



Original Research Article

An assessment of citizens' level of political participation and civic competence

Received 10 April, 2017

Revised 28 April, 2017

Accepted 8 May, 2017

Published 11 May, 2017

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The civic competence and political culture of many Nigerians have become questionable as a result of their deficient behavioural manifestations. This paper therefore examined the extent of citizens' political participation and civic competence in Abeokuta metropolis. The study employed descriptive survey design. The study was guided by four research questions and three hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two hundred and forty (240) participants as the population. A questionnaire of twenty (20) structured items was administered to the participants. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency counts as well as inferential statistics of chi-square. The results showed that there is low level of political participation and civic competence among the sampled participants. Also, there was influence of gender, educational level and occupational status on political participation and civic competence. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that there is an urgent need for more emphasis on formal and informal political and civic learning in Nigeria.

Key words: Civic behaviour, civic competence, community engagement, political participation.

INTRODUCTION

The civic competence of many Nigerians has become a subject of debate as a result of inappropriate behavioural manifestations. Evidently, there is widespread of incivility, political chauvinism, inter-religious crises, as well as inter and intra-ethnic violence in the country (Adetoro, 2014; Omiyefa, 2016). Among these crises are the youth restiveness in the Niger/Delta, socio-cultural and religious militancy in the North, call for confederacy and secession among various ethnic nationalities. Iyamu and Otite (2005) as well as Adediran (2015) observed that Nigeria as a nation has been besieged by an array of social, economic and political problems which include corruption, loss of value, negative attitude to national issues, lack of patriotism, political gangsterism, immoral behaviour, ethnicity/tribalism crises and a host of other vices.

Several scholars have decried the general neglect of civic duties by citizens and public officers as there are

prevalence of immorality, dishonesty, unpatriotic and disloyal practices among the rank and file of Nigeria citizenry (Fabiya, 2009; Kehinde-Awoyele and Jekayinoluwa, 2012; Mofoluwawo et al., 2012; Omiyefa, 2016). In a specific case, Mofoluwawo et al. (2012) lamented that youth incivility has become the order of the day, while civic virtues in all spheres of life have totally declined. They contended that incessant cult activities, kidnapping for ransom, oil bunkering, armed robbery in the country and the recent menace of 'Boko Haram' are the consequences of the incivility of youths.

Notable attempts have been made by government in Nigeria with a view to tackling these vices and at the same time inculcating the rightful awareness, skills, values and attitude in the citizens. Such attempts included the introduction of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in 1973, War Against Indiscipline (WAI) in 1984, Mass

Mobilization for Self-Reliance and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) in 1988 which eventually transformed to National Orientation Agency (NOA) in 1993, Change Begins With Me (CBWM) in 2016. Most of these programmes contained in them elements of civic competence but failed to give concrete solutions of improving the civic lives of the citizens. Thus, the society continues to dig deep into moral decadence (Odumosu, 2014).

Responsible citizenship is the hallmark of every promising society while civic competence is the central focus of civic education. The National Council for Social Studies (2013) sees civic competence as the possession of required skill, knowledge or ability to engage in active participation in societal life, school and local community activities. It includes the knowledge, attitude and skill which build peoples' abilities and make them to be participative and responsible citizens at state and national levels (Adediran, 2015). Equally, Hoskins et al. (2008) define civic competence as the skills of communication, problem solving, critical and creative reflection, decision making, responsibility, respect for others' values including awareness of diversity and the attitudes and values of solidarity, human rights, equality and democracy. It highlights the importance of knowledge of the development of, and institutions that reflect democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civic rights.

Indeed, civic competence is said to be a veritable tool for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environmental, political and developmental issues (Lukman and Audu, 2014). Civic competence is concerned with three different elements: civic knowledge, civic skills and civic disposition. Civic knowledge refers to citizens' understanding of the workings of the political system and of their own political and civic rights and responsibilities (for example, the rights to freedom of expression and to vote and run for public office, and the responsibilities to respect the rule of law and the rights and interests of others). Civic skills refer to citizens' ability to analyze, evaluate, take and defend positions on public issues and to use their knowledge to participate in civic and political processes (for instance, to monitor government performance or mobilize other citizens around particular issues). Civic disposition is defined as the citizens' traits necessary for a democracy which include tolerance, public spiritedness, civility, critical mindedness and willingness to listen, negotiate and compromise.

