

**INTRODUCING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION INTO CLASSROOM
MANAGEMENT SKILLS: A PANACEA FOR STUDENTS HIGH PERFORMANCE IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study was embarked upon with a view to identify the classroom management skills, secondary school teachers in Anambra State utilize and the need for creativity and innovations in enhancement of students academic performance. The design for the study was a survey. The study covered all secondary schools in the six education zones of Anambra State. The population of the study consisted of 5713 secondary school teachers. Random sampling technique was used in selecting three zones and teachers. Questionnaire titled "Questionnaire Innovation and Creativity in Classroom Management (QICCM)" was used as instrument to collect data. It was face and content validated with a reliability coefficient of "r"- 0.86 and "r"- 0.84 through test re-test method. Three research questions guided the study. Analysis was done using weighted mean. Findings indicated that secondary school teachers yearn for introduction of creativity and innovative strategies to enhance the skills of delivery of instructions following the massive trend in today's technology. Based on the findings, recommendations were made which propagated organization of regular workshop and seminars for teachers aiming at inculcating the importance of classroom management for effective implementation of innovative and creative strategies.

Key words: Creativity, Innovations, Classroom, Management, High Performance.

Introduction:

Creating and sustaining conducive social and working environment for innovation to emerge and thrive is desirable in the education system. This is so because the education process is continually hinged on current inventions and innovations which are

sustainable on human development. A dynamic and progressive nation demands an educational system that will man a future which will assure a better life for all. An innovation is a transformation of practice in an organization, it is not synonymous with invention of a new idea or object. A transformation of practice in the organization does not occur unless the new practice generates more value to the members than the old. Many innovations were preceded by inventions though some innovations occur without a significant invention (Denning, 2004). In a culture of innovation, people will have a habit of constantly looking for ways to improve things.

According to Hoyle (1993), innovation means introduction of novelties, the alteration of what is established. Similarly, (Knezenvich, 1976), addressed innovation as the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services. Education industry in Nigeria has been recognized and recommended as the key sector in the national development. The five broad goals of the nation which are; a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy, and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens (FRN 2004), can only be achieved through a well planned and managed educational resources viz a viz delivery. To this end, Akuburo and Joshua (2004) observed that in recent times, there have been complaints that the standard of education have fallen. No wonder Enueme (2002) and Ogbuagu (2001) lamented that most of the Nigerian schools are characterized by inadequate and over-crowded classrooms, lack of equipment, furniture, teaching and learning materials, coupled with poorly motivated teachers.

Creativity is a strong drive to go beyond the well-trodden path already established. Learners who are creative exhibit a lot of observable changes in intellectual, attitude and behavior leading to positive changes in the context it is applied. Creativity in the classroom management is a phenomenon whereby something new and valuable is created such as ideas, solutions, invention, literacy work and many others. The

application of creative resources improves the effectiveness of learning and teaching process in the classroom.

Classroom is a physical structure meant and designed to house group of individuals (learners) ready for teaching learning process. The teacher manages the activities in the classroom for effectiveness. Classroom management according to Adegboyeje and Afolabi (1991) and Ogunna (2000), is

"a process concerned with identifying, understanding, stimulating, controlling and unifying human and material resources in the classroom for maximum success in teaching learning situation".

From the above definition, one can infer that classroom management is judiciously harnessing of human, material resources as well as the curriculum within the classroom setting for the successful accomplishment of the school objectives. classroom management here goes beyond class-discipline, order and control. It is concerned with the physical setting of the classroom to accommodate instructional materials, chalkboard arrangement, time management, class control, learners' interest sustaining skills, communication in the classroom and time-tabling. It is only a well-trained, dedicated, duteous and motivated teacher that can deliver the above-mentioned areas of skills.

Some of the skills applied in the management of classroom include chalkboard arrangement, classroom arrangement, time management class control, learners interest, communication and timetabling. The implication of creativity and innovation in the above skills is that schools and teachers should be in various states of reform to adapt their instructional practices to be more effective. To this end the role of the teachers should shift from being subject matter experts who transmit information to acting as facilitators of student learning in the knowledge society. (Hartnell Youg, 2003).

