

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ONDO STATE, SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

Curriculum innovation is imperative to educational development in any country as it adapts education to our ever-changing society. To attain educational advancement, curriculum must evolve continuously. Education is a catalyst for societal transformation, and as such, individuals play a role in driving change. The study focuses on students' perceptions of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. This is prompted by concerns about education quality in the state and inconsistent findings on students' views toward curriculum changes. The study's objectives encompass understanding students' perceptions, identifying obstacles to curriculum innovation, and proposing solutions to these challenges. Employing a self-designed questionnaire, 200 students were sampled for the study. Results were analysed using simple percentages. The findings show that secondary school students in Ondo State possess positive attitudes toward curriculum innovation, indicating openness to new ideas. However, they lack awareness of upcoming curriculum changes thereby hindering their ability to adapt quickly. Students' interests were not adequately integrated into the innovation process, making it challenging for them to embrace new trends. Suggested solutions include incorporating students' interests, training teachers in new teaching methodologies, improving communication about curriculum changes, involving students in curriculum development, addressing resistance to change, and ensuring that teaching materials are accessible. Further research is recommended to validate findings and explore specific challenges and opportunities within Ondo State. Implementing these recommendations will enhance curriculum innovation, leading to improved student engagement improve academic performance, and overall education quality in secondary schools in Ondo State.

Keywords: Assessment, Student, Perception, Curriculum, Innovation

Introduction

Innovation and development are key for any nation that is willing to remain economically, politically, technologically and socio-culturally relevant in the modern world. In this era of global village, where every human activity is driven by the sophisticated power and diverse applicability, competency, potent information and communication technologies at one's disposal, quality and relevant education must be paramount in the agenda of every country across various governmental levels. Education is the bedrock of all

developments and the cornerstone to all breakthroughs. For a society to experience sustainable positive changes without causing any considerable unfavourable effects on their political, socio-cultural and economic foundations, it is essential that any developmental agenda be comprehensively conceptualised and systematically integrated into the educational system. This will enable learners to internalise these values and concepts, and effectively transmit them to the broader society.

Nigeria's education system encompasses primary, secondary, and

tertiary levels, with secondary education consisting of junior and senior secondary schools. This stage is pivotal for students to acquire fundamental knowledge and skills for future academic pursuits or vocational training (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Improving the quality of education at this level is enhanced by curriculum innovation.

Guided by the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004), curriculum innovation in Nigeria adopts a learner-centred approach, promoting active student engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. The policy emphasises the importance of a responsive curriculum aligned with evolving global dynamics and local needs.

Student perceptions of curriculum innovation significantly influence their engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes (Otaru, 2015). Positive perceptions lead to higher satisfaction, enthusiasm, and active participation, while negative perceptions can impede engagement and academic performance.

Ondo State, situated in Southwest Nigeria, boasts of a diverse educational landscape with both public and private secondary schools. The state government's commitment to educational development is evident through various initiatives aimed at enhancing education quality and fostering curriculum innovation (Ondo State Ministry of Education, 2021). However, a comprehensive assessment of students' perceptions regarding curriculum innovation is necessary to pinpoint areas needed for improvement.

This study is anchored on critical theory in education, which challenges existing systems to enhance education regardless of socio-economic backgrounds or other obstacles

(Giroux, 1981). Aligned with Nigeria's endorsement of global protocols like Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals, the senior secondary school curriculum objectives are designed to address the nation's contemporary needs such as patriotism, national consciousness, unity, moral uprightness and well adjusted citizens, who will be useful in their society and for higher education (Sangoley; Adedapo & Olajojo, 2022). These objectives include stimulating students' subject interests, instilling basic theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, fostering interests in arts, science, technology, and mathematics, applying skills to meet societal demands, and offering a comprehensive course for student's not pursuing higher education while laying a solid foundation for post-secondary career choices (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, P. 18). The Nigerian secondary education system is critical for students' foundational development, and curriculum innovation is pivotal for its enhancement. By adopting a learner-centred approach and aligning with global and local dynamics, curriculum innovation can positively impact students' engagement and outcomes. A thorough assessment of students' perceptions in Ondo State is crucial for targeted improvements, while critical theory in education guides efforts to enhance education despite various barriers.

