 2007	to give access to all kinds of media that are potential tools to understand society and to participate in democratic life;	to develop skills for the critical analysis of messages, whether in news or entertainment, in order to strengthen the capacities of autonomous individuals and active users;	to give access to all kinds of media that are potential tools to understand society and to participate in democratic life; to encourage production, creativity and interactivity in the different fields of media communication.
The European Commission (European Commission, 2007)	feeling comfortable with all existing media from newspapers to virtual communities	Understanding the economy of media and the difference between pluralism and media ownership; being aware of copyright issues which are essential for a "culture of legality", especially for the younger generation in its double capacity of consumers and producers of content.	using media creatively, as the evolution of media technologies and the increasing presence of the Internet as a distribution channel allow an ever growing number of Europeans to create and disseminate images, information
European Charter of Media Literacy (G.Perez ornero J.M. and UNESCO, 2008b)	Effective use of media technologies to <i>access, store, retrieve and share</i> content to meet individual and community needs and interests technologies to <i>access, store, retrieve and share</i> content to meet individual and community needs and interests.	<i>Understanding how and why</i> media content is produced. Accessing and making <i>informed choices</i> about, a wide range of media forms and content from different cultural and institutional sources.	<i>Creative use of the media</i> to express and communicate ideas, information and options.
<b>AMLE</b> NAMLE-Core Principles, 2009	Media Literacy Education expands the concept of literacy(i.e., reading and writing) to include all forms of media.	Media Literacy education uses group discussion and analysis of media messages to help children understand and appreciate perspectives and points of view.	Media Literacy Education builds and reinforces skills for learners of all ages. Like print literacy, those skills necessitate integrated, interactive, and repeated practice

The definitions contained in Table 2.1 above demonstrate the significance attached to media literacy in contemporary media environment. For example both the UNESCO and EU place emphasis on creating access and building creative skills as basic rights of citizens. Similarly, NAMLE also subscribes to universal distribution of media access and skills to navigate the media by its allusion to learners of all ages. The European Charter's definition of media literacy was most emphatic on usage skills as primary requirements for deploying the media for both individual and community needs. As a whole, the definitions contain in the table above reinforces the contention of Penman and Turnbull (2007) that the concept of media literacy is witnessing continuous transformation. Despite this transformation, the relevance of the notions in the definition is yet to be fully applied in the African and Nigeria experience especially in relation to civic engagement. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the media literacy competence of youths in the context new media culture in Nigeria. Nigeria is currently experiencing fast growing new media space but research lags behind in the specific areas of the relationship of media literacy skills to the understanding of the transformation of media landscape.

#### **2.4.2 Approaches**

Kellner and Share (2007) identified four approaches to media literacy education. The first is the protectionist approach where the “aim is to protect or inoculate people against the dangers of media manipulation and addiction” (p.6). The second is the Media Art Education approach “where students are taught to value the aesthetics qualities of media and the arts while using their creativity for self expression through creating arts and media” (p.7). The third approach is referred to as a movement whose concern is ‘to expand the notion of literacy to include multiple forms of media

–music, video, internet, etc” (p.7). Under the influence of this approach, the notion of content literacy, information literacy, grammar literacy, medium literacy etc, have emerged (Burton, 2010). The fourth approach, according to Kellner and Share (2007), is the critical media literacy approach. While incorporating the three approaches, the emphasis of critical media literacy is on ideological critique, politics of representation of gender, race and class. It also incorporates alternative media production and expands the textual analysis to include issues of social, context, control and pleasure. The following passage elaborates on each of the approaches.

#### **2.4.3 Protectionist/Inoculation Approach**

The advent of new media in society has always evoked some kind of threat or exaggerated hope in the potential of the media. To start with, the protectionist approach is traceable to the time of Socrates and Plato (Penman & Turnbull, 2007) who perceived the advent of writing to be a threat to human capacity for memorisation in the tradition of oral culture. Penman and Turnbull (2007) remarked that although such reasoning was not totally untenable if put in the context of the fact that memory (the storage of human experience and activities) was oral based. However, the human ingenuity have led to the development of memory both in the minds (internally) and (externally) in the hard discs of various technological devices. Similarly, the advent of “new media” of film, radio and television excited the attentions of intellectual communities, social, political groups and the establishment communities in Britain. For example, Buckingham (1998) noted that the protectionist movement in Britain was united in their argument against the new media of film, radio and television even though their motivation was different. The first movements are those who seek to protect the high literary culture of the moral and enlightenment

nature of the British English literary culture. The leading lights of that era perceived the mass media as injurious to civilization. The task therefore was to protect the younger ones (students) by teaching them against the attraction of popular cultures. By imparting into the students the skills and attitudes of critical inquiry, the promoters of the protectionist perspectives aimed to help the student hold on to high culture.

The second movement's aim, though in concert with the first movement, was not to dissuade the younger ones from popular culture but inoculate them from uncritical penetration of popular culture among the younger generation. This approach was described as "less inoculative" but has the distinctive characteristics of distinguishing "between the 'living culture' of the industrial working class and the 'processed culture' derived from Hollywood" (Buckingham, 1998, p.34). The characteristic of the media literacy movement in the United States was slightly different from what obtained in the Britain.

In the US, as noted by Penman and Turnbull (2007), the focus of those agitating for the protection of the media audience especially the children and the younger generation was on the potential and actual influence on behaviour. Those behind the need to protect the children come from two philosophical orientations. According to Kellner and Share (2007) the conservatives approached the issue by blaming the media for moral degeneration like "teenage pregnancies and destruction of family values while some on the left criticize the media for rampant consumerism and making children materialistic" (p.6).



Giving the colonial ties of many African countries, it is not surprising that the African media intellectual landscape replicates this academic tradition in many of their works on media studies. Virtually all media scholars from Africa were either trained in American or in the Great Britain as the former colonial masters. Studies such carried out by Eso, (2012); Owens-Ibie, (2012); Okunna, (2002) and Okoye, (1996) have documented the negative impact of popular culture originating from American media industry on the younger generations in Nigeria. It is worthy of notes, however, that most researchers on media in Africa blame the situation on poor policy and regulatory regime, lack of authentic training manual among others and the political economy of the Africa media which ape towards ethnic or religious alliances as being responsible for the situation.

The protectionist approach, in summary, is a kind of response to the perceived manipulative tendencies of the mass media. The audio visual media in particular were seen as having “undesirable effects on audiences, the media have powerful influence on audiences; it threatens civilization as we know it; or it manipulates audience” (Penman & Turnbull, 2007, p.1). Thus, the protectionism can be said to be a product of “fear of media and aims to protect or inoculate people against the dangers of media manipulations and addiction” (Kellner & Share, 2007, p.6). The forms of these protections were pedagogical, regulatory or technological.

The pedagogical approach which Hobbs (1998) dubbed the “pedagogical inquiry” (p.27) is the teaching of media education by incorporating the critical skills in the curriculum of schools. The regulatory forms are manifested in the setting up of regulatory authorities that are charged with control of the dissemination of media

content in various countries across the world. The in-built parental control devices attached to television and parts of computer software are examples of technological protection of the children and younger ones against the potential media content that may be harmful to children.

The challenge, however, is the sustainability of the claim of anti-social effects against the media in the light of research evidence that could not find clear cut validation of these charges. In response, media literacy shifted its strategies from protectionism to preparatory/empowerment/participatory approaches.

#### **2.4.4 Preparatory/empowerment/participatory perspectives**

Following the criticism of the protectionist approach to media literacy, a new approach emerged which advocates the need to prepare users of the new media to avoid risks and maximise benefits of the new media. This approach has the support of United Nations (UN, 1982) and is gaining ground in the light of the difficulty in regulating the new digital media environment. The favourite term to describe this approach is empowerment (UNESCO, 1992, 2010). The approach capitalises on the interactive features of the new digital media to emphasise on the use of the media for civic engagement, social and political participation among the youths. The second factor that gives impetus to the new paradigm arose from years of research outcomes that do not support the claim of absolute direct media effects on audience.

In the context of new media, literacy is perceived as not a mono or unitary skills but multi literacies. In preparing the younger one for the challenges of the new media environment, the proponents of empowerment observed that it is important to expose

them to the nature and characteristics of literacy of the new media which Meyrowitz (1998) identified as media content literacy, media grammar literacy and medium literacy. By media content literacy, he meant to highlight the fact that since media are regarded as conduit that bring us messages, it is a pointer to the necessity of the need for relevant skills to decode the content and be able to analyse and evaluate them. Therefore the preparation of younger ones for new media environment must include this type of literacy.

The second type, media grammar literacy, came out of the notion of media as languages. Both the visual and audio media have their distinct grammar. Being literate in the production variables is a requirement that can make content creation for civic engagement possible. The third typology of media literacy is medium literacy. What all these suggest is that the contemporary media environment is multiskill and multimodal which make high demands of skills on users. A skill in language of media is important without any hierarchical precedence over the skills to decode the content of media. Both must go together. The potentials of new media for civic and political use depend on these skills. Media literacy has become a necessity and hardly a luxury if the society must produce active citizenship in the twenty first century (Kahnee, Ullman & Middaugh, 2011). Furthermore the interactivity being fostered by the digital media is creating new audiences that are not in the mode of the audience in the conventional old media. Just as the audience have become producer creating and collaborating online, so also have the media organisations cease to have monopoly over the flow of messages.

More recent works (Livingstone, 2009, 2011), have also placed emphasis on the creative and collaborative dimensions of digital media and thus the need to consider that media consumers are also media creators. With these types of new recognitions, media literacy is now being promoted as the means to provide preparatory skills for the younger ones. In other words, it is argued that media literacy should prepare audience to use competently wide range of media in different contexts of everyday life (Livingstone, 2009). The thrust here is to prepare young people to make informed media-related decisions on their own behalf, rather than rely solely on external protection. Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robinson and Weigel (2006) made important contributions to this trend by identifying twelve skills which they called new media literacies that are necessary in contemporary media environment.

The foregoing analysis illustrates both extant and contemporary concern about the influence of the media on society generally and the youths in particular. The protectionist notion of the possible harm to the society cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hands as instances of negative influences often ascribed to media exposure and the types of message being disseminated to the society. In contemporary culture, the use of new media by the youths for entertainment purposes tends to reinforce the position of the protectionist perspectives.

Also the risks of exposure to fraudulent practices in online environment and other manipulations like the spread of false information are too frequent in the online media that it will be difficult not to agree with the protectionist notion of the need to provide the youths with some form of inoculation against media manipulation. However, such inoculation is often turned into means of gagging the media by the government agencies aided by other entrenched interest in the society. Even the

copyright regime is being subverted by the emergence of the digital media and the mobile phones that are proving to regulate in the mold of the analogue era. This situation lends credence to the empowerment perspectives.

A cursory look of the empowerment perspectives indicates that the merits of their positions lie in the fact that the contemporary media landscape is changing. The changes from media audience to media users mean that the production of media content is no more in the hands of media institutions. Empowering the youth to acquire skills, attitude and behavior that benefit them and the society has become imperative. The old ways of patriarchal approach may suit the analogue era, the new media environment demands new approach. Both perspectives have their merits and demerits, what is required is a distilling of the two approaches with a view to extract relevant aspect in accordance with the development stage of the particular society. However, the empowerment approach seems more plausible to the reality of the present society.

## **2.5 Youth and the New Digital Media Environment**

Rapid changes in the use of information and communication technologies in recent decades continue to generate both subtle and significant restructuring in every sector of society. Their omnipresence particularly resonates with younger generations of users who approach information in diverse and innovative ways that position their daily uses of ICTs and related new media practices as an essential life skill (Gutierrez & Segovia, 2011).

There are many examples of the growing number of digital media across the world. According to Ofcom (2006) the multimedia world in Britain is made up of more than

350 television channels, 40 of them broadcast on digital terrestrial television (DTT). There are more than 330 radio stations and 700 internet service providers. With about nine million homes in Britain had satellite television and the same again had DTT. Two-thirds of the population had a computer at home, and half of these have broadband Internet access. The same scenario at even higher intensity is reported about the United States of America (Pew Research, 2012). In many Asian countries including Malaysia, where the number of bloggers have skyrocketed since the 2008 elections is an example of growing influence of new media (Salman & Hasim, 2011).

In Nigeria from the record available on the website of the broadcast regulator in Nigeria the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) as at 2012, the broadcast landscape in Nigeria has risen to 394, from less than 30 before deregulation in 1992. The breakdown shows that out of the “55 companies licensed to offer radio broadcasting services, over 90% of them are operational across the country; 25 companies licensed to offer television service; thirty four (34) Wireless Cable (MMDS) Companies; five (5) Direct to Home (DTH) Satellite Television” (NBC 2012).

In addition to the list above, there are over 50 television stations run by the federal government-owned Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) stations, and the close to a hundred radio stations under the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria. These lists continue to grow if we add up the 36 state governments operated radio and television stations. The Federal Capital Territory, Abuja has its own radio and television stations also which adds to the numbers.

In the context of new media, internet penetration is fast growing among the Nigerian populace. In a study by (Scan-ICT, 2012), over forty five million Nigerians are internet users, more than four million of them use Face book. It stretches no imagination that majority of these internet and Face book users are the youths. As a result of this growth in internet penetration most of the radio and television stations as well as all the major newspapers in the country have presence on the internet by maintaining a website or live streaming of their programmes.

In addition, the growth of mobile phone has increased access to internet as mobile phone users view and listen to their favourite radio and television stations programmes through the internet platforms. In a major conference report on new media and good governance held at the capital city of Nigeria, it was remarked that over 67% of Nigerian use mobile phone in a country of well over 150 million people, 67% translates to 101,271,578 active SIM cards. The mobile telephony growth in Nigeria has deepened the internet penetration in both rural and urban centres. This figure continued to increase. The new media tools are predominately accessed using portable electronic devices, the most common being mobile phones. It is estimated that six billion active lines exist world-wide. Sixty seven percent of Nigerians own mobile phone SIM cards that enable access to new media tools. This may be a relatively low percentage compared to 96% in Botswana and 92% in South Africa but with Nigeria's population internet subscribers total 45,039,711. This figure was in 2012. As at December 2014, over 80 million Nigerians access the internet, majority of the users are the youths This critical mass of mobile phone users offers extraordinary untapped potential for the use of new media as a force for public good (Abuja Conference report, 2012, p. 2).

The contemporary world is immersed in media culture facilitated by digital technology. It is an environment wherein technology defines the lives of the youths. They spend more time online mostly chatting, texting, using the camera and accessing plethora of content through multi channels of mobile devices, computer and cellular phones. With devices like You Tube, sharing of self created audio-visual content has become easier than could have been imagined decades ago. Such content, once created, goes viral beyond the imagination of the original creator. The range and application of new media is varied and continue to expand. Social life is now online; economic activities are carried out through the click and browse culture of the internet while political activism occupies the virtual space. The Hybrid nature of new media environment increasingly blurs the distinction between source and audience and between one form of media and the other. It is an environment that bears information and communication as well as fact and fiction wrapped in the same message content. All these form and type of messages more often than not find their type of audience. The hybrid nature of the new media collapses the boundaries of separating the conventional media from the ones in the Internet. The traditional media of radio and television, newspapers and advertisement converge on the web thus making them offline and online media (Euro Meduc, 2009).

The portrait of the new media environment given above illustrates the demand of media literacy among the population. If the new media are bearers of facts and fictions and regulating them through formal means is becoming the difficult, the responsibility of self protection cannot be more urgent. Furthermore, the environment is also mixture of information and communication. The skills of information searching must be honed while the demand of communication, that is



ability to share ideas, express one-self as well as provide appropriate feedback in a multimedia language have all become imperative. In the centre of all these is the ability to analyse and evaluate myriad of messages that the youth and new media users encounter on daily basis.

Media literacy and the new media are credited with the potential of empowering the youths to participate in socio political issues (Culver & Jacobson, 2012; Jenkins et al. 2006). Nigeria as a multi ethnic and multi religious society needs to take advantage of the new media to entrench the culture of civic engagement among the youths. However, the availability of necessary infrastructure and possession of media literacy skills are pre requisites for the situation to improve. Such opportunities, as noted by Wyche, Schoenebeck and Forte (2013), are not always evenly distributed. With low broadband penetration and acute low electricity supply coupled with the challenges of culture of illiteracy, poverty and mutual suspicion among Nigerians (Elaigwu, 2003), the inclusiveness of the youths in the new media culture across socio economic and geographically location is neither clear nor certain.

The Face book demographic data, as of July 3, 2010, indicates that there are about one million, seven hundred and eighteen thousand Nigerians on Face book (less diaspora).It is among the top three most visited sites by Nigerians. The Nigerian internet population as at 2008 stood at about twenty four million people (ITU, 2008). This data places Nigeria as Africa's biggest internet market (audience) dwarfing South Africa and Egypt. This trend continues up to December, 2014. The internet offers a great platform to reach millions of Nigerians with amazing targeting possibilities including age, gender, interest and behavioral targeting. Despite the

erratic power supply and expensive internet access, Nigerian internet users continue to increase. This growth rate suggests that there exists some form of value or meaning derived by the users, most of them youths. These figures have since increased upward in recent years, mostly around urban centres. In a conference report on new media and good governance held in Abuja, it was revealed that 67% of Nigeria's 170million population own phone card with the potential to access the new media on the internet just as the internet subscribers is about 45million of the population (Abuja, 2012).

## **2.6 Perspectives on Media Literacy Competences**

The next review highlights essential components of media literacy competences that form the conceptual model for this study which is derived from (Celtot & Tonero, 2009) and other related theoretical models. This aspect of the review shows the relationship of the variables in the study.

### **2.6.1 Media Literacy Competences**

The necessity of laying out clearly what constitute media literacy competences is informed by both the convergence of media and the informational processing characteristics of media literacy. Competence as conceived in the theory of media literacy is a combination of lower order attributes such as basic ability to use technology of media of communication; and the higher order attributes including analytical, evaluation skills and communication abilities for social, political and civic engagement (Prerez-Rodriquez & Deigado, 2012). Similarly, Martin and Grudziecki (2006) explains that the terms competence is preferred to basic skill because it is too limiting and may be confused with basic literacy and numeracy or

basic survival skills. They pointed out that the notion of competence is a wide range of skills, knowledge, aptitudes and attitude, and include the disposition to learn in addition to know-how.

Furthermore, media literacy in contemporary society requires the possession of skills to access media, critical understanding and evaluation of media contents, as well as creating various contexts for effective communication (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009; Norman, 2006). Following this, Perez and Huelva (2012), reviewed six works that deal with media literacy competence. They identified the dimensions and classified media literacy into three hierarchies of knowledge field, comprehension field and delivery field. The elements under the knowledge field are knowledge of policy and media industry; production process; language of media and access to information. The comprehension field has the elements of reception and comprehension; the ideology and the values of the media users. The delivery field includes that of communication competence; the actual production and citizen involvement. This classification highlights the knowledge base of media literacy both in the production process and on the part of audience. For effective interaction with the media, users must have opportunity to develop their knowledge base through formal and informal means. The availability of media infrastructural facility like broadband and necessary gadgets that will enhance access and means that can boost media literacy competence. As new media evolve so is the need for new media literacy.

It is in this perspective that Jenkins et al. (2006) developed twelve skills which they refer to as “new media literacies skills”. These skills are: play, performance, simulation, appropriation, multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence,

judgment, transmedia navigation, networking, negotiation, and visualization. The authors assert that these new skills are required for full and meaningful participation in the information society. An examination of these skills shows that they are equally relevant to civic engagement among the citizens. As users of the new media get to increase their level of skills and use the new media to networking with others, they learn the skills of proper interactions with others.

Similarly, Brandtweiner and Kerschbaum (2010) called attention to a two-step plan towards becoming competent internet users. The first step is to acquire the basic technical skills of e-competences to operate the computer by being able to type and use the mouse. The second step is to move to higher level of competences of using the internet to participate in socio political and civic engagement. The two steps involves four major dimensions which according Brandtweiner and Kerschbaum (2010) are abilities and skills of “selecting and using the appropriate media content (knowledge about media, usage and participation); and evaluating media contents (analysis and evaluation); recognising and responding to the influences of media contents (self-reflection); identifying and evaluating the circumstances of production (seriousness and credibility). The foregoing review underlines the nexus of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement. In using the new media for civic engagement, the network character of internet media can provide the users the opportunities for developing wide range of civic activities.

With due regard to the foregoing conception of media literacy, the model that we found relevant for this study is the conception of media literacy competence as advanced by Celtot and Perez-Tornero (2009). According to them, media literacy

can be assessed through the dimensions of individual competence and environmental/contextual factors. The individual competence is measured along three dimensions of access/usage skills, the critical understanding, and the communicative abilities. In the environmental/contextual factors, the media literacy competence is influenced by opportunity for media education, the media literacy policy prevailing in the society, the available media industry and the activities of civil society. As the conceptual framework for this study, it lays out the connection of the media literacy to civic engagement. The third dimension of the model is communication abilities which include social relations through the media, the participation in public sphere and content creation for self expression.

Furthermore, unlike other conceptual models such as that of Perez and Huelva (2012); Venwynsberghe, Paulussen and Verdegem, (2011); Celot and Perez-Tornero (2009) model has been tested, refined and validated in a study by Shapiro and Celot, (2011). The constructs and the dimensions that make up this framework are explained in the following passage.

### **2.6.2 Dimensions of media literacy competences**

After years of postulating on the nature and scope of media literacy, the European Union set up a Committee with a mandate to bring up a set of indicators to measure media literacy competence. According to Hargrave (2010) the value of the conceptual map that was developed “lies in the fact that it is not country specific- or time specific and can be used to monitor and evaluate change as well as allowing a snapshot of media literacy level at a particular point in time”(p.198).

This conceptual map comprises of two broad areas of individual competences and environmental factors surrounding the individual. The individual competences relate to these dimensions of use (technical abilities); critical understanding and communication abilities. Environmental factors are those relating to availability (of the technologies), media education and other learning environments, regulatory industry and civil society initiatives. These elements of media literacy competence are the major variables of this study. The following passage discusses them and their relationship with other variables of socioeconomic, geographical location and use of new media for civic engagement.

### **2.6.3 Access/ Usage Skills**

Usage (technical) skills: contains four basic skills of access, analyse, evaluate and creation of online content are regarded as the building blocks and irreducible skills requirement of modern media literacy skills. The expectation from contemporary citizens is that possession of ability to access and use the media will facilitate analytical skills which in turn encourage the creation of one's content for democratic expressions (Buckingham, 2004). In Media literacy theory, access and usage competence means the capacity to operate and practically use media technology which is contingent upon the availability of certain tools and devices in an environment. Furthermore there is a difference in the condition that made it possible for individual to gain access to media and use the media for particular action.

A technical ability is especially important given that they relate to decoding capacities as well as the operative skills to manipulate specific functionalities of the media (Tornero, et al., 2010). In terms of new media use, this would imply that

young people who have acquired technical skills would have gained advantage inherent in the new media over those who are unable to possess the skills. Hargrave (2010) provides further insights into the extended benefits for citizens who have these technical skills and are able to access the new media. According to him, since having technical skills will encourage the citizens to explore the variety of media on the internet to the fullest, therefore the ability to access the internet may lead to knowing how to use social media, having contact with daily news through the websites of media houses and the possibilities of uploading materials to the internet through the use of You Tube and similar applications on the internet.

Furthermore the Use Skill variable in the theory is conceived beyond the technical values and indicates a population's involvement in actual engagement with technology. In other words, it is not just the availability of media and demonstration of technical abilities that matter but the actual exploitation of the medium to the fullest. In the context of new media on the internet, the Use technical skills will allow user to transfer the knowledge gained about one media to the other. In concrete terms, a user with the skills to use Face book may also transfer it or be able to access similar media like wikis or You Tube or Twitter. It is therefore expected that, a user with the technical skills will be able to demonstrate the following skills: understanding simple technical functions; Understanding complex technical functions; critical awareness of technical issues (what is and what is not possible on that delivery medium; decoding interfaces (that is the ability to understand and decipher the essential elements of the interface between functions; adapting and personalizing interfaces; ability to search and choose technical information, devices and configurations; ability to convert informal procedural knowledge into deductive,

formal and declarative knowledge (that is, the ability of the individual to share this technical knowledge (Celot & Tornero, 2011; EAVI, 2009, Hargrave, 2010).

#### **2.6.4 Relationship between Access, Usage Skills, Socio Economic Status and Geographical Location**

Studies on influence of socio-economic status on access/usage skills give rise to the notion of digital divide which ensued from the unequal ability to access technology of communication leading to classification of citizens into “digital natives”, “digital migrant”, “digital haves” or “digital have not” (Bittman, Rutherford & Brown, 2011). From this also emerged the notion of first level digital divide—the inability or disadvantage that flow from socioeconomic factors and second level digital divide which is the difference in the purposes and usage pattern among new media users. For instance, there is difference between those who use the media for educational purpose and those who use it for entertainment (Hargittai, 2008).

Furthermore, Van Dijk and Hacker, (2003) identified four types of digital divide which shapes peoples’ experience of the media. This includes lack of mental access which is responsible for lack of elementary digital experience; lack of material access which is responsible for lack of possession of computers and network connections, lack of skill access which refers to lack of digital skills as well as lack of usage access signifying the lack of meaningful usage opportunities ( Fuchs & Horak, 2008).

Research on the impact of the digital divide continue to demonstrate how socioeconomic factors such as age, education, gender, and income influence in



different form as impediment or facilitator of the abilities of citizens to access as well as develop skills to effectively utilize ICTs (Korup & Szydluk, 2005; Gurstein, 2003; Hargittal, 2002; Attewell, 2001). These socio economic and demographic variables have been found to impact on new media use as evident in a study by Correa (2010) that shows participation divide based on gender, race and age. The results of the study indicate that men are more likely than women to create online content just as age was found to be inversely related to content creation. However, the author reported that “there was no relationship between socio economic status and content creation” (p.24).

As evidence of the continued influence of socio economic and demography variable in explaining usage differences, van Deursen and van Dijk (2013) recently identified usage differences among Dutch population along gender, age, education and Internet experience. They reported several studies which show that *Age* appears to be one of the most significant variables that effect Internet use (Bonfadelli, 2002; Fox & Madden, 2005; Zillien & Hargittai, 2009). Presently, it appears that young adults take the lead with the use of communication tools, such as instant messaging and chatting, and are more likely to pursue entertainment and leisure activities, such as downloading music or surfing for fun (Dutton et al., 2011; Fox & Madden, 2005; Jones & Fox, 2009). In contrast, buying products online, emailing, and searching for health-related information are more popular among older users (Jones & Fox, 2009).

In addition, socio-economic status indicators have a significant impact on Internet use (e.g. Zillien & Hargittai, 2009). DiMaggio et al. (2004) argued that persons of higher socio-economic status employ the Internet more productively and to greater economic gain than their less privileged, but nonetheless connected, peers. There is

evidence to suggest that people with lower levels of socio-economic status tend to use the Internet in more general and superficial ways (Van Dijk, 2005). Here, socio-economic status is considered as a multi-faced concept incorporating educational level of attainment, employment status and income. These findings led them to conclude that the internet will continue to reflect social, economic and cultural relationships of the offline world, including inequalities.

In the context of Africa, Wyche, Schoenebeck and Forte (2013) examined the use of Face book in a rural area of Kenya, which the authors described as “where social media participation is growing, but less developed technological infrastructures and uneven access to technology, limit use of the technology” (p.1) Their findings identified cost, limited access to computers and smart phones as well as erratic electricity power supply as constituting obstacles to online participation.

In Nigeria, Ahmad (2011) examined the use of You Tube among Nigerian undergraduates with the objective of determining the differences in the usage of You Tube in relation to gender, ethnicity religion and impact of You Tube usage on social behaviour. The conclusion of the study was that that there are significant difference in students’ use of the You Tube application in terms of demographic variables of gender, ethnicity and religion.

This situation of usage differences in Nigeria is compounded by access difficulties occasioned by lack of broadband facilities as revealed recently in newspaper reports. The head of the National Communication Commission and the Minister of Communication in Nigeria made two observations that are germane to this study.

They revealed that despite tremendous investment in broadband infrastructure, only urban and semi-urban centres of the country can today boast of access to the Internet, a larger part of the population, which resides in the rural areas are grossly underserved (Osuagwu, 2012). The Minister added that cost of accessing the internet is very high forcing many Nigerians to rely on cyber cafes and computer labs. She lamented that Nigeria has the highest costs of access just as speed of access is lowest in Africa (Osuagwu, 2012).