For Azebanwan (2010), elements of civic education are real because they actually affect peoples' lives. They are typical, current and relevant today (Lukman and Audu, 2014). The issues are also moral, because they relate to making responsible citizens. Indeed, from a narrowed angle, Adediran (2015) citing Bryer (2005) noted that civic competence narrowly includes knowledge of government structure and functions and participation in the political process with acts such as voting while others expand the scope to include participation in less obvious political actions, such as community service (Adediran, 2015).

A study by Niemi and Junn (1998), using the National Assessment of Educational Progress Survey, found a positive relationship between civic coursework, civic and political knowledge. Another study by the National Conference of State Legislatures and Partners suggests that civic competence which is ascribed to effective civic education results in an increased likelihood to vote and increased civic knowledge and engagement (Kurtz et al., 2003). Equally, McDevitt et al. (2003) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Centre for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (2003) recognized programme evaluations detailing the positive effects of specific civic curricula on political engagement and knowledge. A few studies have examined the contribution of civic education to building civic knowledge and engagement (Comber, 2005). For instance, Niemi and Junn (1998) in particular examined civic education and civic knowledge. Torney-Purta (2002) reported the results of a study that links formal education with civic knowledge and engagement. Although, these studies actually incorporated civic skills within their analyses, but did not employ political behaviour and community engagement as outcomes.

Meanwhile, the art of developing civic competence is a process which requires careful acquisition of specific values which are caught and taught. Kouzes and Posner (2002) identified such values as being honest, forward-looking, competent, inspiring, intelligent, fair and broad-minded, supportive, straightforward, dependable, cooperative, determined, imaginable, ambitious, courageous and independent. Regrettably, Bolarin (2005) pointed out that in Nigeria values such as hardwork, dignity of labour, integrity, public spiritedness, respect for authority, truthfulness and honesty had been eroded. Nnachi (2003) equally lamented that peoples' engagement in political thuggery, election manipulation and rigging, robbery and acts of vandalism are indices of civic incompetence in Nigeria.

Political participation according to Barrett and Brunton-Smith (2014) takes a number of different forms, including both conventional forms which involves electoral processes (like voting, election campaigning etc.) and non-conventional forms which occur outside electoral processes (for example, signing petitions, participating in political demonstrations, etc.). In its broadest senses, political participation is the involvement of the citizens in the political system. It is an aspect of political behaviour and it focuses on the way in which individuals takes part in politics (Falade, 2014). It is a voluntary activity and one may participate directly or indirectly. The various ways by which the people can be involved in the political system include selection or election of political leaders, formulation of policies, community activities and other civic engagements. Political participation equally describes the voluntary or non-coercive involvement of citizens in the political affairs of their country (George - Genyi, 2016). This definition points to the fact that political participation should not entail the use of force. In the same vein, Uhlner

(2001) sees it as political engagement. Riley, Griffin and Morey (2010) noted that political participation is thought of as a set of rights and duties that involve formally organized civic and political activities. While Verba et al. (1995) characterized political participation as an activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action – either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy, or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies.

However, the essence of political participation in any society, either civilized or primitive, is to seek control of power, acquisition of power and to influence decision making (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010; Falade, 2014). Consequently, political participation, particularly in the electoral process, is a fundamental requirement of representative democracy because it is a means of contributing one's quota to the political system and overall development of the nation. This is why Adelekan (2010) emphasized that ideally, democracy means individual participation in the decisions that involves one's life. In a democratic system, there is the necessity for the citizenry to be fully involved in the democratic procedures of the choice of rulers and effective communication of the public policies and attitudes. Any claim to democratic regime or state must essentially embrace a high degree of competitive choice, openness and enjoyment of civic and political liberties and political participation that involves all groups of the society (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010; Falade, 2014).

