

## **Economics Teachers' Awareness, Utilization of Collaborative, Interactive, Learner-Oriented Instructional Strategies and Sustainable Economic Literacy in Ibadan**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated teachers' awareness and utilization of recommended instructional strategies in economics curriculum in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State. Two research questions were generated and answered in this study. The descriptive research of ex-post factor type was adopted. One hundred and ninety-nine students offering Economics in ten selected secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. The four validated instruments used for data collection were Teachers Awareness of Instructional Strategies Questionnaire ( $r = 0.86$ ), Teachers Assessment Sheet for Utilizing Collaborative Interactive and Learner-Oriented Instructional Strategies ( $r = 0.78$ ) and Teachers Utilization of Instructional Strategies Observation Scale (0.74). The data collected was analysed using frequency count, percentages, graphs, means and standard deviation at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that the level of economics teachers' awareness of recommended instructional strategies in the secondary school economics curriculum is moderate while its utilization was poor. It was recommended among others that Economics teachers should make concerted effort in improving their competencies on use of newly emerging teaching strategies by engaging in online training. Government should improve on infrastructural facilities by providing classroom, computer and electricity to solve the problem of large class size.

**Keywords:** *Classroom participation, Achievement, Learning resources*

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### **Background to the Study**

Economic literacy is one of the basic life skills. It is a life skill which is paramount to academic and career aspect of an individual. It is also useful to make meaningful decisions as an individual, group and nation. In any nation, economic literacy is needed by all because failure of an individual to make right economic decisions in the midst of scarce resources will affect performance of institutions, a sector and the economy as a whole. A good knowledge of Economics is needed to optimally use scarce resources to achieve sustainable economic growth and development.

Borrowing from the words of Wang (2014) described financial literacy as:

*Just as reading and writing allow people to experience productive lives, financial literacy—the understanding of financial concepts—provides individuals with the skills they need to make informed decisions, never has the need for such knowledge been greater. Shifts in modern society have given individuals far more responsibility and power over decisions about money matters at the same time that consumers' financial options have become increasingly complex.*

More so, economic literacy cannot be over emphasized for sustainable economic growth and development. Meanwhile, to promote economic literacy among the citizenry, students are exposed to concepts of Economics at primary, secondary and tertiary curricular. Specifically, National Policy of Education stated that Economics at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level is one of the elective subjects in the humanities (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). On its significance to secondary education, Yusuf (2014) reiterated that the guiding principle of the Economics curriculum is the need to equip graduates of senior secondary school with the basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to better appreciate the nature of economic problems in any society and adequately prepare them for the challenges in the Nigerian economy .

As important as Economic literacy is in national development reports have shown that Nigerians are deficient in it, which has partly been adduced to poor teaching and learning of Economics at secondary school, which is the foundation (Adu & Galloway, 2015, Gbadamosi & Akanni, 2017). It should be noted that, the impact of economics teaching is less felt in the society. For instance, researchers have reported that the quality of the instruction of Economics has been rated low consistently, by students in secondary schools (SS) and universities over period of years now (Jeshuabib, 2019; Hansen, 2013). Besides, teaching of Economics in Nigerian Secondary School is also characterized with unsatisfactory performance of students in WAEC and NECO examinations in spite of its importance in the development of a nation.

Efforts to address the problem of low achievement in Economics have led researchers to experiment with various teaching strategies such as cooperative learning (Busari, 2016). Also, studies on available learning resources and conduct and quality of economics teachers (Gbadamosi, Arowolo and Oyewole, 2017, Oyewole, 2018). Though, previous studies such as Gbadamosi (2017) conducted a survey on methodologies adopted in the teaching of

Economics while Oleabhiere and Oleabhiere (2015) recommended in another study that Economics teachers should be trained in selecting and utilizing instructional strategies that are learners-centred and be encouraged to attend seminars, workshops in order to improve on their teaching skills and competencies. In spite of all the efforts the problem persists.