The main goal of Nigeria's education system is to provide practical education that equips students for employability or entrepreneurship. Functional education is rooted in addressing students' needs and interests in order to activate their engagement with meaningful activities (Dewey, 1938, & Schunk, 2012). Despite this, the Nigerian education system faces persistent challenges,

including poor learning outcomes, possibly linked to issues arising from curriculum innovation (Ajibola, 2008). Learning outcomes encompass cognitive assessment, attitudes, values, skills, and retention abilities. This discrepancy between students' academic performances and the investments made by the government and parents is evident, especially with the release of annual exam results like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

Nigerian students should be taught to think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions to address local and global needs. However, the current curriculum falls short in preparing students for a competitive and dynamic workplace. The National Policy on Education (2013) emphasises curriculum innovation's role in functional education, skills acquisition, job creation, and poverty reduction. It stresses the need for regular review, effectiveness, and relevance of the curriculum to meet societal demands (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Despite previous public policies aimed at addressing students' needs, systemic shortcomings persist in realising educational goals and philosophies. Education should serve as a means of cultural transmission and change as well as adapting to the evolving needs of society. Therefore, curriculum innovation becomes essential to meaningful education for both recipients and society at large.

Innovation entails a deliberate process of introducing change to address real or perceived problems, involving creativity and novelty. Curriculum innovation, similarly, involves a rational and planned approach, connecting individuals, organisations, school systems, and interested groups through formal and informal avenues. It is a conscious

endeavour driven by needs to enhance teaching quality, student learning, and assessment methods. This involves enhancing instructional methods, techniques, content, and evaluation processes.

Curriculum innovation includes the introduction of novel teaching and learning approaches, methodologies, and content to enhance educational outcomes (Sallis, 2014). Students' perceptions of such innovation significantly impact its successful implementation and learning impact. However, lack of innovation can draw back progress in students' academic achievement (Serdyukov, 2017).

Various factors influence students' perceptions of curriculum innovation, categorised as internal (student-related) and external (context-related). Personally relevant curricula, learning preferences, and prior experiences shape internal factors. Externally, teacher practices, resource availability, and socio-cultural context impact perceptions (Sallis, 2014). Lack of in-service training and poor condition of service of teachers and instructors, out-dated equipment, unstable government policy, lack of standard workshop for practical work and lack of related modern instructional materials are also affecting the curriculum implementation. (Bande & Faremi (2012). Understanding students' perceptions aids curriculum development and guides effective strategies that match student needs and promote engagement. Students' involvement ensures alignment with interests. Teacher training in innovative practices enhance perceptions. Collaboration among stakeholders is vital for successful curriculum innovation (Sallis, 2014).

Curriculum innovation and implementation were affected by inadequate funding, poor knowledge of

interpretation of the curriculum, teachers' poor understanding of the curriculum content, low quantity of human and material resources, as well as the faulty monitoring/supervision of the implementation process. (Odeh & Opoh 2015). Student involvement ensures alignment with interests.

Understanding the perceptions of secondary school students regarding curriculum innovation is essential for effective educational development. Student engagement and satisfaction are central to the success of any curriculum initiative (Otaru, 2015). Positive perceptions contribute to higher motivation, enthusiasm, and active participation which influence overall learning outcomes. However, negative perceptions can hinder student involvement and academic performance thereby emphasising the need for a thorough examination of students' perspectives (Ige & Arekemase, 2021).. Identifying and addressing the major constraints to curriculum innovation in secondary schools is crucial for fostering meaningful educational advancements. Ajibola (2008) highlight the persistent challenges faced by the Nigerian education system, including poor learning outcomes that may be linked to issues arising from curriculum innovation. Examining these constraints provides insights into systemic shortcomings and barriers that impede the realisation of educational goals. Such constraints might range from resource limitations and teacher preparedness to institutional resistance. Recognising these challenges is the first step towards implementing targeted solutions that will facilitate effective curriculum innovation in the region. Addressing the challenges of curriculum innovation requires a multifaceted approach. Firstly, strategic investments in teacher

