INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN NIGERIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study investigated the instructional strategies for the promotion of effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. The sample for the study consisted of 176 teachers in four secondary schools in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. They were drawn using the random sampling techniques.

A 41 item questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Sixteen of the items sought to find out the ways in which instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools, ten were on the problem confronting the use of instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools. While fifteen items sought out to find out the types of instructional strategies for promoting effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Results showed that teachers agreed that the manner in which the teachers approach in their teaching do not promote effective teaching and learning; that there are problems confronting the use of instructional strategies in their teaching process, and that some of the teachers find it difficult to use instructional strategies in their teaching activities in the classroom.

Recommendations include that secondary school teachers should be allowed to be involved in the curriculum planning and implementation, in order to make them bring in students-centered methods/instructional strategies that will make their teaching more lively and interesting as it is likely to produce self-reliant students than the traditional approach.

Keyworlds: Instructional strategies, student's centered methods, effective teaching and learning, curriculum, innovative teaching.

Background of the study

Instructional strategies are all the things the teachers uses to aid the learners in their learning process; they are the means used to bring about effective teaching and learning. Obara and Okoh (2005) regard instructional strategies and materials as "all the things the teacher utilizes to interactively enhance, motivate and facilitate teaching and learning in an attempt to ensuring the achievement of a set objectives."

The effectiveness of instructional materials and strategies depends upon the manner and degree to which they meet the needs of the teacher and students. Instructional strategies and materials are selected based on the principles of provision of accurate materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the interest, abilities and maturity levels of the students. Teachers should be encouraged in every way to use instructional strategies as it makes learning more concrete and meaningful (Buseri and Dorgu 2011).

Teaching brings about understanding; it involves a teacher, a learner and subject matter and teaching materials. Therefore to bring about learning, the teacher engages in certain activities such as talking, demonstration, and give instruction etc, all these are the various strategies to bring about learning (Adediran 2014).

Teachers need to use different instructional strategies to ensure students centered method in the classroom for creativity, innovative and critical thinking purpose in students. Classroom teaching is likely to be more effective when it is informed by an understanding of how students learn. It is therefore important that, the major implications of instructional strategies be reflected in classroom practice. In recent times, emerging research findings seem to show that oriented instructional strategies are becoming increasingly popular in the teaching of various subjects in the secondary school level of education in Nigeria (Ogundare, 1985), (Osakwe 2009). These instructional strategies involve resolution of problems, active practice participations of learners in the teaching process and emphasis on process rather than products of learning. Some of these strategies and approaches according to Osakwe (2009) are categorized under conventional and innovative appraises, instructional strategies which are classified under conventional are mostly those routine, well-knowing ones which teachers use predominantly. They are usually teacher-centered with little or no activities for students. These include teaching method like lecture, story-telling, recitation, etc, on the other hand, the innovative strategies include those ones that are much more recent which are predominantly learner-centered. These include questioning, inquiry/problem solving, role-play and dramatization (Adediran 2014).

The curriculum of secondary school education is so enormous that it prepare young people for full adults lives in the complex and dynamic world. This kind of preparation falls in line with, (2004), dispositive curriculum that the global requirements for education in recent times include promoting life-long education, re-emphasizing the quality of learner experiences, reorganizing subjects into key learning areas so as to develop broad knowledge base, and developing in the leaner the ability to think critically and be innovative. This kind of education, according to Enu and Esu (2010), afford the products of the system the ability to respond to social goal economic realities and future life-challenges. It is universally accepted that students needs the chance to develop faith, self-expression and confidence in them. They also need the ability and skill to learn about themselves; the societal problem and about the wider communities in which the live.

Effective teaching in secondary schools should emphasize the use of activity-oriented method and instructional strategies that will make students achieve their learning objectives (Adediran 2014). The production of a functional and productive citizenry which is a major focus of secondary school education entails that secondary school education concerns itself with inculcating creative reflective, competence relational, analytic and decision-making skills and competence in the learner (Mezieobi and Mezieobi 2008).

Teaching according to Kanno (2001) should not connote sheer passing on of, or imparting of desirable knowledge to a passive learners recipient who must or demand regurgitate the rote memory acquired and stored knowledge.

Effective teaching in secondary schools should be predominantly students directed interactive learning achievement oriented activities inside and outside the formal classroom situation in which the learner actively participates and makes a conscious and deliberate effort to induce and acquire significant learning under the teacher serving as a learning collaborator, director, guide a catalyst, a helper. Hence, Kanno (2001) noted that teaching it helping other persons (the learners) to learn. The teacher in the teaching-learning setting is not a task master or an autocrat, dishing out encyclopedia knowledge. Meaningful leading according to Akinlaye (2002) is students activity headed such that the students is given a provide democratic latitude to learns by doing it himself through his activity participation commitment and display of his intellectual integrity and capacity for independent judgment.

