

TEACHERS' INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER-CENTRED INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH STUDIES' CLASSROOMS IN LAGOS MAINLAND LGA OF LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

Underlying the English Studies curriculum is the principle of integration, thus the curriculum is often referred to as Integrated English. It connotes a two-sided package which can promote the language and communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and thinking; and at the same time facilitate the reading and enjoyment of Literature. By its very nature, the Integrated English requires that teachers engage learners in hands on, task-based language and literature activities. This necessitates learner-centred approach to teaching. The study thus investigates how English Studies teachers interpret and implement Learner-Centred Instruction (LCI) in their classrooms at the Upper Basic (Junior Secondary) schools in Lagos. Through the developed objectives, it specifically determines teachers' knowledge of learner-centred approach and its techniques, their level of acceptance of the approach in teaching practices, and the factors that possibly affect effective deployment of the approach. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study, with a total sample of 22 teachers from seven public and four private schools. The research instruments used were questionnaire and observation checklist. Data analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings showed that despite the reported extensive awareness, knowledge and acceptance of the LCI by teachers, the use of the approach was not seen in the observed lessons in the public schools. It was also found that teachers' refusal to move away from the convenience and familiarity of the old, conventional teaching method ranked as the greatest hindrance to the use of the approach and its techniques. Some teachers also believed that it is inappropriate to work alongside their learners in planning key aspects of the teaching-learning process (lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessment procedure and evaluation). It was recommended that teachers should be update their knowledge and expertise of Learner-Centred Instruction and they should put this into practice to help learners develop critical thinking, problem- solving and collaborative skills, which are core skills of language and communication.

Key words: *English studies, Integrated English, Learner-centred Learning, Literature, instructional techniques*

Introduction

Teaching has been described as the act of guiding learners to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct knowledge in and outside of the classroom, thus it should be professionally and creatively handled. Okoli (2018) points out that teaching requires a deliberate and systematic creation and control of those conditions in which learning occurs. It is safe to state, therefore, that teaching is indeed a challenging task and requires many skills, thinking, and decision making. It requires that teachers should bear in mind that learning is not a product or an outcome, but an active process which is characterized by a change in the learner's thinking and behaviour. This change, according to Sequeria (2012), is brought on by understanding a new concept, developing a new skill or changing an attitude.

Approaches to teaching refer to the rules, techniques, activities and methods employed by teachers to promote learning amongst students. In the past, traditional, conventional instruction was delivered using the teacher-centred approach whereby the teacher was the primary communicator of knowledge. Hill (2002) describes this approach as being more traditional in nature, focusing on the teacher as the instructor. It is sometimes referred to as direct instruction, deductive teaching or expository teaching and is typified by the lecture-type presentation. In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher controls what is to be taught and how students are presented with the information that they are to learn. The teacher is not only the primary communicator of knowledge but also directly manages and dictates the pace and sequence of instructions. While the teacher is actively involved in teaching, the learners or students are in a passive, receptive mode listening to their teacher; they don't do much conversing or collaboration, but are just recipients of teachers' knowledge and wisdom (Ahmed, 2013). The principle guiding the teacher-centred teaching was that students were viewed as 'empty vessels' that had nothing to contribute to the teaching-learning process. Therefore, it was their responsibility to soak up everything their 'all-knowing' teacher transmitted to them from his reservoir of knowledge. The traditional technique of repetition and rote memorization of information meant that students are not developing their critical thinking, problem-solving and decision making skills, suppressing what Jony (2016) and Armstrong (2012) called learner responsibility.

In recent decades, there has been a paradigm shift from the approach to active and collaborative learning or learner-centred teaching approach which aims at improving learners' information acquisition and retention, higher-level thinking skills, interpersonal and communication skills, and self-confidence (Asoodeh, Asoodeh & Zarepour, 2012). Barr and Tagg (1995), in Froyd and Simpson (2010) noted that the shift enhances students' discovery and construction of knowledge which is focus of education nowadays, thus learner-centred learning enjoys a burgeoning advocacy for application at all levels of education all over the world. It is pertinent to note that Nigeria is also translating this pedagogical theory into practice (Anyawu and Iwuamadi, 2015).

There is no universally agreed definition of the learner or student-centred approach to instruction. Some theorists provide broad definitions based on students having a choice in

their learning while others provide specific principles, thus the concept is susceptible to misinterpretation (Lea et al, 2003; Marinko et al 2016; Kaput, 2018). For the purpose of this study, we are adopting the definition by Froyd and Simpson (2010):

An instructional approach in which students influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning; ... places the learner at the centre of the learning process. The instructor provides students with opportunities to learn independently and from one another and coaches them in the skills they need to do so effectively. ... includes such techniques as substituting active learning experiences for lectures, assigning open-ended problems and problems requiring critical or creative thinking that cannot be solved by following text examples, involving students in simulations and role plays, and using self-paced and/or cooperative (team-based) learning (p.21).