training and professional development can enhance educators' preparedness and adaptability to innovative teaching methodologies, collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including administrators. Policymakers, and curriculum developers are essential to create an enabling environment for innovation (Sallis, 2014). Additionally, ensuring adequate resource allocation and infrastructure development can mitigate constraints related to materials and facilities. Engaging with the local community and seeking their involvement in the curriculum development process helps align educational objectives with societal expectations (Goodlad, 1984). By adopting these comprehensive strategies, the study aims to provide practical and actionable recommendations for overcoming the challenges associated with curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State, thereby fostering a more effective and responsive educational system.

Various stakeholders play crucial roles in curriculum innovation, contributing distinct perspectives to its development and implementation. Educators and teachers are central, shaping content and strategies (Stenhouse, 1975). Administrators and policymakers influence the curriculum landscape through decision-making and resource allocation (Marsh, 2009). Parents and community members contribute cultural perspectives, aligning the curriculum with societal expectations (Goodlad, 1984). Curriculum developers and specialists bring expertise in theory and design (Tanner & Tanner, 1980), and industry collaboration ensures real-world relevance (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). Students play a pivotal role in curriculum innovation as active participants in the learning process, contributing to discussions,

collaborating, and applying critical thinking skills (Dewey, 1916). A well-designed curriculum enhances motivation and engagement, aligning with students' interests and providing diverse learning experiences (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Curriculum innovation influences learning outcomes by incorporating effective teaching strategies and developing critical thinking skills (Hattie, 2009; Paul & Elder, 2006). Additionally, it prepares students for future challenges, incorporating emerging trends and fostering creativity (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009; Robinson, 2001). However, students actively engage, offering valuable insights and feedback (Freire, 1970). Together, these stakeholders create a curriculum that addresses diverse learner needs, reflects societal values, and prepares students for future challenges. The influence of curriculum innovation on student performance is significant. Hattie's research on visible learning highlights factors that positively impact student achievement. Effective curriculum design and implementation are considered high-impact strategies (Hattie, 2009). The clarity of learning intentions, success criteria, and the alignment of assessments with curriculum objectives contribute to improved student performance (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

Curriculum innovation is important for Nigeria's education system, particularly in Ondo State. Grounded in critical theory, this study assesses students' perceptions, offering insights for targeted improvements. Recognising the diverse stakeholders' roles, including students, educators, and policymakers, is crucial for effective curriculum development. Curriculum innovation, guided by global educational goals, enhances students' engagement and outcomes,

ensuring relevance in a rapidly evolving world.

Statement of the Problem

The consistent search for equity, quality, standard, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness in educational provisions in Nigeria secondary schools has been the major motive for curriculum innovation. Despite the importance of curriculum innovation coupled with its implementation for about two decades in Nigerian schools and in Ondo State in particular, there seems to be little improvement in the standard of education. The current system of education in Ondo State could be said to have failed to achieve its objectives as enshrined in the Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE) 2013. This clearly showed why the greater percentage of Ondo State secondary school students failed West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) examinations with less than forty percent meeting the requirements for university education and those that could not further their education to tertiary levels could not apply knowledge obtained for job creation. The students' performance left people in doubt if previous curriculum innovations have achieved the desired goals, probably, because the curriculum innovation processes might have not been directed towards the right channels. It is upon this background that this study explores students' perceptions towards curriculum innovation in secondary school in Ondo State, Southwest Nigeria.