Given the above trend in reports of studies examining the impact of socio economic and demographic variables on access to the media and usage pattern and the challenges of infrastructures, it is safe to conclude that socio economic and demographic variables are factors in how young people in Nigeria will use the new media on the internet. Therefore we hypothesised that:

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in use of new media and media literacy competences based on socio-economic status and geographic location of respondents.*

### **2.6.5 Critical Understanding**

Critical understanding which is placed under personal competences is the central elements in media literacy theory. The individual media user whose ability to understand and decode the complex sets of message in the constant flow of contemporary media environment is the person that is regarded as media literate (Silverblatt, 1995). The critical understanding as conceived in the conceptual map has the following elements:

(i) Understanding Media Content and Function: media literacy requires ability to understand, comprehend, analyse, explore, evaluate, interpret, messages in variety of media (Potter, 2004; 2011). The goal of protecting the children, youths and the

vulnerable from media manipulation or empowers them to take advantage of the opportunities in the new media has its root in building their critical abilities. According to media literacy theorist Hargrave (2010) the media often contained fact and fictions and bear ideological motives without apparent disclosures. In fact, the presentation of the media messages may be difficult to distinguish between what is and what is not opinion. The advent of the new media has aggravated the situation which were ameliorated in the analogue years through both technical and regulation policy. Because as pointed out by Hargrave (2010), in the analogue days the media operator are obliged or mandated through conventional practices to alert audience of materials consider to be inappropriate or offensive to the sensibilities of the audience. In the digital environment, due to many platforms and the fact that consumers have become producers, the youths or children get exposed to deluge of materials which most of the times are inappropriately presented. This is especially true of content seen on platforms such as You Tube or Face book. Similarly, individual are becoming information bearer or journalists without the ethical and regulatory inhibitions that are informed by or are based on society consideration or values. Information and news now get flush out through media conduit like Twitter, blogs and news organisation websites while media users now find it more difficult to separate facts from fiction. To survive such circumstance, media literacy skill of understanding media content is imperative to sieve out facts from fictions and opinion from truth or factual narrations. Such demands require the following abilities necessary to understand media content and functions.

- (ii) Knowledge of media and media regulation: this dimension of critical understanding requires the media users to develop critical ability to understand the

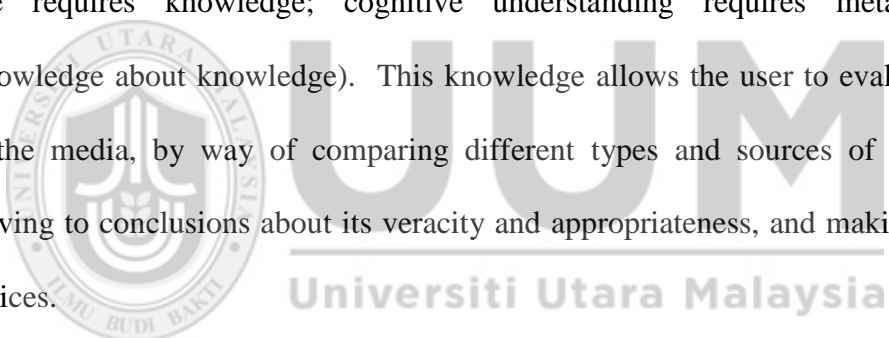
plethora of issues around the many delivery systems in the news media environment. In the digital media environment, the dissemination of news by local television station can be delivered through many platforms like You Tube and Face book but the content will still reflected the norms and policy preferences of the society. But social media like Face book, Twitter and You Tube are not so regulated but rely on self-regulation by users. In many countries like Nigeria where the use of internet and social networking media are still growing, regulation is slow in evolving. The user must develop the critical abilities to navigate the complex arrays of media menu available on the new media platforms to maximise opportunities and minimise risks. The task of using the new media for civic engagement means that the users must be aware of the nature of the medium and make the best use of the situation for building social trust through effective networking (Hoffman, 2012; Zuniga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012; Pinto & Mansfield, 2012).

Kahnee, Ullman, and Middaugh (2011) gave additional reason to emphasise the need for competence in understanding the media. The authors posit that judging the quality of information found online is not always easy by individual and that, it is likely they will choose to be exposed to views and perspectives that tend to align with their own views and perspectives. Also pattern of access and participatory behaviours may lead to increase inequalities level of civic and political participation. Above all, many online users do not exhibit civic behaviours necessitating the development of appropriate user behaviour which is discussed next.

(iii) User behaviour is the last of the component that make up the critical understanding skills. This aspect is regarded as a function that relies on the

understanding of media and their functions. User behaviour as an aspect of critical understanding extends to content creation and manifest internalisation of the previous learning. As a matter of fact, Hargrave (2010), argues that critical skill is imperatives in the context of new media platform ‘where conventions are not yet established and the consequences of usage of these platforms is little understood’ (p.203).

In relation to this, it is appropriate to echo Perez-Tornero et al. (2010), that critical understanding includes all cognitive processes that influence the user’s practices (effectiveness of actions ,degree of freedom or restriction, regulation and norms etc). Use requires knowledge; cognitive understanding requires meta-knowledge (knowledge about knowledge). This knowledge allows the user to evaluate aspects of the media, by way of comparing different types and sources of information, arriving to conclusions about its veracity and appropriateness, and making informed choices.

The image shows the official seal of Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) on the left, which is a circular emblem with a central shield and the university's name in Malay and English. To the right of the seal is a large, semi-transparent watermark of the letters 'UUM' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the 'UUM' watermark, the text 'Universiti Utara Malaysia' is written in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font.

In this era of digital media, the individual using the new media is confronted by the plethora of highly subjective views coming from Bloggers, Twitters, Face book and even the comments that follow news story online. In the context of civic engagement, the projections of issues in the society are subjected to the views of those privileged with the means and skills to participate in the new media. Such uneven access could not augur well for a highly diverse society like Nigeria.

In summary, media literate person is expected to demonstrate his attitude, awareness and skills along the following lines: trust of information that is presented by different

media sources (newspapers, television, radio, internet); awareness of information that is presented by different media sources (different television channels, different news programs, different search engines); awareness of the influence of advertising; knowledge of media regulations; ability to identify options for gathering information; skills in critically evaluating the credibility of information; comparison of information across sources; skills in managing privacy and protecting self from unwanted messages.

Studies relating to critical behaviours of media users indicate that lack of critical skills about the media. Among the earlier studies that used the theoretical framework developed by European Commission to assess media literacy and use of new media was that of Papaioannou (2011). The study assessed the individual competence as reflected in the use of Face book among High School students in Cyprus. The author summarised the findings which reflects low critical competence among the youths. Among the students that were studied, many demonstrated weaker critical understanding skills as lower percentage of them conducts critical search and evaluation of information. The statistics from the study show that when the students encounter doubtful information, only (57%), verify it before making judgements. Although (80%) of the student claim to have awareness of media influence and media regulation as well as being able to recognise the influence of online media like Face book on their behaviours. However, most of them are not informed about regulations on Face book because most of them engage in actions that violate of the rules and laws like that of copyright through illegal downloading.

A further look at similar study using slightly different terms to describe critical understanding skills reveals gaps in young people evaluative skills. Gui and Argentin (2011), used the term information skills to describe critical practices of young people. Information skills appropriate the user's abilities to select, evaluate and re-use information. Citing the outcome of several studies, they point out that depending on level of education capital; there is marked differences in youth's skills. While the youths demonstrate high operational, they usually have challenges when it comes to evaluative skills and in their socio-cultural skills. In other words, the younger ones appears to be at home navigating the web but highly deficient when it come to critical understanding on the web.

Similarly, Ende and Udende (2011) studied media literacy among youths in capital city of Nigeria, Abuja. The findings of the study with regard to the aspect of critical understanding shows that there is high awareness of commercial implications of media messages, social and political considerations underlining mass media operations among the youths. But few of the youths (16.1%) demonstrate knowledge of ideological and value laden messages of mass media just as (14.7%) have awareness that mass media message are construction of reality (p.13). Similarly, Ahmad (2011) conclude, in his study of undergraduates across three universities in Nigeria that there are some level of awareness of the nature of You Tube content among the students yet there is high violation of copyright. Most students reported frequent downloading of material on You Tube in apparent violation of copyright rules.



Although these studies and similar ones report mixed findings about the level of critical understanding practices among youths, we do not know the level of differences based on socio-economic and geographical location. Given the reports of other studies such as Wyche, Schoenebeck and Forte (2013) and Hargittai (2002), which show the influence media literacy on use of new media, this study offers these hypotheses.

*H<sub>2</sub>: There is significant relationship between media literacy of critical understanding and use of new media for civic engagement among the respondents.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is significant socioeconomic status and geographical location differences on use of new media for civic engagement and level of media literacy competencies among the respondents.*

#### **2.6.6 Communication Abilities**

Communication ability is located in the socio cultural skills that make it possible to fully exploit the potentials of new media through the varieties of delivery platform such as social networking and content creation for important issues like participating in public sphere and civic engagement. The real connection of media literacy to civic engagement is the dimension of communication abilities/competence which is conceived as the “ability to use the variety of available media delivery platforms and to use and exploit the content creation capacities to communicate and interact with the object served by medium as in e-government and, most importantly, with other people as in social networking” (Hargrave, 2010, p.203). The interrelated elements of social relations, participation in the public sphere and content creation illustrate the nexus of connection of media literacy competence and civic engagement. As the manifestation of the previous skill levels of access and usage and critical understanding skills, communication skills are placed at the advanced level of media literacy (Sapiro & Tonnerro, 2011; Hargrave, 2010; Celot & Tornero, 2011).

Communication abilities in media literacy contain three dimensions of social relations, participation in public sphere and content creation.

(i) Social relations

The new media of Internet and mobile phone have changed the nature of technology mediated communication through the use of text message, instant messaging, e-mail, and voice added message, Facebook, Twitter and other social media network. Thus, social relations have been given impetus across far flung distances and between social contacts. Most young people conduct their daily activities via the Internet perhaps more than they do offline (Hargrave, 2010).

This dimension heightens both the negative and positive aspects of new media use. The new media provides opportunity for the users especially the youths to establish social relations through what Zuniga and Valenzuela (2011) calls “network of “strong and “weak ties”. Network of strong ties are the friends and family members with whom our interactions are characterised by “intimacy, trust, respect, access and mutual regard” (Kenny, 2004 cited in Zuniga and Valenzuela 2011, p.718). The networks of “weak ties” are those we are less familiar with or whose relationship is not as intimate as the members of family and regular friend. This set of network, (“weak ties”), though categorised as secondary, is the source of risks and benefits of the new media culture. This risky aspect, as pointed out by Livingstone and Helsper (2007) depends on our cognitive and technical ability to manage personal information and privacy online and risk of predation. Some of these risks include cyber bullying, rude or nasty comments, spreading of rumours, threatening or aggressive comments (Ybarra, Diener-West, & leaf, 2007).

On the other hand, the weak ties are also the sources of new facts and information and exciting social relations that may prove beneficial than the one that come through intimate friends and family. The benefits of social media in terms civic participation (Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2011) and a hosts of “significant benefits associated with the use of SNS include delivering educational outcomes; facilitating supportive relationships; identity formation and promoting a sense of belonging and self-esteem” (Collins 2011, p.12), are attributed to tremendous opportunity to expand the network of social relations (“weak ties”) through online activities.

This theory is relevant to use of new media in a country like Nigeria which is highly fragmented society along ethnic, religious and regional dimensions. How are the youths using the new media to build social capital by using the new media to establish social relations outside their cultural zone?

The study of Ende and Udende (2011) conducted among youths in the urban city of Abuja in Nigeria on media literacy, reports that (97%) of their respondents claimed to be using the new media for networking although the nature of such networking is not specified. In a study of the Cyprus youths, Papaionnou (2011) reported that youths claimed to be using the new media to establish relations with close and family friends (strong ties) but little is known about their online social relations with people they have not met physically. Given the priority attention to social relations being established online by the youths, it is important to examine the extent of the relationship between of the level youths media literacy and use the new media for social relation and civic engagement. It is therefore hypothesised that

*H<sub>4</sub>: There is relationship between use of new media for social relations and media literacy competence among the youths.*

## (ii) Participation in the public sphere

The underlining principle of media literacy is the promotion and empowerment of vast majorities of the citizens in the public sphere with a view to strengthening democratic institutions (Livingstone, 2011; Buckingham, 1998). Media literacy is inextricably bounded to human rights of citizen; the ability to effectively participate in issues in the public domain (UNESCO, 2011). According to Celot and Tornero (2009), participation in public sphere involves citizens' abilities to use the media to relate with government through e-government facilities- like internet library or applying for e-passport online. The other type of participating in public life is in the context of political life of the community. Several studies have documented how citizens particularly the youths have used the new media of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Weblog to participate in political process. Safranek (2012) tracked the involvement and involvement of social media for political purpose across the world. According to him, the Filipino in 2001 blazed the trail to successfully used social media to mobilise against the Philippine legislators' attempt to drop the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada. Other examples are the 2009 use of social networking sites to call attention of the world to the unrest in the former Soviet Union Republic and the use of social media for protest action that followed the Iranian elections of 2009.

Perhaps the most dramatic use of new media for political purposes was the wave of protest action that took place in the Middle East and North Africa leading to disruption in the relationship in government and citizen in Tunisia and eventual overthrow of governments in Egypt and Libya. In all of these protest actions, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs were the principal media on the internet that were

used for mobilising and sustaining local support as well as calling attention and gaining support across the world (Mercy Corps, 2011).

Studies in the Asian continent such as that of Skoric, Achananuparp, Lim and Jiang (2012), investigated the role of Twitter in the 2011 Singapore General Elections. The findings show that Twitter was the major tools use for disseminating information and mobilising for the elections. Similarly, Salman and Hasim (2011) reported in details how the new media were used by the opposition party to gain a remarkable ground during the Malaysian 2008 elections. In this scenario the youths were both the subject and object of electioneering manoeuvre through the new media. In the 2011 elections in Nigeria, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs were massively deployed to prosecute the elections both by the candidates and the citizens particularly the youths to monitor elections process. The new media were also effectively used for mass action against fuel price hike announced in January of 2012 by the federal government of Nigeria (Abuja, 2012). The use of new media was intensified in the 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria for voters' mobilization, election monitoring, announcement of results by politicians, political parties, civic society organization, citizen journalists and cyber-activist. The range of civic engagement activities on the web became undeniable as factor that influence the outcome of the 2015 presidential elections that the newly elected President General Muhammadu Buhari, in his inaugural speech; acknowledge the social media as part of the media configuration in the country. However, the importance attached to political participation of citizens tends to obscure the other aspect of civic engagement activities of the citizens. Research activities hardly take interest in how citizens use the new media for other aspect of socio-political process.

In all of these studies, little is known about other form of civic engagement such as community participation, humanitarian services, etc. Such civic engagements are sources of building social capital among the citizenry. This leads to the following hypothesis that:

*H<sub>5</sub>: There is relationship between media literacy competence of communication abilities and use of new media for different types of civic engagement among the respondents.*

### (iii) Content creation

The ability to create content in various forms of media or the ability to create different forms of identity is the requirement of participatory culture in new media environment. This ranges from the most basic or simple skills (such as those taught in schools as part of ICT education, the ability to use the computer to write text, undertake basic mathematical tasks, develop presentations) to those that are used to create audiovisual content and are able to reach to audiences through Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, and You Tube. With this ability, media users can upload straightforward videos or edited video or even professionally produced content. All are collectively referred to as User Generated Content (Scribbling & Scott, 2008). There is also content creation requiring participative skills where interaction with others is required to complete the creation process. So, links with other groups, sharing tools and knowledge or collaborating on a piece of content not hampered by geography are all skills made possible by the digital communications environment.

These are elements of media or communications literacy that relate to the environment in which the individual is placed. Communication ability, in media literacy theory, is content creation. According to Celot and Tonnerro (2009) content creation has direct relation to news media through user generated content and in the

context of new media, the online participation through Blog post, Tweet, Facebook groups and comments on boards of news organisations. It is the empowerment of users to generate their own messages for participation in civic and democratic process. The creation of content through varieties of media depends highly on the level of skills of media production which may be acquired formally (Hobbs, 2011; Kahnee, 2011) and informally through what Jenkins et al (2006) refer to as acquiring skills through playing with the medium. Since media literacy is also affected by social-economic status and geographical location, it is very likely that content creation will be influenced by them. A profound research outcome that is illustrative of the inequality in content production is the one by Blank (2013). In a study on the nature of content creation in relation to digital media literacy skills and new media, the author found three types of content production skills: the 'skilled content', 'social and entertainment content', and 'political content'.

Also, these skills are identified with different social strata. According to Blank, skilled content have little or no relevance to social stratification variables but people of lower status are more likely to produce social and entertainment content while political content is more likely to be produced by highly educated elite. The implication of this is that the effects of socio-economic status on content creation depend on who is producing. In other words, those with the skill abilities and with favourable socio-economic opportunities are more likely to use the new media for participation in civic engagement activities.

*H<sub>6</sub>: There is relationship between communication abilities to create media content and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths*

## **2.7 Moderating Influence of Media Education**

Media education is useful in making citizens to be thoughtful and be active engaged citizens (Westheimer & Kahnee, 2005). The United Nation conceives media education as integral educational needs of all citizens in modern times. This type of education is related to freedom of expression and right to information thus media education is an essential instrument for building democracy (UNESCO, 2009). Furthermore, UNESCO posits that in a situation where new media or technology is being introduced, media education, when introduced into the society, is potentially able to help in projecting their culture and traditions. In short, media literacy was seen to strengthen and promote democracy and at the same time it is an instrument for developing cultural diversity. Venwynsberghe, Paulussen, and Verdegen (2011) assert that availability of training opportunities either through formal or informal channels are important factor that affect media literacy competence.

Several studies reflect varying level of effectiveness of youth's exposure to media literacy training. Bechtas (2009) examined the desirability of media literacy course into the curriculum of schools. His findings revealed an added-value of teaching future media practitioners how to engage with and understand their constant subjection to and interaction with the media. Hobbs and Frost (2003) examined the impact of a course on production and analysis taken by Australian high school students. The outcome shows that the students have significant higher level of media literacy when interacting with media messages. Austin and Johnson (1997) evaluated how a short course on media literacy can impact on the level of media literacy of youths. Their study shows that media literacy course had positive relationship on the attitudes and behaviours of third grades in relation to media messages on alcohol.



Similarly, Hobbs (2003) took interest in studying the capabilities of girls' to analyse media messages after been exposed to media literacy course. The outcomes of the study led Hobbs to assert that media literacy increase the girls' abilities to analyse media messages in relation to body images. Similarly, a study designed to measure media literacy among journalism students, Burson (2010), noted that although journalism students in this study did well on questions designed to measure recognition of media effects, they did not do as well on questions about the media system. This may indicate that although the students have some understanding of the effect of the media, they may not have as clear an understanding of the elements of media messages that can be altered to create certain effects.

Media literacy education is not limited to formal classroom instruction. It can also be part of after school activities, holiday camps, community organizations, and faith-based groups. A study by Giraud (2005) compares those who were formally exposed to media literacy training with those whose exposure were through informal programme or whose training has been less methodical. The study used both interview and survey questionnaire to test the hypothesis that "those who started their media education in elementary school are more critical thinkers than those who started their media education later". The result uphold the hypothesis and also report that "the former are also more frequent users of media" (p.38-39). In another study among Singaporean students in tertiary institutions, Phang and Schaefer (2009) measured awareness of visual media literacy between media students and non-media students. While there is correspondence between media education and increased awareness and media literacy, the effect is higher for production oriented courses in

comparison to consumption oriented courses. Furthermore, the study found that “media education was associated with a significant decrease in the ability to distinguish fact from fiction when comparing the media students to the non-media students” (p.2).

It can be inferred from this, that younger ones who have training about media literacy would significantly differ from their peers without similar opportunity in their media literacy competence and use of new media. An example will suffice here. Many people own mobile phone and mobile devices with internet enabled but never get to use one third of their features which may be caused by levels of media literacy competence in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Therefore this study hypothesized that:

*H<sub>7</sub>: Media education significantly moderates the influence of media literacy competences on the use of new media among the youths.*

## **2.8 Relationship of Socio- Economic Status, Media Use and Civic Engagement**

Scholars have examined the nature of the relationship of the new media, media literacy and civic participation among the youths. Following Putman’s (2005) study on the decline of civic culture among the American youths, interest on civic engagement has increased among scholars. As asserted by Masterman (1985, cited in O’Neil 2008), the goal of media literacy has been conceptually to ensure that youths are empowered to participate in democratic space and institutions. Ultimately, media literacy is tied up to human rights of individual to freedom of expression and information as well as ability to analyse and evaluate based on available information. In acknowledgement of this value in the media literacy theory, especially in the face

of the emergence of new media of internet and associated media applications, the United Nations has been promoting the concept of media literacy and its related concepts of digital literacy, information literacy (UNESCO, 2002, 1999, 1982).

In the context of democracy and human rights, media literacy empowers youth to partake in the process of democracy and good governance. The new digital environment offers unique opportunity for youth to perform civic obligation as members of the society; being able to communicate with each other, produce message from their own perspectives thus making input into social and political process (Scribbling & Scott, 2008).

An international conference held in Istanbul (2012), articulated five media literacy competences which accordingly 'work together in a spiral of empowerment, supporting people's active participation in lifelong learning through the processes of consuming and creating messages. The new media culture has positioned the media users as both consumer and creator of messages leading to creation of participatory culture (Jenkins et al 2006). In this participatory culture, six characteristics defines its nature: - low barrier for artistic expressions and civic engagement; strong support for creating and sharing what you create with others; informal mentorship whereby experienced users of new media passed on what they know to novices; an atmosphere where each member(s) feel that their contributions matter and; lastly members have a sense of social connection and feel that people care about what they have created (Jenkins et al., 2006). Just like in the mainstream media literacy theory, "participatory culture is emerging as the culture absorbs and responds to the explosion of new media technologies which make it possible for average consumers

to archive, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content in powerful new ways (Jenkins et al., 2006, p.4). Furthermore, new media of internet fosters convergence culture “where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumers interact in unpredictable ways. Blogging, You Tube, Wikipedia, and other social networking sites are all examples of how this convergence culture is playing out in the networked world’ (Jenkins et al., 2006, p.4).

It is useful to provide clarification of the term civic engagement and related term of social capital which are often used interchangeably. The new media with the capacity for participatory culture can be used effectively for building social capital and entrenchment of civic culture in a way that leads a fragmented society into a harmonious entity. Rafaeli, Ravi and Soroka (2004,) subsumed the civic engagement into social capital by identifying it as one of the two complementary uses of social capital. To them social capital consists of social contact interpersonal communication patterns, including visits, encounters, phone calls, and social events. Civic engagement according to them includes the extent to which people collectively cooperate for the purpose of advancing communal interest. Political and organizational activities as political rallies, book, and sports clubs are regarded as civic engagement.

In a study on the role of internet on social capital, Wellman, Haase, Witte and Hampton (2001) examined the question: does the internet increase, decrease or supplement social capital? After asserting that the question is neither trivial nor

obscure, the authors reformulated Putnam (1995)'s premier work on media and social capital, into two forms which they call network capital and participatory capital. Added to these two elements by the authors is community commitment.

Network Capital was defined as the relations with friend's neighbours, relatives and work mates that significantly provide companionship, emotional aid, good and services, information and a sense of belonging. This conception of social capital is related to what has been described as network of "strong ties" and "weak ties" discussed above. As indicated by Zuniga and Valenzuela, (2010), the internet can significantly boost the social network because it can eliminate or reduce the challenges of space, time and cost.

Participation capital means the involvement in politics and voluntary organisation that affords opportunities for people to bond, create joint accomplishments, aggregate and articulate their demands and desires. Indeed, the Internet has increased the participation of citizens in politics and political activities though in varying degrees and consequences.

Community commitment as social capital consists of more than going through the notions of interpersonal interactions and organisational involvement. When the people have a strong attitude towards community, that's they have a motivated, responsible sense of belonging, the will to mobilise social capital become quite easy and effective. This point bears relevance to a country where citizens are experiencing poor governance and poor utilisation of common resources for collective good like Nigeria. It is not unlikely that the level of community commitment may be low. On the other hand, commitment to the community may also be a source of motivation to participate in actions that are geared toward changing the reigning condition by collaborating online with other citizens.

Similar conceptions of civic engagement or social capital is that of bonding social capital which involves closed networks and describes as strong ties within homogeneous groups, for example amongst family members, close friends and neighbours. Bonding social capital serves to unite groups and is related to common identity with group members sharing one or several factors in common (aspirations, values, experiences, interests, locality etc.) Another related concept is bridging social capital.

Bridging social capital connected to diversity and involves overlapping networks where a member of one group accesses the resources of another group through overlapping membership. It describes weaker, more diffuse ties with, for instance, distant friends and colleagues. Bridging social capital relates to contacts between people of different backgrounds in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, education, socio-economic status and locality. Woolcock (2001) introduced a third type of social capital which he called linking social capital, which unlike the two others has a vertical dimension.

Linking social capital relates to the connections between individuals and groups in hierarchical or power-based relationships. It describes social relations with those in authority and relates specifically to the capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community such as local and national government.

Zuniga and Valenzuela (2010) borrowed the idea of Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) to conceptualise civic engagement. To them civic engagement equates *civic* voluntary activity. Civic “means activity aimed at addressing social and /or community issues that are not political by nature but, nevertheless, are conducive to the collective wellbeing. Voluntary refer to activity that is not mandatory and is not

financially compensated. The notion of activity is to stress individuals' behaviour, rather than their pro civic attitudes or cognitions. In other words, their conceptions of civic engagement neither emphasise what people actually do and not just how they perceived civic engagement nor only about their understanding of what civic engagement is. From this position, the authors define civic engagement to involve a variety of different activities, such as volunteering for non-political groups, raising money for charities, attending neighbourhood meetings and supporting the social responsibilities of a corporation by buying its products (Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2010, p.399). Hamel (2011) specifically defines "civic engagement as any instance where someone works to solve a public problem at local, regional national and global level" (p.9). However conceived, civic engagement among the citizens is related to socio economic status and media use patterns as identified by (Zuniga & Valenzuela 2010) with each subsuming other factors are discussed in the following passage.

## **2.9 Perspectives on Media Use and Civic Engagement**

Scholars have asserted that media use influences civic engagement along two patterns, one is the pessimistic view that is derived from the cultivation theory and the optimistic view arising from the recent uses and potentials of the new media.

The pessimistic view believes that more time spent with the media result in less time socialising or getting involved in other community issues. Except for news, all other media engagement tends to discourage people from other activities. News however has been consistently found to be associated with civic engagement. In other words exposure to news will rather kindle interest of citizens in knowing about issues of society (Gil de Zuniga, 2007; Norris 2000; Newton, 1999; Putnam, 1996).

The advent of the internet has changed the past findings about media use and civic engagement. Through Blogs, Twitter, Face book and others media applications on the internet, citizens now participate in civic engagement than before. As noted by Kahnee, et al. (2011), the emergence of new technology heralds divergent views of both optimistic and pessimistic predictions. The optimist has pushed the hypothesis which says that the internet offers tremendous opportunities to interact and exchange views with people of like minds as well as the opposing views. Furthermore, individuals who go online are more likely to be exposed to wider information, views and perspectives than those who don't use the internet (Rheingold, 2000). Contrarily, at the opposing side are those who say that the internet users are likely to interact with individuals, information and perspectives that are of interest to them and thus remain in their isolated enclaves. This may be similar to selective theory but in this instance proponents labeled it the "echo chamber" where the participants hear themselves only (Negroponte, 1995; Sunstein, 2007).

However, a study by Kahnee, et al (2011) discovered a different situation with the actual internet users, particularly the youths. The authors designed a study with focus on online practices and civic and political engagement of youths who are between the ages of 16–21 years. The findings show that most youths are not just exposing themselves to views that align with their own but rather encounter divergent views online. Furthermore, the youths engage with social issues and that their online political activities are related to their level of media literacy and political interest.

Studies on civic engagement have shown that educations, income, gender and personality traits are related to participation of citizens in civic engagement. The



level of education of the citizens or opportunities offers by schooling whereby the students are exposed to civic learning contributes to the level of knowledge about the socio-political process (Coleman, 2008). Schooling, in addition, also lowers the barrier to civic engagement. Education is also effective means of social stratification that gives the educated person higher status in society. Individuals with higher status through education are more likely to engage in civic activity compare to those who did not belong to the same class (Gil de Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2010).

The income level of the citizens is also a strong factor of accessing and use of media technology. People with money or a society with higher per capital income, its citizens are more likely to participate in civic engagement (Gil de Zuniga 2010). Both education and income will enhance the acquisition of media literacy skills that facilitates participation in civic activities.

The gender factor is also a source of understanding the trend in civic engagement. As noted by Zuniga and Valenzuela (2010), literature have consistently demonstrated that men are active in political activities as compare to women who tend to be more involved in community and grassroots movements. The likely factors, although yet to be fully investigated in studies, is that educational attainment, access to employment and socialisation pattern are the likely culprits.

Apart from education, gender and income levels, some personality trait have been identified to contribute to civic engagement. An extrovert who is more inclined to seek gratification of his needs from outside his domain may likely not have social or

psychological barriers in participating in behaviour that is collective oriented (Gil de Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2010).

Social orientation particularly the notion of trust is a factor in how people participate in civic engagement. Trust can either be positive or negative. In society where there is mutual trust, there is high likelihood of citizens' participation in collective civic engagement such as volunteerism or online joint advocacy for a common course. On the other hand, in situation where distrust or mutual suspicion and cynicism are prevalent, citizens tend to withdraw from community participation (Norris, 2000).

Given these submission by various findings, it is hypothesised that:

*H<sub>8</sub>: There is significant age, gender, education, income background and geographic location differences in the use of new media (Facebook, Twitter, Weblog, and YouTube) for civic engagement like political participation, community development, social advocacy and volunteerism among the youths.*

## **2.10 Gaps in Literature**

Most studies presently in Africa that are related to media literacy and new media focus attention on ownership and availability of new media (Amobi, 2011; Olatokun, 2007) use of new media such as the mobile phone and YouTube among students on campus (Amali, Bello, & Hassan, 2012; Ahmad, 2011); use of new media in crisis and protest situation (Wyche, Schoenebeck & Forte 2013; Mercycorps, 2012) as well as for monitoring election (Jega, 2012). Other related study like that of Ende and Udende (2011) who studied media literacy among youths reported that most of the youths were not using the new media for significant issues like civic engagement.

