INNOVATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES EMERGING MYTHS AND REALITIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Obih Solomon Onyinyechi¹ and C.I Ekomaru²

¹ Dept. of Economics, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria
² Dept. of Home Economics, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

E-mail: docsolobih@yahoo.com, boajkayo@yahoo.com

Abstract

The thrust of this paper is on innovative teaching strategies emerging myths and realities in teaching and learning. It was observed that qualities education is critical for a better future for Nigeria children. Innovative teaching strategies is very important in that it provides adequate means with which educational practices can meet up their inherit divers roles at any point in time. It is aim at having dynamic educational practice that are not at variance with the changing values and aspirations of the society in which the school exist. Based on the finding that innovative teaching strategies is a panacea if the overall objective of education is to be achieved hence it is channelled towards improving performance of the school system and the paper recommends that; Government should mount a “train workshop for teachers and it will help them to be abreast with the techniques and innovation strategies involved for a successful completion of the task of teaching and learning process. All the innovative strategies in the teaching-learning process have been known to promote learning when appropriately utilized. The paper concludes that teachers should Endeavour to be associated with the ones (methods/strategies) within their realm of possibility, School heads and appropriate authorities, should Endeavour to promote these strategies by providing appropriate resources.

Keywords: Innovative, strategies, techniques, teaching and learning, improving performance

Introduction

Changes are perceived as the spice of life and excellent, enduring and good innovations are changes in positive directions as well as signals of advancement of an educational system. The 21st century is undoubtedly described as a millennium of knowledge explosion as a result innovation has been describe as a roaring flame that overturns institutions, shift the value and directs the people’s lives in the direction of the change. However, institutions of man have shown dynamism as a result of many forces which bring them to being. Many nations have experimented versions of political systems such as parliamentary or presidential, just as their constitutions have been reviewed over and over again the same goes for economic parlance that only thing that is permanent in man’s life is change. Teaching strategies are not left out in this issue and however have innovated policies, strategies, techniques and methods, have been carried out to meet with the needs of the leaner in this 21st century. This paper will among other concepts mirror the meaning of innovation, teaching strategies methods, innovative strategies and importance of innovating teaching strategies and condition necessary for a successful innovations in Nigeria contexts.
Definition of Concepts

Teaching Methods: A method is a way of doing something it is a systematic procedure employed by teachers in attempt to facilitate effective teaching and learning. UNESCO (1978) sees the method as a particular procedure or procedure used to structure teaching and learning situations.

Mezie-Obi (1994) averred that teaching method is “the broad or general way in which knowledge, contents, concepts, skills, competence value and attitude are inculcated in teaching and learning setting through the guidance of the teacher in the co-operative efforts of the teacher and the learner”. According to Amadi (1997:54) “teaching method is “the bringing together of the learner and task so that an awareness is created, the task is tackled, and concepts, skills and values are learned”.

Types of Methods

Basically teaching method can be categories into two.

1. Teacher’s centered approach
2. Learning centered method

**Teacher Centered Method:** It is the oldest method of teaching. The teacher dominate the teaching while the learner is a passive listener. The child in the class is believed not to know anything as a result, he is not given the opportunity to ask questions or interact with other members in the saying of the teaching. Affirming to this, Joof (1995:25) described Teacher Centered Approach as a process through which a teacher in a teacher-centric classroom learning setting transmit knowledge, skills, attitude and values to the passive or non-participative learner who must make effort to assimilate the impulse knowledge which is geared towards including behaviour change. It is implied that time is not given to the learner for creativity and reflective thinking.

**Examples of Teacher Centered Method**

1. Lecture method
2. Demonstration method
3. Story telling

**Learner Centered Method**

This includes all the teaching methods that make teaching to be a two way traffic that encourage student’s participation. This methods are project, discovery, discussion, inquiry, play way method.

**Concept of Innovation**

It simply means a novel factor or adding of a new thing to the existing programme. It implies that innovation is not an “accidental” affair but a deliberate, well-conceived undertaking with a definite purpose that is beneficial to both the school and the community. Innovation seeks to transform or alter a condition of practice, which is known to be some how deficient and to introduce something better that accommodates the identified deficiency. Pinus (1974:16) sees innovation as “a technology which improves educational out comes, improves working relationship or processes within the
school system or reduce the cost of education without significantly reducing the quantity of desired one, a departure from time status quo, but adds in dimension of cost benefits.”