Educational researcher and developments according to Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2008) have unveiled a number of innovative instructional strategies in secondary schools which apply with equal facility in the classroom. A number of these strategies according to Bransford, Brown and Cockry (2000) as include: learning cycle-based instructional strategy, project-based learning approach, case-based teaching strategy, just-in-time teaching instructional strategy etc. all these strategies make students work through sequences of activities that involves complementary thinking and problem-solving approaches. In most of these instructional strategies, the different activities are designed to appeal to different learning style preferences when the teacher teach based on the strategies; all students are taught partly in a manner they prefer, which leads to an increased comfort level and willingness to learn.

On the whole, scholar of teaching methodology and instructional strategies (Oyetunde, 1990, Mezieobi 1994 and Mbakwem, 2001) are agreed that there is no best method of teaching an no singular method will be appropriate to all school subject, in all situations, Mabkwem (2001) was of the view that each teaching subject has its own peculiarities and emphasis procedures. In like manner, each school subject has its own declared objectives and expected outcomes which may be from other subjects.

Research Questions

i.   To what extent does the instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.
ii. What are the problem confronting the use of instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.
iii. What are the instructional strategies to be used for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools

Objectives

i.   Investigate the extent to which instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.
ii. Determine the problems confronting the use of instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.
iii. Ensure the instructional strategies to be used for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of 220 teachers on secondary schools out of this population, 176 of them were used as sample, amounting to 80% of the population. They were drawn using random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a forty-one item questionnaire. It consisted of three parts. Part A sought to find out the ways in which instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Part B ascertained the problems confronting the use of instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools. Part C, on the other hand, sought to find out the types of instructional strategies for promoting effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Odeda Local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

The instrument was structured using a Four-point rating scale of strongly agree=3.50-4.00, Agree = 2.50-3.49 Disagree=1.50-2.49 and strongly disagree 0.00-1.49. Data obtained were analyzed using mean scores. The criterion mean was determined at 2.50. In other words, any item that had mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted while any that had a mean score less than 2.50 was reflected

Results

The results are presented according to the research questions that guided the study

Research Question 1

In what ways does the instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Table 1 Mean scores of the ways instructional strategies promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
1.	The subject content is communicated to the students at the beginning of the term	44	30	62	40	2.44	Reject
2.	The specific objectives of each period are made known to the students at the beginning of the lesson	39	28	64	45	2.35	Reject
3.	Students partake in planning for instruction and in the improvisation of instructional materials	25	18	78	55	2.07	Reject
4.	Teachers do not dictate notes; rather they encourage interactive discussions and explorations	43	32	65	36	2.47	Reject
5.	Teacher-student classroom interaction patterns are democratic	40	31	68	37	2.42	Reject
6.	Teachers do not like their ideas to be challenged by the students	86	25	72	13	3.27	Accept
7.	The teacher controls all class activities	81	26	60	9	3.02	Accept
8.	Paired work is encouraged by teachers in the lesson delivery	37	31	67	41	2.36	Reject
9.	Collaborative assignments are given to students by the teachers	36	29	68	43	2.33	Reject
10.	Students have choice in the assignment or tasks they perform	28	31	85	32	2.31	Reject
11.	Students have always passed their examinations by reproducing what the teacher gave them in the notes	73	42	33	28	2.91	Accept
12.	There is in-depth coverage of learning content by teachers	30	41	69	36	2.37	Reject
13.	Students have open access to information in the library	61	83	20	12	3.10	Accept
14.	The library holds current information in various subjects	26	28	89	33	2.27	Reject
15.	Students have limited access to information on the internet	29	31	91	25	2.36	Reject
16.	The nature of lesson delivery is the one that encourages ability of the students	18	21	10	38	2.06	Reject

Data from table I show that all the items were rejected except item 6, 7, 11 and 13. This shows that instructional strategies for effective teaching in Abeokuta North Secondary School is the type that does not promote learner effective teaching

Research Question 2

What are the problems confronting the use of instructional strategies effective teaching and learning in secondary school?

Table 2 Mean scores of the problems involved in implementing a leaner autonomous English language education curriculum

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
17.	It is difficult to measure the extent of students ability	81	40	32	23	3.02	Accept
18.	It is a new approach without a clearly delineated procedure	65	76	28	7	3.13	Accept
19.	It reduces the authority of the teacher	13	26	77	60	1.95	Reject
20.	It demands a lot from the teacher in terms of planning	51	46	40	39	2.62	Accept
21.	Large class size may prevent the monitoring of the progress of learning.	55	80	22	19	2.97	Accept
22.	The time allocated to each subject per week may not encourage the use of the approach	8	30	78	60	1.88	Reject
23.	Learner autonomous approach may degenerate into laissez faire approach	44	66	43	23	2.74	Reject
24.	Not many teachers are trained on the use of this approach	46	67	41	22	2.78	Accept
25.	Innovative learning involves open access to information which may not be readily available	17	46	56	57	2.13	Reject
25.	It may not be a suitable approach for dull students	35	72	35	34	2.61	Accept

Data from table 2 indicate that apart from items 3, 6 and 9 all the other items constitute problems to effective teaching and learning in secondary school.

