https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

ORIGINAL RESEARCH
Kakanchi Multidisciplinary Journal of COEASU
Vol. 1, Issue 1, 1-09, July 2026
OPEN ACCESS
E-ISSN 3156-397X

Teaching Political Science in the Digital Era: Implications for Teacher Education in Nigeria

Ozabor Celestina Onome & Usman Kabiru

Department of Political Science, School of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi State, NIGERIA

Correspondence: *ozabor.celestina2436@fceokene.edu.ng*

Highlights:
Encourage constructivist learning theory as its framework for digital pedagogy transforms political science teaching classrooms

Enumerates significant barriers hinder digital integration

Recommends digital policy integration and capacity-building

Received date: 7 May 2026
Revised date: 13 June 2026
Accepted date: 20 July 2026

Citation: Ozabor C. O & Usman K. (2026). Teaching Political Science in the Digital Era: Implications for Teacher Education in Nigeria. 1(01),1-09

Abstract: The digital era has significantly changed the way politics is communicated, understood, and practiced in Nigeria. From social media activism to online political campaigns and digital governance platforms, technology plays a major role in shaping political life. These developments have important implications for the teaching of Political Science and for teacher education in Nigeria. This paper examines how Political Science can be effectively taught in the digital era and its implication for the preparation of future teachers. Using a qualitative research design with documentary analysis and key policy review the data were drawn from secondary sources which include policy documents, institutional reports, curriculum documents, peer-reviewed journal articles, textbooks and others. The study was Constructivist Learning Theory, the paper argues that digital tools can promote active learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and student engagement in Political Science classrooms. It highlights practical strategies such as online debates, virtual simulations of legislative processes, digital research platforms, and the use of multimedia resources to explain political concepts. The study identifies major challenges, as inadequate ICT infrastructure, unstable electricity supply, limited digital competence among teacher educators, and unequal access to digital devices among students. It concludes that strengthening digital capacity in teacher education is essential for preparing Political Science teachers to effectively teach in Nigeria's evolving digital environment. The paper recommends integrating digital pedagogy into Political Science teacher education curricula, providing regular professional development for teacher educators, increasing funding for ICT facilities in schools, and developing policies that ensure equitable access to digital learning tools.

Keywords: Political Science Education, Digital Learning, Teacher Education, Constructivism

Introduction

The twenty-first century has been profoundly shaped by rapid digital transformation across political, economic, and social spheres. Advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly the internet, mobile technologies, and social media platforms, have altered how citizens interact with political institutions, access political information, and participate in governance processes. According to Manuel Castells (2010), contemporary societies are increasingly organized around digital networks that shape communication, power relations, and political participation. These developments have significantly transformed the dynamics of political engagement and democratic participation across the world. In Nigeria, the influence of digital technologies on political processes has grown rapidly over the past decade. Social media platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and WhatsApp have become important arenas for political discourse, electoral mobilization, and civic activism. Youth-led movements such as the #EndSARS movement demonstrated how digital

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

platforms can facilitate political mobilization and public accountability (Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021). Similarly, digital technologies are increasingly used for voter education, election monitoring, and policy advocacy by civil society organizations and political actors (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019). These transformations indicate that political participation in contemporary Nigeria is increasingly mediated through digital communication systems.

These developments have significant implications for Political Science education and, more importantly, for the training of future teachers who will educate the next generation of citizens. Political Science is central to the development of civic consciousness, democratic values, and political literacy in society. However, traditional approaches to teaching Political Science in many Nigerian institutions remain largely lecture-based and teacher-centered, relying heavily on textbooks and limited classroom interaction (Okeke, 2014). Such approaches may not adequately prepare students to understand and critically engage with the complexities of digitally mediated political environments. The integration of digital technologies into teaching and learning offers important opportunities to transform Political Science education. Digital tools such as virtual simulations, online debate platforms, multimedia resources, and learning management systems can promote interactive and participatory learning environments (Selwyn, 2016; Adeleke & Ojedele, 2018). These tools encourage critical thinking, collaborative learning, and experiential engagement with political processes, which are essential components of effective Political Science education.

Despite these potential benefits, the integration of digital technologies into teacher education in Nigeria faces several structural challenges. These include inadequate ICT infrastructure, unstable electricity supply, limited digital competence among teacher educators, and unequal access to digital devices and internet connectivity among students (Adebayo, 2015; NCCE, 2020). Such challenges limit the effective implementation of digital learning strategies in many teacher education institutions.