Meanwhile, for effective teaching of Economics some strategies were recommended for teachers to use in the curriculum. They are collaborative, interactive, and learner-oriented instructional strategies (FRN, 2013). Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product (Smith & Mac Gregor, 1992). This type of learning is also known as collective learning, cooperative learning, peer learning, learning communities, team learning, collaborative learning, or peer teaching (Al-Kaabi, 2016). Interactive teaching involves learning with action that is inclusive (Musai, 2014). While learner or student-centered instruction [SCI] is an instructional approach in which students influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning. The SCI approach includes involving students in simulations and role plays, and using self-paced and/or cooperative (team-based) learning” (Collins and O'Brien in Seng, 2014). Although the use of collaborative, interactive, and learner-oriented instructional strategies for teaching has been receiving increased attention, only a few research studies on it have been done in Nigeria. This calls for more research that fully explore teacher classroom practices of recommended instructional strategies in boosting teachers' classroom practices and students' achievement in Economics. Therefore, this study examined teachers' awareness and utilization of collaborative, interactive, and learner-oriented instructional strategies in boosting teachers' class room practices and students' achievement in Economics.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Economics provide numerous values that could help in building well-equipped citizenry and achievement of sustainable development. However, even with the importance of the Economics, studies have shown that students' achievement is not encouraging which results to general low economic literacy in Nigeria. Though scholars have made several efforts to remediate the situation, but the problem persists. It should be noted that it seems that none of the previous studies observed the classroom practices of teachers in Economics. They rarely ascertain the extent to which teachers are aware and explore collaborative, interactive, and learner-oriented instructional strategies that were recommended for effective teaching of Economics and proved to be result-oriented in the teaching of Economics in developed countries.

### **Objective of the Study**

This study, therefore, investigated teachers' awareness and utilization of recommended instructional strategies (collaborative, interactive, and learner-oriented) in economics curriculum in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State.

## **Research Questions**

The following are questions which this study seeks to answer;

1. To what extent are Economics teachers aware of instructional strategies, specifically those recommended in the secondary school Economics curriculum?
2. To what extent do Economics teachers make use of these suggested instructional strategies during their lessons?

## **Materials and Methods**

**Research Design:** A descriptive survey research was adopted in this study.

**Population:** The target population for the study comprised of all the Economics teachers and students offering Economics in government owned secondary schools located within Ibadan north local government area. Ten schools were randomly selected out of the 36 government owned secondary schools within Ibadan north local government. One economics teacher and one intact class of SS 3 were purposively selected in each school. A total of ten (10) Economics teachers and 199 SS3 students were used for the study.

Four validated instruments were used for the study. The Cronbah's Alpha reliability coefficient for Teachers Awareness of Instructional Strategies Questionnaire is 0.86, Teachers Assessment Sheet For Utilizing Collaborative Interactive and Learner-Oriented Instructional Strategies ( $r = 0.78$ ) and Teachers Utilization of Instructional Strategies Observation Scale is 0.74.

## **Procedure for Data Collection**

The researcher sought permission from the school authorities and informed the teachers and the students the purpose of the study. Three research assistants were trained to assist in the administration of the instruments. Data collection was done for two weeks. Thereafter, timetable of the participating teachers was collected for the study.

Teachers Assessment Sheet for Utilizing Collaborative Interactive and Learner-Oriented Instructional Strategies was administered on each teacher in economics class. SS 2 Economics lessons were observed by three trained research assistants, each focusing on a sub-scale. The same process was repeated on the second visit to the participating teachers. The researchers employed the use of tally marks in filling the assessment sheets by ascribed tally marks to each item observed and at the end of each observation/lesson would sum up the tallies then grade based on the five-point rating scale. The statistical procedures used for data analysis in this study included frequency count, percentages, means and standard deviation at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Results and Discussion**

**Research Question 1:** To what extent are economics teachers aware of instructional strategies, specifically those recommended in the secondary school Economics curriculum?

