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TEACHERS' AWARENESS AND USE OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING APPROVCHES IN TEACHING GOVERNMENT IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NASARAWA EDUCATION ZONE, NASARAWA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' poor knowledge of innovative teaching approaches has created a great set back in the school system. Not only that students' performance become poor, but the education system which is supposed to be a vehicle for change is stagnated. As part of the contribution to inform teachers, this study was designed to determine teachers' awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in senior secondary schools in Nasarawa Education Zone. The study adopted a survey research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated and test at 0.05% level of significance guided the study. Instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, one titled teachers' level of awareness of innovative approaches, the test for determining the co-efficient of internal consistency was carried out using the Spearman Ranking Order (Rho) and a reliability index of 0.77 was obtained. Frequencies, mean and standard deviation was used in answering research questions, while t-test was employed to test the hypotheses. The study revealed that teachers with high level of experience tend to be more aware and make use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government. Education is a strong foundation through which Nigeria can maintain a top rank in global competitiveness. To achieve this required the teacher awareness and use of innovative instructional method for teaching government in secondary school. Based on the findings and implications of this study, the following recommendation is made: Government teachers should be train and retrained of teacher on the use of innovative instructional method, both inexperienced and experienced teacher, Awareness on innovative instructional method should be enhanced through seminars, conferences, board meetings and article publications.

Keywords: Government, Awareness, Innovation, Teachers, Secondary School.

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Background of the Study

Nothing is permanent except change. Change takes place regularly in the curriculum of most education systems of the world. The dynamic nature of every society which the curriculum is meant to serve brings about change either in the objectives of education, with a consequent change on the learning experience presented to learners as well as the methodology and process of evaluation (Kuzu, 2025). Therefore, Oluwuo and Asodike (2024) stated that as new information about people and their environment emerges, changes in the practices and approaches followed. These new practices and approaches are deliberately incorporated into the curriculum as innovation.

Innovation according to Aguokogbo (2022) is to create something new which markedly deviates from traditional practices that have been followed for a long time. It is a kind of alteration that comes about either by adding or removing items in the curriculum. Hence, Offorma (2020) viewed innovation as the introduction of a novel factor perceived as new by a given school or community, supported by a driving force and implemented as a practical advance that deviates from established traditional forms. As noted by Ughamadu (2017) innovation is a deliberate, novel specific change, which is thought to be more efficacious in accomplishing the goals of a system. Nwankwo (2012) observed that a lot of innovative teaching approaches have been introduced into the new Government curriculum. The introduction of these new approaches is to help meet up with the learners needs, and achieve the objectives of the subject. The focus of Government as a field of study is to help students understand the institution of the state and the process of governance. The skill when acquired enables individuals as a citizen, to actively participate in the process of national development, (FRN, 2013).

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (FRN, 2013 page 46) recommended the use of innovative and participatory approaches in the teaching and learning of Government, to make learning active, robust and interesting. These innovative teaching approaches includes:
Advanced organizer, mastery learning, cooperative learning, individualized instruction, computer assisted instruction (CAI), Enter-educate, study trips, and simulation approaches. (FRN, 2013: p.46). The achievement of the objectives of Government subject depends largely on what the teacher does in the classroom during implementation stage. Thus, if the teacher is aware of these innovative teaching approaches and adopts them in teaching, the objectives of Government could be realized (Nwankwo 2012). Government as a subject has many definitional approaches. However, our focus in this study is to define Government as an academic field of study. Government as an academic field of study is a branch of political science that studies how people or group of people acquire, consolidate and use state power to attain individual and social goals (Nwankwo, 2008). Government is the study of the institutionalized agency for the legitimate administration of class society, thus it is the study of a systematically organized power, exercised by certain people

purportedly on behalf of the generality (Obasi, 2019). Government as the instrument of activity is generally expected to perform such functions as legislation, the delivery of collective goods and other social services, ensuring security of lives and property and maintenance of order.