The driving force innovation is the need improved condition, and an innovation is sustained as long as this driving force remains potent. Obih (2008:72) averred that innovation. Is the is “injecting and infusing of new ideas, skills, teaching strategies, methods, knowledge, approaches and materials into the wheel of educational system.” It implies that the sole aim of innovation is to find new way of doing things, which includes new techniques or approaches in educational practices, so as to meet the changes which have taken place. So the essence of innovation in education is to create or evolve something new in the school curriculum. Innovative teaching strategies encapsulate transformation or modification as it relate to teaching and leaning in educational sector. Is the science and art of using teaching as a tool in achieving the purpose of the teaching-learning process in and outside the classroom setting. These innovative strategies take different forms based on the subject-matter/content to be taught.

The effort to improve the teaching-learning process is a continuous one. It is this effort that has led to the various innovations in the teaching-learning process. Obih (2009:84) viewed innovative teaching strategies as “Those Innovative strategies, techniques, skills and methods that are primarily design to meet with the demands, needs interest and capabilities of the learner as it relates to teaching learning process” expanding on the theme Obih (2009) adds that these teaching strategies have been suggested and approved by philosophers and psychologist, as an improved teaching method, capable of handling or tackling the concept of individuals differences which bottleneck the free flow of effective teaching and learning process”.

The New Teaching Strategies

1. Team Teaching
2. Computer Based Instruction
3. Mastering Learning Strategy
4. Individualized Instruction

Team Teaching

Team Teaching is an indispensable innovation in the teaching-learning process in the classroom. It evolved as a result of the recent shift towards a new paradigm for learning which focuses on making learners learn how to learn, i.e. the know-how of learning. This shift also impacts on teaching strategies. Mkpa (1992:59) who opined that team teaching is “a processes involving two or more teachers who work together closely in planning, carrying out and evaluating the learning of a group of student, usually the size of two to five (2-5) conventional class.” War-wick (1971;18) averred the team teaching is “a form of organization, in which individual teachers decide to pool resources, interests and expertise in order to device and implement a scheme of work suitable to the need of their pupils and facilities their school”. Team teaching is one of the innovative strategies that is commonly use and practice in tertiary institution of higher learning, primarily aimed to improve the teaching learning processes.

Obih (2009:87) posit that team teaching is “the planning together of day to day instructional activities by two or more teachers who jointly decide the objective unit, and topics to be treated, instructional materials to be used, methods, strategies and evaluation tools to use, so as to facilitate effective teaching learning process.
Computer Based Instruction: it is an indispensable innovation in teaching learning process in the 21st century. Computer Assisted Instruction, as a new strategy, helps students to interact/relate with a planned lesson that have been programmed into the system. Computer Assisted Instruction prepare students in the use of computer to access and apply data necessary to solve problem in a technology based society. It is worthy to note that computer assisted instruction was developed by Patrick Suppers from Stanford University who computerized tutorials in arithmetic and reading for elementary school children dated 1969. Computer Assisted Instruction as a new strategy in teaching is usually used for a large number of students and at the same time provides individualized instruction.

Students learn from simple to complex, and their Individuals needs, interest and capabilities are made within the programme. It implies that computer assisted instruction by it's nature, not only recognized the learners needs, interests and capabilities but learners centred oriented. Computer Assisted Instruction are organized to provide the constant progressive differentiation of interest, needs and capabilities needed for survival in the 21st century.

Mastering Learning Strategy: This strategy has been known as an instructional plan that can be apply to all level of students and in all subjects. Learning for mastery (LFM) model is the approach that is commonly used in schools in developed countries. It is worthy to note that this approach is often referred to as mastery learning strategy, originated with John carrol and later with James Block and Benjamin Blooms, approach is that mastery of a task, topic or subject by every learner hence the instruction is well related with the learner’s characteristics and the learner is given the time he/she requires to learn the task, topic or subject and the same time give the optimum quality of instruction.

However, Bloom’s approach of mastery learning to a instructional strategy designed to bring almost every learners to a specified level of mastery. Is requires adjustment because of individual differences by including special feed-back, connective techniques during regular classroom instruction. Ughammadu (1998:93) opined that “A teacher or group of teachers who want to adopt mastery learning strategy, in particular, Bloom’s approach, will need to do the following

1. Study the subject area thoroughly and break it down into several learning units that will last 1to 3 weeks of instruction.
2. Specify instructional objectives in terms of learner behaviour for all the units of instruction.
3. Teach the learning tasks within each unit using the regular group-based instruction.
4. Administer after each learning unit, formative tests.
5. Use the test results of each learning unit to reinforce the learners who show mastery of the unit and also to diagnose the learning errors of those who couldn’t attain mastery level.
6. Offer remediation to those who did not reach mastery level. This might also entail directing students to re-read specific parts of a book; and also making them use programmed materials etc. Also more time should be given to the students to learn more. After appropriate remediation, retest the students.
7. Give and-of-course test to all students on completion of all the learning units.
8. Use the results of the various learning units (formative tests) and the end-of –course test (summative test) to improve the learning materials, methods and sequencing of the instruction.”