Aim Objectives of the Study

The general aim of the study is to appraise Ondo State secondary school students' perceptions towards curriculum innovation with a view to providing information on effective ways of planning acceptable curriculum

innovation to meet the realisation of goals of education as entrenched in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) for the students at this level of education in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- (i) examine the perception of the secondary school students in Ondo State towards curriculum innovation;
- (ii) determine major constraints to curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State; and
- (iii) proffer solutions to the identified challenges of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State.

Research Questions

The study will provide answers to the following research questions:

- 1. What are the perceptions of the secondary school students in Ondo State towards curriculum innovation?
- 2. What are the major constraints to curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State?
- 3. What are the solutions to the identified challenges of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State?

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The design was appropriate because all variables in the study cannot be manipulated. It was described the way they were responded to by the participants in the study. The population of the study comprised all secondary school students in Ondo State while the sampled population was 200 Senior Secondary School II (SSS II) students selected through multi-stage sampling technique in their intact classes. Four Local Government Areas (LGAs) from the existing 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the State were selected using simple random sampling technique. One school was then selected from each Local Government Area (LGA) and one intact class of SS11 students was selected in each school using simple random technique as well. Four schools were used for the study. Frequency count and percentage statistical tools were used to analyse the data collected on all the research questions

Results

The results and discussion of findings are as follows:

Research Question One

What are the perceptions of the secondary school students in Ondo State towards curriculum innovation?

Data obtained are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Respondents’ View on Perception towards Curriculum Innovation in Secondary Schools in Ondo State

S N	ITEM	SA %	A %	D %	SD %	TOTAL%
1	Students do not know when new changes are made in their curriculum.	66 33.5	70 35.0	21 10.5	43 21.5	200 100.0
2	Reasons for new changes in the curriculum should be made clear to students.	104 52.0	79 39.5	3 1.5	14 7.0	200 100.0

3	When there are changes in curriculum, students are more attentive to their teachers.	48 24.0	96 48.0	13 6.5	43 21.5	200 100.0
4	Students have no interest when changes are made in their curriculum.	37 18.5	49 24.5	34 17.0	80 40.0	200 100.0
5	New methods of teaching make students feel uncomfortable.	70 35.0	48 24.0	25 12.5	57 28.5	200 100.0
6	When new contents are introduced into curriculum, students loss interest.	42 21.0	52 26.0	31 15.5	75 37.5	200 100.0
7	Changes in curriculum affect students' academic performances negatively.	50 25.0	45 22.5	46 23.0	59 29.5	200 100.0
8	Previous curriculum innovations in Nigeria failed because students were not involved.	70 35.0	61 30.5	31 15.5	38 19.0	200 100.0
Ground Total %			54.38	45.62		100

Table 1 depicts respondents' perceptions towards curriculum innovation. 68.5% agreed to not knowing when curriculum changes occur, while 31.5% strongly disagreed. 91.5% felt that reasons for changes should be clear to students, with 8.5% in disagreement. 72% believed that curriculum changes make students more attentive, while 28% disagreed. 43% agreed that students lack interest in changes, contrasting with 57% disagreement. 59% found new teaching methods uncomfortable, and 41% disagreed. 47% agreed that new content decreases interest, while 53% disagreed. 47.5% agreed that changes

negatively impact academic performance, 52.5% disagreed. 65.5% believed that past innovations lacked students' involvement, 34.5% disagreed. Overall, grand total percentage indicates that 54.4% held a positive perception of curriculum innovation in Ondo State's secondary schools, while 45.6% disagreed.

