

Teachers' Innovative Practices and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemic in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State

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Abstract

This research was carried out with the aim of finding out whether there exists a significant relationship between teachers' innovative practices and secondary school students' performance during the period of COVID-19 in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. The research adopted a descriptive correlational design. There are 53 secondary schools in the Ilorin metropolis while 15 schools that fall within the Ilorin metropolis were randomly selected. The total population of the study is 16, 698 while the sample used for the study was 378 participants which was drawn from the principals, vice principals, heads of department, and subject specialists covered in the study. Two sets of instrument were used for this study which was tagged "Teachers' Innovative Practices Questionnaire" (TIPQ) and "Students' Performance Proforma" (SPP) in the 2020/2021 academic session in English Language, Mathematics, Biology, and Economics. In the study, two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated and tested using PPMCS at 0.05 significant level. Results from the analysis showed that there exists a significant relationship between teachers' innovative practices and secondary school effectiveness. In line with the results, it was recommended that: teachers should improve upon their innovative practices to help the schools to achieve more effectiveness on students' performance.

Keywords: *Innovative Practices, Students' Academic Performance, Secondary School*

1. Introduction

The need for the creation of innovation in our educational system in Nigeria is a welcome development. This is necessary because the educational system is not static but rather dynamic. This dynamism calls for a series of innovative practices from the various stakeholders involved in the educational system in order to make the system better. Teachers are curriculum interpreters

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of secondary schools and they are expected to be innovative in order for school goals and objectives to be achieved. It is expected that school teachers should encourage and inculcate in their students the spirit of innovation. This is necessary because teachers perform pivotal roles in student's lives and as such are expected to be full of innovative practices.

The primary purpose of education is to develop individuals' cognitive domain knowledge, skills, and behavior (Burke et al., 2009). Based on Kandola (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic was first noted in Wuhan, China in December 2019 and according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), coronaviruses cause illnesses such as cold and illnesses that has to do with respiration. According to Winthrop (2020), about 185 countries have closed the doors of their schools because of the virus with about 90 percent of students affected. The Federal Government of Nigeria in a bid to curtail the spread of the virus, ordered the closure of the nation's education industry. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria led to the closure of the educational sector and the way out is technology. The outbreak caused by the emergence of COVID-19 calls for innovative practices whereby new ideas, practices, and programs are adopted and implemented for school success to be achieved. Innovative practices are necessary for students to reach their full potential. These practices are required by all educators so as to achieve the aspirations of the new generations.

The term innovation is often used to create a better solution that meets new requirements. Uchendu (2005) described it as the introduction of new policies and procedures for the smooth implementation of the activities of any endeavor so as to bring about something new. When innovations are introduced into any system, the effectiveness of the system is immediately noticeable and this is also applicable to education. The scholar asserted that if they are well implemented, it may lead to efficiency and high productivity. Innovative practice encompasses new ideas, creative thought, and new imagination to inform a new method in order to achieve stated goals, aims, and objectives.

Today's education system is required to be both effective and efficient. Adopting different innovative measures like; collaborative learning, inclusive learning, and peer tutoring are to be put in place in all our schools for improved student retention rates. In school settings, success is a product of the standards set by the school. Performance is an important factor that can be attributed to innovative practices put in place by a school. Campbell (2012) defined performance as the knowledge obtained and skills developed in the school. It is the level at which a student, teacher, and institution have achieved their educational goals.

The persistent low performance of students in public examinations can be attributed to the lack of innovative practices of teachers. There is enough evidence that the lack of teachers' innovative practices in secondary schools has led to poor students' academic performance in the school system. It is a known fact that innovations on the part of school teachers with respect to how lessons are presented have a way of determining students' academic performance. Lack of innovation in the areas of collaborative learning, inclusive learning, and peer tutoring among students of secondary school may lead to poor performance that is being witnessed today Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The major purpose of carrying out this research was to investigate the correlation that can be found between teachers' innovative practices and the academic performance of students in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

1. examine the innovative practices mostly used by teachers in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State
2. find out the level of secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State
3. find out the relationship between collaborative learning and students' academic performance;
4. investigate the extent of the relationship between inclusive learning and the academic performance of students
5. determine the correlation between peer tutoring and students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the research objective, two questions were raised to give the study a direction:

1. What are the innovative practices of secondary school teachers in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State?
2. What is the level of secondary school student's academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara state?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The study was based on the following hypotheses;

Ho: Teachers' innovative practice is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Ho₁: Collaborative learning is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Ho₂: Inclusive learning is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Ho₃: Peer tutoring is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will be of immense benefit to the various stakeholders in the educational sector. The findings of this study would be of importance to the teachers because it would expose them to the different innovative practices that could aid better academic performance of students. Also, the results that emanated from this study could be significant to the students in the schools because it would serve as an eye opener to them on the best innovative practices that could be employed to foster better performance on their part.

2.Literature Review

Innovative practice is an important variable in the teaching-learning process. A school without innovative practices either public or private may not be able to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the system. Adesola (2005) found out the level of innovative practices is indeed a plus to the school's effectiveness and shows the level of commitment of the principal toward the achievement of educational goals and objectives.