In recent time, emphasis on teaching method has shifted from the teacher-know-all to students centered approach. Hence educational activities should be centered on the learner for maximum self-development and fulfillment. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2013: p8). The need for effective teaching becomes necessary in view of the fact that contents and objectives of the curriculum are implemented through the act of classroom teaching. The concept of teaching itself is a complex and difficult task that demand extraordinary abilities and skills (Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi, 2024). Teaching has methods, and teaching methods generally refers to a chosen systematized and ordered way through which the act of teaching is performed in order to accomplish the set objectives of instruction (Okeke, 2007). However, Oranu (2003) noted that in most secondary school teachers tends to avoid the use of effective teaching methods, because of inexperience or their unaware of these innovative teaching approaches, as a result student performs poor and lacks interest in school subjects. Waller (2020) submitted that the conventional teaching method is the most used teaching methods in the secondary school. This method makes teacher authoritative and plays the role of an indoctrinator of knowledge (talking) and even in decision making without regard to curriculum contents and learning objective. Jacob (2013) commented that the conventional method is highly teacher-centered as it places the teacher at the centre of classroom instruction to the detriment of the learner who are seen as mere receivers of information. When this method is used, the teacher does most of the talking, and the students more often assume a passive role. To a large extent, the students might be afraid to ask questions and express their opinions. This situation is in contest with modern teaching approaches which requires less domination by the teacher and more activities on part of the students (Abdullahi, 2023). The consequence of the use of the conventional method of teaching is that student perform poorly in examination. Government is a contemporary discipline that is laden with social realities, it is assumed that with the use of conventional methods students are unable to retain basic information and may not translate knowledge to solving social-economic problems of the society. Hence the challenge of preparing students for societal living has therefore necessitated a shift from the conventional teaching method to innovative teaching approaches, which is based on the introduction of new, novel and effective method of teaching that enhance the achievement of learning objective and position the learner to think for his/her self (Idris, 2018).

Teachers with good teacher's training and professional competence always adopt the innovative teaching methods, which is interactive and rooted in constructivism where instruction is directed towards involving the learner. Innovative teaching approaches is a process of instruction provided an active classroom between

students and the learning materials, student-student, student-teacher, all geared towards the construction of meaningful knowledge, and achievement of stated objectives (Waller, 2020). Innovative teaching approach is an active classroom interaction where teachers and students interact with materials and learning contents that is utilize to achieve stated objective. It is an approach which focused on meaningful construction of knowledge from the experiences of learners' interaction with learning materials (Jacob, 2013). Innovative teaching approaches puts the students at the centre of classroom instruction. The teacher acts as a facilitator to guide the students which encourage them to become self-regulatory, self-mediating and have self-awareness (acquisition of thinking skills). The teachers' role in innovative teaching is to help the student to learn for themselves (Sequeira, 2017).

Among the importance of innovative teaching approaches to learning is the promoting of students' interaction with learning materials, their peers and at the process students are exposed to real no near-life situation for mutual exchange of ideas, explanation, clarifications and justifications. Innovative teaching method is rooted in constructivist theories and promotes an interactive process in a social setting that allows students to explore and work in group, making meaning of tasks and setting out to solving problems that are perplexing to them. There is no authoritarian exchange of ideas from the teacher, freedom to ask question and express opinions and the respect of learner's perspective and thereby, promoting spirit of unity despite diversity in opinions. Reiness (2014) stated that with innovative teaching approaches, interaction among learners is promoted which facilitates learning outcome, higher order thinking skills, social interaction and experiences, civic approach to issues, and context that make the students willing and able to learn.

Notable, the problem with innovative teaching approaches is to ensure that important areas of learning are not omitted and that the "right" balance is struck between these areas, and that each area is learned as effectively as possible (Sequeira, 2017). It also needed a lot of sacrifice on the part of the teacher who must undergo special teaching training, workshop and seminar to get equipped with these approaches. Teachers must make adequate arrangement in preparing lesson, gathering materials which are time consuming. The teacher must also have a wealth of teaching experiences and the right teaching qualification to enable him/her employ the innovative teaching approaches for maximum academic result. Ogobo (2016) mentioned that teachers must have the right conscience for them to adopt and use these innovative approaches, he noted that there is situation in which the teacher may be aware of these approaches but may shy away from using them because of the rigour, inexperience or laxity. Above all, the contemporary Government teachers ought to be conversant with the use of innovative approaches which is learner centered, creative, stimulating and productive in nature and could help in preparing students to continuing learning outside the classroom, and be prepared for the greater task ahead. The primary role of education

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is to produce an active, functional individual who is highly informed and can translate the acquired knowledge to solving, economic and political problems of the society. However, this transfer of acquired knowledge would not take place unless the method of teaching is active enough to deposit a memorable and long-lasting knowledge in the learner through the use of innovative teaching method (Eze & Nwodo, 2021).

Since the way students learn depend on how the learning materials is presented to them (Mezieobi, 2020). The innovative teaching approaches is based on the premise that teaching-learning activity is one in which the teacher guides students in their search for ideas. Using innovative approaches, the students find answers to problem situation and draw conclusion for themselves. It is assured that the use of innovative teaching approaches in Government could help increase students' performance and achievement of objectives. Therefore, this study wants to investigate teacher's awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in Senior Secondary Schools in Nassarawa Education zone.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to assess teachers' awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa Education zone.

