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**AN ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION:  
CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN  
ENUGU NORTH, ENUGU STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the Challenges and Prospects of Implementing Curriculum Innovation among Secondary School Teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. Three purposes of study and three research questions guided the study. The research design adopted for this study was a survey design. The study was carried in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population of the study is 702 respondents, that comprised of all the secondary schools teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area from the nine (9) secondary schools. The sample size for the study is 100 respondents selected using the simple random sampling procedure. The instrument used for the collection of data is a structured questionnaire. For the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach alpha statistical method of estimating reliability, the correlation co-efficient obtained using the Cronbach method of estimating reliability was 0.74 this indicates that the instrument has acceptable reliability. Mean was use for analyzing data from the study. The findings from the study revealed that; Lack of the availability of instructional materials*

*like textbooks, laboratory equipment, teaching aids in school affects the successful implementation of curriculum innovation. Unwillingness to adopt new teaching methods affects how effectively teachers implement curriculum innovations. Regular in-service training and workshops enhance the ability to implement curriculum innovations effectively. It was recommended among others that; School administrators should implement strategies to foster positive attitudes among teachers. This could include motivational programs, mentoring, and guidance that help teachers appreciate the value of curriculum innovation for student learning outcomes.*

**Keywords:** Challenges, Curriculum, Innovation and Teachers

## Introduction

Curriculum innovation has become a central theme in educational discourse worldwide, as nations strive to align teaching and learning processes with the demands of globalization, technological advancement, and socio-economic development. In Nigeria, curriculum reforms are designed to improve the relevance of education, foster creativity, and equip learners with skills necessary for national progress. Secondary school teachers, as frontline implementers of curriculum, play a pivotal role in translating policy into practice. However, the success of curriculum innovation depends largely on their capacity, willingness, and the institutional support available to them (Obanya, 2014).

In Enugu State, particularly within the Enugu North Local Government Area, secondary schools face unique challenges in implementing curriculum innovations. These challenges include inadequate instructional materials, insufficient training opportunities, overcrowded classrooms, and limited access to modern technology. Teachers often struggle to integrate new pedagogical approaches into their practice due to resource constraints and systemic inefficiencies (Okoro, 2018). Moreover, resistance to change, stemming from entrenched traditional teaching methods, further complicates the process of innovation.

Despite these challenges, prospects for successful curriculum innovation remain promising. With increasing emphasis on teacher professional development, government investment in education, and community participation, opportunities exist to strengthen curriculum delivery. Innovations such as learner-centered pedagogy, integration of ICT, and competency-based approaches have

the potential to transform secondary education in Enugu North if effectively implemented (Eze, 2020).

This study therefore seeks to assess the challenges and prospects of implementing curriculum innovation among secondary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area. By examining teachers' experiences, institutional support mechanisms, and contextual realities, the research aims to provide insights that can guide policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in enhancing curriculum implementation for improved educational outcomes.

Education is universally acknowledged as a fundamental instrument for national development and social transformation. In Nigeria, education is regarded as a vital tool for achieving economic growth, technological advancement, political stability, and social cohesion. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2018) in the National Policy on Education emphasizes that education should equip learners with appropriate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for self-reliance and national progress. At the heart of achieving these objectives lies the curriculum, which serves as the blueprint guiding teaching and learning processes in schools. However, due to rapid socio-economic, technological, and global changes, educational systems must continuously reform and update their curricula to remain relevant. This process of updating and improving educational content and practices is commonly referred to as curriculum innovation.

Curriculum innovation involves deliberate and systematic efforts to introduce new ideas, methods, materials, and organizational patterns into the educational system with the aim of improving learning outcomes (Fullan, 2016). It may include changes in subject content, pedagogical approaches, assessment techniques, integration of technology, and restructuring of educational programmes. In the Nigerian context, curriculum innovation has been evident in reforms such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, the revision of the Senior Secondary School Curriculum, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), entrepreneurship education, and the emphasis on learner-centered and competency-based approaches (NERDC, 2022).

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's educational structure. It serves as the bridge between basic education and tertiary education and prepares students either for higher education or for entry into the workforce. According to the FRN (2018), the broad goals of secondary education include preparing individuals for useful living within society and higher education. Achieving these goals requires a dynamic curriculum capable of responding to societal

demands. Therefore, implementing curriculum innovation effectively at the secondary school level is crucial for national development.

