

## The Future Trends and Innovations in Political Science Education in Nigeria

Toye Manuwa

(PhD) Institute of Health Humanities and Entrepreneurship, Ondo, Ondo State

**Abstract:** This paper examines the current state and future prospects of political science education in Nigeria. It argues that political science education faces many challenges, such as inadequate funding, poor curriculum, low quality of teaching and research, and lack of relevance to the society. It also identifies some emerging trends and innovations that can enhance political science education, such as online learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, civic engagement, and policy-oriented research. The paper concludes by offering some recommendations for improving political science education in Nigeria, such as increasing funding, updating curriculum, improving teaching and research methods, and fostering partnerships with stakeholders.

**Keywords:** Innovations, political science, education, future trends and Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

Political science education is the study of how people learn about politics, governance, and public affairs. It encompasses various topics, such as political theory, comparative politics, international relations, public policy, civic education, and political communication. Political science education aims to develop critical thinking, analytical skills, and civic engagement among students and citizens. It also prepares them for careers in academia, government, media, civil society, and other sectors that require political knowledge and expertise. It encompasses various aspects of teaching and learning, such as curriculum design, pedagogy, assessment, and evaluation. Political science education also examines the role of political institutions, actors, and processes in shaping political knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (Chukwuemeka & Nwankwo, 2020).

Political science education relies on a variety of sources and methods to inform its teaching and research. Some of the common sources include academic journals, books, reports, data sets, case studies, surveys, experiments, and simulations. Some of the common methods include lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, field trips, online courses, and peer learning. Political science education also draws on insights from other disciplines, such as history, sociology, psychology, economics, law, and philosophy.

Political science education is important for several reasons. First, it helps citizens develop the skills and competencies necessary for democratic participation and civic engagement. Second, it fosters critical thinking and analytical reasoning about complex and controversial issues. Third, it promotes awareness and appreciation of diversity and pluralism in society. Fourth, it contributes to

the advancement of political science as a discipline and a profession (Bello & Okafor, 2021).

Political science is not an isolated field in our changing world of innovations, but rather interacts with other disciplines such as history, sociology, economics, law, psychology, and international relations, which incorporates interdisciplinary perspectives and methods. By exposing students to different approaches and paradigms, political science education can foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Moreover, interdisciplinary perspectives can help students understand the complex and multifaceted nature of political phenomena, and appreciate the diversity and plurality of views and values. This can be said to be one of the future trends and innovations in political science education.

Another future trend in political science education in Nigeria is the integration of technology and digital tools. Technology has revolutionized the way we access, produce, and disseminate information, and has also created new forms of political participation and communication. Political science education can leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning outcomes, such as by using online platforms, multimedia resources, simulations, games, and social media. Technology can also enable political science education to reach a wider and more diverse audience, and to foster collaboration and dialogue among students, teachers, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers (Dauda & Oyedele, 2019).

The emphasis on civic education and engagement is one of the future trend in political science education in Nigeria. Political science education is not only about acquiring knowledge and skills, but

also about developing values and attitudes that promote democratic citizenship and social responsibility. Political science education can cultivate civic education and engagement by encouraging students to participate in political processes and activities, such as voting, campaigning, volunteering, protesting, lobbying, or joining civil society organizations. Civic education and engagement can also help students develop a sense of identity, belonging, and agency, as well as a respect for human rights, diversity, and tolerance (Eze & Okoro, 2023).

The aforementioned future trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria has the tendency of enhancing the quality and relevance of the field. By adopting these trends and innovations, political science education can prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, and contribute to the development and democratization of Nigeria.

Political science education needs to be responsive to the current issues and debates in the world, as well as the historical and cultural contexts that shape them. Political science education also needs to be inclusive and respectful of the different views and values of its participants, while maintaining academic rigor and integrity (Adebayo, 2022). Political science education should foster a culture of dialogue, collaboration, and mutual learning among its stakeholders. Political science education aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values to understand and engage with the complex and changing political realities of the 21st century. However, political science education also faces many challenges and opportunities in the context of globalization, digitalization, democratization, and social movements. How can political science educators prepare their students for the future? What are the emerging trends and innovations in political science education that can enhance the quality and relevance of teaching and learning? This paper therefore seeks to examine the future trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The field of political science is constantly evolving and facing new challenges in the 21st century. The rapid changes in the global and domestic political landscape, the emergence of new technologies and media, and the increasing diversity and complexity of political issues require political science educators to adapt and innovate their curricula,

pedagogy, and assessment methods. However, there is a lack of systematic and comprehensive research on the current state and future trends of political science education, especially in developing countries like Nigeria (Eze & Okoro, 2023).