In addition, there is geographical bias in the focus of most of these studies in Nigeria. It is observed that a common trend to all these studies is that they draw their population from the urban areas. For example Ende and Udende (2011) studied the youths in Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria where there is some level of infrastructural services while Amali, Bello and Hassan (2012) and Amobi (2011) focused on students in university campuses. These studies have not provided us with the situation in the rural and semi urban areas where there are different socio economic and infrastructural challenges. Whereas, media literacy competence is part of the sources of inequality in society especially in relation to digital media usage; there are few studies that focus on the impact of socio economic and geographical location on media literacy skills that can limit citizens' participatory culture in digital environment (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2010; Hargittal, 2008; Livingstone, 2007). In view of this, the present study builds on these past studies (Wyche, Schoenebeck & Forte 2013; Mercy Corps, 2012; Jega, 2012; Amobi, 2011; Ende & Udende, 2011; Kperogi, 2011; Olatokun, 2007) by focusing on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among youths across socioeconomic and geographical location.

In the conception of media literacy theory, access and usage is at the low level of competence though it is a vital requirement for other levels of critical understanding and communication abilities (Celot & Tornero, 2009; Livingstone, 2009). The central issue in media literacy theory however, is the critical skills to analyse and evaluate the media content and abilities to create message for self-expression.

In relation to issue of civic engagements, the Nigerian media space is characterised by debates on certain basic issues about Nigeria that are yet to be resolved. These issues include, among others, centralization/decentralization of governance; the issue of federalism and the nature of democracy; resource distribution, equality and development; maintenance of law and order; intergovernmental relations and delivery of service; citizenship and indigeneship and the economy (Elaigwu, 2003).

Typical of Nigerian national discourse, these issues are engaged through the prism of ethnic, religious and regional alliances. In the conception of media literacy theory (Porter 2011, Aufderheide, 2001), youths and other users of the new media are expected to understand, analyse, evaluate and deconstruct media messages which often bear ideological and, in the context of Nigeria, ethnic, religious and regional motives, without apparent disclosure by the various sources in the new media environment. Added to this, is the exposure to online risk in the form of falsities, spreading gossip and rumours, blackmails, harassment and intimidation, defamatory and inflammatory remarks, hate speech and incitement to violence or even genocide. Some of these risks are already manifesting in the new media landscape of Nigeria.

Two developments will illustrate the risks being faced by youths who rely on new media for various purposes. With the advent of internet, recruitment into government employment is advertised through the online portal. Fraudsters have seized the development to defraud many youths. Recently, six different online registration portal were created purportedly meant for a security agents of the federal government—the Nigeria Security and Civic Defence Corps (NSCDC). The scammers succeeded in defrauding many youths before they were arrested. The second incident involved fake Face book identity of the Director General of the

Nigeria Customs. Service, several Face book profile of the DG was falsely created and used for fraud purposes. Equally, a false interactive portal was created to hoodwink prospective business men both in and outside Nigeria into believing that they are interacting with office of the Custom Service. Many of such news and information continue to circulate across the internet based media that will require the analytical and evaluative skills of user to deconstruct the messages.

Perhaps, a more ominous case one reported by Adeboye and Dedeigbo (2012) involving a young girl in a postgraduate school of one of the Nigerian universities who was lured into a hotel by her Face book male friends; she was later robbed of her valuables, raped, and killed. Her case is not only symptomatic but may represent a growing trend among youths that are exposed to new media on the internet (Sahara Reporters 22 Aug, 2012). Clearly, there is need to examine the critical abilities and practices of youths when they are exposed to various messages and sources online. This, perhaps, informed the Africa Centre for Media and Information Literacy (ACMIL) based in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria; to call for research on media literacy among youths. The communiqué released at the end of the Centre's 2011 international youth's day highlights the potential of media literacy in facilitating intercultural dialogue but at the same time "emphasizing the urgent need for government to come out with clear policies to regulate and educate the youths on the use of new (social) media for negative purposes". The Centre, therefore recommends the need to "conduct research on the state of social media in Nigeria so that Media and Information Literacy experts and practitioners would be able to design more effective social media initiatives" (ACMIL,2011, p.2) This research is, in part, a response to the call by investigating the level of media literacy competence among youths.

Media literacy is also about communication abilities of citizens which is the use of the new media for social relation, civic participation and collaboration online and content creation (Jenkins et al., 2006). In recent times, there is growing evidence of the use of new media for civic engagement by the youths. The new media are being employed to pursue civic engagement in politics, economy and social life, although most common activities are for political issues (Kahnee et al., 2012). This may be good but is not enough as civic engagement because as Shirky (2011), insightfully submitted that “social media’s real potential lies in supporting civil society and the public sphere which will produce change over years and decades, not weeks or months” (p.1).

## **2.11 Underpinning Theory**

The relationship of media literacy and civic engagement, in particular use of new media for civic engagement (otherwise refers to as online civic engagement) is embedded in various theoretical postulation by scholars. This study used the cognitive theory of media literacy developed by Potter (2004) to explain the elements of media literacy. The second theory used is the theoretical framework developed by Mihailidis and Thevenin, (2013). The two theories explain the requirement and the process that linked media literacy to use of new media for civic engagement.

### **2.11.1 Cognitive Theory of Media Literacy**

The cognitive theory of media literacy as postulated by Potter (2004, 2011) explains the process, elements and requirement of becoming media literate. Drawing from his earlier research and contributions to the field of media education and media literacy, Potter (2011) developed the theory of media literacy and defines it as “the set of perspectives from which we expose ourselves to the media and interpret the meaning

of the messages we encounter” (p.19). Potter’s theory is built around three building blocks of personal locus, knowledge structures and skills.

Personal Locus composed of goal and drives which shapes how information is processed. “The more you know about this locus and the more you made conscious decision to shape it, the more you can control media influence on you”(p.13). Furthermore, media users need to continually engage with the media because according to Potter, “the more you engage your locus, the more you will be increasing your media literacy”(p.13) This points to the importance of access to the media by citizens where the opportunity to acquire skills necessary for media use can be enhanced. As requirement for the use and demonstration of skills, citizens must have ability to own the gadget or at least easy access to use of the gadgets like computer and new mobile technologies.

The second element is knowledge structures which are “sets of organised information in a person’s memory” (p. 13-14). Potter defines knowledge structures as carefully constructed areas of information and understanding built on accuracy and utility. This knowledge structures do not occur spontaneously but require effort that is nurtured with “care and precision” (Potter, 2011, p.13). Knowledge structures are different from other types of information because knowledge structures require spending time gathering and researching information rather than passively observing it. Knowledge structures are built during the process of researching the information and checking it for accuracy. Five foundational knowledge structures support media literacy: (a) media content, (b) media industries, (c) media effects, (d) real world information, and (e) the self (Porter, 2011). It is the knowledge of the different aspects of the media that build confidence in the user which in turn makes him an informed and effective user of the media. Potter (2011)

sums up that “knowledge structures provide the context we use when trying to make sense of new media messages. The more knowledge structure we have, the more confident we can be in making sense of a wide range of messages” (p.15).

The third elements of the theory are skills which are like tools. In the context of the media literacy theory, seven skills are relevant. These skills, though not exclusive to media comprised of the skills of analysis, evaluation, grouping, induction, deduction, synthesis and abstraction (Potter, 2011, p.16). A brief explanation of these skills is provided in table 2.2

Table 2.2

*Potter's Cognitive Media Literacy Skills*

S/N	Elements	Skills of Media Literacy
1	Analysis	ability to break down a message into meaningful elements.
2	Evaluation	the skills to be able to judge the value of an element in a message based on a standard.
3	Grouping	Grouping is being able to determine which elements are alike in some ways; determining how a group of elements is different from other group of elements.
4	Induction	is the act of inferring from a pattern and generalising the pattern to all elements in the set
5	Deduction	is simply using general principles to explain particulars.
6	Synthesis	refers to assembling elements into a new structure
7	Abstracting	involves creating a brief, clear and accurate description capturing the essence of a message in a smaller number of words than the message.

From the foregoing exposition of the concepts of cognitive theory of media literacy, Potter has provided a theory that serves as blueprint for media literacy and highlights the benefits of the theory to individuals toward making them media literate. The value of the theory to this study lays in the fact that (1) media literacy is a skill and competence based activity that is necessarily dependent on knowledge as its building blocks. The digital divide along usage skills can only be ameliorated if citizens are



afforded opportunity of formal training or are given the opportunity of access through ownership and availability of the technology. As pointed out by Potter, (2011) “skills are tools that people developed through practice”, inability of citizens to access or use the new media could only mean less opportunity to become media literate thus aggravating the inequality in society (2) A central issue in media literacy is critical ability of media users to deconstruct media messages and evaluate their contents with a view to maximise opportunities and avoid risks inherent in some of them. Such needs can be met through the cognitive media theory’s seven skills highlighted above in the theory. (3) The use of new media for civic engagement is a pro social perspective. Civic engagement is meant to build social capital relevant for mutual understanding and harmonious relationship among human races. The theory with its emphasis on knowledge and critical evaluation of messages is expected to instill in the new media users the “value of pro social behaviour and use of the new media to develop their pro social skills” (Potter, 2011, p.227). In summary, the cognitive theory provides a blueprint for media literacy education and also give the benefits of media literacy to individual and ultimately to the society.

### **2.11.2 Theory on relationship between media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement**

Literatures on media literacy have always made attempt to connect media literacy competence to civic engagement. One of the earlier scholars of media literacy education to make this connection is Masterman (1985). He avers that media education is a fundamental pre requisite for democratic advancement. He believes that without widespread media literacy competence among the populace, the hope and aspiration of society to build active citizenship, that are able to make rational

decisions and act as change agents will remain unrealizable or a mirage.(Masterman, 1985).

Subsequent scholarships have sought to validate this position of Masterman (Marten & Hobbs, 2010; National Association of Media Literacy, 2007; Livingstone, 2009; Jekins et al 2006). However, it was the work of Mihailidis and Thevenin, (2013) with the title “A framework for media literacy as a core competency for engaged citizenship” that explicitly provides the theoretical framework that connect media literacy and civic engagement in the online environment.

Mihailidis and Thevenin (2013) build their theoretical framework on the work of Jekins et al (2006) on participatory culture. Their framework revolves around four media literacy competency necessary for effective use of the new media for civic engagement: the participatory competency, the collaborative competency, the expressive competency, and the critical competency.

*Participatory competency* is about possessing enabling skills that position the media consumer to be able to achieve, annotate, appropriate and re-circulate media content across the different media that the new media afford the users of the internet. This is related to what Porter (2011) refers to as the analysis skills that make it possible to breakdown messages into meaningful elements. These skills are what Celot and Perez-Tonnero (2011) called the access and usage skills as used in this study. This participatory competency is connected to use of new media for civic engagement because it enables citizens to make contribution daily in the online environment. These online activities create a default action culture that makes it possible to

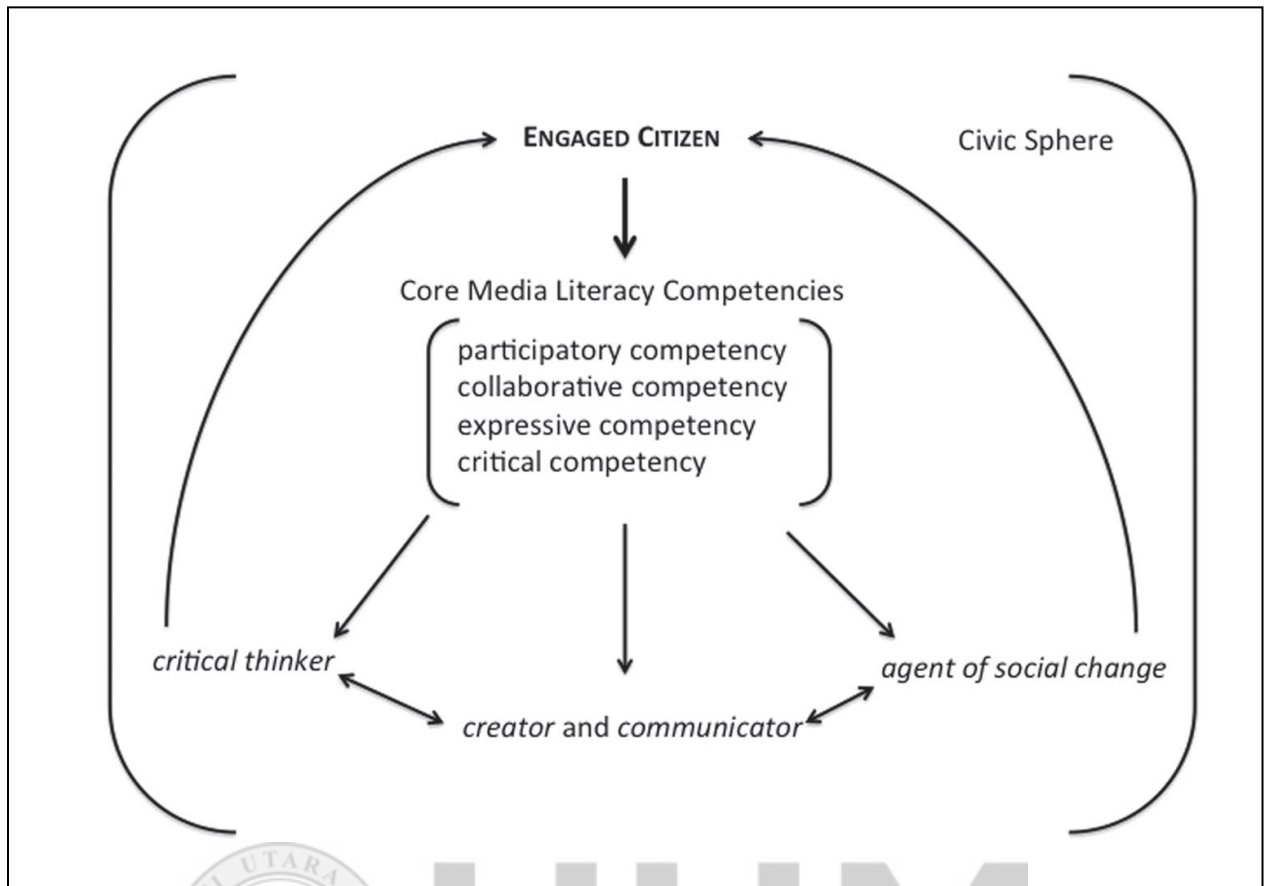
produce responsible and purposeful citizens who contributes to local, national and global communities.

The second element of the theory is the *collaborative competency*. This is when the citizens engage in co-creation of meaning which create, in the user of online media; the feeling to form connections and extend communication to the larger global communities. In other words, collaborative competency is the communication abilities that encourage participation in online media with the potential to lower the barriers against participation. With communication competence, peers can collaborate on common cause including political participation, community participation, humanitarian services and social advocacy.

The third element of the framework is the *expressive competency* which focuses on the content young people are sharing online through daily postings on Face book, blogs, You Tube or Twitter. Through daily status update, sharing other person's posts and links as well as commenting on those posts, a shared narrative community is formed. Once the young citizens engages in creating his own messages and received feedback, Mihailidis and Thevinin (2013), argue that he has the opportunities of reflecting over his own communication. This fosters the feeling of being part of the larger civic engagement community.

The fourth element identified in the framework is the critical competency which is directly related to the central focus of all media literature. Porter's cognitive theory of media literacy (2011) discussed above refers to this as evaluation skills while Celot and Perez-Tonnero (2011) call it critical understanding. Other scholars like

Aufderheide and Firestone, 1993; Livingstone 2008, 2009 & Hobbs, 1998) discussed this element in similar terms. Critical competency is about the ability of the individual media users to “being able to critically view and engage with the messages that they encounter on daily basis” (Mihailidis & Thevenin, 2013, p.7). Although the critical competency or critical understanding concerns individual person as consumers of media, its connections to the larger civic engagement in the online media is ominous. The online media is full of opportunities and predatory acts almost in equal dose; lack of critical competency opens up media users to online risks that discourage use of the new media for civic engagement. That is why Mihailidis and Thevenin quoted Lopez (2008) that ability to access, evaluate and analyse messages/content “helps to define and orient a sense of place and cultural connection to the world”(p.8). This framework is oriented to identify the relevance of certain media literacy competence necessary for effective use of the new media for civic engagement. Mihailidis and Thevenin (2013) summarises the aim of the theoretical framework thus: “to prepare citizens for engaged, inclusive, and participatory lifestyles, necessarily includes their ability to navigate the digital landscapes that offer them space for expression, participation, collaboration, and engagement in civic life” (p.8).



*Figure 2.2. A framework for media literacy as a core competency for engaged citizenship*

**Source:** Mihailidis & Thevenin (2013)

## 2.12 Research Model for the Study

The research model for this study is the graphical illustration of the design of the study. The study is designed to test the theoretical relationship between media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement. The study focuses on examining the relationship between three dimensions of media literacy of access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement.

A review of relevant literature (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2010; Hargittal, 2008; Ende & Udende, 2011) indicates that there are conceptual postulations on the influence of new media literacy competence on use of new media for civic engagement. The

elements of the model that constitute the independent variables are: Access and usage which means ability to own media gadget or having easy of access to use of the gadgets, while usage skill denotes the possession of skills to operate the gadgets.

Critical understanding explains the the necessity of having knowledge, skills and developing attitude to critically evaluate media messages. Critical understanding is what gives the media users ability to protect themselves from prospective harmful message or content of new media ; ability to deconstruct the underlining the intention behind the media content and thereafter been able to meaningfully engage with the media content.

Communication abilities emphasise communication skills necessary for social interaction, political participation in online environment. It also expalins the ability to create content, select the appropriate media outlet for the dissemination of the self created content.

Use of new media for civic engagement is the dependent variable of the model. It denotes carrtying out civic engagemet activities in the online media environment including political particaption, community participation, humanitarian services and social advocacy in the interest of self and the larger society.

Media education is the moderating variable between the relationship of media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement.

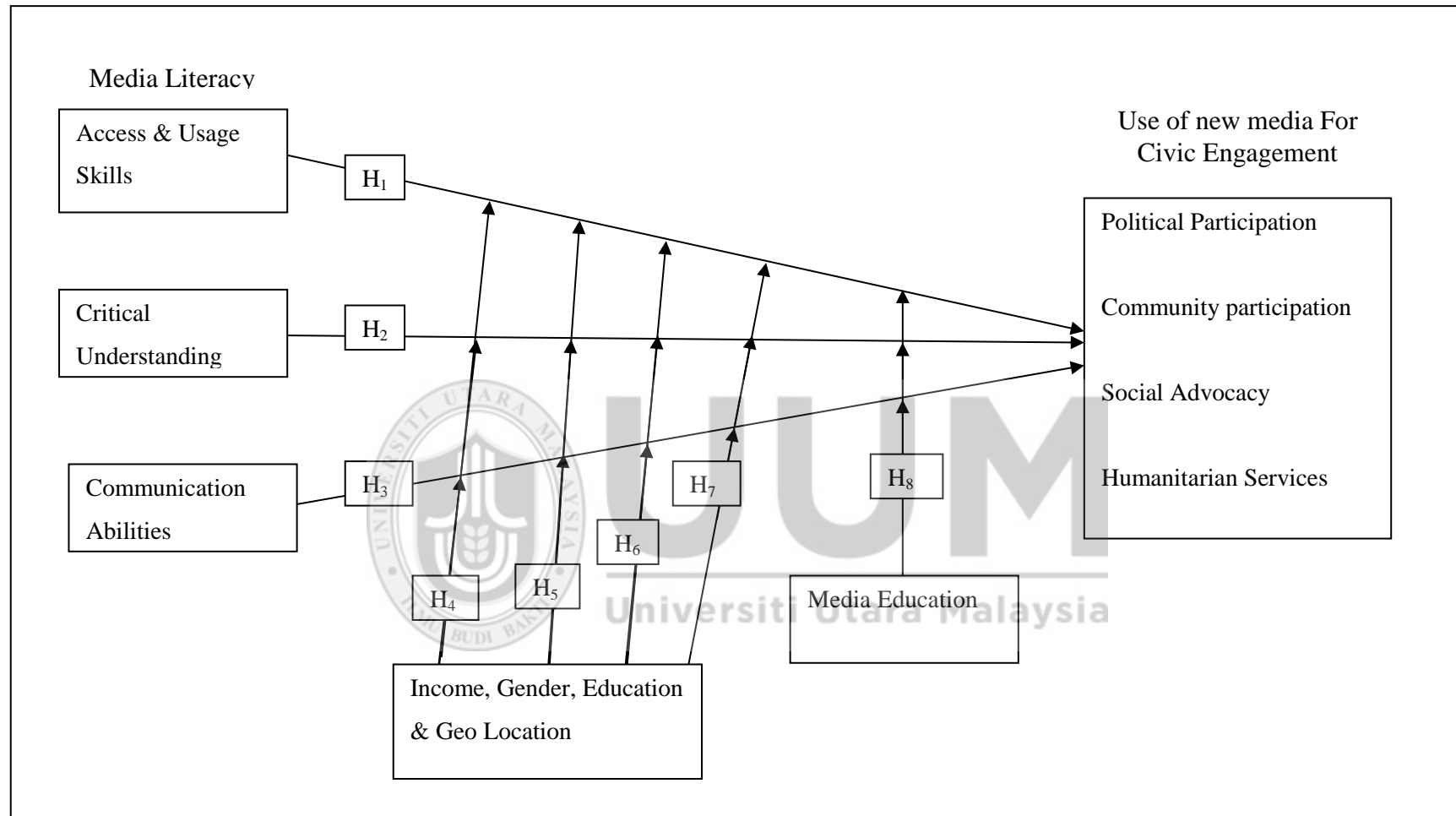


Figure 2.1. Research Model

### **2.13 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has described the essential elements of the study. The chapter discussed the concepts of civic engagement, online civic engagement and media literacy competencies. It argued that media literacy competence of access and usage skills, critical understanding, and communication abilities are essential, unavoidable prerequisite for use of new media for civic engagement. The argument is predicated on the fact that without having the ability to own the media gadget, citizens are excluded from the new media culture. This is related to digital divide theory. Secondly, usage skills are the sources of second level digital divide in the sense that those that possess the usage skills have higher chance of participation in civic activities through the online the new media.

The new media environment is full of opportunities and risks in equal dose. Therefore, effective use of the new media for civic engagement depends on the level of understanding the users possess. The review in this chapter point out that the critical skills to evaluate messages, to deconstruct them, to analyse their content and formation of critical behaviour of cross checking information across media genre are essential attributes of users of new media. Also the importance of communication abilities for sustaining social relation and political participation online as well as ability to create own content was duly emphasise in the review. In conclusion, the reviews of the conceptual elements were complimented with the review of relevant theory and empirical studies.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter attempts to present the detail of the research design and method that were adopted for the study. The chapter starts with the research philosophy and design that guide the study, the population that was selected for the study and the sample size considered appropriate based on literature. The rest of the section contains the following: the sampling technique; method of data collection and instrumentation; reliability and validity procedure and analysis methods which were considered appropriate for the kind of variables in the study. The concluding section deals with choice of data analysis for the study.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy also known as research paradigm is the search for the understanding the underlying structure of the world. Research philosophy, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), refers to ‘basic belief system or world views that guide investigation of a phenomenon. It is usually classified into positivist and the interpretative paradigm.

Positivism as a scientific method holds the philosophical position that scientific knowledge is the only authentic knowledge and such knowledge can only come from positive affirmation of theories through strict scientific method. Positivism places emphasis on empirical data and scientific methods. Subject to specific principles of reasoning, scientific methods are techniques of investigating phenomena based on gathering observable, empirical and measurable evidence.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) is credited with development of this doctrine in the mid-19th century. Furthermore, term "positive" is an epistemological terms which refers to value free, objective approach to study of humanity in contrast to normative approach. This tradition holds that the world consists of regularities, that these regularities are detectable, and, thus, that the researcher can infer knowledge about the real world by observing it. The researcher should be more concerned with general rules than with explaining the particular.

The second scientific philosophic orientation is the Interpretivism, also known as constructivism. Its philosophical position is that social reality is subjective and socially constructed, with both researchers and participants interacting to understand a phenomenon from an individual's perspective (Creswell, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In a contra stand to the positivist paradigm, the interpretive philosophical approach stands on the assumptions that human social life can be qualitatively studied through an array of means including direct observation, interviews, and case studies, among others (Neuman, 2011). Consequently, interpretivists in essence try to integrate the elements of human interest into a research study. In this regard, Myers (2008), points out that the basic argument of the interpretive researchers is that reality is socially constructed and access to it can only be through elements such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments. The philosophical position of the interpretivists rose from their criticism of the positivism in social sciences.

Philosophical approach to learning is divided into three areas of ontology, epistemology and axiology. Littlejohn and Foss (2010), explains that ontology is concerned with the extent to which human makes choices and the nature of human

behavior whether such behavior is trait or state. Also, ontology is concerned about whether human experience is individual or social and finally to what extent is communication contextual. Epistemology which is defined as “ systematic philosophical examinations of knowledge, focuses on the extent to which knowledge can exist before experience and by what process does knowledge arise. Furthermore, epistemology is concerned on whether knowledge is best conceived in parts or whole and to what extent is knowledge tacit or explicit. Related to the concept of epistemology is the term methodology. Both terms are concerned about how we acquire knowledge or come to know a thing. However, methodology is much more practical in nature. It focuses on the specific way –method—that is employed in trying to understand the intricacies of the world phenomenon. The third of the element of philosophical orientation to knowledge is the axiology which is concerned about value. It has two positions—the value free and the value laden aspects. Axiology tries to ascertain whether the theory being employed in the study is value free. Also it is concerned about the extent the process of inquiry influences or affects what is been observed, seen or studied.

This present study adopts the positivist paradigm given that the purpose of the study is to test structural relationship between variables. The deductive approach of the positivist which tries to draw conclusion that are generalisable and allows for revision of theory is considered suitable for the present study. The variables in this study are the media literacy competencies including access and usage skills, critical understanding, and communication abilities as independent variables and are expected to influence or predict the use of new media for civic engagement as dependent variable. Also included in the model are moderating situation. The first

concerns moderation based on socio economic and geographical location. The second is the moderating effects of media education variable between the relationship of media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement. This is investigation of social reality which is in line with the positivist orientation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

### **3.3 Research Design**

The research design that was adopted for this study is quantitative design. A basic approach to carrying out research is the formulation of research design in accordance with the objective of the study. Kumar (2011) provides the basis for the consideration of the quantitative research approach. He argues that quantitative research is capable of extracting the existence of a concept and to generate empirical relationships or influences between concepts. The author further describes the quantitative approach as having its root in rationalism and that it is structured, rigid and focused with emphasis on greater sample size so as to quantify the variation in a phenomenon. Creswell (2012) further gives insight on the value of quantitative approach. According to him when a study requires the explanation of how one variable affects the other or the study is interested in explaining the frequency or why something occur, quantitative research is usually considered.

This study is aimed at determining the relationship of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement and how media education moderates the relationship. It also aims to determine if socio economic status and geographical location make difference on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths. Therefore, the adoption of

the quantitative approach is considered appropriate for the study. Since this type of study will require measuring influence of one variable on the other or groups, quantitative paradigm seems to be the best choice.

The following passage therefore provides the process and the elements involved in applying the quantitative approach to this study which include the population of interest to the study, the sample size, sampling procedure, the data collection procedure and the instrument selected for the exercise.

### **3.4 Operational Definition**

#### **3.4.1 Use of new media Civic Engagement**

The term use of new media for civic engagement refers plethora of communication technologies and applications on the internet or web based media such as Facebook, Twitter, Weblog and You Tube, enabled mobile devices such as GSM mobile phones and Smartphone devices for the purpose of civic engagement including civic activities such as community participation and political participation, humanitarian services and social advocacy (Penman & Turnbull, 2007; Marvin, 1988; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins & Delli-Carpini, 2006).

#### **3.4.2 Access and Usage Skills**

Access as used in this study is the ability own, possess or having access to the gadget of modern communication either at home, in office, schools etc while usage skills is the possession of relevant technical skills to use digital technology as communication tools in the networks environment among youths in the both rural and urban areas

(Livingstone, 2009; Mihailidis, 2014; Vanwynsberghe, Paulussen & Verdegem, 2011).

### **3.4.3 Critical understanding**

Critical understanding is operational defined as the abilities of media consumer to evaluate analyse and deconstruct messages they are exposed to in the online media and use self reported attitude of cross checking information across media types in the online environment among youths in the both rural and urban areas (Kellner, 2007, Martens & Hobbs, 2010; Vanwynsberghe, Paulussen & Verdegem, 2011).

### **3.4.4 Communication abilities**

Communication abilities is operationally defined as the use of new media for social interaction, political participation in online environment and dissemination of self created among youths in the both rural and urban areas (Kellner, 2007, Martens & Hobbs 2010; Vanwynsberghe, Paulussen & Verdegem 2011).

### **3.4.5 Media Education**

According to UNESCO (1999) media education deals with all education and training that make it possible for the people to increase their level of awareness of media and to acquire operational skills; learn how to analyse, critically reflect upon and create media texts; identify the sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial and/or cultural interests, and their contexts; interpret the messages and values offered by the media; select appropriate media for communicating their own messages or stories and for reaching their intended audience; gain or demand access to media for both reception and production (UNESCO, 1999). Following this, we operationally

define media education as the exposure to acquisition of skills of usage, critical understanding, and communication abilities for social relation, participation in public sphere and content creation among youth in rural and urban areas.