Specifically, the study would sort to:

1. Assess teachers' level of awareness and use of innovative approaches in teaching Government in Nasarawa Education zone.
2. Determine the influence of teachers' experience on awareness and use of innovative approaches in teaching Government in Nasarawa Education zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the level of teachers' awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches?
2. What is the difference in the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of experienced and inexperienced teachers on the awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significance difference between the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of male and female teachers on their awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in senior secondary schools.
2. Teachers' experience does not have significance influence on awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in senior secondary schools.

Conceptual Discussion

Concept of Government

Ezeani (2010) defined Government as the study of the practical and the theoretical aspects of the social political, economic and legal system of a particular society. It includes, the study of social institution, of

the state, rights, duties and obligations of citizens, the electoral system (voting) power sharing, wealth distribution, human development, security and international co-operation. The history of Government dates back to the earliest time of Plato in ancient Greece and Confucius in Ancient China. Government is an agreement between the citizens and the state. This means that for Government to function effectively, the citizens should be actively involved in their own governance. (Appadoria, 2004). People in the state do not just passively accept the dictums of others or acquiesce to the demands of others. As Aristotle puts it in his Republic (340 BC) "if liberty and equality, as it is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be attained when all persons alike share in the Government to the utmost. Government is the highest authority in a civil society vested with the power to protect lives and properties. It is a group of people or individual who are assigned with responsibilities to make laws interpret laws and punish law offenders in a state (executive, judiciary and legislature). This implies that Government is examining phenomenon which helps to establish how various functions and nature of the Government affect the society or state. It is a course or subject taught at senior secondary schools and tertiary institutions to inculcate the principles of the political institution in the students and to make them comprehend the ideas, values and doctrines of politics and the state.

Concept of Innovative Teaching Approach

Innovative teaching approaches are the use of more facilitative approaches to teaching and learning of topics or concepts. According to Mezieobi (2020) Innovative Teaching approaches are the methods which by design, engage and challenge the student, thereby resulting in greater students' interest, a deeper level of understanding and lasting change in the student's perception of the topic. Nwafor (2017), describe this era of information explosion as an era in which teachers can no longer assume that they impart to students all essential knowledge. Ferrari, Cachia and Punic (2025) define innovative method as a catch-all term for several different tutorial type programmes. Faber add that innovative based instruction is effective way to learn and apply skills quickly. In other words, innovative is a method/technique that can be used by teachers to effectively deliver instruction where learner have opportunities to practice experience under condition that apply to reality. No matter how one may look at it, innovative approach of teaching is a very powerful and active learner-centre strategy for effective teaching and productive learning. For instance, innovative teaching approaches develops creative thinking in the students and it encourages originality through personal and research work (Nwachukwu, 2016).

It has been acknowledged widely that for students to do well in school and to develop practical skills which will be useful to them in their later lives, they must be actively involved in the process of learning- which is the whole hallmark of innovative instruction approach. This approach to teaching is to help provide the students with worthwhile, fulfilling and joyful learning of the subject matter which lent to exciting classroom that promote the

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retention of learning. For this kind of approach to be implemented, a number of instruction methods will be involved. These methods are those that could stimulate interest, curiosity and motivation, provide information and enable systematic processing of information, experiences and help formulate code of behaviour.

Teachers' Experience

Teachers' years of experience is a measure of quality and thus becomes imperative in the achievement of students' academic achievement (Akinsola and Animashum 2007). Most teachers develop their classroom skills fairly early in their teaching career, teachers entering the profession may find their teaching effort stressful, but with experience they acquire a repertoire of teaching strategies that they draw on throughout their teaching (Lee 2010). In investigating possible differences in teaching strategies, Schuler as cited in Hamdallat (2017) grouped teachers into three levels of teaching experience (3 - 6; 7 - 10 and more than 10 years). Schuler findings revealed that experienced teachers' perception of their teaching objectives was significantly more subject-oriented than was that of first-year teachers. Hence, effective teaching could be measured by the level of a teacher's subject matter competence which Oranu (2003) regarded as a prime predictor of students' learning. However, teachers' theories about teaching are being guided by their previous experience as learners and teachers continue to depend on each other for knowledge acquisition. The importance of experienced teachers in schools has been argued as being necessary for school effectiveness (Zaku as cited in Nwachukwu, 2016). Prawat (2013) observed that experienced teachers are more resistant to change in their beliefs of self-efficacy and the use of different types of activities than teachers with less experience.