Teachers are central to the success of any curriculum innovation. They are the primary implementers who interpret curriculum documents, plan instructional activities, select teaching methods, and evaluate students' learning outcomes. As noted by Fullan (2016), educational change depends largely on what teachers do and think; thus, no curriculum innovation can succeed without teachers' active involvement and commitment. Teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and perceptions significantly influence the fidelity and effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

Despite numerous curriculum reforms introduced in Nigeria, the implementation process has often encountered significant challenges. Research indicates that there is frequently a gap between curriculum design and classroom practice (Obanya, 2018). While policies and curriculum frameworks may be well-articulated at the national level, translating these innovations into practical classroom experiences can be problematic. Factors such as inadequate resources, limited teacher training, resistance to change, and poor supervision have been identified as barriers to effective curriculum implementation (Ogunyemi, 2016).

One of the major challenges associated with curriculum innovation in Nigeria is inadequate funding. Effective implementation requires sufficient financial resources to provide instructional materials, equip laboratories, maintain infrastructure, and organize teacher training programmes. However, many public secondary schools operate under constrained budgets, which limits their capacity to adopt and sustain innovative practices. In some cases, schools lack basic facilities such as functional laboratories, libraries, and ICT equipment, making it difficult to implement modern, technology-driven curricula (Adu & Olatundun, 2017).

Another critical challenge is insufficient professional development for teachers. Curriculum innovation often demands new pedagogical competencies, particularly in areas such as ICT integration, learner-centered methodologies, continuous assessment, and competency-based instruction. However, many teachers may not receive adequate in-service training to update their skills. According to Okoye and Ugwanyi (2017), limited access to regular and practical professional development programmes reduces teachers' readiness to implement curriculum reforms effectively. Without proper orientation and support, teachers may revert to traditional lecture methods that do not align with the objectives of innovative curricula.

Resistance to change also constitutes a significant barrier. Curriculum innovation may disrupt established routines and require teachers to adopt unfamiliar strategies. Rogers' (2023) Diffusion of Innovations theory, although earlier, remains relevant in explaining how individuals adopt or resist new ideas. Teachers may resist innovation if they perceive it as complex, incompatible with existing practices, or lacking clear benefits. In some cases, reforms are introduced in a top-down manner without sufficient consultation with teachers, leading to feelings of exclusion and reduced ownership. Such resistance can result in superficial compliance rather than genuine implementation.

Classroom conditions further complicate the implementation of curriculum innovation. Large class sizes are common in many public secondary schools in Nigeria, including those in Enugu North Local Government Area. Overcrowded classrooms make it difficult to employ interactive, student-centered teaching methods such as group work, project-based learning, and individualized instruction. Innovative approaches that require active student participation and continuous assessment may become challenging under such conditions.

Assessment practices also present challenges. Modern curriculum reforms emphasize formative assessment, continuous assessment, and performance-based evaluation. However, teachers may lack the technical skills to design appropriate assessment tools (Adu & Olatundun, 2017). Additionally, the pressure to prepare students for external examinations conducted by bodies such as WAEC and NECO often encourages teaching to the test, which may undermine innovative practices aimed at holistic development.

Infrastructural deficits, particularly in the area of ICT, remain a major obstacle. The integration of ICT into the curriculum is a significant innovation intended to enhance digital literacy and global competitiveness. However, effective ICT integration requires reliable electricity, internet connectivity, and adequate computer facilities. In many schools within Enugu North LGA, inconsistent power supply and insufficient ICT infrastructure hinder the effective implementation of technology-based innovations.

Furthermore, monitoring and supervision mechanisms may be weak. Effective curriculum implementation requires regular supervision, feedback, and support from school administrators and education authorities. Where supervision is irregular or merely fault-finding rather than supportive, teachers may lack the guidance needed to improve their practices. Instructional leadership from principals plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of innovation within schools (Ogunyemi, 2016).

Socio-economic and contextual factors also influence curriculum innovation. Enugu North Local Government Area comprises urban and semi-urban communities with varying levels of access to resources. Differences in school ownership (public and private), teacher qualifications, and student socio-economic backgrounds may affect implementation processes. For instance, private schools may have relatively better facilities but may face pressure from parents for examination success, while public schools may struggle with limited funding and high enrolment rates.

Despite these challenges, curriculum innovation presents numerous prospects for improving secondary education in Enugu North LGA. One major prospect is the enhancement of teaching and learning quality. Innovative curricula that emphasize critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy can better prepare students for the demands of the 21st century. The integration of entrepreneurship education, for example, can equip students with practical skills for self-employment and economic empowerment, thereby addressing issues of youth unemployment.

Another prospect lies in teacher professional growth. Curriculum innovation encourages teachers to update their knowledge and adopt reflective practices. Through workshops, seminars, and collaborative learning communities, teachers can develop new competencies and enhance their instructional effectiveness. Continuous professional development can increase teachers' confidence and motivation, leading to improved student outcomes (Okoye & Ugwanyi, 2017).