#### **3.4.6 Socio-economic Status**

Socio-economic status refers conceptually to factors of age, gender, income, employment status, race, ethnicity that predict access or use facilities in society (Hargittal, 2010, 2007; Di Maggio et al., 2004). In this study, we operationally use socio-economic status to cover the influence of gender, income level on usage differences on the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagements among youths.

#### **3.4.7 Geographical Location**

Geographical location conceptually refers to place of residence of citizens that determine or predicts access or use of facilities in society or differential access quality (Hargittal, 2010, 2007; Di Maggio et al, 2004). Operationally, geographical location is used in this study to refer to different place of residence of youths as denoted by urban and rural areas of Kwara State.

### **3.5 Sampling for the Study**

#### **3.5.1 Population**

The youths who are residents of Kwara State in the Central region of Nigeria constitute the population for this study. Specifically, the study is interested in comparative analysis of those youths who live in the urban and rural areas. The National Youths Policy of Nigeria, though noted that the United Nations adopts 15-

24 years to define who youths are, it took into cognisance of the socio economic realities in Nigeria in defining youths as those males and females who fall between the age ranges of 18 to 35 years. This study adopts both definitions to define the youths for the purpose of this study as those between the ages of 15 to 35 years. This population comprises of people with high ambition and imbued with creativity but mostly constraint by harsh economic and social realities (Nigeria Youth Policy, 2010). This type of population can be found in Kwara State of Nigeria.

### **3.5.2 Research Place**

Kwara State is a microcosm of the Nigerian federation being a multilingual, multiethnic and multi-religious in configuration. Located in the North Central Zone, Kwara state has a population of 2.3million; bounded in the north by Niger State, in the East by Kogi States, in the South, bounded by the Ekiti states while to the West is the Oyo state. Both Oyo and Ekiti states are Yoruba speaking states in the South-Western parts of the countries with highly developed educational and industrial outlook. Administratively, Kwara State comprises of sixteen local government areas divided into three senatorial districts of Kwara Central, Kwara South and Kwara North. The population of Kwara State is made up of, Nupe, Baruba/Baruten, fulani, who are in the northern parts of the State. In the southern region of Kwara State, the Yoruba ethnic groups are the dominant groups with three principal dialects of Ibolo, Igbomina and Ekiti. The central district is made up of Yoruba speaking Ilorin Emirate people with substantial number of them having their root in Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Yoruba, and Nupe. Other Nigerians resident in Kwara State are the Ibos from the Eastern parts of the Nigeria. The youths among these ethnic groups can be found in both rural and urban segments of the state. Perhaps it is for the peculiar



population spread comprising most of the demographic features of the Nigerian nation, that International bodies usually select Kwara States for most of their project or studies (NURHI, 2013; Abdulbaqi, 2012; Morenikeji, 2003). Furthermore, Kwara State has average educational and socioeconomic achievement among the Nigerian federation (NBS, 2012). It also has an international boundary with the Republic of Benin.

Although over sixty percent of the residents of Kwara state are living in the rural areas, the increasing penetration of the mobile phone is making it possible for the youth in the states to be connected to the new media culture. Therefore, the urban and rural settlement pattern of Kwara will allow the researcher to achieve the research objectives of measuring the literacy competence of the youths and how this relates to use of new media for civic engagement among youths in both urban and rural settings in some Nigerian communities. The above factors informed the choice of Kwara State as place of study. Figure 3.1 shows the map of Kwara State and its position in the Nigerian federation.



Figure 3.1. Map of Nigeria showing Kwara State

### 3.5.3 Sampling Frame

Table 3.1 contains the sampling frame derived from the population distribution of the Kwara state.

Table 3.1

*Distribution of the population according to local government and gender*

S/n	LGA	Senatorial	Land Size	Male	Female	Both Sex
1	Asa	Central	1308.316	62751	61917	124668
2	Baruten	North	124668	104727	101952	206679
3	Edu	North	2596.408	104040	97602	201642
4	Ekiti	South	488.192	27611	26788	54399
5	Ifelodun	South	3501.718	103650	101325	204975
6	Ilorin East	Central	495.076	104801	101325	207462
7	Ilorin South	Central	177.607	103606	105645	209251

Table 3.1 Continued

8	Ilorin West	Central	106.455	180387	184834	365221
9	Irepodun	South	749.338	73554	74040	147594
10	Isin	South	644.433	30088	29393	59481
11	Kaiama	North	7125.225	64901	59114	59114
12	Moro	North	3337.397	54860	53855	108715
13	Offa	South	96.971	44813	44162	88975
14	Oke-Ero	South	445.617	28358	28612	56970
15	Oyun	South	484.19	47890	46564	94454
16	Pategi	North	2975.126	57746	53106	110852
	Total	---	----	1,193,783	1,171,570	2,365,353

Source: National Population Commission, 2006

According to information available from the National Population Commission office in Ilorin as at the time of this study, the specific distribution of youth's population based on local government and wards is not yet available. But the national average of youth's population in Nigeria is put at one third of the population (NPC, 2006). Therefore to get the population of youths for Kwara State that make up our population of study in each local government area, it is necessary to find one third of the population. The distribution, as contained in Table 3.2, shows that the population of youths in the local government areas comprising the Kwara State is 788,451. The breakdown according to male and female is presented in table 3.2

Table 3.2

*Distribution of youth's population according to LGAs and gender in Kwara State*

S/No	Local Government Area	Senatorial District	Male	Female	Both Sexes
1	Asa	Central	20917	20639	41556
2	Baruten	North	34909	33984	68893
3	Edu	North	34680	32534	67214
4	Ekiti	South	9203	8929	18133
5	Ifelodun	South	34550	33775	68325
6	Ilorin East	Central	34933	33775	69154
7	Ilorin South	Central	34535	35215	69750
8	Ilorin West	Central	60129	61611	121740
9	Irepodun	South	24518	24680	49198
10	Isin	South	10029	9797	19827
11	Kaiaama	North	21633	19704	41338
12	Moro	North	18286	17951	36238
13	Offa	South	14937	14720	29658
14	Oke-Ero	South	9452	9537	18990
15	Oyun	South	15963	15521	31484
16	Pategi	North	57746	53106	36950

Source: National Population Commission (NPC, 2006)

**3.5.4 Sampling Procedure**

Sampling is considered absolutely central in quantitative research in order to ensure that the research project has external validity (Davies & Mosdell, 2006). This is possible if the researcher has taken every precaution to make sure that the people he has surveyed, or the material he has selected to analyse, are representative of the group of people or the material the researcher is primarily interested in (Creswell, 2012; Kumar, 2011; Davies & Mosdell, 2006).

The stratified random sampling technique, a probability sampling process, was adopted for the selection of sample size for this study. This technique is considered appropriate for the following reasons: The target population for this study is composed of different parameters of age, gender as well as sub groups in terms of geographical locations—urban, and rural dwellers. Stratified random sampling allows for stratification of study population that will “assist the study in getting more information with a given sample and aid data collection in a manner that makes assessment of the needs of each of the sub groups level in the population” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011, p.272).

Based on the types of settlement of rural or urban, three (3) local government areas were selected from each of the senatorial districts. The identification of which local government that would be included was arrived at after several interactions and discussions with official of the three relevant ministries to this study including the ministries of information, rural and energy development and that of economics in Kwara State. The interactions became necessary in view of the fact that relevant institutions that are expected to have readymade and up to date classifications of communities are not able to provide it. The option of using experts in relevant fields and departments of government was the only option the researcher could rely on. It is to be noted that the researcher is also familiar with the state and therefore was able to thoroughly interrogate the opinion of the experts in the ministries. This check enables us to come to a conclusion on the classification of community as rural or urban that is considered reliable. Based on the foregoing, from the Kwara Central, Asa local government area with youths population of (41,556) and Ilorin South with youth population of (69750) are chosen to represent the semi urban area while Ilorin West

with youth population of (121,740) represents the urban area. For the Kwara North, none of the areas could be agreed upon as urban area hence two local government areas considered as semi urban were chosen.

These are Baruten with youths population of (68,893), Edu with youths population of (67,214) while Moro was chosen to represent the rural area from the Kwara north. However, from Kwara South, Ekiti with youth population of (18,133) and Irepodun with youth's population of (49,198) represent the rural area, while Offa with youth population of 18,990 was chosen to represent the urban area.

### **3.5.5 Sample Size Determination**

In drawing the sample size, the study is guided by six factors outlined by Sekaran and Bouige (2011) as follows: "the objective of the study, the extent of precision desired (the confidence interval), the acceptable risk in predicting that level of precision (confidence level), the amount of variability in the population itself, the cost and time constraints, in some cases the size of the population itself" (2011.p.268). The variability in socio economic and geographic location of the respondents for this study makes it fall in line within the criteria outlined above.

To get the sample size from the sample frame discussed above, the researcher is guided by Sekaran and Bougie (2011). The authors provided a table of sample size that shows the ratio of desirable sample size to a given population size. The table shows that for a population of 20,000, a sample size of 377 will be required, while for a million population size and above, a sample size of 384 will be sufficient. The target population of this study are the youths in Kwara state of Nigeria with a

population of 788,451, which is the sampling frame for this study and which was derived from a total population of 2,365,353 (NPC, 2006) for the sixteen local government areas that made up the place of study. Sekaran and Bougie (2009) and Sudman (1976), advised that for a population with sub groups, the sample should be drawn so that no group contains less than a hundred respondents. Applying the recommended sample size as contained in the table of sample size in Sekaran and Bougie (2009) and the use of Yaromene formula, the sample size for this study must not be less than 400 respondents. Therefore when the sample size is distributed across the three senatorial districts that make up the Kwara state, each will get more than a hundred respondents as shown in Table 3.4

Furthermore, this study used structural equation modeling (SEM) which is considered relevant for a study that have multiple constructs like the present study. SEM is considered appropriate when the study involved multivariate analysis that can be better explained through the combination of multiple regressions, factor analysis and path analysis (Hair, et al., 2010). The technique is also relevant when there is need to establish the relationship between a number of constructs that have been theorised to have relationship. To meet the requirement for selecting the required sample population for structural equation modeling, Hair, et al (2010) posits that, depending on the characteristics of the study population and the number of constructs involved in the study; a model with five or less latent constructs will require a sample size of 100. Also a research model with seven or less constructs with each construct having more than three items; a sample size of 150 will be needed while 300 sample sizes will be enough for model with seven or less items.

Furthermore, for a model with more than seven constructs and some constructs having less than three items, a sample size of 500 will be required for SEM analysis.

The proposed model for this study has five constructs; therefore, a sample size of between 300 and 400 will be adequate for the SEM based data analysis. In view of the foregoing and the objective of meeting the confidence and precision level, the researcher adopted the Taro Yamanie's formula (1967) to calculate the sample size for the study. According to Israel (1992), Yamanie's formula provides simplified way of calculating sample sizes. The formula is  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)}$  where n- represents the sample size that is desired, N- stand for Population, and e- is the level of precision, while 1-is a constant unit. For the data analysis, this study set 5 as the confidence interval at 95% confidence level. Therefore, if this formula is applied to the population of youths in our place of study, the result will be as shown in this formula.

$$n = \frac{491712}{1 + 491712 (0.05)^2} = \frac{491712}{1229} = 400$$

This gives a desirable sample size of four hundred (400) respondents. In other words one respondent will be representing 1229 persons or youths. A total of six hundred questionnaires will be distributed according to the proportional size of the areas. Table 3.4 shows the proposed distribution of questionnaire and the expected return rate in line with the sample size.



Table 3.3

*Population Distribution According to Local Government Areas and Settlement**Types (urban and rural areas)*

LGA	Classification	Total Population	Pop of youths	Settlement Type
1.	Asa	124668	41556	rural
2.	Baruten	206679	68893	urban
3.	Edu	201642	67214	urban
4.	Ekiti	54399	18133	rural
5.	Ifelodun	204975	68325	rural
6.	Ilorin East	207462	69154	urban
7.	Ilorin South	209251	69750	urban
8.	Ilorin West	365221	121740	urban
9.	Irepodun	147594	49198	urban
10.	Isin	59481	19827	rural
11.	Kaiama	59114	41338	urban
12.	Moro	108715	36238	rural
13.	Oke Ero	88975	29658	urban
14.	Offa	56970	18990	urban
15.	Oyun	94454	31484	rural
16.	Patigi	110852	36950	rural
	Total Population	2,365,353	788,451	

Once the research areas were selected, the systematic sampling procedure was adopted in selecting each respondent from the wards comprising the local government. From each of the wards, the research assistants were instructed to choose youths from every 4<sup>th</sup> household until they get the number required for the sample in each local government. In other words, the number four (4) serve as our nth number in line with the practice in systematic sampling procedure. The research assistants were recruited from among the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members who are on their

national youth service programme in each of the local government areas. This approach helped a lot in having a high return rate of the questionnaire.

Table 3.4

*Distribution of Questionnaire*

	Senatorial District /LGA	Classification	Pop of youths	Proposed number of Questionnaire to be shared	Expected Return based on sample size
<b>Kwara Central</b>					
1	Asa	Rural	41556	50	$\frac{41556}{1229} = 33$
2	Ilorin South	Rural	69750	85	$\frac{69750}{1229} = 56$
3	Ilorin West	Urban	121740	148	$\frac{121740}{1229} = 99$
<b>Kwara North</b>					
4	Baruten	Rural	68893	84	$\frac{68893}{1229} = 56$
5	Edu	Urban	67214	81	$\frac{67214}{1229} = 54$
6	Moro	Rural	36238	45	$\frac{36238}{1229} = 29$
<b>Kwara South</b>					
7	Ekiti	Rural	18133	22	$\frac{18133}{1229} = 16$
8	Irepodun	Rural	49198	60	$\frac{49198}{1229} = 40$
9	Offa	Urban	18990	23	$\frac{18990}{1229} = 17$
		Total	491712	600	$\frac{491712}{400}$

### 3.6 Research Instrument

The questionnaire was employed for collection of data for this study. Questionnaire is a time tested, efficient data collection mechanism especially when the variables of interest are clearly known (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011; Hair, et al, 2010). This study's instrument is adapted from the instrument developed for European Commission, (Celot & Shapiro, 2011; Celot & Tornero, 2009); which was specifically designed for assessing media literacy competence. Even though, the instrument was developed and tested in European environment, it is considered adaptable to Nigeria setting on

account of its comprehensiveness and relevance to our study. The criteria in the questionnaire cover all the areas of media literacy competence that have been considered irreducible by leading scholars of the field of media literacy. For example, Livingstone (2004) has argued that media literacy assessment cannot afford to include items testing the critical understanding alone but must consider access as prerequisite of media use while it also include communication abilities of users, otherwise it would under value the potentials of new media.

This instrument developed for the European Commission covers the generally accepted definition of media literacy conceived as “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages across a variety of contexts” (Livingstone, 2004, p. 18). The sensitivity of the instrument is that it allows for consideration of socio economic and geographical variations in media access, usage, critical understanding and communication competence. Furthermore, the study objectives include relating the media literacy competence with the use of new media for civic engagement. Although, the instrument being adapted contains some items measuring civic engagement, they were found to be inadequate after carrying out a pilot test on the instrument. To cover this area, a review of literature on civic engagement relating to online activities of young people (Jenkins, 2006, Kahnee, Lee & Feezell, 2012), provide the additional items for measuring use of new media for civic engagement. From these studies we generated items on civic engagement covering the following items: political participation, community involvement, humanitarian services, and advocacy/promoting social issues. The proposed research model has media training as moderator. The items measuring this aspect were generated from UNESCO’s

Vienna conference recommendation on media education (UNESCO, 1999). The summary of the instrument being proposed for the study is contained in Table 3.5

Table 3.5

*Description of the items and their sources*

Constructs	Sources	No of items	Brief description Original
<b>Access&amp;Usage skills</b>	Marten 2010, DTI, 2011, Celot and Tonnero,2009,EAVI, 2010,literat 2012	18	Reading e-book); Reading newspapers (print or online); Playing computer or video games; Going to the cinema; Using the Internet; Sending e-mails with attached files; Using the Internet to make telephone calls; Using peer-to-peer file sharing; Creating a web page; Reliability of newspapers (print or online); awareness of differences in information between different websites;Awareness of hidden advertisements; Awareness of content upsetting to others; Knowledge of regulation concerning the placement of advertisements; Ease of defining information needs; Ease of evaluating gathered information; Trying to compare with information elsewhere when encountering differences in information; Checking information across other sites when visiting new websites; Preventing reception of unwanted messages and e-mails;
<b>Critical understanding skills</b>	Marten 2010, DTI, 2011, CelotandPerez-Tonnero,2009,EAVI, ,literat 2012	14	Written literature of any kind (including a blog); Video or audio material of any kind; Uploading self-created content to a website to be shared; Social networking online (whether privately or professionally); Collaborating online on a joint project (including contributing to a wiki).
<b>Communicative abilities</b>	Marten 2010, DTI, 2011, Celot and Tonnero,2009,EAVI, 2010, ,literat 2012	10	

Table 3.5 continued

<b>Use of new media for civic engagement</b>	Jenkins,et al 2006, 08 Kahnee, Lee &Feezell, 2011	Possession of skill and actual use of Facebook, Twitter, Weblogs and You Tube for civic engagement.
<b>Media training</b>	UNESCO 1999	07 analyse, critically reflect upon and create media texts; identify the sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial and/or cultural interests, and their contexts; interpret the messages and values offered by the media; • select appropriate media for communicating their own messages or stories and for reaching their intended audience; • gain, or demand access to media for both reception and production.

### 3.6.1 Measurement and Description of the Instrument

The content of the questionnaire contains a list of closed ended questions that are arranged in these headings

- (1) Access and usage skills which are meant to assess the availability/ownership of media technology and the technical skills to operate them.
- (2) Critical understanding: designed to measure skills related to understanding media content and function, knowledge of media and media regulation; user behavior.
- (3) Communication abilities: designed to measure a set of individual ability to create and produce messages using different codes and to disseminate them through different platforms.
- (4) Use of new Media for Civic Engagement For the purpose of measuring use of new media for civic engagement, the items were adapted also from Celotand Tonnero (2012) and the Literat (2012). It has 20 items Likert scale covering four

areas of civic engagement viz: political participation, community participation, social advocacy and humanitarian services. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they use the new media for various civic engagements in the online environment.

(5) Media training contains items that measure the exposure of individual to skills acquisition to operate, evaluate, analyse and to use the new media for communication in different media platform.

The questionnaire was self administered given the level of education of our respondents. However, the researcher still employed the services of the National Youths Service Corps through the Directorate Office in Ilorin as research assistants especially in the rural areas. The National Youths Service Corps members are graduates of universities and polytechnics that are on mandatory service after their undergraduate programmes. Special care was taken to identify and chose those of them who have understanding of the local language and are able to interact with the local youths. Otherwise, they were instructed to seek assistance of the local persons who is able to speak the local language and facilitates interaction with research assistants.

### **3.6.2 Level of measurement and response Scales**

All the variables were measured on ordinal scale on a five point Likert scale except the demographic variable which are on categorical data. The Likert scales range from 1 to 5 where 1 represents the minimum score and five the maximum score. Hair et al (2014) approved the Likert which they referred to quasi metric measurement for PLS-SEM analysis.

### **3.7 Test of Validity and Reliability**

Validity is the degree to which an instrument selected for a study actually measures accurately what it supposed to measure (Kumar, 2011; Sekaran & Bougie, 2011; Hair et al, 2009). In addition, as Kumar (2011) says, validity reflects the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the meaning of the concept under consideration.

#### **3.7.1 Validity Test**

Before the administration of the instrument steps were taken to ensure reliability and validity of the items in the questionnaire. To achieve the content validity, Baxer and Babbie (2004) recommend face validity and expert/panel validity tests. Three lecturers in the Faculty of Communication and Information Sciences were given the items to access the content, design and wordings of the instrument for its suitability for the Nigerian environment. Two of them Dr Azeez, A.Lukuman and Dr Abdulbaqi, S. Saudah are in the field of mass communication while the third assessor Dr. Jimoh Rasheed is from the department of Computer Science. The feedback from them led to some amendment in the wordings, reframing or removal of some items from the questionnaire. For example, the items for Communication Abilities originally contained sixteen items but were reduced to twelve items due to lack of mutual exclusiveness of the items in relation to others. Similarly, under Media Education, one item was added to make it seven instead of the original six. Given this structural adjustment in the instrument by experts in the related fields, the research moved to the next step of reliability test for research instrument. Forty respondents were drawn from the faculty of Communication and Information sciences (CIS) of the University of Ilorin and the instrument were administered on

them. Thereafter, the 77-item in the questionnaire was subjected to reliability test and descriptive analysis using SPSS software. Specifically, 64 questionnaire items measuring media literacy, use of new media for civic engagement and media education were subjected to reliability test. The remaining items which were designed for collection of demographic data were used for descriptive purposes.

### **3.7.2 Reliability Test**

Reliability of an instrument is a function of how dependable, consistent, stable, predictable and honest the instrument is perceived by readers and experts. Hair et al. (2010) submits that reliability is the “degree to which the observed variable measures the “true” values and is “error” free. Two questions are of concern in reliability test: How reliable is an instrument and how unreliable is it? (Kumar, 2011).

To answer these questions, two processes are involved: external consistency and internal consistency of an instrument. In external consistency, a test-retest is carried out on the same instrument at different times on the same population and a comparison of the result is carried out for consistency. The second type is the parallel test where two similar instruments is developed and administered on the population simultaneously. This study adopts the second approach through pilot study to ensure reliability and validity of the instrument.

### **3.7.3 Pilot Study**

Although the study is adapting an instrument that had been validated, still it was considered necessary to conduct pilot study for the instrument being adapted in order



to ensure its suitability for the Nigerian environment. Two pilot tests were carried out for the instrument. The first pilot test was carried out between January and February, 2013 among youths in Ilorin in Nigeria, through the assistance of colleagues at the University of Ilorin who helped in overseeing the distribution of the questionnaire. The respondents who participated in the pilot were drawn from selected areas of the rural, semi urban and urban areas. For example, Alapa and Ode Giwa in Asa local Government area were chosen for the rural areas. For the semi urban area, Oloje and Ubandawaki areas in Ilorin west local government area were selected while Sabo Oke and Fate areas represent the urban area. This step was taken because of the need to ensure that the pilot study was carried out among the population with similar characteristics to the target population (Creswell, 2012; Sekaran & Bougie, 2009).

The result of the Cronbach alpha that was calculated from the analysis of the result shows that it ranges between .89 and .37. The details as calculated for each construct using SPSS indicates that for the access and usage, the Cronbach Alpha if item deleted is between .88 to .89, for critical understanding, .84 to .87; but for communication abilities which included items that measures civic engagement the Cronbach Alpha if item deleted is between 0.37 to 0.55. However, for the moderating variable of media education, the Cronbach Alpha is 0.82. The figures as contained in table 3.6 shows that the Cronbach Alpha are above the acceptable recommended 0.70 cut off level for test of reliability for instrument.

The result of the Pilot study forms the basis of exclusion of some items and the inclusion of more items for measuring the civic engagement. These items were

generated from recent studies that measure relationship between media literacy and online civic engagement (Kahnee, et al, 2009, 2011, 2012).

Table 3.6

*Item statistics and reliability for the construct used for the pilot study*

Constructs	Nos items	Cronbach Alpha
Access & usage	52	0.89
Critical understanding	30	0.86
Communication abilities	14	0.89
Media training/education	6	0.82

### 3.7.4 The Second Pilot Study

Based on the first pilot study, the researcher presented his thesis proposal before a panel of examiners constituted by the School of Multimedia Technology and Communication on the 10th of September, 2013. Parts of the observation that arose from that Defence Session were the substantial modification that has been made on the content of the instrument used for the first pilot test. For example, based on literature and the response pattern of the sample population, the parental mediation construct was dropped while questions relating to civic engagement were separated from communication abilities. Thus the access/usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities remain the dimensions of media literacy while civic engagement stands as dependent variable. The emerging restructuring of the questionnaire compelled another round of pilot study. Subsequently, the first task of data collection embarked upon during data collection in Nigeria was to carry out the pilot study. Between November and December 2013 respondents were drawn among students of the five departments that constitute the faculty of Communication and Information Sciences (CIS) of the University of Ilorin. The choice of the respondents

was informed by the consideration that they reflect, to a large extent, the rural, and urban settlers which is the target of the study. Some of the students are living in the villages that surround the University while others live in town that make up the urban parts of the Ilorin town. As undergraduates of the university, they fall within the category of youths which is the focus of the study.

The reliability of research instrument was tested using the Cronbach alpha. The result of the analysis indicates that the Cronbach alpha ranges between 0.61 and 0.88 which is within the acceptable limit, (Hair et al, 2010; Pallant, 2001). The details of the Cronbach alpha for the second pilot study are contained in the Table 3.7

Table 3.7  
*Item statistics and reliability for the construct used for the pilot study*

Constructs	Nos	Cronbach
	Items	Alpha
Access & Usage	12	0.84
Critical understanding	17	0.82
Communication Abilities	12	0.83
Civic engagement	16	0.94
Media education	07	0.87

### 3.7.5 The Final Questionnaire Measurement Items

A summary of the variables and questionnaire items for the study is contained in Table 3.8 while the full content of the questionnaire is included as an appendix to this proposal.

Table 3.8

*The variables and their questionnaire items*

Construct	Observed variables	Item no	Measurement Statement	Item Scales
<b>Access &amp; Usage Skills</b>	AU1	5	How often do you have access to any of these gadgets?	1=never 5=always
	AU2	5	How often do you subscribe to any of these media application on the Internet?	1=never 5=always
	AU3	6	How often do you access the internet from the following?	1=never,5=always
	AU4	4	Apart from the new media, how often do you use the following media?	1=never,5=always
	AU5	5	On the average, how many hours in a week do you do you spend on Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Blog....?	1=Less than one hour ;5=More than four hours
<b>Critical Understanding Skills</b>	CU1	6	When you noticed differences in the way the same information is presented by different sources, which of these do you usually do?	1=never,5=always
	CU2	4	How do you rate your awareness of laws that regulate the following in the media environment?	1 =Very Low, 5=Very much high
	CU3		How do you rate your current Internet skills to	1 =Very Low, 5=Very much high

Table 3.8 continued

	CU3	7	How do you rate your current Internet skills to:	1 =Very Low 5=Very much high
<b>Communication Abilities</b>	CA	12	How often do you carry out the following activities through the Internet based media	1=Never,5=always
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	CE1	20	Please indicate your use of new media for civic engagement	1=Never,5=Always
<b>Follow up to CE1</b>	CE2	4	Reason for not Using the New Media for Civic Engagement	1=strongly disagree; 5 =strongly agree.
<b>Media Education</b>	ME	8	I have Attended course or seminar trained that helped me to ...	1=strongly disagree;
<b>Demographic Questions.</b>	DQ	6	Level of Education, Gender, Age, Economic Status, Occupation, Residential Area.	3 =strongly agree.

### 3.7.6 Data Presentation and Analysis

The objective of this study is both descriptive and hypothesis testing. The study investigated and measured the relationship of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths. The data collected were presented on frequency table percentages. The ultimate objective of this study is to test the relationships and significant influence that exist among the variables of the socio- economic status, geographical location, media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths. The data analysis involves using multivariate technique. The rationale for employing multivariate analysis is in its suitability to deal with random and interrelated variables due to the fact that “their different effects cannot be meaningfully interpreted separately” (Hair et al, 2009, p.5). The variables involved in this study are many and variants.

The goal of this study is to measure, explain and predict the combined influence of socio economic status and geographic location on level of media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement. These informed the consideration of using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for the analysis. This research is proposing a model for the study; the model will be tested through SEM which is considered when the study involves simultaneous analysis of variables especially when there is need to estimate the measurement model and the structural model. It goes beyond descriptive to carry out confirmatory approach to hypothesis testing (Byrne, 2010). Specifically, the research is adopting the variance based SEM for the analysis for the following reasons.

Hair et al. (2104) advised that when theory about the phenomenon being studied is less developed, the research should adopt the variance based PLS. This study is attempting to model the relationship between media literacy competence and civic engagement. Theory backing such model is relatively new and less developed thus making the advised of Hair et al relevant to the study. Besides, there are other factors and reasons that informed and support the application of the PLS SEM as statistical tool for this study. Among the reasons that support the use of PLS is that though PLS is similar to the first generation regression but it has advantage of simultaneous estimation of the relationship between indicators and their respective constructs. Secondly, a study that is exploratory in nature or is prediction oriented will benefit from using PLS SEM. Thirdly, PLS is friendly in presenting result of the analysis in attractive, simply and easily comprehensible graphic interface especially in a model with moderation or mediating variables.

### **3.8 Unit of Analysis**

Individual respondent is considered as the unit of analysis for the study due to the fact that among the collective of respondents, perception is bound to vary. It therefore behooves the research to separate the individual and extract his/her opinion, perception, views and activity in relation to the issues of interest to the study. It is to be noted further that the study is using the socio-economic and demographic attributes of respondents as basis for comparing their level of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement. This decision is supported by (Wood, 2008) who called attention to the subjective nature of individual respondent. More so, it is asserted that individual unit of analysis is easy to identify and classify and use for exploratory analysis (Gosling & Edwards, 1995).