Scholars studying political behaviour have identified a plethora of ways in which political participation is important in a democratic society (Verba and Nie, 1972; Seligson 1980; Powell, 1992; Flanigan and Zingale, 1998; Nwankwo, 2002; Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2005; George-Genyi, 2016). Powell (1992) for instance, recognizes the participation by citizens in competitive elections as a distinctive feature of democratic politics, noting that substantial citizens' involvement in meaningful elections both reflect and encourage a sense of democratic legitimacy that will help to contain violence and encourage regular competition. Verba and Nie (1972) had earlier posited that if democracy is interpreted as rule by the people, then the question of who participates in political decisions becomes the question of the nature of democracy in a society. Political participation is thus "at the heart of democratic theory and at the heart of democratic political formula" (Verba and Nie, 1972). This is why Patrick (2002) maintains that a combination of political knowledge and civic competence are necessary for democratic citizenry with civic consciousness. In particular, knowledgeable citizens are better citizens of a democracy in regard to their possession and use of civic skills (Comber, 2005).

Regrettably, there is low level of political participation among Nigeria citizens (Falade, 2014). Many Nigerians are indifferent in political matters. Deceit and unfulfilled promises by political leaders discouraged a number of Nigerians from participating in election and other political activities. Falade (2008) argued that politicians make series

of promises during election campaign whereas most of these promises are not fulfilled after they had been voted into power. As a result of these, some voters loose interest in election. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) noted that Nigerians' participation during the general election in the 2011 was low. Only 35% of the 70 million registered voters took part in the election in Nigeria. This low voters' turnout is in contrast with happenings across the globe with more countries taking their civic duty considerably more serious than Nigeria (Zachary, 2012). Some of these countries according to Zachary (2012) include: Uruguay (96.1% in 2009), Rwanda (89.2% in 2010), Peru (86.2% in 2011), Belarus (81.7% in 2010), Venezuela (78.8% in 2012), Argentina (77.4% in 2011), Brazil (77.3% in 2010), Taiwan (74.3% in 2012), Gambia (73.5% in 2011), Ghana (69.8% in 2008) and Benin Republic (68.4% in 2011). Remarkably, The Friedrich Elbert Stifting Foundation conducted a research on the 2011 election in Nigeria and identified lack of transparent elections, election violence and politicians' non-committal to their campaign promises as major reasons for voters' apathy in the country (Falade 2014 citing Odebode, 2011). Hence, this study sampled the opinion of selected respondents about their political participation and civic competence.

Relatedly, community engagement in public affairs serves as an important link between the government and the governed. It affords citizens in a democracy an opportunity to communicate information to government officials about their concerns and preferences, and put pressure on them to respond (Verba et al., 1995). As a result, it enables citizens to make inputs into the political system by appropriately channeling their demands and supports. Understood in this sense therefore, community engagement enables the society to consciously set political goals and civic targets. Community engagement for civic consciousness is consequently, a source of procedural utility – the valuation is for the political process in its own right rather than its political outcomes (Stutzer and Frey, 2006). To this end, citizens develop a sense of trust and confidence when they are involved in the political process but become disillusioned and estranged from it when there are limited participatory opportunities.

The levels of community engagement among people for civic competence have become a popular issue in recent years in both public discourse and academic scholarship. This gave birth to the concept of community-civic engagement which is a broad concept, encompassing a multitude of ways that citizens can connect with the larger society (Pritzker, 2008). It also entails diverse types of activities, including working collectively to solve community problems, belonging to community organizations, attending meetings about issues of concern, volunteering, making donations to charities, etc. (Barrett and Brunton-Smith, 2014). At informal level as related to civic behaviour, it involves a range of different forms, including paying attention to the news media (news papers, magazines, television, radio, internet, etc.), having political

beliefs, understanding political or civic values and holding opinions about and attitudes towards political or civic matters. This study therefore attempted an assessment of peoples' level of participation and civic competence in Abeokuta metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

Despite several interventions aimed at curtailing social menace and attitudinal flaws, it seems, Nigeria citizenry still lacks the necessary civic competence. Indeed, immorality, incivility, political violence, ethno-religious crises and other social vices are on the increase among the citizens. The reason for the flaws has been partly adduced by several studies to non-involvement of individual in political and community engagement for promotion of civic competence. Researchers have revealed many factors which affect civic competence, among which are political participation, mass media campaigns, social welfarism, community engagement and environmental values. Specifically, political participation and community engagement have been viewed as symbiotic platforms for citizens to perform their civic duties and political obligations. This study therefore attempted to assess the citizens' level of political participation and civic competence in Abeokuta metropolis, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Will the selected people demonstrate high level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria democracy?
2. Will there be higher level of political participation and civic competence among the male than the female?
3. To what extent will educational level of the people influence their political participation and civic competence?
4. Will occupational status influence the peoples' political participation and civic competence?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and females' level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria

Ho2: There is no significant influence of educational level on peoples' political participation and civic competence

Ho3: There is no significant difference between civil servant and non-civil servants' level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study was descriptive in nature. The survey design was used in the conduct of the research. The population of the study comprised 32,000 adult residents of four wards in

Abeokuta metropolis, Ogun state. Participants in this study were 240 adult residents from Ake wards I and II, Gbagura wards I and II in Abeokuta South and Abeokuta North local governments respectively. Simple random sampling was used to select 60 participants from each of the four wards. A self-designed questionnaire was the main instruments used in the study. The instrument titled "Civic Competence and Political Participation Questionnaire (CCPPQ) is made up of two sections. Section A sought for the participants' personal information while section B made up of 20 structured items elicited information from the participants on political participation and civic competence which follows the projective rating scale of Always, Sometimes and Never. The research instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Social Studies, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta. The reliability of the instrument was established through a split-half method, which gave a co-efficient of 0.83. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage and frequency counts as well as inferential statistics of the chi-square.

RESULT

Research Question 1: Will the selected people demonstrate high level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria democracy?

Table 1 shows that only 31.3% of the participants always have feelings about political and civic matters, 28.8% were highly involved in political activities, 42.5% always cast their votes; 45% always engage in immorality and incivility and 39.2% sometimes assists the well being of others in the community.

Research Question 2: Will there be higher level of political participation and civic competence among the male than female?

Table 2 presents the gender analysis of the peoples' opinion. Only 9.2% of males and 4.2% of females responded that they always talk about election campaigns with their neighbourhood. Also, 12.1% and 5.4% of males and females respectively always express their opinion on political issues. However, 47.1% of females as against 42.9% male never reported criminals to the law enforcement agents.

Research Question 3: To what extent will educational level of the people influence their political participation and civic competence?

From Table 3, while 22.9% of those who had no formal education or had primary education never persuaded others to vote, 27.1% of those who had secondary and tertiary education never did indicating some levels of political apathy. Even, it is saddening that only 28.3% of those that had secondary and tertiary education always follow the news closely when something is happening.

Table 1. Level of political participation and civic competence by the participants

S/N	Items	Always	Sometimes	Never
1.	I have feelings about political and civic matters	75 (31.3)	109 (45.4)	56 (23.3)
2.	I am involved in political activities	69 (28.8)	148 (61.7)	23 (9.5)
3.	I vote since it is my civic right	102 (42.5)	82 (34.2)	56 (23.3)
4.	Incivility can be a part of me	108 (45)	92 (38.3)	40 (16.7)
5.	I informally assist the well being of others in my community.	130 (54.2)	94 (39.2)	16 (6.6)

Note: percentages (%) are in parenthesis.

Table 2. Influence of gender on political participation and civic competence

S/N	Items	Always		Sometimes		Never	
		M	F	M	F	M	F
1.	I talk about election campaigns with neighborhood	22 (9.2)	10 (4.2)	88 (36.7)	72 (30)	10 (4.2)	38 (15.7)
2.	I do report criminals to the law enforcement agents.	05 (2.1)	01 (0.4)	12 (5)	06 (2.5)	103 (42.9)	113 (47.1)
3.,	I participate in environmental sanitation.	76 (31.7)	87 (36.2)	39 (16.3)	31 (12.9)	05 (2.1)	02 (0.8)
4.	Through the mass media, I express my opinion in political issues.	29 (12.1)	13 (5.4)	51 (21.2)	45 (18.8)	40 (16.7)	62 (25.8)
5.	I do appreciate political efficacy.	40 (16.7)	32 (13.3)	54 (22.5)	30 (12.5)	26 (10.8)	58 (24.2)

Note: Percentages (%) are in parenthesis

Table 3. Influence of educational level on peoples' political participation and civic competence