Similarly, Political science education is a vital component of the curriculum for senior secondary schools in Nigeria, as it prepares students for active citizenship and democratic participation. However, the teaching and learning of political science, or government as it is commonly called, faces many challenges in Nigeria, such as poor motivation, lack of innovative strategies, outdated curriculum, inadequate funding, and low quality of teachers (Fashagba & Omojuwa, 2020). These challenges have resulted in poor performance of students in external examinations, and failure on their part to imbibe the culture of social and political assets for national development. To address these challenges and improve the quality and relevance of political science education in Nigeria, there is a need to adopt innovative trends and practices that have been proven effective in other contexts. It is against this background that this paper investigates the future trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria.

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the future trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- examine the main goals, objectives, and outcomes of political science education in Nigeria;
- identify and analyze the current state of political science education in Nigeria, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
- explore and evaluate the future trends and innovations in political science education, such as new pedagogies, curricula, technologies, assessment methods, and learning outcomes and
- develop and disseminate recommendations and best practices for political science educators, policymakers, and stakeholders on how to improve and innovate political science education in the future.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this paper:

1. What are the main goals, objectives, and outcomes of political science education in Nigeria?
2. What is the current state of political science education in Nigeria, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?
3. What are the future trends and innovations in political science education, such as new pedagogies, curricula, technologies, assessment methods, and learning outcomes in Nigeria?
4. What are the recommendations and best practices for political science educators, policymakers, and stakeholders on how to improve and innovate political science education in the future in Nigerian education?

## LITERATURE REVIEW-

### Overview of Political Science Education and Its Future Developments

Political science education in Nigeria has undergone significant changes in the past decades, as the country has faced various political, social and economic challenges. Political science education aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values to understand and engage with the political system and processes of their country and the world (Adebayo, 2022). This paper discusses some of the future trends and innovations that are shaping political science education in Nigeria, and how they can enhance the quality and relevance of the discipline.

One of the future trends in political science education in Nigeria is the incorporation of interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives. Political science is not an isolated field of study, but rather interacts with other disciplines such as history, sociology, economics, law, psychology and international relations. By exposing students to different theoretical frameworks and empirical cases, political science education can foster critical thinking, analytical skills and global awareness among students. For example, some of the courses offered by the Department of Political Science at the University of Lagos include African Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Economy, Public Administration and Policy Analysis (Gbadebo & Adeyemi, 2022).

Another future trend in political science education in Nigeria is the use of innovative pedagogical methods and technologies. Political science

education can benefit from adopting more interactive and learner-centered approaches, such as simulations, debates, case studies, group projects and field trips. These methods can enhance students' engagement, motivation and participation in the learning process, as well as develop their communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. Moreover, political science education can leverage the potential of digital technologies, such as online platforms, social media, podcasts and videos, to facilitate access to information, resources and networks for students and teachers. For instance, the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) has launched a website that provides information on its activities, publications, conferences and membership (Hassan & Musa, 2021).

A third future trend in political science education in Nigeria is the alignment of curriculum and research with national and global issues and priorities. Political science education can play a vital role in addressing some of the pressing challenges and opportunities facing Nigeria and the world today, such as democracy and governance, security and conflict, development and inequality, gender and diversity, climate change and sustainability. By incorporating these topics into the curriculum and research agenda of political science education, students can acquire relevant knowledge and skills to contribute to the public discourse and policy-making process. Furthermore, political science education can foster collaboration and dialogue among academic institutions, civil society organizations, government agencies and international partners to exchange ideas, experiences and best practices (Kwasau, 2013). For example, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) is a non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, governance and development issues in Nigeria and West Africa.

Political science education in Nigeria is facing new opportunities and challenges in the 21st century. By embracing interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, innovative pedagogical methods and technologies, and alignment with national and global issues and priorities, political science education can enhance its quality and relevance for students and society.