### **3.9 Post Hoc Power Analysis**

Post Hoc power analysis is encouraged for study that did not do prospective sample size power analysis. A priori (prospective) power analysis is recommended as parts of the decision task in research design (Lenth, 2007). Such analysis is required to determine the sample size. However, when a study did not have the advantage of the a priori power analysis, several scholars propose and support the conduct of retrospective (Post Hoc) power analysis (Fadley, 1985; Hallahan & Rosenthal, 1999, Onwuegbuezie & Leech, 2004). Most of those who oppose this approach are outside the social sciences (Lenth, 2007). Thus, Lenth (2007) implies that Post Hoc power analysis is appropriate for communication study. With this clarification a post hoc power analysis was carried out. The aim is to test if the result would have been the same if the research had used different sample size and effect sizes.

Hence, a post hoc power analysis was conducted using the software package, G-Power (Faul & Erdfelder, 1992). The sample size of 503 was used for the statistical power analyses and a 3 predictor variable equation was used as a baseline. The recommended effect sizes used for this assessment were as follows: small ( $f^2 = .02$ ), medium ( $f^2 = .15$ ), and large ( $f^2 = .35$ ) (see Cohen 1977). The alpha level used for this analysis was  $p < .05$ . The post hoc analyses revealed the statistical power for this study was able to meet the power of .80 for the detection of a moderate to large effect size.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has laid out the process of the research design employed in this study. The elements in the research design include the population and place of study; the sampling technique and the sample size determination; instrument reliability and validity test; data collection and data analysis procedure. The study adopted the cross sectional design while youth constitute the unit of analysis. The chapter showed that data were collected from youths residing in both rural and urban areas of Kwara State in the central region of Nigeria. Systematic random sampling was the technique used for data collection after the population was stratified into urban and rural segment. The instrument contained measurement scales that were used to measure access and usage skills, critical understanding, communication abilities, use of new media for civic engagement and media education. The instrument was subjected to pilot study before the final version was used for data collection. The analysis of the data collection is contained in the next chapter



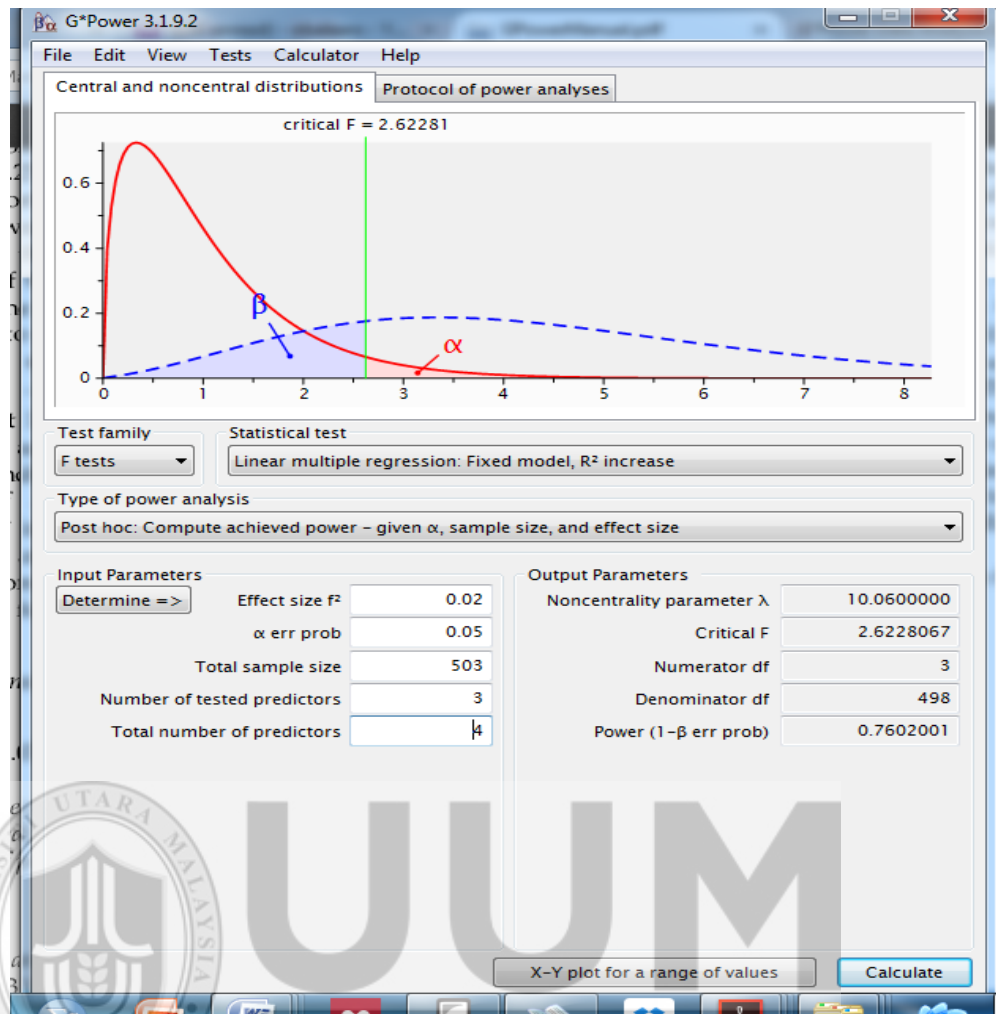


Figure 3.2. Post Hoc output for sample size Analysis

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The following sections explain the data collected from the respondents through self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to measure the relationship between media literacy competences and the use of new media for civic engagement among youths in rural and urban areas. The design of the study is multivariate involving the role of media education as moderating variable between the independent variable of media literacy competence and the use of new media for civic engagement. The statistical software used for the analysis is IBM Statistics SPSS version 22, to help in the descriptive analysis of the profile of respondents, data cleaning process, test of normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity and other related statistics. The analysis also used the Smart PLS, Structural Equation modeling (SEM) data analysis software; for testing the measurement model and testing the hypothesized structural model. For the purpose of examining the differences on the basis of education, gender, economic status and geographical location, the MultiGroup Analysis (MGA) approach in PLS-SEM Smart PLS was adopted.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

The necessity of showing concern for rate of response of the questionnaire was emphasized by Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, (2010) because of the need to ensure that all questionnaires that were retrieved are usable and valid for data analysis. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to respondents who spanned the geographical space of three senatorial districts in Kwara State. These are the

Kwara Central, Kwara North and Kwara South. To ensure high response rate, the researcher sought the assistance from the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) with offices in all the local government areas of the Nigerian federation including Kwara State. This approach helped in achieving a high returned rate of 548 questionnaires out of the 600 distributed. The 548 returned questionnaires represent 91% return rate. Thereafter the returned questionnaires were further inspected for incomplete responses from respondents.

This inspection of the instrument revealed that 42 out of the 548 returned did not have complete information as required in the questionnaire. Hair et al (2010) had suggested that such sets of questionnaire with incomplete information are better left out of the analysis except such exclusion would reduce the number of the sample size. In this study, 489 samples were considered enough for our population as was indicated in the methodology section (Shekaran, 2003). Thus, the excluded questionnaires did not affect the required sample size. This brings the number of usable questionnaires to 506 representing 92% valid response rate. However, the 506 were further checked for missing data or data that were out of range. This is explained in the section 4.3.1 that addresses treatment of missing data and outliers.

Table 4.1

*Response Rate of the Questionnaires*

Response	Frequency/Rate
No. of distributed questionnaires	600
Returned questionnaires	548
Returned and usable questionnaires	503
Returned and excluded questionnaires	45
Questionnaires not returned	52
Response rate	91%
Valid response rate	92%

### 4.3 Data Screening and Preliminary Analysis

Data screening involves certain requirements in quantitative research process. The first requirement is to meet the assumptions of psychometric property concerning the data thus making it safe to proceed to using the data for a number of statistical analyses. Second, is the need to follow certain process by checking for errors then finding and correcting the error, if any, in the data file. Failure to do this may result to distorting the ensuing data analysis. (Pallant, 2011). To meet these requirements, this study adopted the approach of detection and treatment of missing values, identification of outliers, test of assumption of normality, and other related process as may be deemed necessary for the nature of the analysis involved at different levels of the data analysis.

The importance of data screening for this study is further accentuated due to the multivariate nature of the design of the study. Although the initial assumption common in research analyses that are using the PLS-SEM is to assert that since PLS provides accurate model estimation even with the presence of extreme non-normal data, (Henselar, 2009), normality data testing is unnecessary. However, Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle and Mena (2012) and Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014), have emphasized on the imperative of normality test. They pointed out that the bootstrapping procedure used in PLS is prone to standard error where the data is highly skewed or Kurtotic. This view reinforces the fact that multivariate data need rigorous examination in order to overcome the problems of outliers, violation of normality assumptions and the challenge of missing data which can substantially affect the findings of the study (Hair, 2010).

#### **4.3.1 Detection and Treatment of Missing Data**

The indication of a missing data is when a respondent failed to provide information concerning one or more questions thus making the information incomplete for analysis (Hair, 2010; Howel, 2007). Data coding error or entry error are sources of the phenomenon of missing data except in a situation where the respondents were asked to skip questions. In this study, following the advice of Howel (2007); steps were taken to prevent the problem of missing data by the style of distribution and administration of the questionnaire. Through the efforts of the researcher and the research assistants who were recruited for the data collections, the sampled respondents were briefed about the academic nature and objective of the research. This approach gave advantages in two ways. It yields high response and return rate for the questionnaires.

It eventually reduces the possibility of missing data. The second source of missing data that was dealt with is the case of missing data that may arise from data entry procedure. After running the data on IBM SPSS version 22 for frequency analysis some out of range values were observed and replaced with the original values which represented the response of the respondents as contained in the original questionnaire.

#### **4.3.2 Detection and Treatment of Outliers**

Outliers are extreme scores or values entered into the data sets that might have significant effects on the analysis and conclusion of the result of the study (Hair et al., 2010). Typically, outliers are values or scores with unusual figures for a particular variable (unit variate outliers) or a combination of values occurring across

several variables ( multivariate outliers). Although detecting outliers is imperative on a data set, it is not always for negative reason. This much was emphasized by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) that outliers could be of help in detecting values that might otherwise escaped and slip into analysis. However, the type of outliers that portend serious consequences is when values wrongly entered into the data set give false impression about the sample leading to distortion in the statistical analysis. This reality has made detection and treatment of outliers in data sets, especially in multivariate analysis very important. Two levels of detection and treatment of outliers are required for multivariate analysis. The detection of outliers was carried out for this study by following the approach recommended by Pallant (2011) through the SPSS analysis. The output of the SPSS that includes histogram and descriptive statistics where the difference between the original mean and 5% trimmed mean are contained. If there is no difference between the original mean and the trimmed mean it means the outlier is not having significant influence on the data. This may not warrant the researcher to delete any outliers.

Furthermore, the SPSS analysis contains other output like the Box plots and the Detrenched Normal Q-Q plots in the descriptive section of the SPSS software. The focus is to observe the plot of the score in the Detrenched Normal Q-Q plots is along the straight line. As contained in the appendixes, the data is free of outliers because the scores cluster along the line. With this, the data has satisfied the first basic requirement of multivariate analysis. The descriptive statistics, from the SPSS output; is in respect of the variables of Access and Usage skills, the Critical Understanding and Communication Abilities, the Use of New media for Civic Engagement and Media Education are contained in the Appendix to this study.

### 4.3.3 Normality Tests

The approach adopted for the test of the normality in this study is the assessment of the visual and statistical distribution of the data by looking at the Skewness and Kurtosis of the histogram of the data distribution. The second step was to check the Kolmogorov-Smirnov analysis for all the measured variables. To determine this, the data was run on descriptive section of SPSS software. The output shows differential skewness and Kurtosis with many of the variables having normally distributed data. In the statistics analysis of the normality test, several authorities including Hair et al, (2010), Pallant, 2011), Ghosemi and Zahediasi (2012) have pointed out that having zero value is the best although such is not usually achieved with social science data. When data are not normally curved as expected, the effect do not reflect in a study with large sample size of more than two hundred sample. The sample size for this study is 503 after the preliminary screening. For the statistical analysis, Table 4.2 contains the skewness and the Kurtosis of the variable involved in this study, while Table 4.3 is the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test of normality. Furthermore, figure 1-6 (as shown in the appendixes) are the individual histogram for all the variables while the figures 7-12 (as shown in the appendixes) are the box plot that give additional information about the nature of the data.

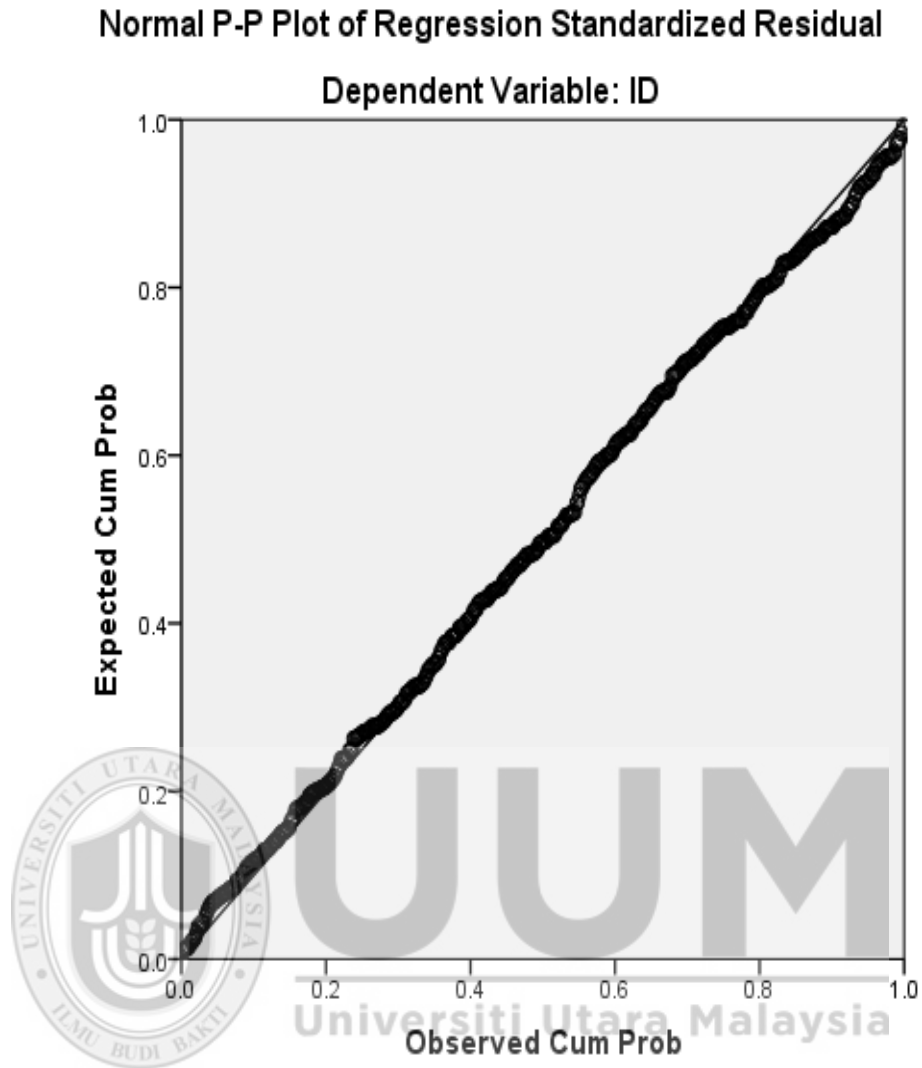


Figure 4.1. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Table 4.2

*Statistical Normality Test of Respondents Distribution: Skewness and Kurtosis*

Variables	Skewness	Standard Error	Kutrosis	Standard Error
Access & Usage Skills	-.073	.109	-.089	.217
Critical Understanding	-.529	.109	.670	.217
Communication Abilities	-.252	.109	-.059	.217
Civic Engagement	.930	.109	.397	.217
Media Education	.140	.109	.263	.217



Table 4.3

*Statistical Normality Test of Respondents Distribution: Kolmogorov-Sminov and Shapiro-Wilik*

Statistic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		Shapiro-Wilk		
	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
.043	506	.024	.997	506	.366
.044	506	.020	.991	506	.004
.124	506	.000	.913	506	.000
.059	506	.000	.979	506	.000
.074	506	.000	.979	506	.000

Table 4.4

*Correlation of the variables*

Constructs	Access & Usage	Civic Engagement	Comm Abilities	Critical Understanding	Media Education
Access & Usage	1				
Civic engagement	.341**	1			
Comm Abilities	.349**	.658**	1		
Critical Understanding	.330**	.436**	.342**	1	
Media Education	.080	.298**	.263**	.173**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

#### 4.3.4 Multicollinearity

The need to inspect the data for possible presence of multicollinearity among the independent variables is informed by a number of factors. While multicollinearity may be discountenanced by study with single predictor, it is potentially fatal to do so for study with multiple predictors (Field 2009). According to Hair et al. (2010),

multicollinearity has the potential to increase the standard error and equally leads to decrease in the ability of the independent variables to predict the effects on the dependent variables. In multiple regression in particular, multicollinearity reduces the significance test due to the fact that the variables cancels out each other (Hayes, 2005).

Multicollinearity exists among variables when one independent variable is actually a combination of the other variables or when the independent variables are highly correlated (Hair et al., 2010). Such situation hinders the predictive role and power of independent variables on the dependent variables. Statistically, a figure of 0.90 and above in the intercorelation matrix indicates multicollinearity (Pallant, 2010, Hair et al., 2010). Another recommended means of testing and assessing the level of multicollinearity in a data set is to examine the result of the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) which is contained in Table 4.4. The Table indicates that the Tolerance level and the VIF for all the exogenous in (dependent) variables are within the recommended values. Many scholars including Hair et al. (2010) and Field (2009), agreed on values of 10 for VIF and corresponding lower values for tolerance level. Going by this, the tolerance level of .639 as against the VIF of 1.566 for the variable of Access and Usage skills is within the acceptable values. Other variables as shown in Table 4.4 have similar output of low Tolerance values as against higher VIF values. (e.g. Critical Understanding CRUND, is .675vs 1.482; Communication Abilities, 487 vs 2.053; Civil Engagement, CENG,622 vs 1.607; and Media Education, 901 vs 1.110.)

Table 4.5  
*Coefficients*

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	UASG	.639	1.566
	CRUND	.675	1.482
	COMAB	.487	2.053
	CENG	.622	1.607
	MEDC	.901	1.110

a. Dependent Variable: level of education

#### 4.3.5 Assumptions of Homoscedasticity

Multicollinearity among the variables intended for multivariate analysis is not the only source of concern to researchers, they also pay attention to how the values of the data are spread out among the variables being analysed. This, in statistical term, is called homoscedasticity. If the assumption of homoscedasticity is not met, using the data for test of differences like ANOVA may be inappropriate. To test the homoscedasticity of the data for this study, the scatter plot was examined. It is expected to “show a fairly even cigar shape along its length” (Pallant, 2011, p.126). The data for the study met the assumptions of homoscedasticity as the scatter plot (Figure, 4.1) shows a cigar shape indicating both linearity in the relationship between the variables and even spread of data for the study.

#### 4.3.6 Common Method Variance

Research that employed self report questionnaire for data collection may be prone to a form of systematic error variance that stems from four sources. These errors can lead to increase in the observed variables as to make them differ from their population values (Meade, Watson & Kroustalis, 2007) Example of the sources of

such errors include social desirability or having a common rater; items ambiguity or item characteristics effects; the effects of grouping items or item context effects and measurement effects which happens through simultaneous measurement of predictor and criterion variables (Meade, Watson & Kroustalis, 2007).

Common Variance Method is essentially that of a measurement issue rather than constructs involved in the study. It is of interest due to its potential of bias when estimating the relationship among the theoretical constructs of the study. It is also one of the sources of type 1 and types 11 errors in research analysis reports. For this reasons, this present study took step to examine the data in order to determine the presence of common method variance. The first step is the procedure in which the questionnaire design was subject to expert evaluation. These experts were selected through objective basis to avoid social effects. Secondly, the respondents were assured that the research is meant for academic purposes; and that their responses are not about being right or wrong; and their responses are confidential. Furthermore, Instructions that explain what each of the constructs in the questionnaire means preceded the relevant sections. Efforts were also made to present the questions in clear, simple and concise sentences.

In addition to the procedural steps stated above, the statistical approach of dealing with the issue was adopted as well. For this process, the Harman single-factor-test (Podsakoff & Organ (1986) commonly used for testing common method variance was adopted for the study. The usual approach in applying this test is to subject all variables of interest to exploratory factor analysis. From the table, the results of the unrotated factor solution will be examined to ascertain the number of factors that

account for the variance among the variables. The result of the component factor analysis yielded six factors which explain the cumulative of 62.21% of the variance. However the first (largest) factor accounting for 17.71% and no single factor can be said to account for the covariance of the variables. It is therefore concluded that this data does not have the problem of common method variance serious enough to inflate relationships between the variables.

#### **4.4 Profile of Respondents**

To show the profile of respondents based on demographic and socio-economic variables, an analysis of six variables were carried out. Table 4.6 shows the characteristics of respondents including level of education, gender, economic background, and place of residents. The breakdown of the sample revealed that the educational attainment of the respondents. Those from lower categories (primary/secondary) constitute 14.7% as against those from upper categories (Bsc/Msc/Phd) who are 85.3%. In terms of gender, the result indicates that there is relatively even distribution of respondents with 262 representing 52.1% male as against 241 female representing 47.9%. The income background analysis indicates that 273 representing 54.3% belong to the lower income category while 230 representing 45.7% are in the higher income category.

Finally is the analysis of the profile of respondents based on geographical location where the youths are residing as at the time of collecting data for this study. Among the respondents 217 representing 43.1% are residing in the rural areas, as against 286 representing 56.9% who are in the urban centre.

Table 4.6

*Distribution of respondents according to level of education, gender, age, income background and place of residence (n=503)*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Education</b>		
Upper Education	429	85.3
Lower Education	74	14.7
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	262	52.1
Female	241	47.9
<b>Income level</b>		
Low income earner	273	54.3
Upper income earner	230	45.7
<b>Geographical location</b>		
Rural	217	43.1
Urban Area	286	56.9

Table 4.7

*Descriptive Analysis of Latent Constructs*

Descriptive Statistics	Nos of items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Access & Usage Skills	25	2.47	0.93
Critical Understanding	18	2.94	0.94
Communication Abilities	12	2.17	0.93
Use of New Media for Civic Engagement	20	1.97	0.91
Media Education	8	2.47	0.56

## **4.5 Assessment of Media Literacy Competences**

This section attempts to answer the research questions that seek to assess the level of media literacy competences involving the access and usage skills, the critical understanding and the communication abilities. The section also reports the assessment of the use of the new media for civic engagement on the Internet by the youths. The last analysis in this section is the assessment of the exposure of the youths to media education training. All the result reported in this section are based on a self reported answer that are based on a 5 point Likert scale.

### **4.5.1 Access and Usage of Media Gadgets on the Internet**

Majority of respondents, 84.1% (n=426) indicate that they always/often have access to GSM phones. Access to school/office computer represent the least means of accessing computer as only 19.1% (n=96) of the respondents said they have access to computer in their office or in their school. Similarly, 32.1% (n=111) are always/often have access to the computer from their home or family computer. On whether the respondents were able to access the new media internet applications such as Facebook, Weblog or Twitter, the response is as follows: Approximately, sixty percent 59.9% (n=301) said they often/always access Face book from the gadgets they have access to, compare to 26.5% (n=134) for Twitter, 14.6% (n=74) for Weblog, 19.0% (n=96). However, most of the respondents, 57.1% (n=289) use their gadgets to access other varieties of applications on the internet such as To go, Whatsapp etc.

Many of the respondents, indicates that their access to computer and access to Internet applications are neither regular nor irregular. For example, 33.4 % (n=169)

said their access to table top computer is sometimes similar to 22.5 % (n=114) who also sometimes have access to lap top computer. It is the same thing with access to computer at home as 24.7% (n=125) report that sometimes they have access to the computer at home. Table 4.3 shows the details of the access and usage patterns of media gadget and internet applications among the respondents.

Table 4.8

*Assessing the access and usage divide among respondents' according to access to gadgets and media applications on the Internet (n=503)*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Tabletop computer	Never	92	18.3	2.83	1.274
	Rarely	107	21.3		
	Sometimes	169	33.6		
	Often	62	12.3		
	Always	73	14.5		
Laptop computer	Never	76	15.1	3.50	1.425
	Rarely	42	8.3		
	Sometimes	114	22.7		
	Often	94	18.7		
	Always	177	35.0		
GSM phones	Never	24	4.8	4.51	1.080
	Rarely	16	3.2		
	Sometimes	38	7.6		
	Often	24	4.8		
	Always	401	79.7		
Family/home Computer	Never	157	31.2	2.52	1.370
	Rarely	110	21.9		
	Sometimes	125	24.9		
	Often	41	8.2		
	Always	70	13.9		
Office/school Computer	Never	174	34.6	2.41	1.349
	Rarely	107	21.3		
	Sometimes	126	25.0		
	Often	33	6.6		
	Always	63	12.5		
Face book	Never	60	11.9	3.72	1.386
	Rarely	36	7.2		
	Sometimes	106	21.1		
	Often	86	17.1		
	Always	215	42.7		



Table 4.8 continued

Twitter	Never	186	37.0	2.53	1.486
	Rarely	82	16.3		
	Sometimes	101	20.1		
	Often	48	9.5		
	Always	86	17.1		
Weblog	Never	227	45.1	2.13	1.264
	Rarely	95	18.9		
	Sometimes	107	21.3		
	Often	38	7.6		
	Always	36	7.2		
You Tube	Never	194	38.6	2.31	1.306
	Rarely	96	19.1		
	Sometimes	117	23.3		
	Often	54	10.7		
	Always	42	8.3		
	Total	503	100.0		
Others(To go,Whatsapp etc)	Never	81	16.1	3.59	1.504
	Rarely	46	9.1		
	Sometimes	87	17.3		
	Often	71	14.1		
	Always	218	43.3		

#### **4.5.2 Assessing the Critical Understanding Practices among Respondents as Measured by Attitude to Information, Awareness of Media Laws and Ethics and Self Rated Protection Skills**

The section presents the analysis of the critical understanding practices of the respondents based on three headings used in measuring the critical understanding dimensions of media literacy.

##### **4.5.2.1 Attitude to Information**

The descriptive analysis of the attitude to information among the respondents revealed that 20 %( n=100) always/often disregard conflicting information as against 41.3% (n=208) who never /rarely disregard conflicting information. But 45 %

(n=229) said they always/often compare information with other source while 37.0% (n=187) always/often consult other people when faced with conflicting information in the media. Still only 28.0% (n=142) said they always/often share concern with others like civic organization. However, majority of the respondents, when it comes to disregarding conflicting information, 38.5 % (n=195) said they sometimes disregard conflicting information, with 43.8% (n=222) report that they sometimes share concern about conflicting information with civic society organizations. Table 4.9.1 contains the trends of critical understanding as measured by attitude to information among respondents in the new media environment.

Table 4.9

*Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by attitude to information (n=503)*

Items	Categories	Freq	Percent	Mean	S.D
Disregard conflicting information	Never	109	21.7	2.68	1.218
	Rarely	99	19.6		
	Sometimes	195	38.8		
	Often	46	9.1		
	Always	54	10.7		
Believe information based on knowledge about how media operate.	Never	47	9.3	3.08	1.086
	Rarely	84	16.7		
	Sometimes	221	43.9		
	Often	94	18.7		
	Always	57	11.3		
Compare with information elsewhere	Never	44	8.7	3.37	1.209
	Rarely	65	12.9		
	Sometimes	166	32.8		
	Often	118	23.5		
	Always	111	22.1		
Consult with other people	Never	55	10.9	3.16	1.214
	Rarely	83	16.5		
	Sometimes	179	35.6		
	Often	98	19.5		
	Always	88	17.5		
Share concern with civil society Organizations	Never	111	21.1	2.76	1.322
	Rarely	111	21.1		
	Sometimes	142	28.2		
	Often	68	13.5		
	Always	71	14.1		

Table 4.9 Continued

Consult only one source	Never	116	23.1	2.73	1.325
	Rarely	109	21.7		
	Sometimes	143	28.4		
	Often	65	12.9		
	Always	70	13.8		

#### 4.5.2.2 Awareness of Media Law and Ethics

A further analysis of self report critical understanding about level of awareness of respondents of issues in the new media environment, shows that 41% (n=208) rate their awareness of what can be advertised on the media as moderately high/ very high, while 44.1% (n=223) rated their level of awareness of the right of authors who posted material on the internet to copyright of the materials posted. A look at Table 4.9.2 further gives detail analysis on the self reported critical skills of respondents.