Research Question Two
What are the major constraints to curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State?
 Data obtained are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Respondents' Views on Constraints to Curriculum Innovations in Secondary Schools in Ondo State

SN	ITEM	SA %	A %	D %	SD %	TOTAL%
9	Senior Secondary School students find it difficult to cope with the trends of curriculum innovation.	34 17.0	62 31.0	37 18.5	67 33.5	200 100.0
10	Students are not involved in the process of curriculum innovation.	52 26.5	56 28.0	30 15.5	62 31.0	200 100.0
11	Curriculum innovation fails to consider students' interest.	66 33.0	61 28.5	24 12.0	38 26.5	200 100.0
12	Curriculum innovation in Nigeria does not consider societal needs.	56 28.0	67 34.5	23 11.5	52 26.0	200 100.0

13	Students are lazy; therefore, they do not accept changes in their curriculum.	56	28.0	56	28.0	39	19.5	49	24.5	200	100.0
14	Teachers find it difficult to implement the new changes in the curriculum.	40	20.0	58	29.0	40	20.0	62	31.0	200	100.0
Ground Total		55.25		44.75		100					

In Table 2, 48.0% agreed, and 52.0% disagreed that Senior Secondary School students struggle with curriculum innovation trends. Also, 54.5% declared that students were not involved in curriculum innovation, while 38.5% disagreed. Similarly, 61.5% felt curriculum innovation disregards students' interests, while 38.5% disagreed. Moreover, 62.5% believed that curriculum innovation overlooks societal needs, while 37.5% disagreed. 56.0% agreed that students' resistance is due to laziness, while 44.0% disagreed. About teachers, 49%

felt they struggle to implement changes, while 51% disagreed. Overall, 55.3% identified problems with curriculum innovation, focusing on failure to address students' interests and students' adaptation challenges.

Research Question Three
What are the solutions to the identified challenges of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State?

Data obtained are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Respondents' Views on Solutions to Problems of Curriculum Innovation

SN	ITEM	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	TOTA	%
15	Students' involvement in the curriculum innovation could make it more effective.	89	44.5	56	28.0	12	6.5	43	21.0	200	100.0
16	Provision for assessing the impact level of curriculum innovation for the students should be made.	95	47.5	66	33.0	14	7.0	25	12.5	200	100.0
17	Curriculum innovation should be directed towards students interest.	100	50.0	57	28.5	20	10.0	23	11.5	200	100.0
18	Teachers should be trained on ways to teach new changes made in curriculum.	104	52.0	73	36.5	10	5.0	13	6.5	200	100.0
19	Curriculum innovation will be effective if necessary teaching materials are provided.	103	51.5	64	32.0	19	9.5	14	7.0	200	100.0
Ground Total		71.7		28.3		100.0					

In Table 3, 72.5% agreed that involving students enhances curriculum innovation's effectiveness, while 27.5% disagreed. Also, 80.5% agreed on assessing curriculum innovation's impact on students, through feedback; 19.5% disagreed. Further, 78.5% believed that curriculum innovation should align with students' interests, and 88.5% thought teachers should be trained to teach new curriculum changes, while 21.5% and 11.5% disagreed respectively.

Moreover, 83.5% believed that effective curriculum innovation relies on teaching materials, while 11.5% disagreed. The grand total percentage, 71.7% to 28.3%, highlighted viable solutions including adequate material provision, addressing students' interests, and teacher training for enhanced curriculum implementation.

Discussion of Findings
Research Question One

The findings of the research reveal noteworthy insights into secondary school students' perceptions of curriculum changes in Ondo State. The recurring theme of students being unaware of when new changes are introduced into the curriculum indicates a potential communication gap between educational authorities and students. Loughran and Berry (2005) argue that such a lack of awareness can lead to feelings of disconnection among students, emphasising the importance of transparent communication in educational systems. In essence, the demand for clear reasons behind changes aligns with the call for transparency in educational processes (Dewey, 1916).