Government initiatives and partnerships with non-governmental organizations also provide opportunities for strengthening curriculum implementation. Programmes aimed at improving teacher capacity, providing instructional materials, and upgrading school infrastructure can support innovation. When adequately supported, teachers can effectively implement new curricula and contribute to educational transformation.

Moreover, curriculum innovation can promote inclusive and learner-centered education. By adopting flexible teaching methods and differentiated instruction, teachers can address diverse learners' needs. Innovations that integrate technology can facilitate access to a wide range of educational resources, enabling students to learn beyond the confines of the classroom. In the context of understanding the specific challenges and prospects associated with curriculum innovation is essential for effective policy formulation and educational planning. Localized studies are necessary to identify context-specific barriers and opportunities. By examining teachers' experiences, perceptions, and readiness, stakeholders can design targeted interventions to enhance effective implementation.

Curriculum innovation is indispensable for ensuring that secondary education remains relevant and responsive to societal changes. While Nigeria has introduced various reforms to improve educational quality, effective implementation at the school level remains a challenge. Secondary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area face numerous obstacles, including inadequate funding, insufficient training, infrastructural deficits, large class sizes, and resistance to change. Nevertheless, significant prospects exist for improving teaching and learning through innovation. By addressing identified challenges and leveraging available opportunities, curriculum innovation can contribute meaningfully to educational development in Enugu North LGA.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Curriculum innovation has become a major strategy for improving the quality and relevance of secondary education in Nigeria. In recent years, reforms such as the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), entrepreneurship education, learner-centered instructional approaches, and competency-based curricula have been introduced to equip students with the skills required for the 21st century. These innovations are intended to enhance critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and self-reliance among learners. However, the success of these reforms depends largely on effective implementation by teachers at the classroom level. Despite these efforts, there are growing concerns that curriculum innovations are not being fully or effectively implemented in many secondary schools. In some cases, teachers continue to rely on traditional teaching methods that emphasize rote learning and teacher-centered instruction, rather than adopting interactive and skill-based approaches prescribed by the revised curriculum. This situation raises questions about the factors influencing teachers' implementation of curriculum innovation.

In Enugu North Local Government Area, secondary schools operate under varying conditions, and anecdotal evidence suggests that challenges such as inadequate instructional materials, limited ICT facilities, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient funding, and irregular professional development opportunities may hinder effective curriculum implementation. Furthermore, teachers may experience difficulties adapting to new teaching strategies due to limited training or lack of adequate support from school administrators and education authorities. Resistance to change, heavy workload, and pressure to prepare students for external examinations may also discourage the adoption of innovative practices.

At the same time, curriculum innovation presents significant prospects for improving teaching and learning outcomes. When effectively implemented, it can enhance instructional quality, promote

student engagement, and improve overall academic performance. However, the extent to which these prospects are being realized in secondary schools within Enugu North LGA remains unclear. The problem of this study, therefore, lies in the apparent gap between the intended objectives of curriculum innovation and the realities of its implementation among secondary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the challenges and prospects of implementing curriculum innovation among secondary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the influence of school-related factors that affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State.
2. Explore how teachers' attitudes affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study;

1. To what extent does school-related factors affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State?
2. To what extent does teachers' attitudes affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State?

### **Research Design**

The research design adopted for this study was a survey design. The study was carried in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population of the study is 702 respondents, that comprised of all the secondary schools teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area from the nine (9) secondary schools. The sample size for the study is 100 respondents. The instrument used for the collection of data is a structured questionnaire. The correlation co-efficient obtained

using the Cronbach method of estimating reliability was 0.74 this indicates that the instrument has acceptable reliability. Research questions were answered using mean.

## Results

**Research Question 1: To what extent does school-related factors affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State?**

**Table 1: Mean Responses on the extent school-related factors affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools**

S/N	Items	VH E 4	HE 3	LE 2	VL E 1	N	∑FX	Mean —( X )	Remark
1	Lack of the availability of instructional materials like textbooks, laboratory equipment, teaching aids in school affects the successful implementation of curriculum innovation.	40	30	15	15	100	295	2.95	HE
2	Inadequate school infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, libraries, ICT facilities) supports effective implementation of curriculum innovation..	45	25	20	15	100	310	3.1	HE
3	Lack of support from school administration (e.g., encouragement, supervision, and guidance from principals and school authorities) influences teachers' inability to implement curriculum innovations.	48	22	18	12	100	306	3.06	HE