The digital era has fundamentally transformed how knowledge is created, accessed, and transmitted. In Political Science, this shift in knowledge means students now engage with governance, elections, civic participation, and public policy through digital platforms, social media, data analytics, and e-learning tools. The 21st-century classroom demands that teachers move beyond traditional lecture methods to integrate technology, digital literacy, and critical digital citizenship into instruction. However, in Nigeria, evidence suggests that Political Science teacher education programmes have not kept pace with these changes. Many pre-service and in-service Political Science teachers were trained under conventional pedagogical models with limited exposure to digital learning tools, online research methods, simulation software, and ICT-based instructional strategies. Consequently, classrooms still rely heavily on chalk-and-talk methods, while students remain more digitally literate than their teachers. This mismatch creates a gap between what is taught and how students learn in a digital society.

Furthermore, the implications of this gap are serious, teachers may struggle to make Political Science relevant to students, may fail to develop students' digital civic competencies, and may be ill-equipped to assess learning in online and blended environments. Teacher education institutions therefore face the challenge of retooling curricula, pedagogy, and teacher competencies to align with digital-era demands. Despite the urgency, there is limited empirical research in Nigeria specifically examining how the digital era is reshaping the teaching of Political

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

Science and what this means for teacher preparation. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the implications of the digital era for teaching Political Science and for teacher education in Nigeria. Against this background, this paper examines the implications of the digital era for the teaching of Political Science in Nigeria, with particular attention to teacher education.

Conceptual Clarifications

The Digital Era

The digital era refers to the period in which digital technologies are embedded in social, political, and economic life. It involves the shift from analogue to digital communication systems, the rise of internet-mediated social networks, and the increasing importance of real-time information access (Castells, 2010 & Selwyn, 2016). In Nigeria, digital technologies have reshaped political participation. Online advocacy, civic mobilization, and electoral monitoring increasingly occur through social media platforms (Olorunnisola & Martin, 2013; Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021). While these platforms offer unprecedented engagement opportunities, they also facilitate the spread of misinformation, fake news, and political polarization (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019). For Political Science teacher education, the digital era necessitates curricula that integrate digital governance, cyber politics, media literacy, and online civic engagement analysis.

Teacher Education

Teacher education encompasses structured academic and professional preparation for teaching. In Nigeria, Colleges of Education and university Faculties of Education are primarily regulated by the National Commission for Colleges of Education and the National Universities Commission respectively (NCCE, 2020). Effective teacher education extends beyond content mastery to include pedagogical skills, adaptability, and responsiveness to societal changes (Okeke, 2014; Adebayo, 2015). In the digital era, teacher preparation must include digital literacy, proficiency in educational technologies, and adaptive teaching strategies to meet the learning needs of digitally aware students.

Digital Learning

The term digital is derived from the Latin word digitus, meaning finger and refers to the system that use discrete values to represent data. In contemporary usage, it describes the technologies, processes, and environments where information is encoded in binary form and mediated through electronic devices such as computers, smartphones and the internet (Castells, 2010, and Selwyn, 2016). Digital learning involves the use of electronic platforms, tools, and resources to facilitate teaching and learning. It includes online instruction, blended learning, multimedia content, and collaborative digital platforms (Selwyn, 2016; Ezeani, 2020). Constructivist theory (Piaget, 1970 & Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes active knowledge construction, making digital tools compatible with learner-centered pedagogical approaches. For Political Science, digital learning enables interactive simulations of governance, virtual debates on public policy, and online research engagement with comparative political systems (Okeke, 2014). It also fosters collaboration, discussion, and experiential engagement, which are central to constructivist pedagogy.

Political Science Teacher Education

Political Science teacher education specifically prepares educators to teach subjects such as government, civics, and public administration (Ayoade, 2008; Adebayo, 2015). Its objectives include fostering critical thinking, democratic consciousness, and civic responsibility among students. In Nigeria, the integration

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

of digital tools into Political Science teacher education has both pedagogical and democratic significance. Digital platforms provide experiential learning opportunities that align with the demands of contemporary governance and civic engagement, preparing future teachers to cultivate informed, critically aware citizens (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019; Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts Constructivist Learning Theory as its sole analytical lens. Constructivism, advanced by Jean Piaget (1970) and Lev Vygotsky (1978), posit that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction, experience, and social engagement. Piaget emphasizes cognitive development through exploration and problem-solving, while Vygotsky highlights the role of social interaction in learning. In Political Science teacher education, constructivism provides a framework to analyze the integration of digital learning. Digital technologies, such as online debates, virtual civic simulations, and collaborative research platforms, create interactive environments for active knowledge construction. Teacher educators become facilitators guiding students to engage critically with governance concepts, policy debates, and civic responsibilities (Okeke, 2014; Adeleke & Ojedele, 2018).