Research Question 3

What are the strategies for promoting effective teaching and learning in secondary school in Odeda Local Government Area?

Table 3 Strategies for promoting effective teaching and learning in secondary schools

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
26.	Making available to the students the subject content at the beginning of each term	40	78	28	30	2.73	Accept
27.	Disclosure of the specific objectives of each lecture before the commencement of each lecture	45	79	26	26	2.81	Accept
28.	Involvement of the learners in planning for instructional strategies	51	83	20	22	2.93	Accept
29.	Use of the instructional strategies as the preferred medium of classroom communication	49	76	27	24	2.85	Accept
30.	Explorative discovery in their lesson	36	86	38	16	2.81	Accept
31.	Encouragement of note-taking skills instead of note copying skills	47	69	44	16	2.84	Accept
32.	Making classes democratic in order to allow students air their views	33	64	50	29	2.57	Accept
33.	Giving of individuals and collaborative tasks	28	72	46	30	2.56	Accept
34.	Proving open access to learning resources	60	71	40	5	3.06	Accept
35.	Use of applied questions that encourage critical thinking skills	18	96	48	14	3.22	Accept
36.	Encouragement of learners to keep a written record of their learning	21	85	46	24	2.59	Accept
37.	Regular evaluation of the students to determine their progress of learning	35	82	30	29	2.70	Accept
38.	Providing feedback to the students on their progress in learning	44	65	49	18	2.77	Accept
39.	Use of seminars where each students researches and presents a paper for class criticism	36	69	36	35	2.60	Accept
40.	Giving freedom for away of texts and projects for the lesson	29	77	47	23	2.64	Accept

Table 3 above shows that respondents agreed that all the items on the table are strategies that can promote effective teaching and learning.

Discussion of findings

The study found out that most secondary school teachers did familiarize themselves with the use of instructional strategies to teach their students. Respondents also agreed that the students were not involved in planning for instructions. The teachers rather controlled all class activities. Also, teachers use to dominate the class during their teaching. Student hardly participates in the class activities. These finding are in agreement with Igbokwe (2010) who observed that many teachers used the traditional approach in which the teacher was in charge of subject matter and made decision about what was needed and what students should do.

The study also found that certain problem may confront the use of instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools. It may be that, most secondary school teachers were not trained in the use of the approach. Instructional strategies is not only difficult to use but also require that, teachers select the appropriate instructional strategies to be used and plan how to use them for effective teaching to be taken place in the classroom. There was also the problem of class size which might prevent the effective utilization of various instructional strategies.

These findings corroborate (Oyetunde, 1990, Mezieobi 1994 and Mbakwem, 2001) observed that, there is no best method of teaching at no singular instructional strategies will be appropriate to all school subjects in all situations, Mbakwem (2001) was of the view that each teaching subject has its own peculiarities and emphasis procedures.

Finally, the respondents agreed that using of various instructional strategies will promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools. This will spur the students to participate activity in any lesson being undertaken by any subject teachers in the school. This will give the students room to carry out indepth research which they will share with the teachers and the rest of the students. Bransford, Brobun and Cooking (2000) also agreed that certain instructional strategies like learning cycle-based instructional strategy, project-based learning approach etc. can be used to promote effective teaching and learning. This will bring the involvement of the students in planning and determine the use of these strategies for effective delivery of lessons in the classroom.

The implication of the findings include that secondary school students are still taught and spoon fed by their teachers.

This practice may not produce students who can stand on their own after their schooling; as their minds are focused on passing examinations and not to develop themselves. It also implies that some instructional strategies may have some problem of utilization, but if utilize well, can promote effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and subsequent discussion, this study recommends as follows:

i.   Workshops and Seminars should be organized to train teachers on the approach as well as the procedure for using it.
ii. Learning resources which are current and adequate should be provided for the students.

iii.   More research should be carried out on the use of this various instructional strategies especially experiments to compare its efficacy with the traditional approach.

iv.   Secondary school teachers should be allowed to involve in the curriculum planning and implementation, in order to make them bring in students centred methods/strategies as it is more likely to produce self reliant students than the traditional approach.

Conclusion

Students centred teaching methods and instructional strategies have been established as crucial in delivering scientific and technological information for effective teaching and learning in various school subjects' secondary school education should provide rooms for students to explore in detail their areas of interest. One of the approaches that can help promote effective teaching and learning in the use of various instructional strategies. Findings from the study revealed that student's involvement in the lesson can make them seekers of knowledge by activity participating in the lesson rather than being passive learner.

Students are more likely to learn and retain what is learnt thereby achieving result-oriented classrooms of their teachers learn to make use of various instructional strategies that can promote effective teaching and learning.

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