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CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR AMONG OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH: EVIDENCE FROM APPRENTICES IN FARIN-GADA COMMUNITY, JOS NORTH LGA PLATEAU STATE NIGERIA.

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Abstract
This study examined citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth apprentices in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 218 apprentices across various trades, including mechanics, panel beating, carpentry, tailoring, and welding. The Citizenship Behaviour Survey among Youth Apprentices (CBSYA) was employed to measure civic awareness, understanding of rights and responsibilities, and citizenship behaviour. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise demographic characteristics, while Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation tested the relationships between variables. Findings indicate that most apprentices were young adults (20 - 24 years), predominantly male, and had moderate apprenticeship experience of 1–3 years. Correlation analyses revealed very weak and non-significant relationships between civic awareness and citizenship behaviour ($r = 0.033$, $p = 0.625$), and between understanding of rights and citizenship behaviour ($r = -0.074$, $p = 0.276$). These results suggest that while apprentices may acquire civic knowledge and awareness of rights, these do not necessarily translate into observable civic actions. The study concludes that apprenticeship systems provide valuable vocational and social experiences but lack structured civic instruction, highlighting the need for interventions that integrate citizenship education into informal learning environments to foster active, responsible, and community-oriented behaviour among out-of-school youth.

Keyword: Behavior, Citizenship, Citizenship behavior, Out of school, Apprentices.

Introduction
Less formal learning is increasingly recognised as an important pathway through which individuals acquire not only vocational skills but also social and civic values outside formal

schooling systems. In Africa, traditional apprenticeship systems remain one of the most accessible and widely utilised forms of non-formal education. These systems contribute significantly to youth empowerment and employment (Obadara & Abatan, 2014; Filmer, Fox, Brooks, Goyal, Mengistae, Premand, Ringold, Sharma & Zorya (2014), while also promoting social integration and reducing crime (Petu-Georgewill, Uko & Adebayo, 2021; Eneh, Enuoh, Hammed, Anyadighibe, Pepple & Etuk, 2022; Amadi, 2023). Through structured mentorship and hands-on work experiences, apprentices develop discipline, cooperation, and a sense of responsibility. In addition, participatory learning processes within these settings foster civic knowledge, democratic values, and potential future political engagement (Hoskins, Janmaat, & Villalba 2011). This suggests that informal learning environments extend beyond technical skill acquisition to include the cultivation of civic orientations and behavioural competencies necessary for functioning within society. Therefore, traditional apprenticeships should not be viewed solely as economic survival mechanisms but also as critical socialization platforms through which citizenship behaviour can potentially be nurtured among out-of-school youth.

Citizenship behaviour, defined as individuals' actions reflecting civic responsibility, law-abiding conduct, and community participation, is essential for democratic stability and social cohesion. It is closely linked to broader societal outcomes such as effective governance, social trust, and national development (Kim & Chung, 2020). Achieving these outcomes requires deliberate efforts, particularly through citizenship education, which equips individuals with knowledge of their rights, responsibilities, and democratic processes, thereby enhancing political awareness and participation (Manuwa, 2023; Amachree & Nweke, 2024; Umaru et al., 2024). Formal schooling is widely regarded as a key starting point for developing active citizenship among young people, as civic education promotes informed decision-making and encourages engagement in activities such as voting, public discourse, and community service (Umaru et al., 2024; Thelma et al., 2024). In Nigeria, it has been shown to improve youths' political awareness, participation, and law-abiding behaviour (Ogundele & Ajala, 2018; Yusuf & Abubakar, 2018; Nouri et al., 2024). However, citizenship development remains largely confined to formal education systems, excluding out-of-school youth in informal settings such as apprenticeships. This gap may result in uneven access to civic knowledge, a limited understanding of rights and responsibilities, and reduced participation in democratic processes.

Youth populations are typically defined within specific age ranges, with the United Nations classifying youth as individuals aged 15–24, while Nigeria extends this range to 15–35 years (Praise, 2024). Within this demographic, out-of-school youth constitute a large and vulnerable population with limited access to formal citizenship education. Exclusion from formal schooling is often associated with lower levels of civic awareness and political participation, as education plays a key role in fostering political knowledge, interest, and engagement. Empirical evidence shows that individuals with formal education tend to be more politically aware and participatory, while those without such education often display lower levels of civic competence (Persson, 2015, Le & Nguyen, 2021). Similarly, a recent study by Murshed and Sabates (2025) shows that higher levels of education significantly increase involvement in public discourse and

community development. These patterns suggest that limited access to formal education may negatively influence citizenship behaviour. However, this relationship remains empirically underexplored within informal learning contexts, particularly among apprentices who acquire skills outside formal schooling systems.