Table 4.10

*Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by awareness of media laws and ethics*

Items	Categories	Freq	Percent	Mean	S.D
Awareness of what can be advertised on the media	Very low	85	16.9	3.07	1.305
	Slightly low	78	15.5		
	Somehow High	132	26.2		
	Moderately High	131	26.0		
	Very Much High	77	15.3		
When and where Advert can be placed	Very low	53	10.5	3.25	1.213
	Slightly low	73	14.5		
	Somehow High	162	32.2		
	Moderately High	125	24.9		
	Very Much High	90	17.9		
Right of authors to intellectual property of materials posted on the net	Very low	70	13.9	3.18	1.298
	Slightly low	82	16.3		
	Somehow High	129	25.6		
	Moderately High	129	25.6		
	Very Much High	93	18.5		

#### 4.5.2.3 Awareness of Content and Skills of Protection

The third issues examined under critical understanding is the awareness of the content that can be posted on the Internet and self report skills of preventing unpleasant experiences including skill to prevent unwanted e-mail or skill to avoid bullying or disagreeable content on the internet. A descriptive analysis of some of the responses revealed that 26.1% (n=130) rated their skill to protect their computer as very low/somewhat low as against 35.0% (n=278) who rated their skills as moderately/very high. However, 52.1% (n=264) rated their skill to avoid unwanted comments as moderately/very high similar to 55.7 % (n=282) who rated their skill to avoid bullying on the internet as moderately/very high. Details of the trend are also contained in Table 4.9.3

Table 4.11  
*Distribution of respondents according to level of critical understanding practices as measured by self rated protection skills*

items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Awareness of types of contents that can be posted on the Internet	Very low	107	21.3	3.02	1.298
	Slightly low	80	15.9		
	Somewhat High	111	22.1		
	Moderately High	107	21.3		
	Very Much High	98	19.5		
Skills to protect yourself on the internet	Very low	73	14.5	3.41	1.416
	Slightly low	57	11.3		
	Somewhat High	96	19.1		
	Moderately High	145	28.8		
	Very Much High	132	26.2		
Skills to prevent unsolicited e-mails	Very low	78	15.5	3.18	1.367
	Slightly low	84	16.7		
	Somewhat High	111	21.1		
	Moderately High	129	25.6		
	Very Much High	101	20.1		
Skills to prevent your computer from being infected by virus	Very low	71	14.1	3.59	1.348
	Slightly low	50	9.9		
	Somewhat High	82	16.3		
	Moderately High	112	22.3		
	Very Much High	188	37.4		

Table 4.11 Continued

Skills to avoid unpleasant experiences or unwanted posting	Very low	57	11.3	3.43	1.428
	Slightly low	62	12.3		
	Somehow High	123	24.5		
	Moderately High	128	25.4		
	Very Much High	133	26.4		
	Total	503	100.0		
Skill to avoid comment you don't agree with	Very low	67	13.3	3.45	1.367
	Slightly low	55	10.9		
	Somehow High	117	23.3		
	Moderately High	113	22.5		
	Very Much High	151	30.0		
Skill to avoid bullying hate or extreme views on the internet	Very low	59	11.7	3.50	1.342
	Slightly low	62	12.3		
	Somehow High	101	19.9		
	Moderately High	132	26.2		
	Very Much High	150	29.8		
Skills to protect you from receiving unsolicited e-mail or postings.	Very low	75	14.9	3.29	1.376
	Slightly low	77	15.3		
	Somehow High	98	19.5		
	Moderately High	132	26.2		
	Very Much High	121	24.1		

#### 4.5.3 Assessing Communication Abilities based on Use of the Internet for Self Created Content, Civic Activities and for Economic Purposes

The section is a descriptive analysis of the abilities of respondents to use the Internet for different communications activities including self created content, civic activities and for economic purposes. Analysis of results 4.10 revealed varying level of communication activities. Among the respondents, 27.6% (n=140) never or rarely received or sent e-mail as against 46.6 % (n=239) who always or often Interact with other through the e-mail. For self created messages on the Internet, 44.3% (n=224) claimed to always/often upload self created messages on the internet. Also, 41.0% (n=207) always/often read the news through the internet while only 21.8% (n=110) of the respondents use the internet to interact with the public institution like

government agencies or banks. A substantial number 48.4 % ( n=245) sometimes use the internet to interact with public institutions. However, half of the respondent 50.2 % (n=254) never or rarely used their Face book to interact with the politicians or political parties who also have Face book page. The details of the communication activities of the youths are contained in Table 4.10.

Table 4.12

*Distribution of respondents according to communication activities on the Internet as measured by frequency of carrying out the following activates.*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Sending or receiving e-mails	Never	64	12.7	3.31	1.329
	Rarely	75	14.9		
	Sometimes	127	25.2		
	Often	115	22.9		
	Always	122	24.3		
Finding information about goods and services	Never	61	12.1	3.28	1.318
	Rarely	78	15.5		
	Sometimes	146	29.0		
	Often	94	18.7		
	Always	124	24.7		
Uploading self created content	Never	69	13.7	3.29	1.355
	Rarely	70	13.9		
	Sometimes	142	28.2		
	Often	90	17.9		
	Always	132	26.2		
Writing in or uploading content to Weblog	Never	141	28.0	2.53	1.317
	Rarely	129	25.6		
	Sometimes	113	22.5		
	Often	64	12.7		
	Always	56	11.1		
Watching or downloading movies or music from the Internet	Never	73	14.5	3.6	1.342
	Rarely	85	16.9		
	Sometimes	146	29.0		
	Often	85	16.9		
	Always	114	22.7		
Reading news online	Never	69	13.7	3.15	1.308
	Rarely	90	17.9		
	Sometimes	140	27.8		
	Often	104	20.7		
	Always	100	19.9		
	Total	503	100.0		

Table 4.12 Continued

Internet Banking	Never	212	42.1	2.22	1.329
	Rarely	110	21.9		
	Sometimes	89	17.7		
	Often	44	8.7		
	Always	48	9.5		
Interacting with institution or government	Never	140	27.8	2.55	1.286
	Rarely	105	20.9		
	Sometimes	151	30.0		
	Often	54	10.7		
	Always	53	10.5		
Buying goods or services through the Internet	Never	247	49.0	2.07	1.292
	Rarely	87	17.2		
	Sometimes	94	18.8		
	Often	35	7.0		
	Always	40	8.0		
Publishing piece of literature on the Internet	Never	201	40.0	2.23	1.278
	Rarely	107	21.3		
	Sometimes	111	22.1		
	Often	44	8.7		
	Always	40	8.0		
Uploading other materials	Never	218	43.3	2.25	1.351
	Rarely	86	17.1		
	Sometimes	104	20.7		
	Often	46	9.1		
	Always	49	9.7		
Sending message to political party/politicians Face book page	Never	254	50.5	2.09	1.324
	Rarely	73	14.5		
	Sometimes	91	18.1		
	Often	45	8.9		
	Always	40	8.0		

#### 4.5.4 Assessing the Use of New Media Applications on the Internet for Civic Engagement

The section is an assessment of the trend of the use of new media for different types of civic engagement among respondents in the areas of humanitarian services, community development, political participation and social advocacy.

#### **4.5.4.1 Use of Face book for Civic Engagement**

On the use of Face book for humanitarian services including seeking donation for indigent members of the community, seeking support for the donation of blood for sick people etc, majority of the respondents, (72.4%) never or rarely use the Face book for humanitarian as against (27.0%) sometimes, often or always use the Face book for humanitarian services. On the use of Face book to support political issues or candidates, (29.4%) claim to do so sometimes, often or always while (76.6%) never or rarely use Face book to support political issues or candidates. Similarly, when ask about their use of Face book for opposing political issues or candidates, still majority (72.2%) answered that they never or rarely use Face book to oppose political issues or candidates leaving (27.9%) who claim to be using the Face book sometimes, often or always for the purpose of opposing a political issue or candidates.

The analysis of the use of Face book to support community development such as environmental, health or educational issues, majority of the respondents (59.6%) approximately sixty percent use the Face book sometimes, often or always while (40.4%) never rarely use the Face book for supporting community development issues. Similarly, when assessing their use of Face book to carry out social advocacy such as the lending their voices to fight against corruption, ethnic or religious discrimination, (51.8%) said they sometimes, often or always do so while (48.1%) answered that they never or rarely use the Face book to fight against corruption, ethnic or religious discrimination.



Table 4.13

*Use of Facebook for Civic Engagement*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Use of Face book for Humanitarian cause	Never	267	53.1	1.92	1.204
	Rarely	97	19.3		
	Sometimes	84	16.7		
	Often	23	4.6		
	Always	32	6.4		
Use of Face book to support political issues	Never	247	49.1	2.03	1.280
	Rarely	108	21.5		
	Sometimes	82	16.3		
	Often	20	4.0		
	Always	46	9.1		
Use of Face book to oppose to political issues	Never	262	52.1	1.91	1.163
	Rarely	101	20.1		
	Sometimes	88	17.5		
	Often	27	5.4		
	Always	25	5.0		
Use of Face book for community development	Never	124	24.7	2.82	1.386
	Rarely	79	15.7		
	Sometimes	152	30.2		
	Often	62	12.3		
	Always	86	17.1		
Use of Face book for social advocacy	Never	145	28.8	2.64	1.386
	Rarely	97	19.3		
	Sometimes	130	25.8		
	Often	57	11.3		
	Always	74	14.7		

**4.5.4.2 Use of You Tube for Civic Engagement**

Analysis of the result on the use of You Tube for civic engagement among the youths indicates that a vast majority of them do not use the You Tube for civic engagement. Seventy seven percent (77.1%) of the respondents said they never or rarely use the You Tube for humanitarian causes as against (22.9%) who answered that they use it sometimes, often or always to pursue humanitarian services. On use of You Tube for supporting political issue or candidates, almost eighty percent (79.3%) never or rarely use You Tube for that purpose. Similar numbers of respondents (81.5%), never

or rarely use the You Tube for opposing political issues or candidates. Further analysis shows similar in the trend as only (33.8%) could answer that they sometimes, often or always use You Tube for social advocacy. It is the same when they were asked to about their use of You Tube for social advocacy, (68.2%) never or rarely use You Tube for social advocacy.

Table 4.14

*Use of You Tube for Civic Engagement*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Use of You Tube for Humanitarian cause	Never	303	60.2	1.80	1.193
	Rarely	85	16.9		
	Sometimes	56	11.1		
	Often	31	6.2		
	Always	28	5.6		
Use of You Tube to support political issues	Never	329	65.4	1.70	1.145
	Rarely	70	13.9		
	Sometimes	54	10.7		
	Often	26	5.2		
	Always	24	4.8		
Use of You Tube to oppose political issues	Never	354	70.4	1.64	1.167
	Rarely	56	11.1		
	Sometimes	44	8.7		
	Often	18	3.6		
	Always	31	6.2		
Use of You Tube for community development	Never	250	49.7	2.15	1.397
	Rarely	83	16.5		
	Sometimes	73	14.5		
	Often	41	8.2		
	Always	56	11.1		
Use of You Tube for social Advocacy	Never	262	52.1	2.04	1.322
	Rarely	81	16.1		
	Sometimes	83	16.5		
	Often	32	6.4		
	Always	45	8.9		
	Total	503	100.0		

#### 4.5.4.3 Use of Weblog for Civic Engagement

The results of the analysis on the use of Weblog for civic engagement are similar to that of the You Tube. On use of Weblog for humanitarian services, results reveals

that majority of the youths (73.4%) never or rarely use Weblog while similar result (75.7%) and (75.3%) never or rarely use Weblog either for supporting or opposing political issues or candidates. However, a slightly different result was obtained for the use of Weblog for supporting community development and social advocacy. Thirty four percent (34%) said they sometimes, often or always use the Weblog to support community development such as environmental, health or educational issues, but majority (66%) never or rarely use the Weblog for community development. Similarly, only (36.1%) sometimes, often or always use the Weblog for social advocacy such as to fight against corruption, ethnic or religious discrimination as against majority (63.8%) never or rarely use for Weblog for social advocacy as a way of tackling social issue.

Table 4.15

*Use of Weblog for Civic Engagement*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Use of Weblog for Humanitarian cause	Never	297	59.0	1.87	1.257
	Rarely	72	14.3		
	Sometimes	69	13.7		
	Often	30	6.0		
	Always	35	7.0		
Use of Weblog to support political issues	Never	307	61.0	1.81	1.208
	Rarely	74	14.7		
	Sometimes	63	12.5		
	Often	30	6.0		
	Always	29	5.8		

Table 4.15 continued

Use of Weblog to oppose political issues	Never	313	62.2	1.81	1.218
	Rarely	66	13.1		
	Sometimes	57	11.3		
	Often	42	8.3		
	Always	25	5.0		
Use of Weblog for community development	Never	244	48.5	2.14	1.370
	Rarely	88	17.5		
	Sometimes	82	16.3		
	Often	35	7.0		
	Always	54	10.7		
Use of Weblog for social advocacy	Never	243	48.3	2.18	1.385
	Rarely	78	15.5		
	Sometimes	84	16.7		
	Often	46	9.1		
	Always	52	10.3		

#### 4.5.4.4 Use of Twitter for Civic Engagement

The result on the use of Twitter for civic engagement indicates that the youths are slightly interested in the use of Twitter for social advocacy when compared to other areas of civic engagement. Thirty five percent (35.3%) sometimes, often or always use the Twitter as against (28.7%) who use it for humanitarian issues; (25.7%) to support political issues or candidates; (25.9%) to oppose political issues or candidates with (35.3%) who also use it sometimes, often or always for social advocacy including the fight against corruption, ethnic or religious discrimination.

Table 4.16

*Use of Twitter for Civic Engagement*

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Use of Twitter for Humanitarian cause	Never	280	55.7	1.91	1.220
	Rarely	79	15.7		
	Sometimes	80	15.9		
	Often	37	7.4		
	Always	27	5.4		
Use of Weblog to support political issues	Never	291	57.9	1.87	1.238
	Rarely	83	16.5		
	Sometimes	63	12.5		
	Often	34	6.8		
	Always	32	6.4		
Use of Weblog to oppose political issues	Never	304	60.4	1.86	1.276
	Rarely	69	13.7		
	Sometimes	61	12.1		
	Often	32	6.4		
	Always	37	7.4		
Use of Twitter for community development	Never	239	47.5	2.22	1.398
	Rarely	73	14.5		
	Sometimes	86	17.1		
	Often	53	10.5		
	Always	52	10.3		
Use of Twitter for social advocacy	Never	245	48.7	2.19	1.406
	Rarely	80	15.9		
	Sometimes	69	13.7		
	Often	57	11.3		
	Always	52	10.3		

**4.5.5 Assessing the Exposure of Respondents to Media Education**

In examining the respondents' exposure to media training that improve their competence in using the new media based on 4-point Likert scale, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to a set of questions. In response to the statement that asked whether the respondent has attended training that made him or her to 'understand how media operate and communicate their messages, 38.0% (n=196) disagree or strongly disagree to the statement as against the majority 61.2 % (n=310) who either agree or strongly agree with statement. On whether, the

respondents have attended training which made them to ‘acquire skills needed to operate internet media, majority 61.7% (n=315) either agree or strongly agree to the statement while 37.7% (n=191) disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the respondents’ response to the statement on whether they have attended training that has given them skills to ‘critically analyse and evaluate media messages 56.9% (n=284) agree or strongly as against 43.9 % (n=222) who disagree or strongly disagree with statement. Examining whether respondent have attended training where they were trained on skills to produce their own messages using the internet media, still majority 62.7% (n=317) agree or strongly agree to the statement while 37.3% (n=189) disagree or strongly disagree. The details of other aspect of media training exposure of respondents are contained in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17

*Distribution of respondents according to their exposure to media education*

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Understand how media operate and communicate their messages.	Strongly Disagree	98	19.5	2.47	0.862
	Disagree	96	19.1		
	Agree	283	56.3		
	Strongly Agree	26	5.2		
acquire skills needed to operate internet media	Strongly disagree	80	15.9	2.54	0.841
	Disagree	108	21.5		
	Agree	280	55.7		
	Strongly Agree	35	7.0		
critically analyse and evaluate media messages	Strongly disagree	87	17.3	2.39	0.768
	Disagree	133	26.3		
	Agree	282	55.9		
	Strongly Agree	1.0	2.0		

Table 4.17 continued

understand that media have political and economic interest behind their messages	Strongly disagree	94	18.7	2.37	0.783
	Disagree	129	25.6		
	Agree	279	55.5		
	Strongly Agree	01	2.0		
use the new media to produce my own messages	Strongly disagree	66	13.1	2.49	0.730
	Disagree	130	25.8		
	Agree	302	60.0		
	Strongly Agree	5	1.0		
use different search methods on the internet	Strongly disagree	56	11.1	2.51	0.754
	Disagree	96	19.1		
	Agree	322	64.0		
	Strongly Agree	29	5.8		
use the media for social and political purposes	Strongly Disagree	70	13.9	2.22	0.752
	Disagree	116	23.1		
	Agree	308	61.2		
	Strongly Agree	9	1.8		
Use the internet based media for political purposes	Strongly Disagree	119	23.7	2.22	0.828
	Disagree	164	32.6		
	Agree	211	41.7		
	Strongly Agree	10	2.0		

#### 4.6 Summary of profile and assessment

The analysis in this chapter revealed that majority of the respondent (83.3%) belongs to the higher education including Bachelor/M.sc./PhD category. The income background of most respondents shows that most of them are from the middle level category while the sex distribution features more male than female although it is very close. However, the respondents who come from the rural and urban centre are almost the same. Majority of the respondents have GSM or Smartphone through which most of them access the internet based media such as Face book, Twitter, You Tube and Weblog. Critical practices varies as the respondents are not so critical in handling conflicting information on the internet just as they rate their skill of internet protection from unpleasant or unwanted posting as low or slightly low. On

communication abilities of respondent through the new media on the internet, majority of the respondents do not use the new media to interact with public institution, politicians or government agencies. Use of new media for civic engagement like humanitarian services, political participation, community development and social advocacy is generally low but varies across types of media. However, exposure to media education is fairly high among the respondents. The next section discusses multigroup differences.

#### **4.7 Multi group Differences based on Gender, Education, Income, Geographical Location**

In this section, the analysis involved examining differences among the groups. The importance of this section is to answer the sets of hypothesis that seeks to determine if there are significant differences in the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables on the basis of gender, education, income and geographic location. To achieve this objective, and following Henseler and Chin (2010) the data were split into two following categories: educational background was split into higher and lower categories; the gender into male and female; income background into higher and lower income earners and the geographical location into rural and urban categories. This grouping/classification is in line with PLS approach for analyzing multi group data (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler & Chin, 2010).

It is appropriate to recall here that in the context of PLS-based multi-group analysis (MGA); the purpose is to determine the moderating influence of a set of categorical variables. Otherwise, if the moderating variable is not categorical, PLS adopts the product indicator approach. As shown in section 4.7.7, this study adopts the product



indicator to measure the moderating effects of media education ((Hair et al., 2014; Henseler & Chin, 2010). Meanwhile, Henseler et al., (2009) has pointed out that carrying out the MGA, a population parameter  $\beta$  is hypothesized to differ for two subpopulations as in  $\beta(1) \neq \beta(2)$ . This allows for detecting if there are differences in path coefficients between two groups. In order to be able to conclude that there are differences in population parameters, the statistical indicator of these differences is to examine the t-test statistics. The results of the multi group analysis indicate a mix of significant and non significant differences between the two samples for each of the categorical variables submitted for analysis. This is not surprising since literatures on the use of new media are not conclusive about the direction of the influence of demographic and socioeconomic variables on use of media generally.

#### **4.7.1 Multi group Differences based on Education**

As indicated in Table 4.18 the relationship between access and usage skills and use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of education among the respondents do not show significant differences (t-value, .105; p-value, .916). Similar result is observed for the critical understanding (t-value 0.924; p-value 0.356) and communication abilities (t-value 1.067; p-value 0.286) in relation to use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of respondents' education. This is an indication of similar level of media literacy practices competence and use of new media for civic engagement regardless of educational background.

Table 4.18

*Differences of relationship on the basis of educational background of respondents*

Relationships	Group 1 Higher		Group 2 lower		Group1vs Group2	t-value	p-value
	SM1	SE1	SM2	SE2	SM1-SM2		
A&U>UNCE	0.088	0.058	0.049	0.839	0.039	0.105	0.916
CU >UNCE	0.198	0.039	0.292	0.091	-0.094	0.924	0.356
CA >UNCE	0.508	0.089	0.613	0.077	-0.105	1.067	0.286
N	429		74				

Note: SM1 and SM2 are the sample mean for the groups; SE1 and SE2 are the standard error of the SM1 and SM2 of the groups; 2. A&U=Access and Usage skills, CU=Critical Understanding, CA=Communication Abilities; UNCE=use of new media for Civic engagement

#### 4.7.2 Multi group Differences based on Gender

The analysis of the results as shown in Table 4.19 of the relationship between access and usage Skills and use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of gender of the respondents also did not show significant differences for all the three path relationship access & usage skills (t-value, 0.486, p-value 0.627); critical understanding; (t-value, 0.006, p-value 0.996); communication abilities (t-value, 0.022, p-value,0.998). This result is an indication that both male and female who are youth are more or less using the new media in the same way.

Table 4.19

*Differences of relationship on the basis of gender of respondents*

Relationships	Group 1 Male		Group 2 Female		Group1 vs Group2	t-Value	p-value
	SM1	SE1	SM2	SE2	SM1-SM2		
A&U>UNCE	0.104	0.053	0.069	0.052	-0.036	0.486	0.627
CU >UNCE	0.217	0.053	0.217	0.047	0.004	0.006	0.996
CA >UNCE	0.530	0.049	0.528	0.049	0.002	0.022	0.983
N	262		241				

**Note:** SM1 and SM2 are the sample mean for the groups; SE1 and SE2 are the standard error of the SM1 and SM2 of the groups; 2. A&U=Access and Usage skills, CU=Critical Understanding, CA=Communication Abilities; UNCE=use of new media for Civic engagement

#### 4.7.3 Multi group Differences based on Income Background

The trend of the results analysis for group difference based on income background is the same. As indicated in Table 4.20 the relationship between access and usage Skills and use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of education among the respondents do not show significant differences (t-value, 0.100; p-value, 0.921). Similarly, for the critical understanding of the respondents results (t-value 0.660; p-value 0.510) do not show significant differences. It is the same thing for communication abilities (t-value, 0.857; p-value, 0.392). All the results are indication that income is not much of a factor for the use of new media among youths.

Table 4.20

*Differences of relationship on the basis of income background of respondents*

Relationships	Group 1 Higher		Group 2 lower		Group1 vs Group2	t-value	p-value
	SM1	SE1	SM2	SE2	SM1-SM2		
A&U>UNCE	0.092	0.056	0.085	0.044	0.007	0.100	0.921
CU >UNCE	0.188	0.057	0.235	0.045	-0.047	0.660	0.510
CA >UNCE	0.495	0.059	0.554	0.040	0.554	0.857	0.392
N	230		273				

**Note:** SM1 and SM2 are the sample mean for the groups; SE1 and SE2 are the standard error of the SM1 and SM2 of the groups; 2. A&U=Access and Usage skills, CU=Critical Understanding, CA=Communication Abilities; UNCE=use of new media for Civic engagement

#### 4.7.4 Multi group Differences based on Geographical Location

As indicated in Table 4.21 the relationship between access and usage Skills and use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of geographical location of the respondents shows very significant differences (t-value, 11.231; p-value, .000). There is no significant relationship for other two relationships of critical understanding (t-value, 0.182; p-value, 0.855) and communication abilities (t-value, 0.951; p-value, 0.342). in relation to use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of geographical location of respondents.

Table 4.21

*Differences of relationship on the basis of geographical location of respondents*

Relationships	Group 1 Rural		Group 2 Urban		Group1 vs Group2	t-value	p-value
	SM1	SE1	SM2	SE2	SM1-SM2		
A&U>UNCE	0.914	0.556	0.082	0.049	0.832	11.231	0.000
CU >UNCE	0.52	0.538	0.533	0.047	-0.013	0.182	0.855
CA >UNCE	0.245	0.055	0.1773	0.046	0.0681	0.951	0.342
N	217		286				

Note: SM1 and SM2 are the sample mean for the groups; SE1 and SE2 are the standard error of the SM1 and SM2 of the groups; 2. A&U=Access and Usage skills, CU=Critical Understanding, CA=Communication Abilities; UNCE=use of new media for Civic engagement

#### 4.7.5 Summary of Group Differences

The foregoing analysis of differences is an attempt to determine groups' difference on the basis of four demographic and socio-economic variables i.e education, gender, economic status and geographical location of the respondents. The Multigroup Analysis approach in the context of PLS-SEM was applied to determine the regression weight or sample mean, the standard error and t-values for each group. Thereafter, determine if there is significant statistical difference between the groups. The results shows that for the subpopulation, in this study who are mainly youths, demographics variables of gender, education; socio-economic status and geographical location do not have significant differences. However, the relationship between access and usage skills and use of new media for civic engagement shows significant differences. This notwithstanding, it can be concluded that largely the hypotheses are not supported.

#### **4.8 Inferential Statistics and Measurement of Relationships**

In the following sections, the analysis is to answer the RQ1 to RQ8 and to test the hypotheses one to seven. This was carried out using the partial least squares approach. The PLS approach of assessment of the measurement model (outer model) is derived from the “multiple regression and factor analytic techniques” (Pallant, 2011 p.105). The measurement refinement involves factor analysis, reliability test, and validity procedures. The second step is the assessment of the structural model (inner model) which is to test hypothesis.

##### **4.8.1 Assessment of Smart Partial Least Square, PLS-SEM Model Results**

The analysis of the data through the PLS-SEM approach for this study is in two parts which involves the assessment of the measurement model (outer model) and the assessment of the structural model (inner model). The measurement model shows the representation of the relationship pattern existing between the manifest (observable) indicators and their corresponding latent (construct) variables. Although the PLS model can contain both the reflective and the formative model, the design of this study deals with the reflective measurement only.

It is important to note that there exist significant differences in characteristics of reflective and formative models. Essentially, the indicators in the reflective model respond to changes in the latent variable and the change in latent (construct) variable precedes variations in the indicators. Also the indicators in reflective measurement are interchangeable because they share common theme. This interchangeability of the indicators makes it possible for the researcher to measure the construct of interest by focusing on the relevant underlying indicators of the construct (Hair et al., 2015;

Hair et al., 2012; Henseler, Ringle, Sinkovics, 2009, Colman, 2008). The important thing to note about the characteristics of indicators in a reflective model measurement is that excluding or including indicators would not necessarily lead to non reliability or impair the validity of the construct being measured. Hair et al (2014) remarked that in reflective models causality is assumed to flow from the construct to the indicators. In measuring PLS path model assessment, Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics (2009), recommends two-step- approach. The first is the measurement (outer) model and the second step is to measure the structural (inner) model.

In this study, the measurement model assesses the reliability and validity of the reflective constructs, while the structural model was assessed by examining the variance explained of the endogenous construct or the significance of the path models, the level of R<sup>2</sup> squared values; determining the effects size; f<sup>2</sup>; and the predictive relevance Q<sup>2</sup> of the model parameters.

#### **4.8.2 Assessment of Measurement Model**

Assessment of the measurement model requires the determining the reliability of individual indicators then ascertaining convergent validity and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2012; Henseler, Ringle, Sinkovics, 2009, Colman, 2008).

##### **4.8.2.1 Reliability**

Reliability of a measurement is concerned with consistency, stability and extent to which it actually measures what it is intended to measure. The individual reliability test was determined by examining the outer loading of the each of the constructs. The rule

of thumb (Hair, et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2012; Vinzi et al., 2010) is to look for items in the outer loading that are between .40 and .70. In line with this guide, through a check of the path diagram in figure 4.2, it is discovered that out of a total of 72 indicators submitted for algorithm 30 items/indicators met the criterion. All the items that were retained have loadings between .771 and .861. Table 4.22 contained the summary.

#### **4.8.2.2 Internal Consistency Reliability**

Cronbach alpha has been the traditional assessment procedure for internal consistency. But due to observations of Chin, (1998) that Cronbach's alpha, in the context of PLS, tends to underestimate internal consistency reliability of latent variable (LV) researchers have shifted emphasis from Cronbach's alpha to composite reliability coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha works on the assumptions that all items with one construct depict the same range and meaning or that they contribute equally. This tends to obscure individual strength and weakness of the items and thereby either underestimate or overestimate the scale reliability. Following this observation, researchers, particular those using the PLS approach; have been reporting the composite reliability. This composite reliability recognizes the individual loadings thereby highlighting the contribution of each item.

However, both the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability use the threshold of .70 for exploratory research making the composite reliability coefficient to be interpreted the same way as the Cronbach's alpha. For the purpose of reinforcing one and another both the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were reported. Table 4.11 indicates the result of the internal consistency reliability for the main constructs of the models. The composite reliability results exceeded the threshold of 0.70 for the



constructs in this study. The breakdown is as follows. Access and usage skills has 0.845; critical understanding 0.862; communication abilities has 0.834; civic engagement using the new media 0.941; media education 0.858. All of them exceeded the recommended 0.70 threshold for exploratory study using the PLS approach (Hair, et al, 2014, 2011; Pallant, 2011).

Table 4.22

*Items loadings, average variance extracted, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha*

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Access and Usage skills	AU1.5	.776	.646	.845	.725
	AU1.5	.776			
	AU3.5	.861			
	AU3.5	.861			
	AU3.6	.771			
	AU3.6	.771			
Communication Abilities	CA10	.788	.557	.834	.734
	CA10	.788			
	CA11	.746			
	CA11	.746			
	CA12	.734			
	CA12	.734			
	CA9	.715			
	CA9	.715			
Civic Engagement in New Media	CE10	.730	.569	.941	.931
	CE12	.745			
	CE13	.734			
	CE14	.777			
	CE15	.760			
	CE17	.778			
	CE18	.755			
	CE19	.809			
	CE20	.754			
	CE7	.731			
	CE8	.735			
	CE9	.741			

Table 4.22 Continued

Critical Understanding	CU3.2	.705	.556	.862	.800
	CU3.2	.705			
	CU3.4	.727			
	CU3.4	.727			
	CU3.5	.720			
	CU3.5	.720			
	CU3.6	.787			
	CU3.6	.787			
	CU3.7	.785			
	CU3.7	.785			
Media Education	ME3	.707	.548	.858	.799
	ME5	.735			
	ME6	.765			
	ME7	.753			
	ME8	.741			

#### 4.8.2.3 Validity Test

Validity measurement of the model is aimed at decreasing errors that are attributable to measurement items. Instrument designed for a study is expected to measure what it is designed to measure. To evaluate this criterion, the instrument is subjected to convergent and discriminant validity measurements through the assessment of t-values, composite reliabilities and average variance extracted.