Constructivist analysis underscores that digital integration is not merely technological adoption; it is a pedagogical transformation aimed at fostering inquiry, collaboration, and critical thinking. In this context, Nigerian teacher education institutions must ensure digital tools are used to enhance experiential learning, promote discussion, and encourage democratic participation among students.

Teaching Political Science in the Digital Era

The teaching of Political Science in the digital era requires a significant transformation in pedagogical approaches, instructional strategies, and the overall learning environment within teacher education institutions. Traditionally, Political Science instruction in Nigeria has largely relied on lecture-based methods in which instructors transmit knowledge while students play a relatively passive role in the learning process. While this approach has been effective in transmitting theoretical knowledge, it often limits opportunities for critical engagement, collaborative learning, and the practical application of political concepts. In the contemporary digital environment, however, technological innovations offer new possibilities for creating interactive and learner-centered educational experiences. According to Manuel Castells (2010), modern societies are increasingly organized around digital communication networks that shape the flow of information, political participation, and governance processes. As political communication becomes more digitally mediated, Political Science education must adapt to prepare students for these evolving realities.

Digital technologies have made it possible for educators to integrate a variety of online platforms and multimedia resources into the teaching of Political Science. Tools such as Learning Management Systems, digital libraries, virtual classrooms, and online discussion forums enable greater interaction between students and instructors and allow students to access a wide range of political information and scholarly resources. These platforms also facilitate collaborative learning by enabling students to participate in virtual discussions, group research projects, and online policy debates. Scholars such as Neil Selwyn (2016) argue that digital technologies have the potential

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

to transform traditional educational environments by promoting active learning, knowledge sharing, and critical engagement with academic content.

Another important dimension of digital learning in Political Science education is the opportunity for experiential and simulation-based learning. Through digital simulations, students can engage in activities such as mock parliamentary debates, virtual election monitoring exercises, and simulated diplomatic negotiations. These activities enable students to assume roles as political actors, policy makers, or civil society advocates, thereby providing practical insights into the functioning of political institutions and governance processes. Constructivist theorists such as Jean Piaget (1970) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) emphasize that learning occurs most effectively when students actively participate in the construction of knowledge through interaction, experimentation, and social collaboration. Digital simulations therefore align closely with constructivist pedagogical principles by allowing learners to explore political concepts through practical engagement rather than passive memorization.

Digital platforms also enhance collaborative learning and democratic dialogue among students. Online discussion boards and virtual seminar platforms enable students to exchange ideas, analyze political events, and debate public policy issues with peers. Such interactions expose students to diverse viewpoints and encourage them to critically evaluate political arguments. In the context of Political Science education, these discussions mirror the deliberative processes that characterize democratic governance. Research on digital political communication in Nigeria suggests that online platforms have become important spaces for civic engagement and political discourse, particularly among young people (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019).

Digital technologies also provide access to vast repositories of political information and research materials. Online databases, international governance reports, and digital archives allow students to explore comparative political systems and analyze political developments across different countries. This exposure broadens students' analytical perspectives and enhances their understanding of global governance structures. According to Ezeani (2020), digital learning environments provide students with opportunities to conduct independent research and engage critically with political data, thereby strengthening their analytical and problem-solving skills.

Another critical aspect of teaching Political Science in the digital era is the promotion of digital citizenship and media literacy. The proliferation of digital communication platforms has increased the circulation of political information but has also created new challenges such as misinformation, fake news, and political propaganda. Teacher education programmes must therefore equip future Political Science teachers with the skills required to critically evaluate online information sources and guide students in identifying credible political information. Scholars studying civic engagement in the digital age emphasize that critical media literacy is essential for strengthening democratic participation and preventing the manipulation of public opinion (Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021).