According to them, effectively implemented learner-centred learning can lead to increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding, and more positive attitudes towards the subject being taught. It gives students opportunities to lead learning activities, participate more actively in discussions, design their own learning projects, explore topics that interest them, and generally contribute to the design of their own course of study (Sawant and Rizvi, 2015). Additionally, such classroom often features desks arranged in circles or small groups (rather than rows of desks that face the teacher), with *self-guided* or *self-paced* learning, or with learning experiences that occur outside of traditional classroom settings (Brown et al, 1994). Its techniques involve active learning with variety of hands-on activities in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class; cooperative learning in which students work in teams on problems and projects under conditions that assure both positive interdependence and individual accountability; and inductive learning in which students are first presented with challenges (questions or problems) and learn the course material in the context of addressing the challenges (Sawant and Rizvi, 2015) Learners are treated as co-creators in the learning process, and as individuals with ideas and issues that deserve attention and consideration (Jony, 2016). It also recognizes that the prior knowledge of learners powerfully influences future learning and thus attempts to build on prior knowledge.

Learner-Centred Instruction is an offshoot of constructivism (Ozola, 2012; Iwuamadi & Anyawu, 2015; Sinhal, 2017). Ozola (2012) explains that the constructivist conception uses learner-centred strategies because they help students develop thinking and collaborative skills. Also, learning takes place in an environment where students are able to participate actively. Constructivist teachers understand that knowledge is not a thing that can be simply given by him or her in front of the classroom to students at the desks. Knowledge is constructed by learners through an active mental process of development. They follow constructivist principles which are implemented through a collection of educational practices that are student focused, meaning-based, process-oriented, interactive and responsive to students' personal interests and needs. Theorists like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, whose collective work focused on how students

learn, are primarily responsible for the move towards learner-centred approach. Carl Rogers' ideas about the formation of the individual also contributed to the growth of the pedagogy (Hein, 1991).

LCI can be applied to all subjects including the teaching of English as a second language. Considering the importance of English Language in Nigeria, students need to acquire a reasonable degree competence in it to perform varied functions in different contexts (Oribabor, 2014). However, in spite of this expectation, the standard of the English language in Nigeria is gradually waning. According to Akujobi & Chukwu (2012), the average Nigerian child still experiences overwhelming difficulty in learning the skill of written and spoken English, reading effectively is still a problem and the failure rate in nationwide examinations like SSCE and GCE is daunting. These problems are unequivocally placed at the doorstep of the teachers of English. Thus, there is a need to improve teaching methodologies for English Language in secondary schools in Nigeria.

As established earlier, the use of LCI in the English classroom comes with many benefits for the learners. Emaliana (2017) explains that its utilization would give students opportunities to improve analytical and problem solving skills, to entrench deep, lifelong, self-directed and reflective learning, as well as enhance their motivation. She maintains that there are several activities that bring many advantages in the learning process in English classes; students may work alone, in pairs, or in groups. When students are working alone, they can prepare ideas or make notes before class discussions, engage in listening tasks, do short written assignments, or do grammar or vocabulary exercises. Students can work together in pairs or groups when they compare and discuss their answers, or read and react to one another's written work and suggest improvements. Students may work together in discussions or in role-plays, share ideas, opinions, and experiences. These activities are advantageous to students because in working together while learning English they talk more, share ideas, learn from each other, feel more secure and less anxious, and use English in a more meaningful way. English teachers can engage their students in small-group discussions before and after the class. They can also make their students engage in pair or group presentations and encourage students to select topics to be treated in a class. Therefore, effective implementation of LCI should be emphasized in schools. This highlights the aim of this study: to find out how teachers of English Studies interpret and implement the approach into their daily teaching activities in public junior secondary schools in Lagos State.

The study is pertinent because despite the global awareness and practice Learner-Centred Instruction (LCI), there is still a gap in the mode of transition from the pedagogical theory into practice in Nigeria. Anyawu and Iwuamadi (2015) attribute this situation to some challenges facing the Nigeria's educational system, such as the low level of pedagogical understanding among educators. The ability to positively lead the student to learn effectively following the principles of LCI requires the teacher to be knowledgeable in his content area, as well as display a good level of pedagogical and class management skills. This requirement is seemingly deficient due to a number of issues. The popular saying that

you can only give what you have holds true for teachers who accept and appreciate the LCI but wrongly interpret it in their classrooms. Supporting this view, Lea et. al. (2003) noted that different interpretations of LCI imply that many institutions or educators that claim to use the approach may in reality not do so, or effectively. This study therefore examines the different ways teachers interpret or implement the Learner-Centred Instruction (LCI), in teaching English Studies at the Junior Secondary School level.