#### 4.8.2.4 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity measures the extent to which the hypothesized items to a latent construct truly reflected the conceptualized model. Convergent validity confirms that a latent variable is able to explain more than half of the variance of its indicators on the average (Hair et al., 2010). To examine the convergent validity, there is need to look at the factor loading of the measurement model that is above 0.50 which is an indication that the latent construct correlate with the items used to measure it (Fornell & Lacker, 1981; Chin, 1988). Table 4.24 indicates that the Average Variance Extracted for respective constructs are above 0.50 threshold thus confirming that the items have

strong relationship with the construct they are measuring. Table 4.24 also shows that average variance extracted range between 0.548 and 0.646 which exceed the stipulated minimum of 0.5 (Fornell & Lacker 1981) which indicates that there is convergent validity between the latent constructs and their indicators in this study.

Table 4.23

*Latent Variable Correlations and Square Roots of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)*

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1) Access & Usage skills	<b>.719</b>				
2) Civic engagement	.344	<b>.712</b>			
3) Critical understanding	.331	.441	<b>.723</b>		
4) Media Education	.092	.322	.177	<b>.714</b>	
5) Communication Abilities	.351	.663	.342	.275	<b>.707</b>

**Note: The value in bold represent the square root of AVE across the diagonal**

Table 4.24

*Items, standard loadings, average variance extracted*

Construct	Items	Standardized Loadings	AVE
Access & Usage Skills	AU1.4	.664	.516
	AU1.5	.725	
	AU3.3	.623	
	AU3.5	.807	
	AU3.6	.759	
Comm & Abilities	CA10	<b>.762</b>	<b>.500</b>
	CA11	.730	
	CA12	.717	
	CA7	.607	
	CA9	.712	

Table 4.24 Continued

<b>Civic Engagement</b>	<b>CE10</b>	<b>.697</b>	<b>.507</b>
	<b>CE11</b>	<b>.703</b>	
	CE12	.748	
	CE13	.722	
	CE14	.747	
	CE15	.736	
	CE16	.691	
	CE17	.795	
	CE18	.742	
	CE19	.789	
	CE2	.622	
	CE20	.728	
	CE3	.626	
	CE4	.568	
	CE6	.681	
	CE7	.757	
	CE8	.735	
	CE9	.694	
<b>Critical Understanding</b>	<b>CU1.3</b>	<b>.636</b>	<b>.522</b>
	CU1.5	.766	
	CU1.6	.759	
<b>Media Education</b>	<b>ME2</b>	<b>.607</b>	<b>.509</b>
	ME3	.710	
	ME5	.737	
	ME6	.755	
	ME7	.742	
	ME8	.721	

#### 4.8.2.5 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is to determine that each of the latent construct measurement indicators actually represent one latent construct and do not cross load with other latent construct. To test the discriminant validity, Fornell and Lacker (1981) recommend the use of average variance extracted where the square root average variance extracted of any construct being measured has to be greater than the latent variable correlations of all other constructs. Table 4.25 shows that the square root of Average Variance Extracted for each of the construct is higher when compared to the latent variable correlations of all other constructs. Discriminant validity for the measurement

indicators can be confirmed by examining the cross loading of the indicators. As shown in table 4.26, indicator loading, when compared with other reflective indicators loading, is greater than the corresponding cross loading of other indicators. This implies that there is discriminant validity among the constructs as well as the measurement indicators.

Table 4.25

*Latent Variable Correlations and Square roots of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)*

Constructs	Edu	Aus	Ceng	Comab	Crund	Gender	Geo Loc	Medu	Income
Edu	1								
	-								
Aus	0.018	0.804							
	-								
Ceng	0.084	0.311	0.754						
	-								
Comab	0.035	0.297	0.607	0.746					
	-								
Crund	0.162	0.171	0.162	0.180	0.746				
	-								
Gender	0.108	0.021	-0.061	0.001	0.050	1			
	-								
Geo Loc	0.074	0.038	-0.090	-0.031	0.075	0.096	1		
	-								
Meduc	0.167	0.077	0.313	0.247	0.125	0.031	0.041	0.740	
	-								
Income	0.023	0.112	-0.025	-0.012	-0.031	0.061	0.102	-0.019	1

Note: Square roots of AVE are the values in bold

Table 4.26

*Factor loadings*

Items	AU	Comm	Ceng	Crund	Edu	Gender	Income	Geo loc	Medu
AU1.5	<b>.776</b>	.218	.246	.139	.008	-.068	-.076	.017	.049
AU1.5	<b>.776</b>	.218	.246	.139	.008	-.068	-.076	.017	.049
AU3.5	<b>.861</b>	.287	.284	.126	-.028	.018	-.092	.033	.066
AU3.5	<b>.861</b>	.287	.284	.126	-.028	.018	-.092	.033	.066
AU3.6	<b>.771</b>	.207	.218	.149	-.022	-.006	-.103	.043	.069
AU3.6	<b>.771</b>	.207	.218	.149	-.022	-.006	-.103	.043	.069
CA10	.188	<b>.788</b>	.459	.195	-.013	.027	.002	-.025	.190
CA10	.188	<b>.788</b>	.459	.195	-.013	.027	.002	-.025	.190
CA11	.221	<b>.746</b>	.441	.055	-.093	.013	.019	-.072	.234
CA11	.221	<b>.746</b>	.441	.055	-.093	.013	.019	-.072	.234
CA12	.258	<b>.734</b>	.461	.134	-.003	-.068	-.027	-.021	.122
CA12	.258	<b>.734</b>	.461	.134	-.003	-.068	-.027	-.021	.122
CA9	.223	<b>.715</b>	.452	.145	.000	.033	-.027	.025	.196
CA9	.223	<b>.715</b>	.452	.145	.000	.033	-.027	.025	.196
CE10	.249	.396	<b>.730</b>	.169	-.037	-.030	-.039	-.094	.202
CE12	.236	.493	<b>.745</b>	.051	-.046	.014	-.069	-.076	.213
CE13	.202	.465	<b>.734</b>	.043	.085	-.045	-.033	-.053	.254
CE14	.244	.417	<b>.777</b>	.173	.065	-.088	.019	-.092	.260
CE15	.231	.439	<b>.760</b>	.137	.077	-.073	.046	-.121	.206
CE17	.256	.476	<b>.778</b>	.107	.093	-.009	-.053	-.002	.232
CE18	.211	.412	<b>.755</b>	.140	.054	-.055	-.019	-.032	.214
CE19	.232	.490	<b>.809</b>	.148	.073	-.071	.022	-.058	.289
CE20	.230	.476	<b>.754</b>	.187	.112	-.070	.045	-.029	.265
CE7	.281	.512	<b>.731</b>	.109	.085	-.009	-.096	-.067	.194
CE8	.205	.483	<b>.735</b>	.074	.048	-.058	-.070	-.060	.237
CE9	.240	.437	<b>.741</b>	.113	.016	-.050	.002	-.130	.261
CU3.2	.148	.205	.174	<b>.705</b>	.111	.006	-.043	.033	.117
CU3.2	.148	.205	.174	<b>.705</b>	.111	.006	-.043	.033	.117

Table 4.27

*Summary of the method, threshold and the sources that guided the reliability and validity process adopted for the study* **Validity Criteria for Reflective Measures**

<b>Validity Measures</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Source</b>
Internal consistency Reliability	Composite reliability	0.6 to 0.7 for exploratory research; 0.7 to 0.9 for advanced research	(Fornell & Larcker, 1981); (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994); (Hair et al., 2011)
Convergent validity	Component Principal analysis Confirmatory Factor Analysis	Standardized factor loading > 0.5; average variance extracted > 0.5 Each of the measurement items loads with significant t-value on its associated construct	(Bagozzi & Yi, 1988); (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (Bentler, 1990); (Bollen & Long, 1993); (Bollen, 1989); (M. W. Browne & Cudeck, 1992); (Barrett, 2007); (Gefen & Straub, 2005)
Discriminant Validity	Principal Component Analysis  Confirmatory Factor Analysis	Each pair of constructs are not perfectly correlated; Loading on associated construct > 0.4, cross-loading < 0.4; Loading of the items of a construct is an order of magnitude above the loading for other constructs; chi-square difference test; Square root of the AVE for each construct is much higher than the correlation among each pair of constructs Loading of the items of a construct is an order of magnitude above the loading for other constructs; the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct is much higher than the correlation among each pair of constructs	(Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (Gefen & Straub, 2005)

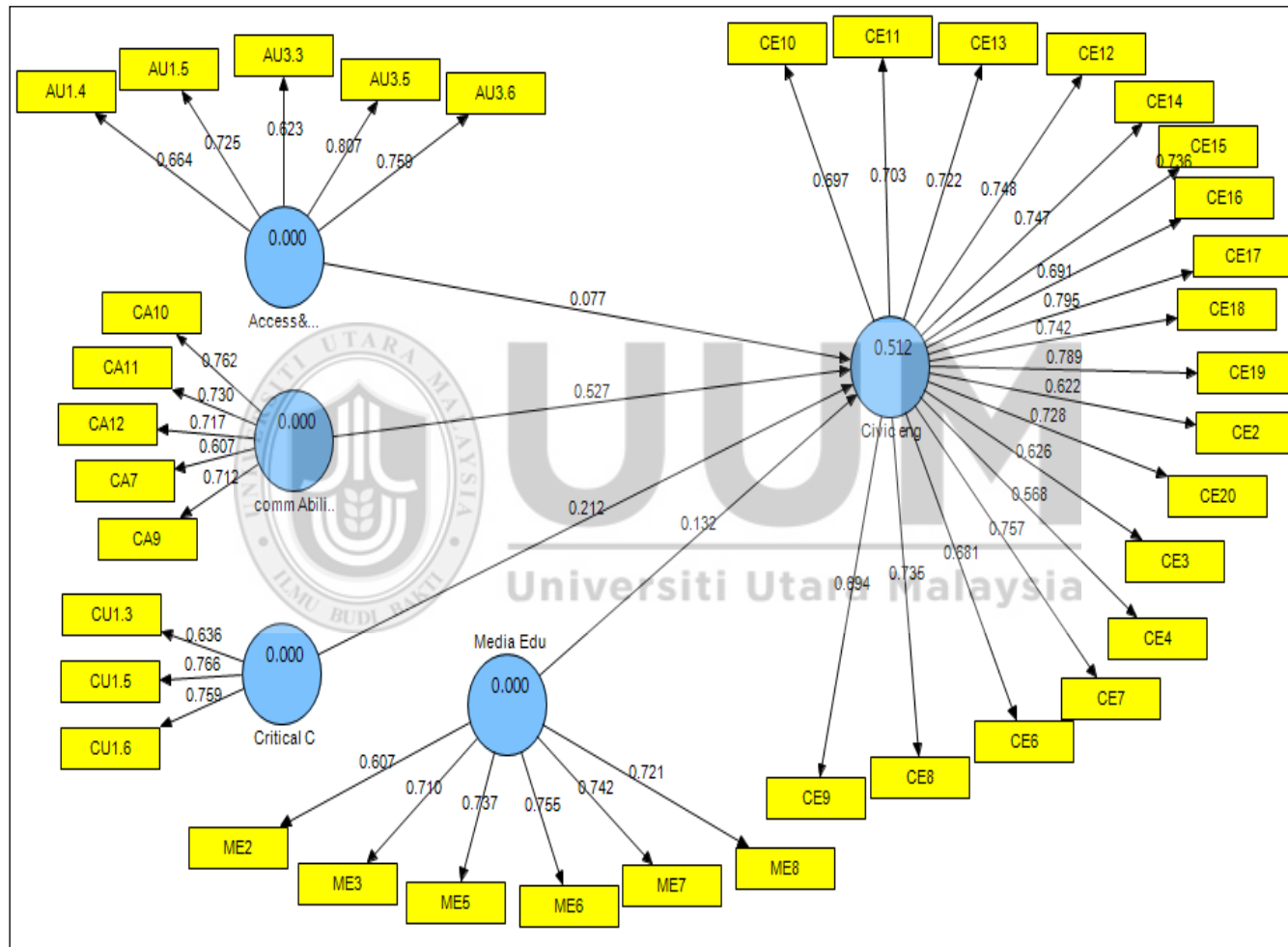


Figure 4.2. Measurement Model for the study



## **4.9 Validation of the Structural Model**

### **4.9.1 Assessment of Significance of the Structural Model**

This section of the analysis is contingent upon the steps taken in the previous section to validate the model through the measurement model specification. Following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2014) and Henseler et al. (2009), the present study apply the bootstrapping procedure in PLS with bootstrap of 5000 samples to treat 503 cases for the purposes of assessing the significance of the path coefficient. The application of bootstrapping in PLS is necessary according to Hair et al (2014) because PLS SEM does not assume the data being analysed are normally distributed. Hence, testing the requirement of significance test as in regression analysis like the weights, outer loading and path coefficient can not apply. The PLS-SEM which is essentially a non-parametric data analysis employs bootstrapping procedure for the purpose of testing of the significance of path coefficient. As pointed out by Chin (1998) path coefficient, in PLS, gives the reflection of the strength of relationship between independent variable and dependent variables and other hypothesized relationship. Furthermore, path coefficient is comparable to ordinary least squares regressions; hence it can be interpreted as standardized beta coefficient. With the foregoing as guide PLS structural path coefficient was carried out on the relationship between the media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement.

The central focus of the study is the relationship of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement hence it was considered important to test the individual dimensions of the media literacy competence in terms of their relationship to the dependent variable of use of new media for civic engagement. Hypothesis 1 of this study states that the relationship between Access and Usage skills and use of new

media for civic engagement will be significant. As the result shows, this hypothesis was confirmed as access and usage is significantly related to use of new media for civic engagement ( $\beta = 0.077$ ;  $t\text{-value} = 2.185$ ;  $p = 0.015$ ). Therefore, it can be asserted that skills of access and usage are essential requirement to effective use of new media for civic engagement.

Also, the central issue in media literacy competence is the ability to critically examine the plethora of information the users are exposed to in order to use the data and information for civic engagement. Hypothesis 2 which predicts that critical understanding is significantly related to civic engagement is supported as revealed in this result ( $\beta = 0.212$ ;  $t\text{-value} = 5.888$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). With this result, the assumption for effective use of new media for civic engagement will include the critical understanding among the users.

Hypothesis 3 asserts that communication ability is significantly related to civic engagement in the online environment. With the result of the measurement ( $\beta = 0.527$ ;  $t\text{-value} = 14.857$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) for communication abilities including knowing and having relationship skills, skill for self created contents are very significant media literacy skills for effective civic engagement through the new media. Table 4.20 contains the summary of the results in terms of the path coefficient,  $t\text{-value}$  and the  $p$  value.

Table 4.28

*Hypothesis Testing of the relationship between constructs*

Hypo	Relationships	Beta value	Std. error	t value	p value	Decision
H <sub>1</sub>	Acc & Usage > UNCE	.077	.035	2.185	.015	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	Critical U > UNCE	.212	.036	5.888	.000	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	Media Edu > UNCE	.132	.032	4.092	.000	Supported
H <sub>4</sub>	Comm. Abilities > UNCE	.527	.035	14.857	.000	Supported
H <sub>5</sub>	Access & Usage * Media Edu -> UNCE	.018	.071	.252	.401	Not supported
H <sub>6</sub>	Critical understanding* Media Edu -> UNCE	.070	.079	.885	.188	Not supported
H <sub>7</sub>	Comm Abilities * Media Edu -> UNCE	.077	.046	1.670	.048	Supported

**Note:** Acc&Usage=Access and Usage Skills, Critical U= Critical Understanding, CommAbilities=Communication Abilities, UNCE=Use of New Media for Civic Engagement

#### 4.9.2 Assessment of Variance Explained in the Endogenous Latent Variables

##### (R<sup>2</sup>)

A prominent test of the significance of structural path in PLS is to measure the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by or ascribed to one or more of the independent variables. This is referred to as the R<sup>2</sup> or the coefficient of determination. In measuring the R<sup>2</sup>, scholars differ on specific criterion. This lack of consensus is in recognition of the fact that R<sup>2</sup> is a function of the research context, research complexity and area of discipline. As an example, Hair et al (2014) observed that in most scholarly work, R<sup>2</sup> of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are classified as strong, moderate and weak respectively. Similarly, Chin (1998) had earlier posited

that R-squared with the values of 0.67, 0.33 and 0.19, in the context of PLS-SEM; are regarded as good enough to be classified as substantial, moderate and weak respectively.

Within the context of these suggestions of acceptable R<sup>2</sup> value, the result of the variance of the endogenous (dependent) variable explained by the exogenous (independent) variables is presented in Table 2. This result indicates that the model is able to explain 51% of the variance in the use of the new media for civic engagement. In other words, the combined independent variables of access and usage skills; the critical understanding and communication abilities have moderate variance value slightly above 0.50 recommended by both Hair et al. (2014) and far above that of Chin (1998) which is 0.33.

Table 4.29

*Variance Explained by the Endogenous Latent Variables in the exogenous variable*

Latent (endogenous) Variables (IV)	Explained R <sup>2</sup> (DV)
Access and usage skills	Use of new media for civic engagement. 51% (0.512)
Critical understanding	
Communication abilities	

#### 4.9.3 Assessment of Effect Size

Although the R<sup>2</sup> provides an idea about the combined influence of the latent exogenous variable in explaining the proportion of variation in the dependent endogenous variable, researchers are also interested in the individual influence of each independent variable.

PLS measures this by determining the effects size when a particular exogenous variable is removed from the measurement by applying this formula (Hair, et al, 2014).

$$F^2 = \frac{R^2_{\text{included}} - R^2_{\text{excluded}}}{1 - R^2_{\text{included}}}$$

In applying this formula Hair et al (2014) endorsed the guideline provided by Cohen (1998) which states that the values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 respectively indicate small, medium and large effects size of the exogenous variables on the dependent variable. The result of applying this formula for this study shows that the effect value of access and usage skills is .010 which is less than the recommended values hence it is classified as none. The result for the critical understanding shows that it has a value of 0.073, which is within the range of values classified as small effect size. However, the measurement of effect size for communication abilities indicate a value of 0.436 which means it has large effect values on the endogenous dependent variable of use of new media for civic engagement. The summary of this effects size evaluation is presented in Table 4.30

Table 4.30

*Effect size measurement*

Construct	R-squared	R-squared	f-squared	Effect size
	Included	Excluded		
Access & usage skills	.512	.507	.010	None
Critical understanding	.512	.476	.073	Small
Comm Abilities	.512	.299	.436	Large

#### **4.9.4 Assessment of Predictive Relevance**

According to Hair et al. (2014), instead of measuring the global fit of a model, the PLS-SEM assesses the structural model. This approach is informed by the fact that the aim of PLS-SEM is to maximize the explained variance of the endogenous latent variable and to minimize differences between the sample covariance. Therefore, in assessing the predictive relevance of this study's model, the blindfolding procedure was adopted. Hair et al. (2014) advised researcher to examine the Stone-Geisser's Q-values (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). This measure of Q-values is usually resorted to as supplementary to global fit as partial least squares structural equation modeling does not measure global fit of model. Furthermore, it must be noted that the application of blindfolding procedure to measuring the predictive relevance is applied when the model is reflective. For clarity, blindfolding is a sample reuse technique that omits every dth data point in the endogenous construct's indicators and estimates the parameters with the remaining data points (Chin, 1998; Henseler et al., 2009; Tenenhaus et al., 2005).

A reflective model means that measurement of the latent or unobserved concept is the causes of variation in the set of observable indicators. In other words they stem from the same constructs and the items are interchangeable (Hair et al., 2014; McMillan & Conner, 2003). This study is designed as reflective measurement as it meets the criteria explained above. Hence, the adoption of the blindfolding procedure is appropriate to measure the endogenous latent variables as well as applying the cross validated redundancy to measure the predictive relevance. Hair et al. (2014) recommends the use of validated redundancy measure as part of the two-steps of assessing predictive relevance because "includes the key element of the path model,

the structural model, to predict eliminated data points” and for the fact that the “Q2 values estimated by the blindfolding procedure represent a measure of how well the path model can predict the originally observed values. Similar to the f2 effect size approach for assessing R2 values, the relative impact of predictive relevance can be compared by means of the measure to the q2 effect size.

As a guide for determining the predictive relevance of a model, Henseler et al. (2009)’s recommendation that a model with Q2 statistic greater than zero should be considered to have predictive relevance. This recommendation is endorsed by Hair et al. (2014), hence its adoption for this study. The outcome of the measurement as shown in Table 4.6 shows that the cross validated measure of the endogenous variable of Use of new media for civic engagement is above the minimum criteria of zero value. This is an indication that the study model has predictive relevance as shown in Table 4.31

Table 4.31

*Predictive relevance of the model (Q2)*

Total	SSO	SSE	1-SSE/SSO
Use of new media for civic engagement	9054	6728.1504	0.2569

#### 4.10 Testing Moderating Effect

According to Hair et al. (2014) and Henseler and Chin (2010), the nature of the data whether continuous or categorical is an important factor in choosing the type of approaches to test moderating effects. This study estimated the strength of the moderating effect of media education on the relationship between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement. Given that the model was

specified as reflective and the moderating variable measurement was on Likert scale, the study adopts the product indicator approach with partial least squares to detect and assess the strength of the moderation (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler & Chin 2010). Furthermore, the choice of product indicator approach was on the basis of Henseler and Fassott, (2010) observation that when compared to the group comparison approach the outcomes of the products indicator approach are usually equal or superior. He further advice that a study with larger sample should use the product indicator approach. This study met all the criteria mentioned above because the latent constructs for this are reflectively and the sample size is 503 which is above the minimum 200 recommended for PLS-SEM.

However, in applying the product indicator approach for testing the moderating effects of media education on the relationship between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement, it requires the creation of interaction terms (Hair et al; 2014). In this study the interaction terms between the latent independent variables of media literacy competencies indicators and the latent moderating variables indicators were created. Thus, the product of the interaction terms will serve as the indicators for the structural model. As a result, the interaction terms have three products indicators (Henseler, 2012; Baron & Kenny, 1986).

It is pertinent to recall that the hypothesis that is of interest here is the hypothesis which states that media education moderates the relationship between media literacy competencies of access and usage skills; critical understanding and communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement.



The result of the moderation test as indicated in Table 4.24, the interaction terms between communication abilities multiply by media education ( $\beta = 0.71$ ;  $t = 1.670$ ,  $p = 0.048$ ) is statistically significant. However, for the access and usage skills and critical understanding the interaction term between them and media education did not produce significant statistical relationship. The result of the moderation test as indicated in Table 4.24, the interaction terms between communication abilities multiply by media education ( $\beta = 0.132$ ;  $t = 4.092$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) is statistically significant.

Table 4.32

*Moderating influence of media education on the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement*

Relationships	Beta value	Std. error	t value
Access&Usage -> Civic eng	0.073	0.034	2.147
Access&Usage * Media Edu -> Civic eng	0.018	0.071	0.252
Critical C -> Civic eng	0.204	0.035	5.856
Critical C * Media Edu -> Civic eng	0.070	0.079	0.885
Media Edu -> Civic eng	0.158	0.038	4.178
comm Abilities -> Civic eng	0.498	0.035	14.291
comm Abilities * Media Edu -> Civic eng	0.077	0.046	1.670

#### 4.10.1 Determining the Strength of the Moderating Effects

The graph in Figure 4.3 illustrates the effect of the interaction of the media education with media literacy competence to influence use of new media for civic engagement. The graph indicates that media education strengthens the relationship between communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement.

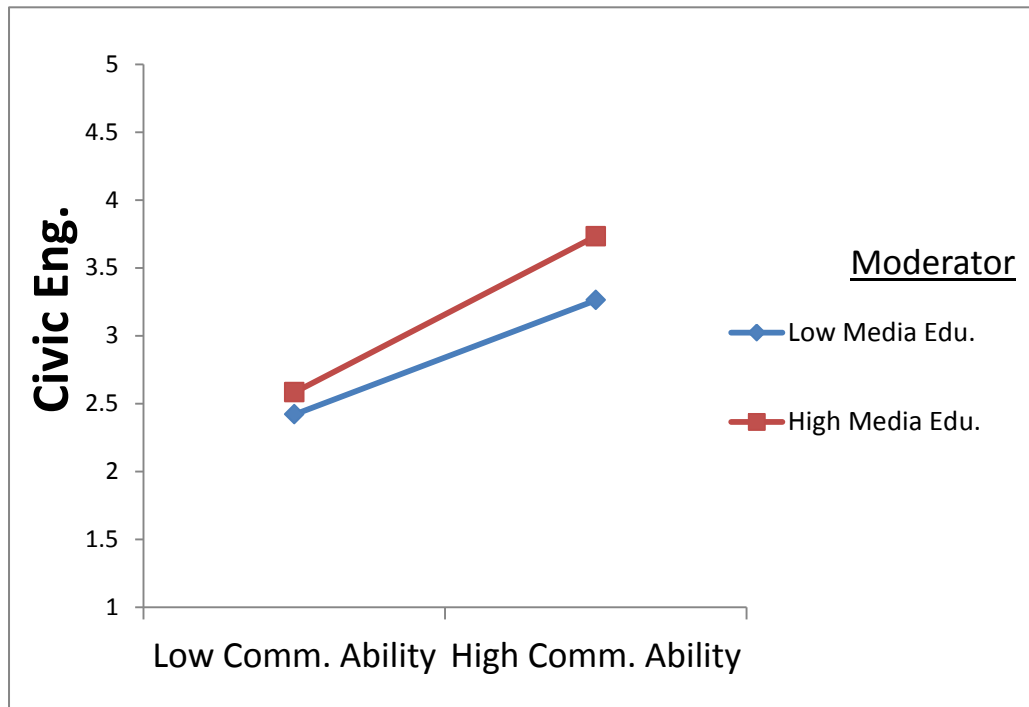


Figure 4.3. Moderating Graph

#### 4.11 The Structural Model Graph

The graph in Figure 4.4 graphically illustrates the path model of the relationships between the latent constructs and their respective indicators. It also contains the correlations between the exogenous (IV) and the endogenous (DV) latent constructs as well as the interactions of the moderating variable with the latent variables.