The research suggests that students become more attentive when curriculum changes occur. This finding aligns with the idea that well-designed changes can capture students' attention and enhance their engagement (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The positive response to changes might indicate that students recognise the value or novelty introduced into their learning environment. The positive interest shown by students when changes are made to the curriculum is a significant finding. It contradicts the common notion that students resist changes and showcases an openness to innovation. Hattie (2009) suggests that students' attitudes toward educational interventions can vary widely, and the positive interest observed here may be indicative of the perceived relevance or improvement brought about by the curriculum changes. Another intriguing finding is that the introduction of new contents into the curriculum does not lead to a loss of interest among students. This contrasts with the perception that new content might be met with resistance. Hidi and Renninger (2006) argue that students'

interest can be influenced by the perceived relevance and challenge of the content, and this finding suggests that careful consideration of content selection can mitigate potential disinterest.

However, the research highlights a significant concern – the discomfort students feel with new teaching methods. This finding is consistent with Savery's (2015) emphasis on the careful introduction and scaffolding of new instructional approaches. It implies that, while students may be receptive to changes in content, alterations in teaching methods may require more deliberate strategies to ensure a smooth transition and minimise discomfort. The findings depict a complex landscape of students' perceptions regarding curriculum changes in Ondo State. While there is a lack of awareness about the timing of changes, students seem generally attentive, interested, and open to new content. The discomfort with new teaching methods, however, signals a need for careful implementation strategies. These insights contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective curriculum development and implementation thereby emphasising the need for clear communication and thoughtful pedagogical adjustments to foster positive student responses to educational innovations.

Research Question Two

The findings shed light on significant challenges and constraints faced by Senior Secondary School students in Ondo State regarding curriculum innovation. A substantial proportion of students reported struggling with curriculum innovation trends, signaling a potential gap between the evolving educational landscape and students' readiness to adapt. This finding aligns with the broader literature on the difficulties

associated with implementing and adapting to innovative educational practices (Dede, 2010). Moreover, the revelation that a considerable percentage of students feel excluded from the curriculum innovation process implies a lack of student involvement in decision-making. Cook-Sather (2014) argues for the importance of including students in educational decision-making processes, fostering a sense of agency and empowerment. The absence of student involvement may contribute to feelings of disconnection and resistance.

The perception that curriculum innovation disregards students' interests is a crucial finding. It underscores the importance of aligning curriculum changes with students' needs and preferences (Dewey, 1916). This finding resonates with the student-centred learning approach, emphasising that educational innovations should consider and incorporate students' perspectives to enhance relevance and engagement (Fullan, 2007). Furthermore, the notion that curriculum innovation overlooks societal needs suggests a misalignment between educational changes and the broader societal context. Successful curriculum innovation should not only meet students' needs but also align with the demands and expectations of the society it serves (Schwab, 1978). This finding emphasises the importance of considering the societal context in curriculum development and reform. The assertion that students' resistance to curriculum innovation is due to laziness is a significant perception that warrants careful consideration. While students' attitudes and motivation can vary, attributing resistance solely to laziness may oversimplify a complex issue. It calls for a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing students' engagement and

resistance in the context of curriculum changes (Deci et al., 1991). The findings related to teachers' perspectives on implementing changes highlight a divided opinion. Nearly half of the students felt that teachers struggle to implement curriculum changes. This resonates with the broader challenges faced by educators in adapting to new pedagogical approaches and curriculum reforms (Cuban, 1993). It emphasises the need for adequate support and professional development for teachers to navigate and implement changes effectively.

The identified constraints to curriculum innovation in Ondo State's secondary schools, as indicated by students' perceptions, highlight the need for a more inclusive, contextually relevant, and collaborative approach to educational reforms. Addressing students' interests, involving them in decision-making processes, and providing necessary support for teachers are crucial steps toward fostering a more positive and adaptive response to curriculum innovations.

Research Question Three

The findings illuminate key insights into potential solutions for the challenges associated with curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Ondo State. These solutions, as perceived by the students, offer valuable considerations for improving the effectiveness and acceptance of educational reforms. Firstly, the recognition that involving students enhances curriculum innovation's effectiveness is a noteworthy finding. This aligns with contemporary educational theories emphasising student agency and participation in the learning process (Cook-Sather, 2014). When students feel actively involved in shaping their educational experience, it can lead to a sense of ownership,

engagement, and better adaptation to curriculum changes.