In Nigeria, this concern is particularly significant, as millions of youths remain outside the formal education system due to economic and structural constraints, relying instead on informal systems for socialization (UNICEF, 2022). National data further indicate that 92.3 per cent of youth employment occurs within the informal sector (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2024). Within this context, traditional apprenticeship systems have emerged as key avenues for skill acquisition and economic integration, extending beyond technical training to shaping attitudes, norms, and social responsibility (Itoje-Akpokiniovo, 2025; Oluoch-Suleh & Osuji, 2025). However, despite their socialising potential, these systems often lack structured civic or institutional learning components (Oseni, 2012; Meagher, 2013). The apprenticeship process is largely driven by the master craftsman, who determines the content and mode of instruction, while learning occurs through observation, imitation, and trial-and-error (Sonnenberg, 2012).

This body of literature reveals a critical imbalance. While formal education has been widely studied and shown to shape civic outcomes, informal learning environments, where a large proportion of out-of-school youth are located, remain underexplored in relation to citizenship behaviour. Existing research tends to focus on the cognitive and institutional aspects of citizenship developed through formal schooling, while overlooking the behavioural and experiential forms of civic learning embedded in everyday apprenticeship practices. As a result, although apprentices may acquire values such as discipline and respect for authority through workplace interactions (Oluoch-Suleh & Osuji, 2025), there is limited empirical evidence connecting these experiences to broader civic awareness, understanding of rights and responsibilities, and active community participation.

Building on this identified gap, the local context provides a critical lens for further examination. Like many urban and peri-urban communities, Farin-Gada in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State is characterized by a high concentration of out-of-school youth engaged in various informal trades, including mechanics, carpentry, tailoring, and retail services. These environments serve as primary spaces for daily interaction, socialization, and behavioural conditioning among young people excluded from formal schooling. However, unlike formal educational institutions, they lack structured curricula or deliberate frameworks for citizenship education, civic instruction, or democratic engagement. Local observations suggest that while apprentices are exposed to hierarchical authority structures and informal rules within workshops, there is limited emphasis on broader civic values such as awareness of rights, community participation, and lawful civic engagement. This creates a disconnect between socialization and civic development. Although apprentices may internalise values such as obedience, loyalty, and work ethics within their trade environments, these do not necessarily translate into informed citizenship or active participation in democratic processes. Furthermore,

in contexts marked by socio-economic pressures, weak institutional presence, and limited civic sensitization, the absence of structured civic learning may contribute to inconsistent rule compliance and low engagement in community responsibilities.

The local context therefore raises important questions about whether apprenticeship systems in Nigeria merely reproduce economic survival behaviours or also foster broader citizenship orientations. It is within this context that the present study examines how civic awareness, understanding of rights and responsibilities, and participation in apprenticeship systems interact to shape citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA. This study argues that although apprenticeship systems provide important vocational and socialization experiences, they do not significantly foster citizenship behaviour due to the absence of structured civic education.

Research Question

To achieve this purpose, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of civic awareness among out-of-school youth apprentices in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA?
2. What is the level of apprentices' understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the apprenticeship system and the broader community?
3. What is the relationship between civic awareness and citizenship behaviour among apprentices?

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of civic awareness and citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth apprentices in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA.
2. There is no significant relationship between apprentices' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and their citizenship behaviour in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA.

Methodology

Research Design and study location

The study was conducted in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, using a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional survey design. The target population consisted of all apprentices operating within the community. However, 218 participants was used as the sample size of the study. These participants provided information following the consent in accordance with ethical research standards. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select participants. In the first stage, apprentices were grouped into major trade clusters common in the study area, including mechanics, carpentry, tailoring, welding, panel beating, salon services, vulcanizing, and electrical work. In the second stage, purposive sampling was used to select the 218 (sample size) participants who met the inclusion

criteria of being out-of-school youth actively engaged in apprenticeship training. This approach ensured that only participants with direct experience of the apprenticeship system were included in the study.