Statement of Problem:

One of the cardinal points of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) is to make major positive improvements in the national economy. To attain this goal, attention must be given to the management of classroom and education at large (Babalola, 2003). It may be rightly inferred that some nations have been developing their educational systems through introduction of creativity and innovations for present and future global challenges while Nigeria may have been complacent and appears not to be in a hurry due to the type of educational policies she has adopted over the years. Un-conducive learning environment, inadequate funding and poor teacher classroom management could be responsible for low pace of innovations in Nigeria educational system thereby posing a great challenge to classroom teachers in the changing world. (Onyali & Modebelu, 2013). The forgoing relate to the problem of this study as follows;

- 1) What are the classroom management skills identified by secondary school teachers to encourage implementation of creativity and innovation in secondary schools in Anambra State?
- 2) What is the extent of application of these skills by the secondary school teachers in Anambra State?
- 3) What innovative strategies are to be introduced into for enhancement of classroom management?

Method:

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, 5713 secondary school teachers constituted the population of the study. There are six education zones in Anambra State

of which three were selected for use through simple random sampling. The zones were Otuocha 262 teachers, Aguata 598 and Awka 996 giving a total of 1856 teachers. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Innovation and Creativity in Classroom Management (ICCM). For the analyses of data obtained in the final study, the statistical instrument of mean was used to analyze the data collected since the research questionnaire was developed on a 4-point rating scale of 4,3,2,1. Any weighted mean below 2.5 was rejected while any waited mean score of 2.5 and above accepted.

Research Question 1

Identify the classroom management skills needed for improvement of students performance by secondary school teachers?

Mean ratings of classroom management skills identified for improvement of students academic performance by secondary school teachers in Anambra State

S/N	Items	Teachers	Identified
1.	Individualization	4.00	identified
2.	Chalkboard arrangement	4.00	Identified
3.	Classroom arrangement	4.00	Identified
4.	Time management	4.00	Identified
5.	Class control	4.00	Identified
6.	Communication	4.00	Identified
7.	Authority	4.00	Identified
8.	Patience	4.00	Identified
9.	Knowledge	4.00	Identified
10.	Learners interest sustain skills	4.00	Identified

Table 1 indicates that items 1-10 have means scores of 4.00. The analysis portrays that teachers identified the 10 classroom management skills needed for improvement of students performance by secondary school teachers in Anambra State.

Research Question 2

1. To what extent are the innovation strategies being utilized by secondary school teachers in Anambra State.

Mean ratings of teachers' responses on the extent of utilization of the classroom management skills.

S/N	Item	X	Decision
11	chalkboard arrangement	3.65	V.H Extent
12.	Classroom arrangement	3.60	H.E.
13.	Time management	1.86	V.L. Extent
14.	Communication	3.98	very High Extent
15.	Authority	3.80	V.H.E.
16.	Patience	2.50	Low Extent
17.	Learners interest sustaining skills	1.90	V. Low
18.	Time tabling	3.80	V.H.E.
19.	Individualization	2.30	L. Extent

From the analysis in table II, it can be seen that mean ratings above 2.50 are obtained in items 1, 2, 4, 5,6,7, and 9. This indicated the areas in which teachers utilization of classroom management skills are of very high extent. The remaining items viz: 3, 8 and 10 scored below 2.50 suggesting the areas where teachers utilization of management skills are of very low extent.

Research Question 3

What are the innovative strategies accepted for improvement of student's academic performance in secondary school in Anambra State.

Table 3;

Mean ratings of innovative strategies identified for improvement of students academic performance.

