

POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION FOR JOB CREATION

Efosa Uzebu
Department of Political Science,
College of Education,
Ekiadolor-Benin,
Edo State

Abstract

This paper looks at how Political Science Education in Nigeria could create job for its graduates that are roaming the streets in search of white collar jobs in both public and private establishments which are not easy to come by. This has been of concern to educationists, government and society at large. Political Science is the systematic and analytical study of the acquisition, control and exercise of power by individuals, groups and organizations within the political system. It inculcates in the citizenry the knowledge of government, its processes, principles, political theories, democratic ideas, values, attitudes and norms that are essential for the development and sustenance of a democratic culture and stable polity. The author recommends that: (1) Intending law students should be made to have a degree in political science before being admitted to study law. (2) Entrepreneurial study and computer training should be included in political science curriculum, etc.

Introduction

Many Nigerian graduates nowadays find it difficult to find a job after graduation from tertiary institutions. Those worst hit are those who studied social sciences one of which is Political Science. For graduates to gain employment without sweat which was the case in the sixties and seventies has now preoccupied the minds of parents, educationists and government. Employment according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is work, especially when it is done to earn money.

Emphasis is now on education that can create employment for oneself and not

having to search for it in government and public establishments. We are all aware that public and private sector jobs are in short supply compared to the number of graduates turned out by Nigeria's tertiary institutions yearly. While it is easily possible for a new graduate in Medicine, Engineering or Law to immediately get job or set up his own private practice, those who read Political Science may not be able to do the same. He has to move from one office to another in search of one and may sometimes be lucky to be employed as administrators, public relations officer, teachers, etc.

Those that are lucky are few compared to the number looking for such jobs.

This is so because educational training in Nigeria today is characterized by the following:

- (i) Learning of theories and concepts without adequate emphasis on application and utility.
- (ii) Training received in educational institutions is geared towards employment and not for job creation.

Political Science Education in Nigeria

Political Science is the systematic and analytical study of the acquisition, control and exercise of power by groups, individuals and organizations within the political system. As an instrument for citizenship education, Political Science inculcates in the citizenry the knowledge of government, its processes, principles, political theories, democratic ideas, values, attitudes and norms that are essential for the development and sustenance of a democratic culture and stable polity.

Its study is also useful for understanding of relations among states and international organizations, their interdependence, cooperation, peaceful co-existence and mutual assistance.

Now that the graduate of Political Science has been taught all those things mentioned above, what can he do with them?

He can either be employed by organizations requiring his services or find something else to do that is not related to his field of study. It would have been suggested that he goes to play active

politics by running for political office, but where will finance with which to do it come from? This is a big problem.

Although Government is taught in secondary schools in Nigeria and graduates of Political Science naturally have jobs created for them there, all cannot be absorbed in the secondary schools. In schools where Government is taught, few teachers are employed to teach the subject.

When one looks at the objectives of Political Science Education at the Colleges of Education level in Nigeria, the programme in the National Commission for Colleges of Education handbook states that it is designed to equip the students with the skills, knowledge and methodology needed for effective teaching of Government in secondary schools (NCCE Handbook, 2009).

The primary objectives of the programme (FRN, 2009) are:

- a) to produce proficient teachers of Government who possess sound knowledge of Political Science.
- b) to produce inspiring teachers of the subject who, not only possess confidence, skills and techniques necessary for the teaching of the subject but also possess the proper values and attitudes towards political science as a discipline of study.
- c) to inculcate within the scope of the students' training the necessary values, skills and techniques for effective and moral leadership.

- d) to produce the necessary training in citizenship and broaden students' sense and scope of participation in community as well as national affairs.
- e) to produce teachers that can inspire and inculcate in the students, the values and attitudes of Pan-Africanism, African nationalism and African brotherhood.
- f) to produce teachers who can foster the growth of international cooperation, co-existence and mutual assistance.

