

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EBONYI STATE

BY

Eje Benjamin Oda
Political Science Department
Ebonyi State College of Education Ikwo
odaeye@gmail.com
08032605223

Abstract

This study titled 'Problems and Challenges of Teaching Political Science in Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State' was carried out in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The design of the study was descriptive survey research design, while the population comprised of all political science teachers in the public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The study made use of simple random sampling techniques to select 130 Political Science Teachers out of 237 of them. The study has four research questions and two hypotheses. The research questions were used to develop 34 items questionnaire which was subjected to cronbach Alpha reliability test and it showed a high reliability coefficient of 9.5. The items on questionnaire were used to extract information from the respondents. The data collected was analyzed using weighed mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics. Results of the analysis showed that; teachers and students' background, nature of political science and political science curriculum contribute to the problems and challenges of teaching of the political science in the state and that the opinion of the respondents are not gender bias. The study recommended among others things improve funding of secondary schools, employment of qualified political science teachers into the system and review of the current political science curriculum to meet up with current trend.

Key Words: *Problems, Challenges, Teaching, Political Science and Secondary Schools*

Introduction

Political Science is a social science discipline concerned with the study of the state, nation, government and politics, and policies of government. It deals with the theories and practices of politics, the analysis of political systems, political behavior and political culture. Political Science intersects with other fields, including economics, law, sociology, history, anthropology, public administration, public policy, national politics, international relations, comparative politics, psychology, political organization and political theory Political Science is fundamental to the understanding of one's rights and responsibilities as a citizen and to understanding international politics and laws (American Political Science Association, 2020). In

other words, it is the systematic and analytical study of the acquisition, control and exercise of power by individuals, groups and organizations within the political system. As such, it will be an essential mechanism for achieving sustainable development in a polity like Nigeria. Every educational system always works hard to achieve excellent performance in both external and internal examinations and political science is not an exception. In Nigerian secondary schools in the absence of political science as a subject political science teachers are made to teach either Government or Social Studies. The problem of low academic achievement of students in the political science is one of the most challenging problems that face students as well as teachers. This problem has may be educational, social, cultural and psychological in nature. However, the students' low academic achievement on political science can be defined as: Low or weakness of the student's mark under the normal average in a study subject level as a result of a variety of reasons, including those related to the student himself, or the teacher, those related to family of the student, social and academic environment. Consequently, this may lead to frequent repetition of failure, despite their abilities that qualify them to get the best marks.

Individual differences play an important role in academic achievement of students. There have been many attempts to address the problem of low academic achievement in political science and some factors have been identified in explaining academic achievement. Among the numerous variables researched, demographic status, intelligence, behavioral characteristics and psychological factors, namely, attitudes, self esteem, self efficacy and self concept, have been used to explain academic achievement. Besides differences in ability, which are not easy to control, students have specific learning styles that may influence their academic achievement. Sternberg (1997) proposed that learning styles are at least in part socialized, suggesting that they can, to some extent, be modified. Thus, being aware of learning styles and their roles in academic achievement is of a great importance for educational psychologists, teachers and researchers. The above explained variables contribute to high or low achievement in political science varies from place to place and from person to person.

This study titled problems and challenges of teaching political science in secondary school in Ebonyi State is aimed at unveiling the problems and challenges secondary school teachers (political science) face in the process of teaching the subject. This reviewed among other variables the students and teachers' background problems, administrative and curriculum problems, nature of political science and environmental problems. It was believe that if the

problems and challenges are discovered and are surmounted through this study, the teaching of political science in Nigeria and Ebonyi state in particular will be an easy and interesting one. This study intends to bridge the gap existing as result of many unidentified and unsolved problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in the secondary schools in the state.

Statement of the Problem

One will imagine the world without leadership. Infact it is better imagined than be. It is the importance of this leadership that made it mandatory that everywhere two or more gather, and for peace and progress to rain there, they must be leader among them. This leadership is anchored and studied in political science. It is a general believe that the more a leader understand his/her role as a leader the more peace and progress of the group or society. As seen above that political science deals with the theories and practices of politics, the analysis of political systems, political behavior and political culture. It is very much important that our future leaders (students) are properly equipped with this leadership knowledge being studied in political science. It is based on above that this studies unveiled problems and challenges to the proper teaching of this political science and related subjects in our secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi State. However, the specific objectives are to find if;

1. teachers and Students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
2. curriculum and Administrative polices constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
3. nature of political science and teaching environment constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
4. strategies to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Research Questions.