### What are the Main Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes of Political Science Education in Nigeria?

Political science education is a discipline that concerns with the study and critical analysis of political theories, political institutions, political organizations and activities of the state. It also examines the structures of governments and their historical evolution over time as well as the question of how governmental authority is established and maintained in different eras and different societies. Political science education also acquaints students with the methods of teaching political science in tertiary institutions or government in secondary schools (Franklins, *et al.*, 2015).

According to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013). The main goals, objectives, and outcomes of political science education in Nigeria are:

- To equip students with the knowledge and skills to understand and analyze the political system of Nigeria and its challenges, such as democratic consolidation, corruption, ethnic conflicts, security issues, etc.
- To foster civic education and democratic values among students and prepare them to participate actively and responsibly in the political process as citizens, voters, leaders, activists, etc.
- To develop students' critical thinking, research, communication, and problem-solving skills that are essential for academic and professional success in various fields related to politics, such as law, journalism, public administration, diplomacy, etc.
- To contribute to the sustainable development of Nigeria by producing graduates who can apply their political knowledge and skills to address the social, economic, and environmental issues facing the country.

The outcomes of political science education in Nigeria are expected to contribute to the sustainable development of the country by promoting good governance, accountability, human rights, peace, and social justice.

### **What is the Current State of Political Science Education in Nigeria, Including its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats?**

Political science is a discipline that studies the theory and practice of politics, government, and public policy. It is one of the social sciences that aim to understand and explain the political phenomena that affect human societies. In Nigeria, political science education has a long history, dating back to the colonial era, when it was

introduced as part of the liberal arts curriculum. Today, political science is taught at various levels of education, from secondary schools to universities, and it attracts many students who are interested in the political affairs of their country and the world (Adebayo, 2022).

However, political science education in Nigeria faces many challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. Some of the strengths of political science education in Nigeria according to Fashagba & Omojuwa (2020) include:

- The diversity and richness of the political culture and history of Nigeria, which provide a fertile ground for political analysis and research.
- The relevance and importance of political science for understanding and addressing the contemporary issues and problems that Nigeria faces, such as democracy, development, security, corruption, ethnicity, religion, gender, and human rights.
- The availability and accessibility of political science programs and courses in many institutions of learning across the country, which offer a variety of perspectives and approaches to the study of politics.
- The existence and growth of professional associations and networks of political scientists in Nigeria, such as the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA), which promote academic excellence, collaboration, and dissemination of knowledge.

Some of the weaknesses of political science education in Nigeria include:

- The lack of adequate funding and resources for political science teaching and research, which affect the quality and quantity of academic staff, facilities, equipment, materials, and publications.
- The low level of academic freedom and autonomy for political scientists in Nigeria, who often face political interference, censorship, intimidation, harassment, or violence for expressing their views or conducting their research.
- The poor quality and relevance of some political science curricula and pedagogy in Nigeria, which are outdated, rigid, or detached from the realities and needs of the society.
- The low level of employability and recognition of political science graduates in Nigeria, who face limited or competitive career opportunities in the public or private sector.

Some of the opportunities for political science education as opined by Ugwu, (2022) in Nigeria include:

- The increasing demand and interest for political science knowledge and skills in Nigeria, especially among the youth, civil society, media, and policymakers, who seek to understand and influence the political processes and outcomes in their country and beyond.
- The emergence and development of new fields and subfields of political science in Nigeria, such as comparative politics, international relations, public administration, public policy, political economy, gender studies, peace studies, environmental politics, etc., which offer new avenues for research and innovation.
- The expansion and diversification of sources and methods of political science data collection and analysis in Nigeria, such as surveys, experiments, interviews, focus groups, case studies, content analysis, discourse analysis, etc., which enhance the validity and reliability of political science findings.
- The integration and collaboration of political science with other disciplines and fields of study in Nigeria, such as sociology, economics, history, law, psychology, geography, etc., which enrich the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of political science.