Despite these opportunities, the effective integration of digital technologies into Political Science teaching requires strong institutional support and capacity development among educators. Many teacher educators in Nigeria lack adequate training in digital pedagogy and instructional technologies. Without appropriate professional development programmes, digital tools may be underutilized or used in ways that do not significantly enhance learning outcomes.

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

Studies on teacher education reform in Nigeria highlight the need for sustained capacity-building initiatives that equip educators with the skills required to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices (Okeke, 2014; Adebayo, 2015).

In the Nigerian context, the successful teaching of Political Science in the digital era will depend largely on the ability of teacher education institutions to integrate digital tools into both curriculum design and classroom practice. This integration must go beyond the mere introduction of computers and internet facilities into educational institutions; it should involve a fundamental transformation in pedagogical philosophy toward interactive, inquiry-based, and student-centered learning. When properly implemented, digital technologies can significantly enhance Political Science education by promoting critical thinking, civic awareness, and democratic participation among students.

Opportunities in Integrating Digital Learning in Political Science Education

Experiential Political Learning: Virtual simulations of parliamentary debates, elections, and public policy negotiations allow teacher trainees to actively construct knowledge (Piaget, 1970; Okeke, 2014). For instance, students may role-play lawmakers or civil society actors, gaining insights into governance processes and institutional dynamics.

Collaborative Civic Engagement: Vygotsky's social constructivism highlights knowledge construction through interaction. Digital discussion forums, collaborative projects, and virtual classrooms enable peer-to-peer engagement on constitutional reforms, electoral policies, and civic responsibilities (Adebayo, 2015). Collaborative digital engagement mirrors democratic dialogue in broader society.

Critical Digital Citizenship: Digital platforms expose students to vast amounts of political information, including misinformation. Constructivist pedagogy requires trainees to critically analyze online content and identify biases, thus strengthening digital literacy and responsible civic behaviour (Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021; Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019).

Access to Global Political Knowledge: Digital resources provide access to comparative politics databases, international governance reports, and global policy case studies (Ezeani, 2020). Trainees can analyze, synthesize, and apply this knowledge to local contexts, enhancing pedagogical and analytical competence.

Structural and Institutional Challenges of Teaching Political Science in the Digital Era

- Reliable digital engagement requires stable electricity and internet connectivity. Many Nigerian teacher education institutions face frequent outages and limited network coverage, undermining experiential learning (Adeleke & Ojedele, 2018).

- Constructivist pedagogy redefines the teacher as a facilitator. However, many lecturers lack training in digital instructional strategies (Okeke, 2014; Adebayo, 2015). Without capacity building, digital tools may be underutilized.
- Socio-economic disparities limit equitable participation in digital learning. Rural students or those from low-income households may lack devices or internet access, creating barriers to experiential and collaborative learning (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019).

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

- Nigeria's ICT education policies articulate ambitious goals, but weak implementation and bureaucratic inefficiencies hinder digital integration (NCCE, 2020; Ezeani, 2020). Without institutional support, digital initiatives remain superficial.
- Applying constructivist analysis, digital integration in Political Science teacher education requires: Curriculum Restructuring: Embed digital simulations, virtual civic engagement, and online research methodology as mandatory components (Okeke, 2014). Professional Development: Continuous training for lecturers on interactive digital pedagogy (Adebayo, 2015). Equity-Oriented Digital Policy: Provide devices, subsidized internet, and campus-wide Wi-Fi to reduce digital inequality (Ibrahim & Salihu, 2019). Democratic Citizenship Focus: Emphasize critical analysis of online political content, digital activism, and responsible civic engagement (Oladejo & Olatunji, 2021).

Conclusion (s)

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed political communication, civic participation, and governance processes across the world. In Nigeria, digital platforms have become significant arenas for political engagement, public discourse, and democratic activism. These developments have important implications for Political Science education and for the preparation of teachers who will educate future generations of citizens.

This study has demonstrated that digital technologies offer significant opportunities for enhancing Political Science pedagogy. Digital learning tools can promote experiential learning, collaborative engagement, critical thinking, and active participation among students. Through virtual simulations, online debates, and digital research platforms, teacher trainees can develop a deeper understanding of political institutions, governance processes, and civic responsibilities.

However, the effective integration of digital technologies into Political Science teacher education in Nigeria remains constrained by several structural challenges. These include inadequate ICT infrastructure, insufficient digital competence among educators, unequal access to digital resources among students, and gaps between policy formulation and implementation. Without addressing these challenges, the transformative potential of digital learning in Political Science education may remain largely unrealized.