This study seek to answer the following research questions;

1. Do teachers and students' background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?
2. Do curriculum and administrative policies constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?
3. Do nature of political science and teaching environment constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?
4. What strategies should be applied to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 alpha level;

1. Ho₁ There is no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the teachers and students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
2. Ho₂ There is no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design 'survey research design' according to Nworgu (2015), is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire population. This study was interested in the problems and challenges of teaching political science in secondary school in Ebonyi State. The population of this study comprised 237 Political Science secondary school teachers in the 222 public or government owned senior secondary schools in Ebonyi State (ESSEB, 2021). The study made use of 130 secondary school political science, social studies and history teachers spread across the thirteen Local Government Areas in Ebonyi State. The researcher adopted a multi-stage random sampling technique to arrive at the sample. Instrument for data collection of this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. It was called 'Problems and Challenges of Teaching Political Science in Secondary

Schools (PCTPSS). It was in form of four point scale questionnaire designed to elicit information on the four research questions. Each item of the questionnaire has a four point scale rating thus; Strongly Agree (**SA**), Agree (**A**), Disagree (**D**) and Strongly Disagree (**SD**). The researcher scored the instrument using weighted mean. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test - retest form of reliability which correlated with cronbach Alpha reliability test and it showed a high reliability coefficient of 9.5. The researcher visited the sample schools and with the help of two research assistants from each school, and administered the instrument on each of the sample teachers in the school. That is the mean response of the respondents to each item in the questionnaire was used to determine the answer to each item in the questionnaire and the mean response of each cluster of the research question was used to answer each research question. The instrument was scored using weighted mean, that is Strongly Agree (**SA**) scored 4 points, Agree (**A**) scored 3 points, Disagree (**D**) scored 2 points and Strongly Disagree (**SD**) scored 1 point. Therefore, any item with a weighted mean value of 2.50 and above was regarded as positive and accepted while any item with a mean less than 2.50 regarded as negative and rejected. The research hypotheses was answered using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics.

Presentation and Analysis

The results are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses in tables below. There are four research questions and two hypotheses for the study.

Research Question 1 Do teachers and students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?

Table 1: Teachers and students background constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school

S/N	Teachers and Students Background Constituting Problems and Challenges in Teaching of Political Science	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Parents do not encourage their children/wards to study political science	2.46	1.11	Rejected
2	Friends and peer groups discourages students from studying political science	2.47	1.13	Rejected
3	There are not enough job vacancies for political science graduates	3.03	1.02	Accepted

4	Students do not like the method of teaching political science.	2.52	0.99	Accepted
5	Political science is not important in our society.	2.72	0.71	Accepted
6	Teachers don't like teaching some topics in Political Science	1.55	0.91	Rejected
7	Teachers use non students centered methods to teach political science.	2.85	0.97	Accepted
8	Teachers don't make use of instructional materials in teaching political science.	3.49	1.31	Accepted
9	Most political science teachers are poor or from poor family.	2.45	1.08	Rejected
Grand Mean		2.72	1.08	Accepted

Key: \bar{X} = mean , SD = Standard Deviation

Data in Table 1 above shows that items 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 were accepted while items 1, 2, 6 and 9 were rejected from the questionnaire in determining if teachers and students constitute problems or challenges in the teaching of Political Science in Ebonyi State. The grand mean of the means was accepted based on the fact that it is 2.72 which is within the acceptable range.

Research Question 2 Do curriculum and administrative policies constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?

Table 2: Curriculum and administrative polices constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school

S/N	Curriculum and Administrative Polices Constitute Problems and Challenges in Teaching of Political Science	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	The secondary school curriculum are in variance with the society norms	2.89	0.89	Accepted
2	The period allocated for teaching of political science in secondary school is not enough.	2.29	0.92	Rejected
3	The objectives of the political science curriculum is not achievable	2.56	1.02	Accepted
4	There is not practical aspect of political science curriculum.	2.62	0.90	Accepted
5	Political science teachers always have over load of work	3.25	0.84	Accepted

6	Government do not have enough incentives for political science teachers	3.30	0.79	Accepted
7	There are no adequate provision of teaching materials for teaching political science.	2.96	1.02	Accepted
8	There are no enough teachers to teach political science in secondary schools.	2.55	1.02	Accepted
9	Government don't put the results of research works of political science in use.	3.08	0.89	Accepted
10	There are no adequate or regular workshops and seminars for secondary school political science teachers.	3.05	0.96	Accepted
Grand Mean		2.72	0.93	Accepted

Key: \bar{X} = mean , SD = Standard Deviation

Table 2 above shows that out of 10 items of the questionnaire to determine if curriculum and administrative policies constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in Ebonyi State, only item number 2 was rejected while the items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 was accepted. The grand mean of the means was accepted based on the fact that it is 2.72 which is within the acceptable range.