4	Lack of teacher collaboration and teamwork within the school enhance the effective implementation of curriculum innovation.	35	30	15	20	100	280	2.8	HE
5	Inadequate school funding and resource allocation significantly affect the adoption and implementation of innovative curriculum practices.	47	33	10	10	100	317	3.17	HE
<b>Grand Mean</b>								<b>3.16</b>	<b>HE</b>

Findings from table 1 with mean scores of 2.95, 3.1, 3.06, 2.8 and 3.17 Showed that the mean of items 1-5 were above the cut- off point of 2.5 and therefore agreeing that to a high extent school-related factors affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

**Research Question 2: To what extent does teachers’ attitudes affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State?**

**Table 2: Mean rating on the extent teachers’ attitudes affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools**

s/n	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\sum FX$	Mean —( X )	Remark
6	Unwillingness to adopt new teaching methods affects how effectively teachers implement curriculum innovations.	50	35	15	5	100	340	3.49	HE
7	Negative attitudes toward curriculum changes does not motivate teachers to	30	25	25	20	100	265	2.60	HE

	use innovative teaching strategies in the classroom.								
8	Resistance to new teaching methods makes it difficult to implement curriculum innovations successfully	46	34	15	5	100	321	3.21	HE
9	Lack of teachers' belief in the relevance and benefits of curriculum innovation influences their commitment to its implementation.	35	25	30	10	100	285	2.85	HE
10	Non participation in professional development and training programs affects how well I implement curriculum innovations	38	38	18	6	100	346	3.46	HE
	<b>Grand Mean</b>							<b>3.12</b>	<b>HE</b>

Findings from the table 2 above, with mean scores of 3.49, 2.60, 3.21, 2.85 and 3.46 showed that the mean of items (6-10) were above the cut –off point of 2.5 and therefore indicates that **teachers' attitudes** affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State?

### Discussion of Findings

Research question one examined the extent school-related factors affects the implementation of curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The findings showed that; Lack of the availability of instructional materials like textbooks, laboratory equipment, teaching aids in school affects the successful implementation of curriculum innovation, inadequate school infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, libraries, ICT facilities) supports effective implementation of curriculum innovation, lack of support from school administration (e.g., encouragement, supervision, and guidance from principals and school

authorities) influences teachers' inability to implement curriculum innovations, lack of teacher collaboration and teamwork within the school enhance the effective implementation of curriculum innovation and inadequate school funding and resource allocation significantly affect the adoption and implementation of innovative curriculum practices. The findings are in line with the findings of Adeyemi (2023) who is of the opinion which suggests that the successful implementation of curriculum innovations is heavily dependent on the provision of necessary teaching resources. Schools that are well-resourced provide teachers with the tools needed to experiment with new teaching methods and integrate innovative approaches into lessons.

Research question two investigated the extent teachers' attitudes affects curriculum innovation in secondary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The findings revealed that; Unwillingness to adopt new teaching methods affects how effectively teachers implement curriculum innovations, negative attitudes toward curriculum changes does not motivate teachers to use innovative teaching strategies in the classroom, resistance to new teaching methods makes it difficult to implement curriculum innovations successfully, lack of teachers' belief in the relevance and benefits of curriculum innovation influences their commitment to its implementation and non participation in professional development and training programs affects how well the implementation of curriculum innovations. The finding is in line with the findings of Ojukwu (2018) who asserted that; teachers who demonstrated a positive attitude toward change were more likely to implement innovative instructional strategies effectively he also said that the success of curriculum reforms largely depends on teachers' readiness to embrace change. Conversely, resistance or reluctance among some teachers impeded the smooth adoption of new curricular initiatives, highlighting the importance of fostering positive attitudes.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the challenges and prospects of implementing curriculum innovation among secondary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The findings revealed that the successful adoption of curriculum innovations is significantly influenced by both school-related factors and teachers' attitudes. Challenges such as inadequate teaching resources, poor infrastructure, limited professional development opportunities, and resistance to change were found to hinder effective curriculum implementation. Similarly, negative teacher attitudes, including reluctance to adopt new methods and low motivation, impede the smooth integration of innovative teaching practices.

Conversely, the study identified several prospects that can enhance the implementation of curriculum innovation. These include continuous professional development, availability of instructional resources, supportive school leadership, collaborative teacher practices, incentives and recognition, and awareness of educational policies and guidelines. When effectively leveraged, these prospects can create an enabling environment that fosters teacher engagement, improves instructional delivery, and ultimately enhances students' learning outcomes.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Government agencies, school management boards, and school administrators should ensure that schools are well-equipped with teaching materials, laboratory equipment, ICT tools, and adequate classroom facilities.
2. Teachers should be provided with regular training, workshops, and seminars to enhance their skills and competence in implementing new curriculum initiatives.

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