S/N	Items	Always		Sometimes		Never	
		NF & PE	S & TE	NF & DE	S & DE	NF & PE	S & TE
1.	I persuade others to vote	18 (7.5)	14 (5.8)	48 (20)	40 (16.7)	55 (22.9)	65 (27.1)
2.	I follow the news closely when something is happening.	21 (8.8)	68 (28.3)	40 (16.7)	73 (30.4)	23 (9.6)	15 (6.2)
3.,	I engage in solving problems in my community.	50 (20.8)	53 (22.1)	62 (25.8)	60 (25)	06 (2.5)	09 (3.8)
4.	I participate in peaceful demonstrations and protests	34 (14.2)	50 (20.8)	22 (9.2)	26 (10.8)	66 (27.5)	42 (17.5)
5.	I use social networking sites to join or link group(s) which have political focus	17 (7.1)	30 (12.5)	60 (25)	79 (32.9)	32 (13.3)	22 (9.2)

Note: NF & PE implies Non Formal and Primary Education
S & TE implies Secondary and Tertiary Education.

Furthermore, the percentages of the participants who always engage in solving their community problems were close with 20.8% for the non- formal and primary education holders and 22.1% for the secondary and tertiary education holders. While 20.8% of the secondary and tertiary education holders would participate in peaceful

protests as a result of their higher level of education, only 14.2% of the non-formal and primary education holders would do so. Consequently, only 12.5% of the secondary and tertiary education holders are social networking on political focus as against 7.1% for the non-formal and primary education holders.

Table 4. Influence of occupational status on peoples' political participation and civic competence

S/N	Items	Always		Sometimes		Never	
		CS	NCS	CS	NCS	CS	NCS
1	I volunteer in political campaigns	07 (2.9)	34 (14.2)	13 (5.4)	46 (19.2)	74 (30.8)	66 (27.5)
2	Leaders are trustworthy and dedicated to the needs of the people	16 (6.7)	14 (5.8)	82 (34.2)	102 (42.5)	12 (5)	14 (5.8)
3	I wear or display a symbol or sign representing support for a political course.	06 (2.5)	46 (19.2)	10 (4.2)	39 (16.3)	77 (32.1)	62 (25.8)
4	I undertake voluntary work in my community	42 (17.5)	69 (28.8)	38 (15.8)	64 (26.7)	05 (2.1)	22 (9.1)
5	Nigerian democracy gives room for mass participation.	27 (11.2)	35 (14.6)	18 (7.5)	33 (13.7)	27 (11.3)	100 (41.7)

Note: CS implies Civil Servants (Lecturers, Teachers and Civil servants)
NCS implies Non Civil Servants (Traders, Artisans and Farmers)

Table 5. Chi-square Analysis of male and female citizens' level of political participation and civic competence

Variables	N	df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Male	120	8	683.92	15.51	Significant
Female	120				

X^2 calculated (683.92) > X^2 critical (15.51): $p < 0.05$

Table 6. Chi-square Analysis of educational level on citizen's political participation and civic competence

Variables	N	df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Non Formal and Primary Education	122	8	301.95	15.51	Significant
Secondary and Tertiary Education	118				

X^2 calculated (301.95) > X^2 critical (15.51): $p < 0.05$

Research Question 4: Will occupational status influence the people's political participation and civic competence?

Table 4 shows that 30.8% of civil servants never volunteered in political campaigns, while 2.9% always volunteered in political campaigns. Also, 19.2% (majorly non-civil servants) display symbols or signs representing support for a political course and 41.7% of the non-civil servants never believed that Nigerian democracy gives room for mass participation.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and females' level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria

Table 5 shows that t-calculated was 683.92, while its corresponding value at 0.05 of significance was 15.51. Since t-calculated is higher than t-table therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected. This implies that male and female citizen's level of political participation and civic competence are different. Male citizens are more involved in politics and conscious of their civic engagement than their female counter parts.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant influence of educational level on peoples' political participation and civic competence

From Table 6, there was a statistical significant difference in the political participation and civic competence of less educated and educated citizens. This is because X^2 calculated value of 301.95 is considerably greater than the critical value of 15.51. Therefore, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. By implication, less educated and educated citizens differently portrayed political participation and civic competence.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between civil servant and non-civil servants' level of political participation and civic competence in Nigeria

Findings in Table 7 showed that the chi-square critical value of 15.51 is less than the calculated value of 496.88. Therefore, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between civil servants and non-civil servants' political participation and civic competence. This suggests that civil servants and non-civil servants are differently engaged in political activities and civic competence.