Research Question 3 Do nature of political science and teaching environment constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?

Table 3: Nature of political science and teaching environment that constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school

S/N	nature of political science and teaching environment constitute problem in teaching of political science	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Topics in political science are abstract in nature	2.84	1.02	Accepted
2	Political science study involve a lot of difficult words	2.33	1.06	Rejected
3	The studies in political don't actually conform with the what happen in real life.	2.83	0.84	Accepted
4	Materials for teaching political science are not always available.	2.22	0.98	Rejected
5	Students don't like to study political science.	2.32	1.03	Rejected
6	Governments care not on the students and teachers of political science.	2.20	0.96	Rejected

7	Communities don't value students and teachers of political science.	3.02	0.94	Accepted
8	There no enough political science teachers in the secondary schools in the state.	2.45	1.00	Rejected
9	Political science teachers are regarded as non-promise keeping set of people.	2.68	1.10	Accepted
Grand Mean		2.65	0.99	Accepted

Key: \bar{X} = mean , SD = Standard Deviation

Table 3 above shows that items 1, 3, 7 and 9 were accepted while items 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 was rejected as nature of political science and teaching environment constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state. The grand mean of the means was accepted based on the fact that it is 2.65 which is within the acceptable range.

Research Question 4 What strategies should be applied to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?

Table 4: Strategies to be applied to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school

S/N	What are the strategies to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state?	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Introduction of practical in the political science teaching curriculum.	2.85	0.99	Accepted
2	Award scheme for student and teachers that excel in political science.	3.12	1.03	Accepted
3	Making it a law that politicians must have a political science certificate.	2.83	0.97	Accepted
4	Introducing the study of political science in junior secondary schools.	2.34	1.02	Rejected
5	There should be increase in the funding of schools offering political science.	2.51	1.06	Accepted
6	Political science graduates should be encouraged to go into politics.	2.60	1.06	Accepted
Grand Mean		2.71	1.04	Accepted

Key: \bar{X} = mean , SD = Standard Deviation

Table 4 above shows that out of 6 items of the questionnaire to determine the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state, only item number 4 was rejected while the items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 was accepted. The grand mean of the means was accepted based on the fact that it is 2.71 which is within the acceptable range.

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses was tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 alpha level;

Ho₁ There is no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the teachers and students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Table 5: Opinions of male and female teachers on the teachers and students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school

Variable	N	mean	SD	Df	LS	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	71	2.75	1.04					
				128	0.05	0.214	1.960	NOT Significant
Female	59	2.68	1.02					

Key: N=Number of Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, Df=Degree of freedom, LS=Level of significance,

Table 5 above showed that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female teachers on the teachers and students background constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state as the grand mean t-calculated of the t-test is 0.214 which is less than t-critical of 1.960.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Table 6: Opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school

Variable	N	mean	SD	Df	LS	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	71	2.72	1.04					
				128	0.05	0.010	1.960	NOT Significant
Female	59	2.70	1.04					

Key: N=Number of Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation, Df=Degree of freedom, LS=Level of significance,

Table 6 above showed that there is no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state as the grand mean t-calculated of the t-test is 0.010 which is less than t-critical of 1.960.

Summary of the findings

This study entitled ‘problems and challenges of teaching political science in secondary schools in Ebonyi state’ was able to come up with the following as the main problem and challenges of teaching political science in secondary schools in Ebonyi State:

1. That some teachers' and students' background such as; lack of job vacancies for political science graduates, students not liking the method of teaching political science, use of non students centered methods to teach political science, and not making use of instructional materials in teaching political science constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
2. On the curriculum and administrative policies constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state they implicated; secondary school curriculum being in variance with the society norms, objectives of the political science curriculum always not achievable, over load of work for political science teacher, lack of teachers to teach political science in secondary schools and Government not putting the results of research works of political science in use.
3. The study on the nature of political science and teaching environment constitute problems and challenges discovered that; topics in political science are abstract in nature, studies in political science not actually conforming with what is happening in real life, Communities not giving good value to students and teachers of political science and Political science teachers being regarded as non-promise keeping set of people are the main causes of problems and challenges of teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
4. In order to remedy these problems and challenges they gave node to; introduction of practical in the political science teaching curriculum, award scheme for student and teachers that excel in political science, making it compulsory that politicians must have a political science certificate, increase in the funding of schools offering political science and encouraging political science graduates to go into politics as strategies should be applied to overcome the problems associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.
5. The study made it clear that there was no significant difference on the opinions of male and female political science teachers on the teachers and students background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

6. Finally the study unveiled that there was no significant difference on the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies to be applied to overcome the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Discussion

This study is a very important one in the sense that it is aimed at solving the problem of poor teaching and learning of political science in Ebonyi State and even Nigeria in general. This aim was actually achieved as the main problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in Ebonyi state were exposed. Most of the things discovered are not far from the other researchers have been saying about teaching of political science in Nigeria. On the issue of teachers' and students' background constitute problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state. The study is in line with Oladebinu, Adekunle & Oyediran (2018) who stated that, students' factors, parental background, school factors, and teachers' factors have serious influence on students' academic performance.