Recommendations

1. Teacher education curricula in Nigeria should be restructured to incorporate digital pedagogy as a core component of Political Science teacher training.
2. Government and educational authorities should prioritize continuous professional development for teacher educators in digital teaching strategies. This can be achieved through regular workshops, training programmes, and capacity-building initiatives.
3. There is an urgent need for increased government investment in ICT infrastructure within Colleges of Education and universities.
4. Policies aimed at reducing digital inequality among students should be implemented.
5. Political Science teacher education programmes should emphasize the development of critical digital citizenship skills.

Acknowledgements: The authors acknowledge the institutional support provided by Federal College of Education (FCE) Okene. The research

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

infrastructure and academic environment facilitated the successful execution and completion of this study.

Funding Statement: This work was supported by peronnal effort.

Data Availability: The analyzed data are included within the article.

Declaration: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, that could be perceived as influencing the objectivity or integrity of the research presented herein.

Author Contributions: Ozabor Celestina Onome did the Conceptualization & Investigation. **Usman Kabiru** did the Formal Analysis, Methodology, and Validation, support Funding Acquisition, Resources, and Project Administration. **Ozabor Celestina Onome** did the Writing of the original Draft, Writing-Review & Edit.

Disclosure: The AI-assisted visual output has been verified, with the authors taking final responsibility for the intellectual content.

Reference

Adebayo, F. A. (2015). Teacher education and digital literacy in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. Ibadan University Press.

Adeleke, A., & Ojedele, P. (2018). Digital transformation in Nigerian teacher education: Infrastructural and policy challenges. *African Journal of Education and Technology*, 4(2), 45–62.

Adewumi, T. O., Olaniran, S. O., & Agwuegbo, I. (2022). Digital divide and educational media use in Nigerian teacher training: A mixed-methods study. *International Conference on Education Research and Teaching* 3(3), 1–16.

Ayoade, J. A. A. (2008). Godfather politics in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations,* 2(1), 12–28.

Castells, M. (2010). *The rise of the network society* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Eke, O. O. (2025). Assessment of Nigerian teacher educators' strategies for professional digital competent development. *Eduphoria Journal,* 2(04), 51-64.

Ezeani, E. (2020). Digital learning and political education in Nigeria: Opportunities and constraints. *Journal of Nigerian Social Studies*, 18(1), 101–118.

Ibrahim, J., & Salihu, A. (2019). Social media and political participation in Nigeria: Emerging trends. *Nigerian Journal of Political Science*, 14(2), 56–73.

Kolawole F. Ogunbodede, T. O. Ewata, & O. G. Okediji. (2023). Digital competencies and the 21st century skills of university teachers in Nigeria. *European Journal of Interactive Multimedia and Education, 4(2),1-6.*

Mojirade Ayantunji & Adekunle Makanjuola. (2025). Digital tools for democratic citizenship: Enhancing social studies to combat human trafficking in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *Ife Journal of Social and Civic Studies, 1(1), 1-19.*

National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) (2020). *National policy on ICT integration in teacher education*. Abuja: NCCE Publications.

Nwobodo, C. J., & Udoka, C. E. (2025). Evaluating technology integration in teaching and learning: A survey of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Humanities and Contemporary Education Research,* 20(1), 19–40.

Obiagu, A. N. (2019). Influence of teachers' characteristics on civic education implementation in

https://doi.org/10.68071/8m4q2x7p

Nigeria. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 2(2), 1-15.

Oladejo, M., & Olatunji, T. (2021). Civic engagement in the digital age: Lessons from the EndSARS movement. *African Journal of Political Communication,* 5(1), 77–95.

Okeke, B. C. (2014). Teacher education reform in Nigeria: Policy and practice gaps. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Research,* 11(3), 34–50.

Onu, A. D., Nuru, R. A., & Babafemi, J. (2025). Assessing ICT skills of teachers for post-COVID-19 teaching and learning in Colleges of Education, Northwest Nigeria. *ATBU Journal of Science, Technology and Education, 13(1) 45-59.*

Piaget, J. (1970). *Science of education and the psychology of the child*. Orion Press.

Selwyn, N. (2016). Education and technology: Key issues and debates (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Harvard University Press.