Table 7. Chi-square Analysis of Civil servants and Non Civil servants political participation and civic competence

Variables	N	df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Civil servants	108	8	496.88	15.51	Significant
Non civil servants	132				

X^2 calculated (496.88) > X^2 critical (15.51): $p < 0.05$

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study assessed people's political participation and civic competence. The findings of this study indicated that there was averagely low level of political participation and civic competence among the sampled participants. Only 28.8% of the people were always involved in political activities. Also, 45.4% and 23.3% respectively sometimes and never had feelings about political and civic matters. Regrettably, 45% and 38.3% respectively always and sometimes involved in incivility and immoral behaviours. This finding is corroborated by the submissions of Falade (2014) who decried political apathy of Nigerian populace as non-participation of most registered voters in the 2011 and 2015 elections which served as an obstacle to democratic governance. The outcome of this study further supported the findings of Bolarin (2005), Fabiyi (2009), Kehinde-Awoyele and Jekayinoluwa (2012), Mofoluwamo et al. (2012) and Omiyefa (2016) that youth incivility has become the order of the day while civic virtues in all spheres of life have totally declined in Nigerian society.

This study also showed that there was the influence of gender on political participation and civic competence. Evidently, only 9.2% male as against 4.2% female always talked about the election campaigns with their neighbourhood. Furthermore, only 12.1% male as against 5.4% female always expressed their opinion on political issues through the mass media. However, more females (36.2%) than males (31.7%) always participated in environmental sanitations. The probable reason for low level of women's participation in politics is that women role in politics has been at the peripheral level because according to Arowolo and Aluko (2010), women usually face massive resistance from participating in politics. They discovered in their study that most females believed that politics would prevent them from taking absolute care of their families. Hence, the fear of broken homes, breeding irresponsible children and the need to perform their domestic activities are the reasons preventing women from going into politics (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010; Falade, 2014).

The findings of this study showed that educational level of the participants had influence on their political participation and civic competence. This is because more educated individuals (28.3%) than uneducated ones (8.8%) always followed the news closely when something is happening. Also, more educated individuals (20.8%) than uneducated ones (14.2%) always participated in peaceful

demonstrations and protests. This finding corroborates the assertion of Comber (2005) that knowledgeable and educated citizens are better informed citizens of a democracy as regards to their possession and use of civic skills. Equally, Partrick (2002) maintained that a combination of political knowledge and civic competence by the citizenry especially through education are necessary for thriving democratic citizens with civic consciousness.

Lastly, the findings of this study showed that there was an influence of occupational status on the people's political participation and civic competence. Evidently, more civil servants (32.1%) than non-civil servants (25.8%) never wore or displayed any symbol or sign representing support for a political cause. However, more non-civil servants (28.8%) than civil servants (17.5%) always undertake voluntary works in their communities. The low direct participation of civil servants in politics as shown in this study is as a result of the civil service rule of non-partisanship in politics for civil servants. The findings are also in line with other findings such as that of Kurtz et al. (2003), Azabanwan (2010), Riley et al. (2010), Adelekan (2010), Mofoluwawo et al. (2012), Lukman and Audu (2014) among others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident that there is low level of political participation and civic competence among the sampled Nigerians as they were not obliged to civic competence, community engagement and political process. Indeed, there are marginal involvements of women and less educated individuals in the Nigerian political and civic process as portrayed in their rate of incivility and political apathy. However, for Nigeria to be reckoned with in the comity of nations of the world, there is the need for massive promotion of civic consciousness to be undertaken by government and non-governmental agencies. The 21st century demands adequate orientation of all Nigerians to cultivate desirable civic attitudes and display political skills very essential for nation building.

Furthermore, socio-civic and political education should not be limited to the school system. Hence, both formal and informal approaches should be adopted to orientate the citizens on the need for active participation in the political system and proactive civic engagement. Civic learning should be promoted by all and sundry since it has the capacity to perform its mission of promoting an education

culture that stimulate civic competence, critical thinking skills, and proffer solutions to complex socio-economic and political issues of state policies.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests

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