Curriculum and administrative policies, nature of political science and teaching environment were all considered to be constituting problems and challenges in teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state. This submission is supported by the review done by Idris et al (2021), that recommended national curriculum review by making political science a compulsory course for all disciplines, field trip/excursion as well as incorporating information and communications technology in teaching and learning political science education for prompt realization of sustainable development in Nigeria. The study went further to unveil some remedies to this poor teaching of political science to include; introduction of practical in the political science teaching curriculum, award scheme for student and teachers that excel in political science, making it compulsory that politicians must have a political science certificate, increase in the funding of schools offering political science and encouraging political science graduates to go into politics. The two hypotheses showed no significant difference for male and female political science teachers on both teachers and students' background and on the remedies to the problems and challenges associated with teaching of political science in secondary school in Ebonyi state.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study it is important to conclude that adequate measures should be taken to improve on the teaching and learning of political science in Ebonyi State and Nigeria in general as it will go a long way in creating a suitable democratic rule in the country. Areas of major interest to this study include; students and teachers welfare, employment of adequate qualified political science teachers, review of curriculum to meet current trend and regular workshops and seminars for political science teachers.

Recommendations

On the strength of the result of this study the following recommendations were made;

1. There is need to employ more political science teachers that will teach both political science and social studies in the secondary schools in the state.
2. This study is of the view that secondary school curriculum and administrative policies should be reviewed to met up with the current need of the society as it stands now secondary school curriculum is in variance with the society norms.
3. The study is also recommending for better funding of secondary schools especially the political science section as it is the place where basic knowledge for any profession is acquired.
4. The study is of the view that workshops, seminars and in-service training should be regularly organized//approved for currently serving political science teachers so as to make them up to date in methods and trend of political science teaching.
5. Field trips, excursions and practical exhibition should be inculcated in secondary school political science curriculum.

References

- Al-Khaza'leh, M. S., (2021) University and Political Awareness among Students: A Study in the Role of University in Promoting Political Awareness. *Journal of Educational and Social Research Vol 11 No 2 March 2021. www.richtmann.org*
- Dauda, H. &Garba, S. (2017). An Introduction to Philosophy of Education. Kano: Tamasi Computer and Printings.

- Emas, R. (2015). *The Concept of Sustainable Development: Definition and Defining Principles*. Florida International University.
- Eze, D. N. (2005). *What to write and how to write. a step-by-step guide to educational Research Proposal and Report. A publication of the Institute of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka.*
- Idris, A. A., Aliyu A., Kabiru, S. S. & Yusha'u A., (2021) The role of Political Science Education toward achieving Sustainable development in Nigeria *Journal of School of Arts and Social Sciences, Kano State College of Education and Preliminary Studies (KASCEPS) P.M.B. 3145, Kano turakindanhassan@gmail.com*
- Juan, M. F. (2015) Problems and challenges for the Politics of Education before the change of prominence experienced by educational actors. *New Approaches in Educational Research* Vol. 2. No. 2. July 2013 pp. 63–71 ISSN: 2254-7399 DOI: 10.7821/naer.2.2.63-71.
- Nworgu B. G. (2015): *Educational Research; Basic issues and methodology* University of Nigeria . Ibadan Wisdom publishers.
- Oladebinu T. O., Amos A. A. & W.O. Oyediran (2018), *Factors Affecting Students' Academic Performance in Colleges of Education In Southwest, Nigeria*. Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) Vol.6, No.10, pp.43-56.
- Rodolfo B. T., Wayet, J. D., Loneza G. C. (2016). Mass media: Its impact to the knowledge level of political science students of kalinga state university, philippines. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences*. Vol. 5 | No. 9 | www.garph.co.uk.
- United Nation General Assembly. (1987). *Report of the World Commission on environment and development: Our Common Future*, Oslo, Norway; United Nation General Assembly. Development and International Corporation, Environment. Retrieved from <http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987ours>.
- Uzebu Efosa (2010). Challenges of information technology to skill acquisition in tertiary political science education. *Knowledge Review Volume 21 No. 2*.