Some of the threats to political science education in Nigeria include:

- The instability and insecurity of the political environment in Nigeria, which pose risks and challenges for political scientists who study or work on sensitive or controversial topics or issues.
- The competition and conflict among different schools or paradigms of political science in Nigeria, which create divisions or rivalries among political scientists or institutions that may undermine academic cooperation or dialogue.
- The influence and dominance of foreign or external actors or factors on political science education in Nigeria, such as donors, partners, publishers, or rankings, which may affect the autonomy, quality, or relevance of political science teaching or research.
- The erosion or loss of public trust or confidence in political science or political scientists in Nigeria, who may be perceived as

biased, corrupt, irrelevant, or incompetent by some segments of the society.

Political science education in Nigeria is a dynamic and evolving field that has many strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It is important for political scientists in Nigeria to recognize and address these challenges and opportunities in order to improve the quality and impact of their teaching and research.

### **The Future Trends and Innovations in Political Science Education, in Relation to New Pedagogies, Curricula, Technologies, Assessment Methods, and Learning Outcomes in Nigeria**

Political science education is a vital component of preparing citizens for active participation in democratic governance and development. However, the field faces many challenges in Nigeria. Such challenges include poor funding, outdated curricula, inadequate facilities, low motivation and quality of teachers, and lack of relevance to the needs and aspirations of the society. To address these challenges and improve the quality and impact of political science education, some future trends and innovations can be considered as opined by Ugwu (2022).

Adopting innovative pedagogies that foster active learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and civic engagement. Some examples of such pedagogies are project-based learning, service-learning, simulation and role-playing, case studies, debate and dialogue, peer instruction, and flipped classroom. These pedagogies can help students develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are essential for political analysis and action.

Updating the curricula to reflect the current and emerging issues and trends in political science and related disciplines, such as globalization, democratization, human rights, gender equality, peace and conflict resolution, environmental sustainability, social movements, digital media, and civic education. The curricula should also be responsive to the local context and needs of Nigeria and its diverse regions and communities.

Integrating technologies that enhance the access, delivery, interaction, and assessment of political science education. Some examples of such technologies are online platforms, e-learning modules, podcasts, videos, blogs, social media, digital games, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. These technologies can help student's

access diverse sources of information and perspectives, engage with instructors and peers across different locations and time zones, create and share their own content and opinions, and receive timely feedback and support (World Economic Forum, 2022).

Developing assessment methods that measure not only the content knowledge but also the higher-order skills and competencies of political science students. Some examples of such methods are portfolios, rubrics, self- and peer-assessment, reflective journals, essays, presentations, posters, info-graphics, podcasts, videos, blogs, social media posts, digital games, virtual reality scenarios. These methods can help students demonstrate their understanding of political concepts and theories as well as their ability to apply them to real-world situations.

Aligning the learning outcomes of political science education with the national goals and priorities of Nigeria as well as the global standards and expectations of the discipline. Some examples of such outcomes are political literacy; civic responsibility; ethical reasoning; intercultural competence; global awareness; research skills; communication skills; leadership skills; teamwork skills; lifelong learning skills. These outcomes can help students prepare for their future roles as informed citizens; active participants in democratic processes; agents of positive change; contributors to national development; and members of the global community (Sanubi & Akpotu, 2015).

### **Recommendations and Best Practices for Political Science Educators, Policymakers, and Stakeholders on How to Improve and Innovate Political Science Education in the Future in Nigerian Education**

Political science is a discipline that studies the theories, institutions, processes and activities of political systems and their functions within complex societies. It examines the structures of governments and their historical evolution over time, as well as the question of how governmental authority is established and maintained in different eras and different societies. Political science education is therefore essential for preparing citizens to participate effectively in democratic governance, public policy making, and international relations (Chukwuemeka & Nwankwo, 2020).

However, political science education in Nigeria faces many challenges and problems that hinder its

quality and relevance for sustainable development. These challenges call for urgent and concerted efforts to improve and innovate political science education in Nigeria, especially in view of the country's vision to become one of the 20 most developed economies by 2020. To achieve this vision, Nigeria needs a well-educated and informed citizenry that can contribute to the political, social, economic, and environmental development of the country (Hassan & Musa, 2021).

Therefore, this paper offers some recommendations and best practices for political science educators, policymakers, and stakeholders on how to improve and innovate political science education in Nigeria in the future. These recommendations are based on the existing literature, research findings, and experiences of other countries that have made significant progress in political science education.