Osim, Uchendu, and Mbon (2012) conducted a study that focused on the relationship between principals' innovative behaviour and teachers' task performance in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study showed that the two variables do not have a significant relationship.

Onyali, Ezeugbor, and Okoye (2016) conducted an empirical study on the need for creativity and innovations as a means of fostering better student outcomes in Anambra, Nigeria. Findings indicated that secondary school teachers believed that creativity and innovative strategies make the delivery of lessons interesting and stimulating through the use of modern technology.

A study that examined the degree of relationship between school principals practicing innovation and teachers' professional development was carried out by Abu-Shreah and Zidan (2017). It was reported in their study that school principals practiced innovation as a way of fostering teachers' professional development in the three domains by encouraging innovative ideas, promoting schooling, and solving problems. It was also found that a positive correlation exists between the two variables under study.

A study that focused on the relationship that exists between innovative teaching approaches and their effect on the performance of students learning in science in a Preparatory school, in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand was conducted by Yawman and Kubi (2018). The findings of their study showed that the

students were divided into two groups and that the students who were taught via innovative teaching performed better than their mates who were taught through the traditional teaching modes.

Güçlü Yılmaz (2021) carried out a qualitative study on the views of teachers on the various innovative practices used in teaching. It was a relationship study that was conducted along the variables of gender, level of education, and based on seniority. The findings of the study showed the resources allocated for teaching methods and techniques, educational technologies, school buildings, and equipment were limited thereby not allowing for innovative studies in education.

A study that focused on the various innovative practices adopted by different Senior Secondary Schools in the South district of Sikkim, India was investigated by Dona and Bandana (2022). Based on the outcome of their study, it was found that senior secondary schools in the South district of Sikkim adopted different types of innovative practices and that teachers most of the time undertake training programmes organized by the state government in order to improve their innovativeness in the discharge of their duties in schools. Umoren and Ekong (2020) carried out a descriptive survey study on the assessment of innovative teaching strategies in rebuilding performance in senior secondary school Physics in Nigeria. Results showed that inquiry method, discovery learning, individualized instruction, role play, simulation, games, team teaching, brainstorming, and other similar strategies were agreed to be innovative teaching strategies that can enhance performance in physics.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research is a quantitative study that adopted a descriptive correlational design because the method gathers information from a representative group out of the entire population. Also, information on teachers' innovative practices and secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara state was gathered from the sample used for the study.

3.2 Population and Sampling

There are 53 secondary schools in the Ilorin metropolis while 15 schools that fall within the Ilorin metropolis were randomly selected. The total population of the study is 16, 698 while the sample used for the study was 378 participants which was drawn from the principals, vice principals academics, heads of department, and teachers of the subject areas covered in the study.

3.3 Instrumentation

A researcher-designed questionnaire tagged "Teachers' Innovative Practices Questionnaire" (TIPQ) was used for the data collection from the

participants. It was four Likert scale types (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (D) Disagree, (SD) Strongly Disagree while the second instrument was a proforma tagged "Secondary School Students' Academic Performance Proforma "(SSSAPP). The TIPQ was structured along the three sub-variables of collaborative, inclusive, and peer tutoring while the SSSAPP was used to collect the students' results in four core subject areas. The reason for limiting the research to these three sub-variables is because past researchers had worked on other areas of innovative practices and in order not to replicate what others have done, the researchers then focused on these three areas. Also, the four subject areas were considered for this study because they are the requirements necessary to gain admission into higher institutions after secondary education. The validity of the research instrument was ascertained by giving the draft to two lecturers at the Faculty of Education, the University of Ilorin for both the face and content validities. In addition to that pilot test was carried out to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instruments by administering the questionnaires to 15 secondary school teachers who were not part of the schools used in the Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State at an interval of two weeks. The co-efficient value obtained was .86.

3.4 Data Collection

The researchers with the assistance of four of their postgraduate students who were trained on the purpose and objectives of the study carried out the administration of the instruments in each of the sampled schools after obtaining necessary permission from each school administrator. All 378 copies of the questionnaire administered were duly retrieved and this represents a 100% rate of return.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected were analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics of mean and rank order were used to answer the research questions raised while the inferential statistics of PPMC were used to test the formulated hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: What are the innovative practices of teachers in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State?

Table 1

Innovative Practices of Secondary School Teachers in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State

S.No	N	Items	\bar{X}	Ranking
1.	378	Collaborative learning	1.65	3 rd
2.	378	Inclusive learning	1.70	2 nd
3.	378	Peer tutoring	1.83	1 st

Table 1 shows the innovative practices employed by secondary school teachers in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. As shown in the Table, inclusive learning had a mean score (of 1.70), and collaborative learning had a mean score (of 1.65), peer tutoring had a mean score (of 1.83) thereby ranking 1st, 2nd, and 3rd respectively. The finding was in agreement with the earlier finding of Simeon (2000) who believed that students subjected to peer tutoring, inclusive learning, and collaborative learning are likely to perform better than those who are not. The result from data analysis on the innovative practices of secondary school teachers in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State indicated that peer tutoring is the best innovative practice that can aid improved students' academic performance. The reason for the finding may be that students are free with one another and comprehend better when they teach each other. The result agreed with Hinum (1999) who asserted that the efficiency and effectiveness of innovative practices have an impact on the well-being of students and teachers. Furthermore, the finding agreed with the finding of Akinsolu (2004) who reported that the adoption of innovative practices brings about the accomplishment of goals and objectives in the educational process.