Research instrument

The instrument used for data collection was the *Citizenship Behaviour Survey among Youth Apprentices (CBSYA),* designed to measure civic awareness, understanding of rights and responsibilities, and citizenship behaviour. All items were structured in a dichotomous (Yes/No) format to enhance clarity and ease of response, taking into account the participants' educational backgrounds. The instrument underwent face and content validity assessment by experts in Social Studies Education and Measurement and Evaluation, who evaluated its relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives. Their feedback was incorporated to improve the instrument's quality. To establish reliability, a pilot study was conducted with apprentices in Student Village, an area outside the main study location. Given the dichotomous nature of the items, internal consistency was assessed using the Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), which yielded a coefficient of 0.74, indicating acceptable reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure and Method of data analysis

A face-to-face, on-the-spot method of administration was adopted. The researchers provided necessary clarifications and, where required, translated the items into Hausa to enhance respondents' understanding. Care was taken to ensure that responses were given independently without any form of interference. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and anonymity of participants. Descriptive statistics, using frequencies and percentages, were employed for the demographic section, while Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation was used to examine the relationships between civic awareness, understanding of rights and responsibilities, and citizenship behaviour, due to the non-parametric nature of the data.

Results

Demographic result

Table 1:

Demographic Characteristics of Youth Apprentices in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA (N = 218)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Age (years)	15–19	74	33.9
	20–24	81	37.2
	25–35	63	28.9
Gender	Male	149	68.3
	Female	69	31.7
Trade	Carpentry	25	11.5
	Electrical	22	10.1
	Mechanics	34	15.6
	Panel Beating	40	18.3
	Saloon	25	11.5
	Tailoring	23	10.6
	Vulcanizing	22	10.1
	Welding	27	12.4
Duration of Apprenticeship	<1 year	52	23.9
	1–3 years	114	52.3
	4–6 years	37	17.0
	>6 years	15	6.9

Survey, 2026

The Table 1 shows the demographic background 218 youth apprentices who participate in the survey in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA. Specifically, the age distribution shows that the majority of respondents were 20–24 years (37.2%), followed by 15–19 years (33.9%) and 25–35 years (28.9%). This age spread indicates a predominantly young population, which is typical of apprentices in vocational trades and relevant for understanding early civic socialization. In the same vein, gender distribution reveals a dominance of male apprentices (68.3%) over females (31.7%), consistent with societal trends where males are more likely to engage in physically intensive or trade-based apprenticeships. Regarding trade specialization, Panel Beating (18.3%) and Mechanics (15.6%) were the most represented, while Tailoring (10.6%) and Saloon (11.5%) had lower participation. This suggests that vocational opportunities in the community are skewed toward certain trades, which could influence social interactions,

civic exposure, and workplace culture. In terms of apprenticeship duration, most respondents had been in training 1–3 years (52.3%), followed by less than 1 year (23.9%), 4–6 years (17.0%), and over 6 years (6.9%). This indicates moderate exposure to apprenticeship learning, which may limit opportunities for structured civic education, as most have not reached advanced levels of experience or responsibility.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between the level of civic awareness and citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth apprentices in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA.

Table 2:

Correlation Between Civic Awareness and Citizenship Behaviour Among Youth Apprentices in Fari-Gada Community, Jos North LGA

Variables	Civic Awareness	Citizenship Behaviour
Civic Awareness	1	0.033
Citizenship Behaviour	0.033	1
Significance (2-tailed)	-	0.625
N	218	218

Table 2 shows the result of the correlation between civic awareness and citizenship behaviour among the 218 youth apprentices. The analysis shows a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.033$) between civic awareness and citizenship behaviour, which is not statistically significant ($p = 0.625$). This implies that higher levels of civic awareness among the apprentices do not necessarily correspond to higher levels of citizenship behaviour. In other words, while apprentices may possess some awareness of civic concepts, this does not automatically translate into observable civic actions, such as participation in community initiatives, law-abiding conduct, or responsible social behaviour. These findings suggest that informal apprenticeship environments may provide limited opportunities for translating civic knowledge into practical citizenship behaviours.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between apprentices' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and their citizenship behaviour in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA.