**Table 1:** Level of Economics Teacher Awareness of Recommended Instructional Strategies in Secondary School Economics Curriculum

S/N	Instructional Strategies	Not Aware	Slightly Aware	Somewhat Aware	Moderately Aware	Extremely Aware	Mean	STD.D
1.	Concept mapping	2 20%	2 20%	1 10%	4 40%	1 10%	3.00	1.414
2.	Inquiry based strategy	2 20%	-	3 30%	2 20%	3 30%	3.40	1.414
3.	Cooperative learning	1 10%	-	-	5 50%	4 40%	4.10	1.197
4.	Field trips	2 20%	1 10%	-	4 40%	3 30%	3.50	1.581
5.	Future wheel technique	3 30%	2 20%	3 30%	2 20%	-	2.40	1.174
6.	Guest speakers	2 20%	1 10%	1 10%	3 30%	3 30%	3.40	1.578
7.	Brain storming	1 10%	3 30%	1 10%	2 20%	3 30%	3.30	1.494
8.	Role playing	1 10%	2 20%	3 30%	2 20%	2 20%	3.20	1.317
9.	Case study	2 20%	-	3 30%	5 50%	-	3.10	1.197
10.	Debates	1 10%	1 10%	-	5 50%	3 30%	3.80	1.317
11.	Games	2 20%	1 10%	2 20%	3 30%	2 20%	3.20	1.476
12.	Discussion	-	2 20%	1 10%	5 50%	2 20%	3.70	1.059
13.	Service learning	2 20%	2 20%	2 20%	4 40%	-	2.80	1.229
14.	Presentations	1 10%	2 20%	2 20%	3 30%	2 20%	3.30	1.337
Weighted mean= 3.3								

Table 1 revealed a weighted mean of 3.3 out of a maximum obtainable score of 5.0 and is higher than the standard mean of 3.0. This implies that the level of Economics teachers' awareness of recommended instructional strategies in the secondary school Economics curriculum is moderate.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do Economics teachers make use of the suggested instructional strategies in the economics curriculum during their lessons?

**Table 2: Economics Teachers' Utilization of Instructional Strategies by Observation**

SN	Performance assessed	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Mean	STD. D	Rank
<b>Collaborative Strategies</b>									
1.	Teacher allows students to share their opinions and experiences in class.	1 10%	1 10%	-	4 40%	4 40%	2.10	1.370	9 <sup>th</sup>
2.	The teacher listens attentively to student questions and comments/opinions.	-	2 20%	-	4 40%	4 40%	2.00	1.155	11 <sup>th</sup>
3.	The teacher establishes group interaction by assigning students to work in groups to carry-out an assignment.	-	-	3 30%	-	7 70%	1.60	0.966	14 <sup>th</sup>
4.	The teacher gives assignments that may be on debates, writing projects, problem-solving task, collaborative writing and study teams.	-	2 20%	1 10%	-	7 70%	1.80	1.317	12 <sup>th</sup>
5.	The teacher works actively with students and manages student behavior through firm and consistent responses to student action.	-	-	1 10%	9 90%	-	2.10	0.316	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Interactive Strategies</b>									
6.	The teacher uses a variety of activities, strategies and methods to engage students in class.	-	2 20%	2 20%	5 50%	1 10%	2.50	1.972	4 <sup>th</sup>
7.	The teacher provides positive reinforcement and oral or written feedback in class.	-	2 20%	3 30%	1 10%	4 40%	2.30	1.252	6 <sup>th</sup>
8.	The classroom chairs are positioned in groups or around tables to promote interaction.	-	1 10%	4 40%	2 20%	3 30%	2.30	1.059	6 <sup>th</sup>
9.	The teacher moves around the class in order to make interaction between teacher and students inevitable.	1 10%	1 10%	4 40%	2 20%	2 20%	2.70	1.252	3 <sup>rd</sup>
10.	The teacher encourages interactions by allowing low hum of conversations about activities or tasks in the class.	-	-	2 20%	4 40%	4 40%	1.80	0.789	12 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Learner-Oriented Strategies</b>									
11.	The teacher uses students' questions to guide the lesson.	-	2 20%	3 30%	3 30%	2 20%	2.50	1.080	4 <sup>th</sup>
12.	Teacher helps students figure out what to do when they are stumped, by given clues i.e. students construct their own learning.	1 10%	1 10%	3 30%	-	5 50%	2.30	1.494	6 <sup>th</sup>
13.	The teacher has high number of students actively engaged in the classroom activity.	2 20%	1 10%	3 30%	2 20%	2 20%	2.90	1.449	2 <sup>nd</sup>
14.	The teacher provides the opportunity for students to reflect on what they have learnt by asking them questions or testing their knowledge.	2 20%	2 20%	3 30%	2 20%	1 10%	3.20	1.317	1 <sup>st</sup>
Weighted mean= 2.2929									