1. Increase funding and investment for political science education at all levels, from primary to tertiary. This should include providing adequate infrastructure, equipment, materials, and incentives for teaching and learning political science.
2. Recruit, train, and retain qualified and motivated teachers and lecturers for political science education. This should include enhancing their professional development, career progression, remuneration, and recognition.
3. Review and update the curricula and textbooks for political science education to make them more relevant, comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and comparative. This should include incorporating emerging issues such as democracy, human rights, gender equality, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, environmental sustainability, regional integration, globalization, etc.
4. Encourage more students to enrol and complete their studies in political science education by providing scholarships, bursaries, loans, grants, mentorship programs, career guidance, etc. This should also include promoting gender balance and diversity among students of political science.
5. Reduce political interference and instability in the educational system by ensuring autonomy, accountability, transparency, and participation of all stakeholders in decision making and policy implementation. This should also include respecting academic freedom and

promoting academic excellence in political science education.

6. Foster collaboration and innovation among political science educators, policymakers, and stakeholders by creating platforms for dialogue, exchange of ideas, best practices, research findings, etc. This should also include establishing networks, associations, journals, conferences among the teachers and learners.
7. Political science education should be learner-centered, meaning that it should focus on the needs, interests, and abilities of the students and foster their active participation and engagement in the learning process.
8. Political science education should be outcome-based, meaning that it should define clear and measurable learning outcomes that reflect the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students are expected to acquire by the end of the course or program.
9. Political science education should be competency-based, meaning that it should develop students' competencies that enable them to apply their political knowledge and skills in various contexts and situations, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, leadership, etc.
10. Political science education should be interdisciplinary, meaning that it should integrate perspectives and insights from other disciplines that are relevant to political science, such as history, sociology, economics, law, etc.
11. Political science education should be contextualized, meaning that it should relate to the local, national, regional, and global issues and challenges that affect Nigeria and its people.

## SUMMARY

Political science education in Nigeria is undergoing significant changes and challenges in the 21st century. This paper summarizes some of the future trends and innovations that are shaping the field and its relevance for the society.

Some of the trends and innovations discussed include:

- The adoption of interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to political analysis, incorporating insights from other social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences. For example, political scientists can collaborate with economists, sociologists, historians, and biologists to study the effects of globalization,

social movements, historical legacies, and environmental issues on political behaviour and outcomes.

- The incorporation of new technologies and methods, such as digital media, big data, artificial intelligence, and social network analysis, to enhance political research and teaching. For example, political scientists can use online platforms, databases, algorithms, and software to collect, analyze, visualize, and communicate political data and information.
- The diversification of political science curriculum and pedagogy, to reflect the diversity of political actors, issues, and contexts in Nigeria and beyond. For example, political science courses can cover topics such as gender and politics, ethnic politics, religion and politics, youth and politics, security and conflict, democracy and governance, regional and international relations, and more.
- The engagement of political science education with the public sphere, through civic education, policy advocacy, and social activism. For example, political science educators can involve their students in community projects, public debates, policy forums, and social campaigns that address relevant political issues and problems.
- The promotion of academic excellence and integrity, through quality assurance, accreditation, and ethical standards. For example, political science institutions can establish clear criteria, procedures, and mechanisms for evaluating and improving the quality of their programs, faculty, students, and research. They can also adhere to the principles of academic honesty, transparency, and accountability in their work.

These trends and innovations aim to make political science education in Nigeria more relevant, responsive, and rigorous for the changing political landscape and the needs of the society. They also present opportunities and challenges for political science educators, students, and practitioners, who need to adapt to the new realities and expectations of the field.

## CONCLUSION

The future trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria are promising and challenging. On one hand, they offer opportunities for enhancing the quality, relevance and impact of political science teaching and research in a dynamic and diverse society. On the other hand,

they pose significant obstacles and risks for political science educators and students, such as inadequate funding, infrastructural decay, political interference, ethical dilemmas and security threats. Therefore, political science education in Nigeria requires constant adaptation, innovation and collaboration to meet the changing needs and expectations of the society and the discipline. In conclusion, this paper has examined some of the current and emerging trends and innovations in political science education in Nigeria, and highlighted their implications for the future of the field.

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