Individualized Instruction: The measure of any educational programme is the extent to which the programme is able to discipline the learners and make the desire impact as a means of bringing out the desire change in the behaviour of the learner. As a result any meaningful educational programme
must revolve round the learner such that the learner becomes the focus of educational activities. An instruction is said to be individualized, when it takes into consideration the interest, capabilities, needs, past achievement, learning rate, motivation and learning styles of the learner. Howes (1970:69) defined individualized instruction as” an innovative instructional strategy which patterns learning to satisfy differences in the learner’s needs, interest and goals perhaps due to divergent socio-economic and environmental backgrounds, or maturational capacities, mental retardation and hereditary factors”.

Additionally, Heinich (1985) noted that individulaslized instruction, wherein student’s use learning materials specifically designed or chosen to suit their individuals interests, abilities and experience, is now almost universally accepted as an important and productive instructional strategy”. Individualized Instruction is aimed at helping learners to maximize his potential, interest, abilities and capabilities that the child will benefit maximally from teaching and learning despite child’s individuality/differences thereby allowing them to learn at their own pace/speed rate which are the child’s natural way of learning. This generally affects their powers of comprehension. Self-expression and the nature of activities that meet their needs and interest under the auspice/supervision of the teacher. Individualized instruction is based on the following principles. Obih (2007:36) Highlighted six basic principles that guide individualized instruction.

1. The needs of the learners should determine what they are to learn at school.
2. What they learn should recognized and respond to the changing characteristics showed by children at different stages of development.
3. Children should be trained in the skills that are within the capacity of their stage of development.
4. The experience and comprehension level of the child should determine what is taught and made to use for learning.
5. Utilizes the strongest forces of motivation that controls children natural learning.
6. Apply the knowledge of child psychology and development to the content and method of teaching and learning.

Types of Individualized Instruction

Four basic types have been identified by Gronlud (1974) as:

i. individually diagnosed prescribed programme
ii. self-direct programme
iii. personalized programme
iv. independent study

Emerging Myths and Realities

Nigeria teachers have been criticized for their inability to make learning meaningful, real and practical to the students. This criticism is as a result of their failure to involve the students in active exploration and discovery of knowledge. In the words of Amanze (1990:37), the study confirmed the view held by many critics that there exists a between theoretical course and classroom practices. Conclusively, the findings indicated that educational theory is isolated from actual classroom practice.
Most teachers do not look at the instructional process comprehensively-as a system in which resources can be deployed in a variety of ways to achieve stated objectives. There is a need therefore to review how we teach, what the students are exposed to, and how we could enhance students’ modes of learning so that they can contribute to the learning environment. In view of today’s trends, there is need to employ innovative teaching strategies approaches to teaching in order to evolve more practicable teaching procedures that are much more congruent with student’s learning style, the realities of the Nigerian society and the assumptions associated with the National Policy on Education.

Conclusion

This research work posits that the attitudes required for improving teaching and learning in Nigeria schools includes among other things initiative, creatively, sense of responsibility and commitment to teaching. It is pertinent to state that teachers are the hub to quality education. Teachers must update, enrich and renew self in order to master the new methods of teaching. It means that innovative teaching strategies are undertaken due to those need to cope with pressures and problems from social change, the need to utilize research findings geared towards teaching and learning the need to explore opportunities with potentials for improved education its need for education that is more relevant to the contemporary situation in Nigeria and at the same time facilitating effective teaching and learning process. Additionally, we all aware that the realities of today’s high technology world prefaces the complexities of tomorrow’s world. This means that all hands must be one desk to help teacher and students broaden their skills, competencies if they are to operate effectively in the present world.

Recommendation

1. Teacher should Endeavour to be improvised instructional materials to facilitate their teaching strategies and methods hence new teaching strategies promotes learning in students when appropriately utilized.
2. The novelty of working with computers increase the learner’s motivation to learn as result there is need to create awareness among teachers on the need to use computer in teaching and learning.
3. The school head and appropriate authorities should Endeavour to promote these strategies by providing appropriate resources for teachers.
4. Government should mount a “train workshop for teachers and it will help them to be abreast with the techniques and innovative strategies involved for a successful completion of the task of teaching and learning process.
5. There is urgent need to re-view re-examine the teacher education curriculum and ensure that it reflects on the realities on contemporary.

References