Theoretical Explanations

E.M Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 1962)

Diffusion innovation theory, is one of the oldest social science theories. It originated in communication to explain, how overtime, an idea or product gains momentum and diffuse (or spreads) through a specific population or social system. The end result of this diffusion is that people, as part of a social system, adopt a new idea, behaviour, or product. Adoption means that a person does something differently than what they had previously (i.e., acquire and perform a new behaviour, purchase or use a new product). The key to adoption is that the person must perceive the idea, behaviour, or product as new or innovative. It is through this that diffusion is possible. Oluwuo and Asodike (2024) wrote that adoption of a new idea, behaviour or product (i.e.; "Innovation") does not happen simultaneously in a social system; rather it is a process whereby some people are more apt to adopt the innovation than others.

The obvious implication of Roger's theory in this study is that it helps researchers to understand the process through which new ideas and technologies can be applied and translated into widespread practice. Diffusion of innovation theory is appropriate for investigating teachers' awareness and use of innovative teaching

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approaches in teaching Government in Secondary schools. The theory relates to the study in the sense that some teacher and school administrators may classified into the different categories such as: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards; when the different categories is identified it could help to address the mixed feelings arising from teachers' unwillingness to adopt innovative teaching approaches. The theory is also relevant because it explains why some people are ready and willing to accept charge (innovators), while others skeptical (laggards) to change. This is also the situation in some educational environment where some teacher accepts and uses the innovative teaching approaches in their lesson, but others see it as strange and unprofitable, making them to stick to the traditional teaching methods which may be less productive.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. Survey design specifies how much data were collected and analyzed. The study used data obtained from the administration of copies of questionnaires to describe the present awareness and use of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in secondary schools in Nasarawa central education zone. The survey design was suitable for this study because it is based on the opinions of the respondents in the area of the study.

Presentation of Results

Research Question one: what is the level of teachers' awareness of innovative teaching approaches?

Table 1: shows the level of teachers' awareness of innovative teaching approaches.

S/N	Innovative Method	Frequency	Unaware	Frequency	Aware	Remarks
1	Flexible schedule approach	26	26.8%	65	73.2%	Aware
2	Computer assisted approach	34	37.1%	56	62.9%	Aware
3	Simulation	37	40.2%	53	59.8%	Aware
4	Individualized instruction	30	33%	60	67%	Aware
5	Advanced organizer	40	44.3%	50	55.7%	Aware
6	Future wheel	40	47.4%	50	52.6%	Aware
7	Programmed instruction	40	43.3%	50	56.7%	Aware

Result in Table 1 reveals that flexible scheduling, computer assisted method, future wheel, advanced organize, simulation method, individualized instruction method and programmed instruction method all scored above 50% bench mark which implies that teachers are aware of these innovative instructional methods. Frequency also Tables that the majority of the respondents are aware of innovative instructional method. In other words, teachers are aware of the innovative instructional approach use in implementing government curriculum in senior secondary school.

Research Question two: What is the difference in the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of experienced inexperienced teachers on the use of innovative teaching approaches?

Table two shows the difference in the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of experienced inexperienced teachers on the use of innovative teaching approaches.

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Experience	Flexible schedule approach	Computer assisted approach	Simulation	Individualized instruction	Advanced organizer	future wheel	Programmed Instruction
1-5	1.73	2.27	2.00	2.18	2.18	2.09	2.27
	.647	.467	.000	.405	.405	.302	.467
6-10	2.70	2.33	2.50	2.53	2.37	2.28	2.33
	.813	.790	.753	.807	.741	.779	.701
11-15	2.50	2.49	2.55	3.50	2.35	3.35	2.13
	.506	.506	.736	.506	.736	.736	.757

Table two reveals that teachers with 1-5 years' experience use all the innovative instructional method to low extent as their mean scores were below 2.5 benchmark. Teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience use Computer assisted approach, advanced organizer, future wheel and programmed instruction method to low extent and use Flexible schedule approach, simulation method and individualized instruction method to high extent. Teacher with 11-15 years teaching experiences use computer assisted approach, advanced organizer, future wheel and programmed instruction innovative instructional methods to low extent while they use flexible scheduling, simulation, individualized instruction and future wheel to high extent. The total mean scores for three groups show that government teachers in central education zone of Nasarawa state uses innovative instructional approaches depending on level of their experiences. 11-15 years of experienced government and private teacher uses it to high extent while 1-5- and 6-10-years teachers uses it to very low and low extent respectively. There is a difference on experienced and inexperienced government teachers on use of innovative instructional approaches ($\bar{X}$) rating of qualified and unqualified teachers on awareness of innovative teaching approaches?