Table 3:
Correlation Between Understanding of Rights and Citizenship Behaviour Among Youth Apprentices in Fari-Gada Community, Jos North LGA

Variables	Understanding	Citizenship Behaviour
Understanding	1	-0.074
Citizenship Behaviour	-0.074	1
Significance (2-tailed)	–	0.276
N	218	218

Table 3 shows the correlation between apprentices' understanding of their rights and their citizenship behaviour. The analysis reveals a very weak negative correlation ($r = -0.074$) that is not statistically significant ($p = 0.276$). This suggests that higher levels of rights understanding do not necessarily correspond to higher levels of citizenship behaviour among the apprentices. The findings reveal a potential gap between knowledge and action, indicating that awareness of constitutional and civic rights alone may not translate into practical engagement in community and civic activities. Contextual factors, such as apprenticeship culture, peer influence, and local community norms, may play a more decisive role in shaping the citizenship behaviour of out-of-school youth.

Discussion of findings

This study examined citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth engaged in apprenticeship systems in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA. The findings show that there is no significant relationship between civic awareness and citizenship behaviour ($r = 0.033$, $p > 0.05$). This indicates that civic awareness does not necessarily translate into citizenship behaviour among the apprentices. This suggests a disconnect between knowledge and practice, where awareness of civic issues does not lead to active engagement in community or civic responsibilities. The finding aligns with existing literature which indicates that informal apprenticeship systems, while effective in transmitting vocational skills and social values such as discipline and respect for authority, often lack structured mechanisms for fostering practical civic engagement (Oseni, 2012; Meagher, 2013). Consequently, apprentices may acquire work-related values, but these do not necessarily extend to broader citizenship behaviour

The results of the analysis in Table 3 revealed that $r = -0.074$ and $p = 0.276$, which indicates that the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The implication of this is that the null hypothesis is accepted, and it is concluded that understanding of rights does not significantly influence citizenship behaviour among the apprentices. This finding suggests that knowledge of rights alone is insufficient to promote active citizenship behaviour among out-of-school youth. It indicates a gap between awareness and practice, where understanding of civic rights does not necessarily translate into meaningful participation in community or civic activities. This result is consistent with existing literature which emphasizes that citizenship

behaviour requires not only cognitive awareness but also structured opportunities for engagement, which are often lacking in informal apprenticeship settings (Manuwa, 2023; Amachree & Nweke, 2024; Umaru et al., 2024). Consequently, apprentices may possess some level of rights awareness, but this does not automatically lead to responsible civic actions.

This study contributes to existing literature by extending the understanding of citizenship behaviour beyond formal educational settings to informal apprenticeship systems, where a significant proportion of out-of-school youth are engaged. It provides empirical evidence that civic awareness and understanding of rights do not necessarily translate into citizenship behaviour within informal learning contexts, thereby revealing a critical gap between knowledge and practice. In addition, the study also enriches the discourse on non-formal education by demonstrating that, although apprenticeship systems promote vocational skills and social values, they lack structured civic learning components necessary for fostering active citizenship. In doing so, it offers a contextualised insight into the dynamics of youth socialization in Farin-Gada Community, Jos North LGA. The findings provide a basis for policy and educational interventions aimed at integrating citizenship education into informal vocational settings, thereby supporting the development of responsible and engaged citizens among out-of-school youth.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that traditional apprenticeship systems in Farin-Gada provide valuable social and vocational experiences but do not inherently promote citizenship behaviour. The limited translation of civic awareness and understanding of rights into practical civic actions among apprentices highlights the absence of structured civic instruction within these informal settings. This underscores the need for interventions that integrate citizenship education into apprenticeship programs. The findings reinforce the literature's view of apprenticeship systems as dual platforms for both skill acquisition and socialization, while emphasizing the critical importance of deliberate civic engagement strategies to cultivate active, responsible, and community-oriented citizenship among out-of-school

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Apprenticeship environments should incorporate practical, action-oriented civic activities such as community service or group responsibilities to help translate civic awareness into actual behaviour.
2. There is a need to introduce simple and structured civic sensitization programmes within apprenticeship settings to reinforce the application of civic knowledge in real-life situations.
3. Workshop leaders and master craftsmen should be encouraged to model and reinforce behaviours related to responsibility, cooperation, and community engagement, as behaviour appears to be more influenced by the immediate environment.
4. Since knowledge alone was not sufficient, emphasis should be placed on experiential learning strategies that promote active participation rather than passive awareness.

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