The acknowledgment that assessing curriculum innovation's impact on students, through feedback, is crucial reflects a commitment to evidence-based educational practices. This finding resonates with the broader literature on the importance of continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms in improving teaching and learning outcomes (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Regular evaluation and feedback allow for the identification of successful strategies and areas that may require adjustment thereby contributing to the overall effectiveness of curriculum innovations. The belief that curriculum innovation should align with students' interests emphasises the significance of relevance and contextualization in educational reforms. Dewey (1916) argues for education that connects with students' experiences and interests, fostering a more meaningful and engaging learning environment. Aligning curriculum changes with students' interests can enhance motivation and positively influence their attitudes towards innovation.

Moreover, the understanding that teachers should be trained to teach new curriculum changes is a crucial aspect of successful implementation. Teacher's professional development plays a pivotal role in supporting educators as they navigate and integrate innovative teaching methods (Guskey, 2002). Adequate training ensures that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively implement new curriculum initiatives. The emphasis on effective curriculum innovation relying on teaching materials underscores the importance of resource provision in educational reforms. Quality teaching materials can facilitate the implementation of new strategies and

content thereby providing a foundation for engaging in effective instruction (UNESCO, 2017). The availability of appropriate materials is a fundamental consideration for the success of curriculum innovations.

The grand total percentage of 71.7% highlights the consensus among students regarding these proposed solutions. Adequate material provision, addressing students' interests, and teacher training emerge as crucial components for enhancing curriculum implementation. This collective agreement underscores the potential effectiveness of a multifaceted approach that integrates students' involvement, assessment, relevance, and teacher support in shaping the success of curriculum innovations in secondary schools. Implementing these solutions can contribute to a more responsive, engaging, and effective educational system in Ondo State.

Conclusion

The studies on curriculum innovation in Ondo State secondary schools highlight challenges such as students' adaptation difficulties, limited involvement, and neglect of students' interests and societal needs. Solutions include involving students, assessing impacts, considering interests, teacher training, and ensuring material provision. Collaborative efforts among stakeholders are vital to address these challenges and implement solutions. Further research that is specific to Ondo State context is recommended for validation and refinement. Prioritising students' perspectives is crucial for effective curriculum innovation and continuous education system improvement.

Recommendations

In light of the nuanced insights garnered from students' perspectives

on curriculum innovation in Ondo State's secondary schools, the following recommendations are proposed to address the identified challenges and capitalize on opportunities:

1. Establishing a dynamic and accessible communication platform to keep students informed about upcoming curriculum changes thereby fostering a sense of inclusivity and connection with the educational process is needed.
2. Government should develop robust and ongoing teacher training initiatives that specifically target the incorporation of new teaching methods. Addressing the discomfort expressed by students necessitates educators who are adept and confident in implementing innovative pedagogies.
3. Institutionalised mechanisms for students' involvement in educational decision-making processes should be created. This will not only validate their desire for a participatory role but will also cultivate a sense of ownership and engagement in the learning experience.
4. Efforts to actively involve students in the curriculum development process to ensure it aligns with their interests and aspirations should be enhanced. This personalized approach will enhance motivation and create a curriculum that resonates with the diverse student body.
5. Incorporating continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms into the curriculum innovation structure to give room for necessary improvement is required. This approach, informed by students' experiences and outcomes will enable timely

adjustments, fostering a more adaptive and effective learning environment.

6. Aligning curriculum changes not only with individual student needs but also with the broader societal context is essential. A curriculum responsive to societal needs ensures that students are equipped to navigate real-world challenges and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

By strategically implementing these recommendations, education stakeholders can create an environment that not only addresses the challenges highlighted by students but also leverages their openness and positive inclinations towards curriculum changes.

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