Research Question 2:

What is the level of secondary school Students' academic performance Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State?

Table 2

Level of Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

S.No	Subjects	Mean	S.D	Decision
1.	Mathematics	1.23	0.43	Low
2.	English	1.38	0.49	Low
3.	Economics	1.36	0.48	Low
4.	Biology	1.37	0.48	Low
	Mean	1.34	0.47	Low

\bar{X}

1.00-2.54	Low
2.55-3.54	Average
3.55-4.54	High
4.55-5.00	Very High

Source: Researcher's Interpretation

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the level of secondary school student's academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. As shown in Table 2, the mean scores for all the subjects were less than 2.54 and, therefore, fall in the category of low.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: There is no significant relationship between teachers’ innovative practices and secondary school effectiveness in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State.

Table 3

Teachers’ Innovative Practices and Secondary School Students’ Academic Performance in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

Variable	N	X	SD	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Teachers’ Innovative Practices	378	1.89	.62	.578	.000	Ho Rejected
Students’ Academic Performance	378	1.34	5.64			

*Significant P < .05

Table 3 shows the calculated r-value (.578) while the p-value (.000) is less than the significance level (.05). Since the P-value is less than the significant value, the hypothesis is hereby rejected. This implies a significant relationship between teachers’ innovative practices and academic performance. The result agreed with Abu-Shreah and Zidan (2017), that, school teachers as curriculum interpreters need to be innovative and imaginative to enhance the smooth running of the schools which would facilitate the realization of effectiveness and improved performance on the part of the students.

Ho₁: Collaborative learning is not significantly related to secondary school students’ academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Table 4

Collaborative learning and Secondary School Students’ Academic Performance in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

Variable	N	X	SD	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Collaborative Learning	378	1.65	.66	.556	.000	Ho Rejected
Students’ Academic Performance	378	1.34	5.64			

*Significant P < .05

Ho₂: Inclusive learning is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Table 5

Inclusive learning and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

Variable	N	X	SD	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Inclusive learning	378	1.70	.65			
Students' Academic Performance	378	1.34	5.64	.544	.000	Ho Rejected

*Significant P < .05

Ho₃: Peer tutoring is not significantly related to secondary school students' academic performance in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Table 6

Peer tutoring and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State

Variable	N	X	SD	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Peer Tutoring	378	1.83	.68			
Students' Academic Performance	378	1.34	5.64	.546	.000	Ho Rejected

*Significant P < .05

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the hypothesis tested indicated that there was a significant relationship between teachers' innovative practices and secondary school students' academic performance in the era COVID-19 pandemic in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. The statistical analysis of the null hypothesis tested showed that the p-value (.000) is less than the significance level (.05). This finding is in agreement with the earlier findings by Onyali, Ezeugbor, and Okoye (2016) who found that secondary school teachers believed that creativity and innovative strategies make the delivery of lessons interesting and stimulating through the use of modern technology. Furthermore, there was an agreement between the findings of this study and that of Dona and Bandana (2022) who found that different kinds of innovative practices were adopted by schools such as ICT, group learning, teacher guardian concept, simulated library, special

tutorials for slow learners in primary sections, subject base quiz in morning assembly, assembly reading, remedial classes, project work, field trips, model preparation, dramas and elocution. Again, the findings of this study corroborate the findings of Umoren and Ekong (2020) that inquiry method, discovery learning, individualized instruction, role play, simulation, games, team teaching, brainstorming, and other similar strategies were agreed to be innovative teaching strategies that can enhance performance in physics. Adesola (2000) believed that students subjected to inclusive learning are likely to perform better than those who are not. The findings of hypothesis four showed that there was a significant relationship between collaborative learning and secondary school effectiveness in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. This finding is in tandem with the view of Adesola (2000) that, collaborative learning is very innovative and beneficial to students because it brings about the cross-breeding of ideas between or among students and consequently assists those who are academically weaker to improve in learning.

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that teachers' innovative practices could assist in realizing secondary school students' performance in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. Collaborative learning, peer tutoring, and inclusive learning all play a significant role in the realization of students' performance. Inclusive learning is a veritable tool for achieving academic performance because it provides opportunities for students to acquire more knowledge in their subject areas. Collaborative learning goes a long way in actualizing secondary school achievements because it assists in facilitating seriousness on the part of the students thereby enhancing their academic performance.

6. Recommendations

Arising from the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that:

1. Inclusive learning is a good way of enhancing students' performance and may be promoted among secondary school students to improve their performance.
2. Collaborative learning needed to be encouraged among students to facilitate the sharing of ideas which could help secondary school students to improve more academically.
3. Teachers should group their students so as to encourage the sharing of ideas in order to assist those who are academically weak to improve in their learning.

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