Table 2 revealed a weighted mean of 2.29 out of the maximum obtainable score of 5.00 and is lower than the standard mean of 3.0. This implies that the level of Economics teachers' utilization of recommended instructional strategies secondary school Economics curriculum is low. This implies that secondary school economics teachers poorly utilize recommended instructional strategies in the secondary school Economics curriculum.

## **Discussion of Findings**

### **Level of Economics Teachers' Awareness of Recommended Instructional Strategies in the Current Secondary School Economics Curriculum**

Based on the result obtained from the study it evident that secondary school Economics teachers are moderately aware of recommended instructional strategies in the resent Economics curriculum. This corroborates the finding of Gbadamosi, Oyewole and Arowolo (2017) that the awareness of innovation in economics curriculum usually forms the backbone of its effective implementation for achievement of sustainable development (p.382). This study also support the submission of Iloabuch (2017) that the knowledge teachers have about a teaching strategy determines how well they implement any activity and the choice of activities they would favour during their lessons. The level of awareness teachers have about a teaching strategy determined amount of time they allocated to adopted classroom activities for example those teachers who were more aware of learner-centred strategies spent less time on teacher-centred activities and more time on student-centred activities. In the bid to therefore, improve the effective utilization of recommended instructional strategies in Economics curriculum, teachers are to be aware of the features and guiding principles underlining such strategies. In doing so, teachers will able to know what is expected and develop the right attitude towards implementing the curriculum.

### **Level of Economics Teachers' Utilization of Recommended Instructional Strategies in the Secondary School Economics Curriculum**

The findings in this study revealed that secondary school Economics teachers poorly utilize recommended instructional strategies in the secondary school Economics curriculum. This situation is reflected on teachers over dependence on conventional teaching methods (teacher-centred) that is not students' friendly than the learner oriented methods. Since, the teachers were not well informed about the various instructional strategies in their disposal (Adu, Ojo & Adu, 2018). An adage says "an individual can't give what he/she don't have", teachers likewise couldn't utilized learner oriented instructional strategies. The few ones that are aware did not make the best use of the opportunity due to inadequate knowledge of the strategies, large class size, and poor classroom environment among others. This can results to poor implementation of Economics curriculum and at the long run have negative impact on teaching and learning of Economics as reported by Gbadamosi & Akanni, (2017) and Chima (2017) that there is need to improve students' achievement and attitude to Economics.

### **Implications of the Findings to Achievement of National Development**

1. When a learner friendly classroom environment is created through effective use of interactive, collaborative and learner oriented strategies there will be improvement in students' interest and achievement in Economics. This will probably improve sustainable economic growth and development.
2. The choice of the teacher on the utilization of the teaching strategies will be based on the teachers' knowledge on the existence of collaborative and learner oriented strategies. Therefore a teacher who is not aware of these strategies will neither attempt to use them at all or use them correctly.
3. When teacher improves their competencies on use of newly emerging teaching strategies, learning task is simplify and less stressful, and could be result-oriented.

4. Student active engagement in economics lesson is very vital for academic success and improvement in economic literacy for achievement of sustainable economic growth and development.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that when teachers awareness, knowledge and utilization of interactive, collaborative and learner oriented instructional strategies are improved upon, students' achievement and attitude to Economics would improve. This invariably increase economic literacy in this nation for achievement of SDG.

### **Recommendations**

1. Government should organise regular training, workshops and seminars for economics teachers on interactive, collaborative and learner oriented instructional strategies.
2. Economics teachers should make concerted effort in improving their competencies on use of newly emerging teaching strategies by engaging in online training.
3. Government should improve on infrastructural facilities by providing classroom, computer and other audio-visual instructional materials as well as regular source of electricity power to solve the problem of large class size to enhance meaningful interaction in the economics class.
4. There should be adequate provision of relevant learning resources by the Government through School Board for the teaching of Economics.

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