S/N	Items	X	Decision
21	Project based learning	3.00	Accepted
22	Co-operative learning	3.60	Accepted
23	Peer tutoring	4.00	Accepted
24	Use of laptops & wireless technology	4.00	Accepted
25	Outdoor learning	3.00	Accepted
26	Risk taking	3.500	Accepted
27	Collaboration learning	3.20	Accepted
28	Capacity for change	4.00	Accepted

Table 3 reveals that all the items obtained mean scores above 2.50, this indicates high level of acceptance of the specified innovative strategies by teachers of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

From the results obtained in table 1, it was found that all the ten items listed were identified by secondary school teachers in Anambra State as classroom management skills needed for improvement of students performance. These skills include: individualization, chalkboard arrangement, classroom arrangement, time management, class control, communication in the classroom authority, patience, knowledge and learners' interest sustaining skills. This is in line with Ajayi and Oluchukwu (2002), who emphasized the importance and significance of the skills to teachers, students and general public as instruments that could ensure understanding of lessons, stimulating students learning, helping teachers control variables within the classroom for easy

unification of both human and material resources geared towards maximum success of teaching-learning situation. Egbochukwu in Ogunyemi (2003), pointed out that poor academic performance, examination malpractice and school dropout would be minimized consequent upon teachers knowledge of the classroom management skills.

Results from table 2 indicated three negative responses from the teachers on utilization of the classroom management skills. That teachers rarely utilize all the skills they accepted in table 1 above that could enhance students academic performance through maximum utilization of the classroom management skills is a big assignment to teachers, ministry of education, educational managers and administrators. No wonder Adegboyeje and Afolabi (1991) emphasized that classroom management skills should be frequently utilized by teachers for identifying, understanding, stimulating, controlling and unifying human and material resources in the classroom for maximum students academic performance.

The poor extent of use of the three classroom management skills (individualization, time management and learners interest sustaining skills) is of great educational challenge as that could be the reason for poor students performance and fallen standard of education in Nigeria.

The responses to research question 3, (table 3) revealed that secondary school teachers in Anambra State are eager to get the innovative strategies introduced in secondary schools. Perhaps their acceptance for the introduction of all the innovative strategies was because most secondary school teachers are not computer literate hence the last item in table 3. (Introduction of use of lap tops and wireless technology in teaching). The need for introduction of these innovative strategies was emphasized by Olakulehin (2007) who demands a change that promotes creativity and innovations among teachers.

The need for secondary school teachers to accept the introduction of innovative strategies is very crucial. According to Hartnell-Young (2003), in schools where teachers accept creativity and innovative strategies, teachers act as facilitators of knowledge rather than transferring knowledge to the students, learning involves an investigation of problems by both students and teachers, students have access to variety of useful

resources to assist them in solving such problems. Successful introduction of these strategies (project based learning, co-operative learning, Peer Tutors, use of laptop and wireless technology, outdoor learning, risk ---- collaboration learning and capacity for change) would mean the ability of the teachers to be responsible to changes, opportunities and willingness to bear risks. (Ezeugbor,2010). Government should therefore provide appropriate incentive strategies for teachers to motivate them to compliment their positive responses and desire to improve towards innovation and creativity. No wonder Lamming and Owen (2001) opined that innovative teachers are noted for their insatiable desire to improve their own practices. Of course, teachers possess status, raise their self esteem and improve on their delivery of instructions for greater students' academic performance if conducive classroom management skills are provided.

Conclusion:

The study portrayed the acceptability of the classroom management skills by secondary school teachers in Anambra State for improvement of students academic performances. However, following the massive trend in today's technology, the teachers yearn for introduction of creativity and innovative strategies to enhance the skills of delivery of instructions in secondary schools of Anambra State. Government of Anambra State and all the stakeholders in management of education should harness this position for enhancement of students academic performance in the state.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Regular workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers aiming at inculcating the importance of classroom management skills for effective implementation of innovative strategies.

- 2) Government should always show a good leadership in education by providing necessary materials to ensure a good classroom setting, such as infrastructure, equipment and human capital, which when properly harnessed will likely enhance standard in secondary education.
- 3) Teachers should read widely and get prepared to meeting with the challenges ahead of them since change is dynamic.
- 4) Regular supervision of schools should be enforced to monitor the activities of the school in ensuring that creativity and innovative strategies are well guided.

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