As laudable as these objectives are, Political Science cannot be said to be able to create jobs for all graduates of the subject or to create self-employment for all of them. Schools are limited just as the number each school can employ are also limited while Political Science graduates are unlimited. Records available at the Department of Political Science in tertiary institutions attest to the fact that potential graduates of the subject are too many for the system to absorb.

At the College of Education, Ekiadolor-Benin for example, those who wanted Political Science combinations were over one thousand, five hundred, but facilities on ground could only permit the admission of about three hundred and fifty students. One of the reasons given by most of the students who chose the subject was that since the National Assembly was contemplating making a tertiary education certificate the minimum requirement for

election in Nigeria and since they intended to be politicians, they have to be prepared now. Its implementation by the National Assembly is a step in the right direction.

This can also lead to self-reliance and as Danladi, (2000) put it, self-reliance calls for a system of education where citizens acquire the right type of values and attitudes, practical skills and knowledge that would enable them attain self-development through self-employment. Although some of them can readily find jobs as teachers, civil servants, etc. but the subject cannot be said to be able to create jobs.

Conclusion

It is quite clear that Political Science as a course of study cannot in itself create jobs *per se*, although many of those who studied it are engaged today in money-yielding ventures. Many of those who did not study it are also engaged in money-yielding ventures. Many of them would complain that the jobs they are engaged in are not the ones they would have preferred.

The natural home of the Political Scientists is in government as a politician, adviser on political matters, teachers of government or lecturer of Political Science at a higher level. It does not create job, since those who also did not read it are also being employed by these institutions.

Recommendations are made as to how it can create jobs.

Recommendations

1. The 5th edition of the National Policy on Education should be out in no

distant future. This edition should include the condition for the study of law in Nigeria which must include a degree in Political Science before one could be admitted to study Law. According to Rosenfeld (2010) this is already being done in advanced countries like the United States of America. Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama of the United States had Bachelor's Degrees in Political Science before studying Law in Universities. Whenever a lawyer who studied Political Science first before reading law loses election, he will have his law chambers to fall back on. In fact, having a background in Political Science will encourage him to have interest in politics. Two jobs have therefore been created for him – politic and law. He could help create job for others from these professions.

2. The Political Scientist can become an entrepreneur if he learns other trades in the course of his training as a Political Scientist. An entrepreneur is a person who makes money by starting or running business, especially when this involves taking financial risk. Onu (2009) maintained that entrepreneurs are people who perceive these opportunities with their inherent intelligence, drive and hardworking who are making the best use of the opportunities that are available with the changes that are taking place in

the growth of business and globalization.

Political Scientists are intelligent people who readily detect opportunities, but the problem is finance. Government could come in to help by making low-interest loan available to those Political Scientists interested in starting their own businesses. On the long run, they could also be employers of labour. The Political Scientist is advised to take training in entrepreneurship in his area of interest like farming, buying and selling, etc.

3. Training in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) – The Political Scientist should also undertake training in ICT while in school. The Political Scientist could benefit from computer training just like any other educated person as his mind and brain are opened to any wind that blows. He could therefore establish a 'business centre' where people could come and browse. He could help customers to the centre to carry out political researches for a fee, and if this is well handled, he could earn a living for himself and employ others. We all are aware of the busy nature of business centre today in big cities.

References

- Danladi, E.N. (2000). *Attitudes and values for self-reliance in dimensions of social studies*. WAIS Printing Press, Jos.

- FRN (2009). *National commission for colleges of education handbook*, Abuja: NERDC Press.
- FRN (1998). *National policy on education*, Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Hornby, (2000). *Oxford advanced learners dictionary* (6th Edition). University Press, Oxford.
- Onu (2009). In *Public Policy-making and Implementation (Entrepreneurship in Nigeria)*, Ethiope Publishing Corporation, Benin City.
- Rosenfeld, L. (2010). *The profiles of three United States Presidents: George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.