Hypotheses One ($H0_1$): there is no significance difference between the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of male and female teachers' awareness of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in Nasarawa education zone.

Table one Tables the independent sample t-test analysis of difference between the mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of male and female teachers' awareness of innovative teaching approaches in teaching Government in Nasarawa education zone.

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}1$	Sd1	$\bar{X}$ 2	Sd2	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
1	Flexible schedule approach	2.92	.919	2.92	.862	-.009	.993	NS
2	Computer assisted approach	2.85	.945	2.76	.804	.556	.579	NS
3	Simulation	2.79	.922	2.80	.790	-.024	.981	NS
4	Individualized instruction	2.94	.909	2.76	.804	1.047	.298	NS
5	Advanced Organizer	2.73	.939	2.78	.798	-.262	.794	NS
6	Future wheel	2.83	.953	2.57	.842	1.436	.154	NS
7	Programmed instruction	2.63	.866	2.67	.747	-.295	.768	NS

$\bar{X}1$= male mean, sd1= male standard deviation, $\bar{X}2$= female mean, sd2= female standard deviation

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Hypotheses two ($H0_2$): Teachers' experience does not have significance influence on awareness of innovative teaching approaches in senior secondary schools.

Table two Tables the ANOVA test of Teachers' experience influence on awareness of innovative teaching approaches in senior secondary schools.

S/N	Items		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remarks
1	Flexible schedule approach	Between Groups	20.566	2	10.283	16.712	.000	S
		Within Groups	53.534	87	.615			
		Total	74.100	89				
2	Computer assisted approach	Between Groups	25.966	2	12.983	24.995	.000	S
		Within Groups	45.190	87	.519			
		Total	71.156	89				
3	Simulation	Between Groups	19.791	2	9.896	17.937	.000	S
		Within Groups	47.998	87	.552			
		Total	67.789	89				
4	Individualized instruction	Between Groups	22.210	2	11.105	20.917	.000	S
		Within Groups	46.190	87	.531			
		Total	68.400	89				
5	Advanced Organizer	Between Groups	22.545	2	11.272	20.622	.000	S
		Within Groups	47.555	87	.547			
		Total	70.100	89				
6	Future wheel	Between Groups	26.460	2	13.230	23.007	.000	S
		Within Groups	50.029	87	.575			
		Total	76.489	89				
7	Programmed instruction	Between Groups	14.226	2	7.113	13.425	.000	S
		Within Groups	46.096	87	.530			
		Total	60.322	89				

Discussion of the Findings

With reference to research question one on awareness of government teachers on the innovative instructional methods use in teaching government subject, the findings of this study revealed that government subject teachers are fully aware of the computer assisted approach, advanced organizer, future wheel, simulation approach, flexible scheduling approach, individualized instruction and progammed instruction.

With reference to research questions two this study found that government teachers' experience is a significant factor in use of innovative instructional approaches. Teachers with 1-5 years of experience use innovative instructional approaches to a very low extent while government teachers will 6-10 years and 11-15 years experiences use innovative instructional more even though not to very high extent. In agreement with these findings, Adeyemi (2008) revealed that teachers' teaching experience was significant factor in determining students' learning outcomes as measured by their performance in the senior secondary certificate examinations. Adeyemi further stressed that schools having more teachers with five years and above teaching experience achieved better results that schools having more teachers with less than five years teaching experience. Also, in line with this findings, Kalu (2016) revealed that teachers with

higher teaching experience are more satisfied with their job and are more likely to deliver the right teaching skills than those with how experience.

Conclusion

Education is a strong foundation through which Nigeria can maintain a top rank in global competitiveness. To achieve this required the teacher awareness and use of innovative instructional method for teaching government in secondary school. However, it has been noted that Government teachers in Nasarawa Education zone are aware of the innovative instructional approach use in implementing government curriculum in senior secondary school; that there is a difference on experienced and inexperienced teacher on use of innovative instructional approaches.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and implications of this study, the following recommendation is made:

1. Government teachers should be train and retrained of teacher on the use of innovative instructional method, both inexperienced and experienced teacher.
2. Curriculum planner should incorporate these innovative instructional approaches in teaching and learning government subject at secondary school level, and the need to fund teachers' training for improvement to ensure proper implementation of the subject curriculum.

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