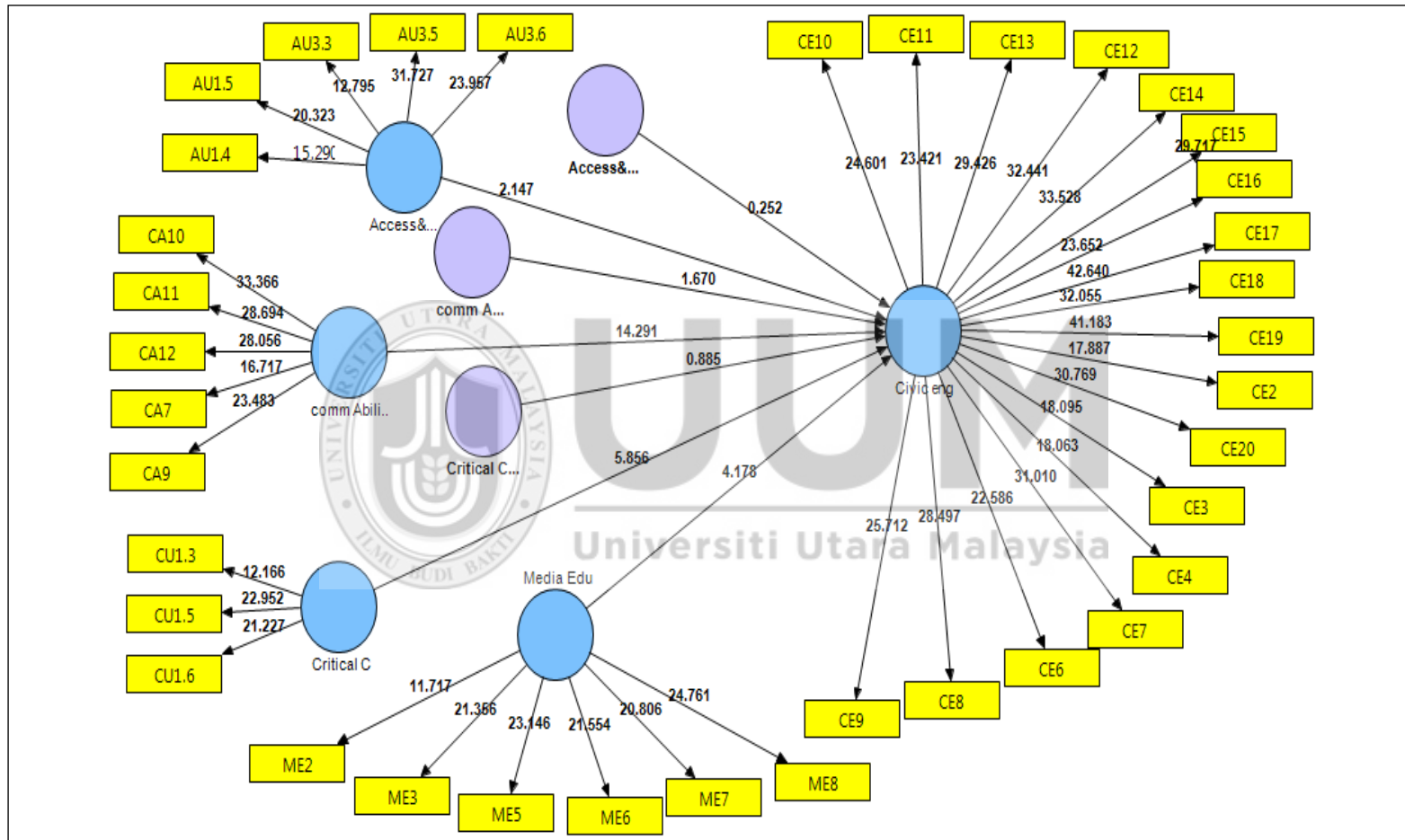


Figure 4.4. Structural Model Assessments with Moderator

Table 4.33

*Summary of Findings*

Hypothesis	Statement	Findings
H <sub>1</sub>	There is significant relationship between media literacy competence of access and usage and use of media for civic engagement among the youths.	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	There is significant relationship between media literacy competence of critical understanding and use of media for civic engagement among the youths.	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	There is significant relationship between media literacy competence of communication abilities and use of media for civic engagement among the youths.	Supported
H <sub>4</sub>	There are significant differences in use of new media for civic engagement among youths based on gender	Not supported
H <sub>5</sub>	There are significant differences in use of new media for civic engagement among youths based on educational level.	Not supported
H <sub>6</sub>	There are significant differences in use of new media for civic engagement among youths based on income background.	Not supported
H <sub>7</sub>	There are significant differences in use of new media for civic engagement among youths based on geographical location	Not supported
H <sub>8</sub>	Media education significantly moderates the relationship between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement	supported

**4.12 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the data for this study in terms of the nature of the data and description of the respondents' characteristics. Thereafter, a comparative analysis of the trends of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement was analyzed. Through the adoption of PLS, the quality of the data was

examined through the measurement model and the structural model to measure the significance of the path model which test the key assumptions and hypothesis of the study. The self report data generally indicate that there is significant relationship between media literacy competencies (access and usage skills; critical understanding and communication abilities) and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths. Specifically, the path coefficient analysis revealed that there is significant relationship between (1) access and usage skills and use of new media for civic engagement (2) critical understanding and use of new media for civic engagement (3) communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement. However, result did not support the four hypothesized significant group differences in the use of new media for civic engagement based on education, gender, income and geographical location of respondents. For the hypothesis that seeks to determine the moderating influence of media education, the findings support the hypothesis. These findings, their implications as well as limitations and suggestions for further studies will be discussed in the next chapter of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The main focus of this chapter is to discuss the major findings of the study. The study was designed to measure the media literacy competence and trend of new media usage for civic engagement among youths. The second aspect of the study was to test a structural model of the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement. The elements of the model include hypothesized moderating influence of media education on the relationship between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement. The model also accounts for the usage differences that may be due to influence of socio-economic and geographical location of respondents. Youths who live in both rural and urban location provide the empirical data for the study. Therefore this chapter is organized as follows: Section 5.2 recapitulates and summarises the aims and objectives of the study while Section 5.3 is a discussion of the findings within the context of the relevant theories and practical situations from the field studies. The implications of the study to theory, methodology and practical significance are the focus of Section 5.4 while the factors that were considered as limitations to the study are highlighted in Section 5.5. Based on the foregoing, Section 5.6 gives suggestion for future research direction. The concluding remarks are contained in Section 7 of this chapter.

## 5.2 Overview of Objective

The objective of this study was to measure the level of media literacy competence, trend in use of new media for civic engagement among youths and to empirically test conceptual notion of the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagements. In this regard media education was incorporated as moderator between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement. These objectives were presented as research questions that guided the conduct of the study:

1. What is the level of media literacy competencies in term of access and usage skills, critical understanding and communication abilities among youths?
2. What is the trend of using different new media for various civic engagements among the youths?
3. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competencies of access and usage abilities and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?
4. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competence of critical understanding and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?
5. Are there significant relationship between media literacy competence of communication abilities and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?

6. Are there significant moderating difference in the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement based on educational, gender and socioeconomic status of the youths?
7. Are there significant moderating difference in the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement based on geographical location of the youths?
8. Does media education reveals significant moderating test effects on the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths?

The research objectives were achieved by incorporating them into a model for the study which seeks to determine relationship of media literacy competencies of access and usage skills; critical understanding and communication abilities of users of new media as the independent variables that influence the use of new media for civic engagement. To answer the first research question, a descriptive analysis of the level of the media literacy competence was carried out.

The results showed that majority of the respondents are lacking in media literacy competence especially critical understanding and behaviours. A descriptive analysis of the use of new media such as Face book, You Tube, Weblog and Twitter for civic engagement that includes humanitarian serves, political participation, community development and social advocacy were used to answer the second research question. The result reveals that their use of new media for civic engagement is largely restricted



to Face book with lesser use of other new media like Twitter, Weblog and You Tube. For the model analysis through the PLS path coefficient, the model showed that the three dimensions that constitutes media literacy competencies significantly influence respondents use of new media for civic engagement. Similarly, the media education moderates the relationship of media literacy competence and civic engagement but it is significant only for communication ability of respondents. With regards to influence of socio-economic and geographical location differences in usage of new media for civic engagement, the findings did not indicate significant differences among respondents. The discussion section that followed explains these findings in the light of theoretical and practical situation of the study environment.

### **5.3 Discussion**

This section is focused on explicating on the results of the data analysis carried out in chapter four. This discussion is guided by the relevant literature and the theoretical framework derived for the study. The elements of the study for discussion are (a) characteristics of respondents; (b) descriptive analysis of the level of media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among the youths and (c) test of group usage differences based on socio economic status and geographical location; (d) validation of research model through PLS path coefficient measurement and structural model.

### **5.3.1 Level of Media Literacy Skills among Respondents based on Access and Usage Skills, Critical Understanding and Communication Ability**

This present study covers all aspect of media literacy usually found in the literature. Media literacy encompasses information literacy, computer literacy, visual literacy, critical competence and communication competence. The findings indicate that Facebook and Twitter remain the most accessible and used by the youths with Weblog and You Tube yet to gain prominence. The youths have not demonstrated usage skills for the You Tube and Weblog. Mobile (Smart) phones are cited by the respondents above all other devices as the means of accessing the internet, primarily because of its continuous penetration through service providers. Its mobility, portability and cheapness have greatly placed it as the preferred means of internet access among Nigerians particularly the youths. Many of the youths do not access the internet from home or office computer. This raises media literacy related issues. Home or office computer provide easy and effective means of control than the mobile phone. Such control can limit the level of risks the youths may be exposed to through the online interactions.

The findings indicate that youth in this study are yet to imbibe critical understanding behavior in online environment that could shield them from predatory activities of online stalkers. Given its centrality in the media literacy theory, policy makers, educationist and cultural leaders would need to pay adequate attention to building critical skills among youths. The ubiquitousness of the new media and their relevance to the lives of the young ones nowadays would make it compulsory to pay attention to

the critical media skills of the youths. The empowering potentials of the new media for the youths are often alluded to in the literature of media literacy but the findings does not indicate that the youths are taken advantage of this side of the new media. Majority of the youths do not use new media (except for Face book through group activities) for interacting or sending messages to politician or public institutions. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of new media among the youths does not reinforce the optimism about use of new media for pro-social objectives. Rather it would seem the youths in this study have not cultivated enough skills, confidence or interest in using the wide range of internet based-media for substantive issues like civic engagement, creative self expression and for economic benefits.

In summary, the outcome of this study suggests there is low level of media literacy competence among the youths in the context of Kwara States, especially in the area of critical understanding. Majority of the youth are not using the new media for political participation by interacting with political office holders.

#### **5.4 Assessing the Use of New Media for Civic Engagement**

Two perspectives have dominated the literature on use of new media for civic engagements among youths refer to as optimism and pessimism perspectives (Perry & Park, 2005, Hargittai, 2008). However, most of the studies carried out the assessment by focusing on political participation to the exclusion of the other areas of civic activities. Similarly, the new media have been studied individually in the context of civic engagement. The present study advances knowledge and understanding by its

inclusive approach in evaluating how young ones are using the new media for civic engagement. The findings of the study indicate that Face book is the dominant media that is accessible and use for civic engagement among youths although its performance is not the same across types of civic engagement.

The findings from this present studies on new media in Nigeria did not support dominance of political issues among the youths who use the new media for civic engagement. Rather, respondents who use Face book for political reason are less to those who prefer to use it for community development issues like environmental or education matter affecting their community. Also more of the respondents indicate that they use the new media for social advocacy such as lending their voices to the fight against corruption and/or ethnic discrimination. Corruption, ethnic and religious bickering (Elaiwu, 2007) are parts of the constant national issues that worry most Nigerians and their leaders.

This finding is perhaps a reflection of the concern about the role of corruption in Nigeria. Use of Weblog and You Tube for all types of civic engagement was very low among the youths. The findings are attributable to low level of access and usage abilities of the media applications as indicated in the previous section on the findings on media literacy competence. Research findings (Hargittai & Walejko; Ende & Udende, 2011) have all identified challenges of access and usage ability otherwise referred to as second level digital divide among the youths. However, there is appreciable usage of Twitter for civic engagement among youths. The findings show

that social advocacy ranked high among the civic engagement activities of the youths. This is followed by humanitarian activities like seeking donation for the poor and sick people.

Generally, the findings reflect both theoretical and empirical position in literature. Scholars of media use and civic engagement have identified factors that influenced or affect youths approach to media usage. First, scholars working in the areas of digital divide have been divided along optimism and pessimistic lines. The Cyber optimist argues that the interactive features of the new media encourage participation of youths in using the new media for civic and political engagement. On the other hand, the cyber pessimist countered that the use of new media by the youths is dominated by entertainment, farcical and non existential concerns (Abdullah, 2012; Amadi, 2012). The findings of this study neither wholly support either of the two positions. Rather it is in line with that of Azeez (2013), Salman (2011) who found that there is increase in use of new media for civic engagement in the area of political participation among the youths in both Nigeria and Malaysia respectively.

However, the contribution of this present study is the insight it provided in comparative analysis of use of new media across different social networking media and for different types of civic engagement. The youth are not only interested in politics but they are also interested in using the new media for other types of civic engagement. This confirmed the findings the use of new media among youths is “interest driven” (Khane, 2012).

### **5.5 Usage Differences based on Education, Income Sex and Geographical Location**

Hargittai (2008) identified usage differences along socio economic divide which led to conceptualization of the phenomenon as second level digital divide. However, the trend in recent studies is that socio-economic and demographic features of respondents are becoming less as factors in predicting the direction of media use among media users (Correa, 2010). In view of these trends of literature on socio-economic influence on media use, this present study set out to determine if there would be significant differences among the youth in the context of Nigeria on the basis of education, sex, income and geographical location of respondents. The analysis of the data for present study confirmed the position of Vanwysberghe, Paulussen and Verdegem (2011) that socioeconomic factors are becoming less influential in explaining digital divide among youths. Recent development in the growth of Internet that is driving digital media culture among Nigeria may be the reason for the outcome of this study. These developments are discussed below.

First, the period of this study coincided with the phenomenal growth of Internet penetration in Nigeria. The study started in 2012 when the conceptualization of the study was done. Internet usage as at 2012 was about 40% while mobile telephone was about 60 million subscribers. By the time the data for the study was collected between February and May 2014, the mobile phone subscriber had risen to 140million which is about 80% of the population. The Internet penetration which is what the new media

depend upon has increased tremendously. The period witnessed phenomenal rise of Internet penetration of both in urban and rural areas of Nigeria.

The International Telecommunication Union, (ITU) in its 2015 reports covering 2013 and December, 2014, said that the Internet penetration has risen to 57.7 million, making Nigeria to overtake South Africa and become first in Africa and 9th in the world. The rise of cheap Smartphone is the major driving access to broadband and the internet by both urban middle class and the poor rural dwellers. Similar development happened in Malaysia when government implemented some ICT policies meant to improve access among broad based geographical locations (Salman, 2011).

Another factor that may be responsible for the lack of significant differences on the basis of education is the fact that majority of our respondents have education up to degree level. The multi group analysis of the PLS test of significance indicates that there is no significant differences in the use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of education. More so, the youths have long been regarded as digital native with seemingly natural instinct and predilection to master and use the new media (Livingstone, 2009).

In the same vein, there was no significant difference in use of new media for civic engagement based on income background of the respondents. The internet access provided through the mobile phone may also be the reasons. Both high and low price mobile phones have the capacity to access the internet anytime the users recharge (top

up) his or her account which give access to broadband data. A recharge of N200.00 equivalent to about one dollar can give access to use of internet through the mobile phone.

The analysis of the results based on sex show that there is no significant difference in use of new media for civic engagement on the basis of sex. This would indicate that both male and female have been substantially mobilized by the state of things in Nigeria that they all take interest in using the new media for civic engagement. It must be noted that virtually all respondents use the new media for civic engagement even though there is difference in the type of civic engagement in the new media. Since the test of differences is on the basis of civic engagement generally and not on types of civic engagement, the result is not surprising. The result is similar to that of Abdulbaqi (2012) which was carried out among respondents in Kwara State. The result of her study on the aspect of the use of media indicates there was no significant difference on the basis of sex.

The test of the significance on the basis of geographical location did not indicate statistical significance. Although, the descriptive analysis shows differences across media types both in terms of access and usage. A number of reasons can be adduced for these findings of the study. During the period of the study, the Nigeria federal government implemented some policies that were geared towards increasing internet penetration and digital culture. One of the policies that may have great impact on the use of new media in the rural areas is the distribution of free mobile phone to the



farmers for the purpose of passing information to them. The programme is referred to as electronic wallet system (Ericsson, 2014; Sylvester, 2014)). Most of these farmers are youths who are being encouraged to pick career in farming. The mobile devices have internet access which also drives internet penetration among youths.

Other factor that may account for the lack of significant differences is the fact that some of the selected rural communities happen to be where tertiary institutions are located. Most of these institutions do not have enough accommodation facilities for the students which led to majority of the students living within the rural communities. Thus, some of them may have fall into the random selection of the sample. It is a known fact that students of higher institutions living in rural areas are digital savvy with access to modern smart phones. These give these set of youths access to new media on the internet. Also, their level of political consciousness is higher comparable to the typical rural dwellers.

Other reason for the decrease of the influence of the socio-economic and geographical location on use of new media is the fact that the period of collecting data for the study preceded the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. As pointed in the report of the Ericsson (2014), Nigeria and other sub- Saharan African are witnessing continuous penetration of mobile phone which is driving Internet access in both rural and urban centres. This development considerably lower the cost of internet access and reduce the geographical limitations. In addition, the INEC, the body in charge of elections in Nigeria, have since 2007 been mobilizing all segment of the populace for the use of e-

voting in Nigeria. This mobilization involves all segment of the population. The effect of all these development as witnessed in the period preceding and during the election in Nigeria, led to improved awareness about the use of information technologies. The politicians seize the increasing level of awareness and use of new media among Nigerians, particularly the youths to deploy the use of new media of Facebook, Twitter, Weblog and You Tube intensively for mobilization and for promoting parties, ideologies and candidates. In this scenario the youths were the most active in the use of new media across socio economic strata and geographical locations.

## **5.6 Hypothesized Relationships**

### **5.6.1 Media Literacy Competence based on Use of New Media for Civic Engagement**

The relationship between media literacy and civic engagement in the context of new digital media has been theorized from different perspectives. Some scholars hold the position that civic engagement is a natural consequence when youths engage in frequent use of the digital media. On the other hand, scholars from media education traditions contend that users of digital media would require systematic support that will give them cognitive and social skills necessary for meaningful use of the new media for civic engagement Martens (2010) provides a review of these positions. Furthermore two perspectives of optimistic and pessimistic prevail in relation to digital media and youths. The pessimistic perspectives posit that new media aggravate digital divide, brings decreasing social participation and homogenization of view of the world otherwise refer to as “echo chamber” The optimistic countered that involvement in

cyber life leads to creation of alternative community. This community is valuable and useful just as the physically located community that we are familiar with in normal life.

Media literacy scholars push the argument further by empirically supported position (Haggittal, 2008) that level of usage skills among the users of digital media is creating a second level digital divide. They also insist, conceptually and theoretically, that media literacy competence is connected to civic engagement activities in the new digital environment (Martens, 2010; Hobbs, 2010; Hobbs & Martens, 2014). In view of the foregoing differing perspectives on new media, media literacy and civic engagement among youths, this study hypothesized that media literacy competences will have significant influence on use of new media among youths. This general hypothesis was broken into a number of research questions and hypothesis that were tested through the PLS modeling approach.

Hypothesis 1 says access and usage skills will have significant relationship with use of new media for civic engagement. The result of the path coefficient indicates that access and usage competences are positively related to use of new media for civic engagement. Furthermore, the  $f^2$  test was carried out to measure individual contribution of each independent variable to the effect on the dependent variable. In this regards, access and usage skill was examined, the outcome was suggests that the contribution of access and usage skills was lower compare to other variables in the model. According to Cohen, effect size with less than 0.02 should be regarded as

making none contribution to the collective impact of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variable. In other words, access and usage are relevant skills as a member of the media literacy competence but it makes little statistical impact in determining how young people; in this research, used the new media for civic engagement.

The second hypothesis examines the role of critical understanding as a central concept in media literacy competence. Hypothesis 2 says there is significant relationship between media literacy competence of critical understanding and use of media for civic engagement among the youths. The result of the path coefficient confirm significant relationship suggesting that the theoretical argument which posits that user of the new media will need critical understanding practices in the new media environment is supported by empirical findings. Furthermore its individual contribution was measured by examining the effect size ( $f^2$ ); the result fall within category of effect classified as significant but small effect according to Cohen, (2012). This means that critical understanding skills when acquired will have considerable influence on the endogenous variable of use of new media for civic engagement.

Hypothesis 3 is on the communication abilities of the youths. It was hypothesized that communication abilities will have significant relationship with the use of new media. The path coefficient result indicates that communication abilities have significant impact on the online civic activities of the youth. The result is a confirmation that communication abilities which include creating self expression and interactions with others in online environment are the most important skills needed for civic

engagement. The effect size is the biggest among the three exogenous variables of the study. It indicates ( $f^2$  0.436) which is classified in the category of large effect size (Cohen, 2012).

## **5.7 Moderating Effect of Media Education on the Relationship between Media Literacy Competence and Use of New Media for Civic Engagement**

This section considers moderating element of the study model. The issue of interest is the set of hypothesis that test the moderating influence of media education on the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement.

### **5.7.1 Moderating Role of Media Education**

The consideration of media education as potential moderator of the relationship between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement is based on literature and common sense (Kenny & Baron, 1986). Media literacy education is conceptualized in literature as having the potential to enhance the cognitive and social skill of media user who may or may not have prior encounter with media education training (Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Rheingold, 2008; Porter, 2011). New media literacy theorists affirm the potential contribution of media education to youth participation in civic engagement in the context of online digital media environment (Jenkins et al., 2006). The value of moderator in research is in its potentials to enhance the understanding of the nature of the relationship between exogenous variable(s) and the endogenous variables in a communication model. The

introduction of the media education in the model is to test its effects on the relationship between three reflective constructs that constitute the media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement among youths. The results of the hypothesis testing revealed that of the three hypothesized moderating impacts, only the communication abilities was significant.

As indicated in the literature in chapter two access and usage skills constitute the basic level of media literacy competencies and may be affected minimally by exposure to media literacy education. Access is a digital divide issue where other factors such as socio-economic and location factor may determine the trend of things. However, usage skills denote ability to use the gadget and the frequency of actual use of the technology (Hargittai, 2012, 2008, 2004). The findings on the hypothesis 4 show that the path from access and usage skills to use of new media for civic engagement was not statistically significant as a moderator of the relationship.

This result may be due to several factors. First the level of penetration of the new media determines the usage level whether the users are being exposed to any formal media education. In other words, informal learning and peer group supports may be sources of improved usage rather than attendance of formal media education training. Secondly, access to the new media gadget is being facilitated by fast penetration of internet in the Nigerian community. The telecommunication providers in Nigeria are providing subscribers with data plans that make it easy for younger ones to be part of the internet culture. This trend was noted earlier in this study but since the

phenomenon was just starting at the time of the conceptualization of the study, the impact on the use of new media was not certain.

The hypothesis also tests the moderating impacts of media education on critical understanding of the youths in their use of new media for civic engagement. Critical understanding is the central concept of media literacy theory. Critical understanding protect the user of media from falling prey to false information, and cultivate in the user of new media the habit of inquiry and scrutinisation of information in digital media environment (Livingstone, 2012; Hobbs, 2012, 2015).

Application of the critical understanding skills when using the new media for civic engagement means that the youths will use the new media in responsible manner. Therefore, media education is expected to have impact on use of new media for civic engagement among youths. The finding of this study did not support the hypothesis, since the path from critical understanding to use of new media for civic engagement did not meet the statistical significant level. This indicates that the youth are not critical in using the new media. The finding is in line with the both empirical studies and practical observation of the trend of use of new media among youths in Nigeria.

## **5.8 Theoretical Implications**

This study is theoretically oriented and derived its conceptual framework from the theoretical notions that linked media literacy to use of new media for civic engagement. Despite the linkage in literature, there is empirical gap in testing the

theoretical postulations (Martens, 2010; Verbersghem, Paulussen & Verdegem, (2011). Moreso, studies in the context of Nigeria and in Africa generally, are far behind in both conceptual and empirical evidences that linked media literacy and civic engagement in the new media environment. The conceptual framework linking the exogenous (independent) and latent (dependent) variables was supported and used to explain by the media literacy theories like that of Porter (2011) and Vernesberghe (2012).

Other theory that provided support for the study is the social network theory while media education was incorporated into framework as moderating variable between media literacy competencies and use of new media for civic engagement. Media education as conceptualized by UNESCO (1999, 2009, 2012) can function both at formal and informal level of education. In other words, media literacy education can lead to media literacy competencies and can also serve to modify existing level of media literacy competencies among media users. With this conceptual framework and the discussion of the findings; this current study has contributed to the study of media literacy competence, use of new media for civic engagement and role of media education in the new digital media environment. The specific contribution of the study is highlighted below in the following sections.

### **5.9 Empirical Evidence on Media Literacy Competence Theory**

The outcome of the study has provided empirical support for the role of media literacy competencies to the use of new media for civic engagement among youths. Media literacy theorist posits that the possession of media literacy competence is an



unavoidable and necessary skill requirement of citizenship in contemporary digital media environment. The new media environment is full of opportunities and risks. Therefore to maximize the opportunities and minimize the risks, media literacy skills are inevitable. Citizenship responsibilities in the new media environment require media literacy competence otherwise civic responsibilities through the new media will be constrained. This result of the current study has not only provided support for the literature; it has extended it by accounting for the role of the individual variables/dimensions of the media literacy in the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement.

#### **5.10 Empirical Evidence on Moderating Role of Media Education**

The outcome of the study has also provided theoretical implication of the moderating role of media education. Theory of media education has postulated and positioned the media education as empowerment of the media users especially the youths to self expression (UNESCO, 2008). Few studies have tested how the level of media education reinforced or strengthened media literacy competences of media users. The basis for the conceptual incorporation of the media education into the framework as moderator was because media education serves as a form of scaffolding (Buckingham, 2008) for the youth in their use of new media.

Secondly, the incorporation of the media education as moderator makes it possible for the study to examine its moderating role on each of the dimensions of the media literacy conceptual framework in relation to use of new media for civic engagement.

This approach has extended our understanding of the extent of the moderating role of media education on each of the media literacy competences.

### **5.11 Contribution to Modeling of the Relationship between Media Literacy and Civic Engagement**

The model as a whole and the analysis of the result provide basis for the modeling of the relationship between media literacy and civic engagement. It will serve useful framework for future research towards building reliable framework for measuring the relationship between media literacy and online civic engagement.

### **5.12 Practical Implication**

This study has been able to make significant practical implication on the use of new media in the context of digital environment in Nigeria. The result suggests that media literacy competences are important consideration on the use of new media among the youths and the citizens generally. It gives direction on the skills needed by the youths to effectively use the new media for pro social issue as against the farcical use of new media by the youths.

Secondly, the result point to the needs for training of the youths in critical understanding that will help them in avoiding the risks that are common in the online digital environment such as the luring of young ladies to risky adventure that eventually led to the death of some of them. Also there is concern about the circulation of false claims, lies and hate message across the new media landscape.

This is dangerous trend in a multi diverse nation like Nigeria. Therefore, this outcome of the study informs of the need to train youth in critical understanding.

Thirdly, presently in Nigeria there is regulation gap that has stirred debates on how to approach the regulation of the new media. By establishing that there is strong relationship between media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement, this study provides direction on modern approach to regulation. This approach places emphasis on media literacy competencies that help citizens to maximize opportunities and avoid risks inherent in the new digital environment.

### **5.13 Methodological Implication**

The methodological implication and significance of the study are in two folds. The study adapted and modified the Celot and Tonnero (2012) instrument for measuring media literacy and civic engagement. The original instrument contained both nominal and ordinal scale measurement. The adaptation leads to modification of the item into Likert. As a result of the literature review and the first pilot study, the civic engagement aspect was expanded to accommodate four types of civic engagement in the context of new media. In addition, the measure of media education was incorporated into the framework of the instrument. Thereafter, the reliability and the validity of the instrument were tested in two pilot studies as reported in chapter three of this report. The instrument represents a fresh measurement suitable for collecting data for a model of the relationship between media literacy competence and use of new media for civic engagement.

Second, the study makes contribution to assessing the psychometric properties of the instrument by adopting the PLS path modeling. The use of PLS analysis is rare in communication study (Gaskin & Lowry, 2014). Through the measurement model and the structural model, the present study succeeded in assessing the psychometric properties of latent variables by examining the individual item reliability, composite reliability, average variance explained (AVE), convergent validity and the discriminant validity for each of the variables. All these are the measurement model of the PLS. The validity of the model was confirmed by ensuring that the model meets the important criteria set for measuring elements of research instrument viz: a comparison of the correlations among the latent variables with the average square roots and examining the cross loadings matrix. In both instance, the result of the discriminant validity test provides support for the conceptual model. PLS approach is considered as one of the robust data analysis technique suitable for testing instrument and measuring path relationship among variables in a complex model like we have in this study.

#### **5.14 Limitations/Suggestions for future study**

Although, the study findings support the conceptual framework of the study, yet, it is important to point out certain limitations to the interpretations and application of the study findings. First, the adoption of the cross section approach was due to time and resources constraint. This approach, however, places limitations to the extent of making causal inferences across populations. Therefore additional cross section and/or longitudinal design would be needed to provide research support for the

findings of this study. This will ensure that the test of the theoretical constructs at different points in time goes beyond situational findings and enhances further generalisability of the model.

Secondly, the finding of non significant difference in the use of new media between the rural and urban dwellers, though, is in line with some other findings, needs to be taken into future research, at least to monitor possible changes. This will enhance and update knowledge concerning the level of digital divide in the society.

Thirdly, the outcome of the test for this conceptual model indicates that the exogenous variables of media literacy competence were able to explain half of the (51%) of the total variance of the use of new media for civic engagement. This finding is acceptable in social science research, it however, points to the fact that there is a need to consider other factors that serve as means of effective use of new media by the youths in online civic engagement.

Fourthly, the conceptual model was designed to test the moderating influence of media education on the relationship between media literacy and use of new media but the moderation was significant only for the communication abilities. There is a need to investigate why media education could not significantly moderate usage and critical understanding. Conceptual postulations and empirical findings about media education had posited that usage skill constitutes sources of second level digital divide. Also critical understanding is the central focus of media education since its

inceptions. It is therefore necessary to investigate further the role of media education both as moderator and as antecedent of media literacy competence.

### **5.15 Conclusion**

In the whole, the study was able to provide empirical evidence and confirm the extent to which the exogenous and the endogenous variable relate to one and the other. From the six hypothesized relationship, the path model test indicate that four of them were found to be significant. Two of the moderating influences of media education were not accepted. The results of the study lend support the theoretical notion of the relationship between media literacy competences and use of new media for civic engagement. The limitations to the findings have been noted for future study's guidance. The incorporation of media education as the moderating variable is among the key contributions to the body of knowledge in digital media study. Also, this study makes contribution to instrument development for measuring the relationship of media literacy and use of new media for civic engagement. It provides practical relevance to the ongoing search for policy formulation and regulatory direction for the new digital media environment in Nigeria. The result of this study provides basis for the place of media literacy in society and its potentially for maximizing the opportunities of the new media and minimize the inherent risks.

All society spires indeed deserved to produce “good citizens. In the present world of digital mediated world such hopes is anchored on the capacity of citizens to participate, collaborate and express themselves in the online environment. Media

literacy education provides and prepares citizens become critical thinkers, creators of their own messages and competent communication who is ethical. Thus, making the youths effective but less destructive agents of social change. Failure of government to afford the younger ones the opportunity of media literacy education is tantamount to undermining societal potentials. This is antithetical to the notion of progress and development and may even constitute a violation of the right to communication as enshrined in the ARTICLE 19 of the United Nations charter.



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