Techniques of Learner-Centred Instruction

LCI involves planning *with* the students in place of *for* the students and emphasizes learning by doing. Watanabe-Crockett (2017) explains that the effective implementation of the LCI prioritizes students' interests and gives them a voice in the learning process. LCI techniques include activities, tasks, practices and strategies that are used in the classroom by both the teacher and the students to accomplish the objective(s) of a lesson. It also includes the use of instructional materials and assessment procedures all of which follows the principles of the approach. There is a broad array of LCI techniques teachers and students can initiate, adopt, adapt and even expand; the key therein is that LCI gives room for creativity of teachers and students in devising classroom strategies.

Pass (2015) recommends techniques such as open-ended questioning to encourage critical and creative thinking, enhance problem-solving skills and promote communication among students; students' reflection to promote information processing and analytical thinking; Individual self-paced assignments and learning styles; community-based activities and service-learning projects. Clawson (2016) also suggests strategies such as demonstration; graphic organizers (e.g. flow charts, concept maps, storyboards, Venn diagrams); case studies of real people and real problems that must be solved; Think, Pair, Share; students' presentations and peer teaching; informal or formal debate on current issues related to the course content; and picture prompts. O'Neill & McMahon (2005) give a list such as field-trips, practical sessions, buzz groups and snowballing, quizzes, poster presentations, etc. On his part, Santos (2018) highlights the use of the flipped classroom which involves encouraging students to prepare for the lesson before class; thus, the class becomes a dynamic environment in which students elaborate on what they have already studied. Students prepare a topic at home so that the class the next day can be devoted to answering any questions they have about the topic. This allows students to go beyond their normal boundaries and explore their natural curiosity. He also identifies self-directed learning which involves letting students focus on exploring an area which interests them and learn about it by themselves. A common technique for exploring self-learning is the use of mind maps. Others include role play, flash cards, flow charts, storyboards, and story maps. Weimer (2012) adds that learner-centred teachers teach students how to think, solve problems, evaluate evidence, analyze arguments, generate hypotheses; reflect, analyze and critique what they are learning and how they are learning it. Weimer (2012) laments the fact that teachers make too many decisions about learning for students. Though she agrees that students cannot decide on what content should be included in the course or which textbook is best, but she believes that when teachers make all the decisions, the motivation

to learn decreases and learners become dependent. To combat this problem, she advises that teachers should search out ethically responsible ways to share power with students. They might give students some choice about which assignments to complete and make classroom policies something that students can discuss. From these reviews, one can conclude that LCI strategies or techniques can be graded on a continuum, from the least involvement, partial involvement to full involvement of learners. The study's concern thus is to locate the English Studies teachers' classroom practices within this continuum.

Objectives

The study sought to:

1. Determine English Studies teachers' knowledge of techniques of the Learner-Centred Instruction (LCI).
2. Ascertain the level of acceptance of LCI amongst teachers of English Studies.
3. Investigate how LCI is interpreted in the instructional practices of English Studies teachers.
4. Find out from the teachers' perspectives the factors that affect the effective implementation LCI in their classrooms.

Methodology

The research adopted a descriptive survey research. Study population comprised junior secondary schools in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State where 22 teachers of English Studies were sampled from 7 public and 4 private schools. Research instruments included a questionnaire and an observation checklist. The questionnaire, developed to answer research questions 1, 2 and 4, was made up of forty-five (45) items, divided into three clusters in accordance with the research questions respectively. Cluster 'A' contains items on teachers' knowledge of learner-centred technique, ranked on a 4-point Likert scale- *Strongly Agree (SA)*, *Agree (A)*, *Disagree (D)* and *Strongly Disagree (SD)*; cluster 'B' contains those measuring their level of acceptance of the approach, ranked on *Always (A)*, *Sometimes (S)*, *Rarely (R)* and *Never (N)*; while cluster 'C' has items on factors affecting the effective implementation of the approach in their classrooms where teachers are expected to rank 1 to 10 from the most important factors to the least ones. The classroom observation was carried out in eleven (7 public and 4 private) of the schools. The observation checklist was made up of sixty (60) items all of which are aimed at identifying the learner-centred practices and techniques that English Studies teachers implement in their classrooms, and was developed based on the framework given by Bekele and Melesse (2010). It rated on '*seen, not sure* and '*not seen*' to indicate the observance or otherwise of a particular item. The instruments were subjected to face and content validity to ascertain their clarity, relevance and adequacy. To ascertain their reliability, the questionnaire was administered to four teachers who were not part of the study, and one class was observed. The Cronbach Alpha was established as 0.72 and 0.74 respectively. Two assistants were engaged for data collection, while data analysis was done through descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings and Discussion

Respondents' information

The background of the subjects was aptly summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: Biographical information on the respondents

Variables	Indices	No	Total
School type	Public	11	22
	Private	11	
Gender	Male	-	22
	Female	22	
Age	25-30 years	4	22
	31-35 years	6	
	36-40 years	5	
	41-45 years	1	
	46-50 years	3	
	51 & above	3	
Class	Basic 7	7	22
	Basic 8	2	
	Basic 9	13	
Qualification	NCE	2	22
	B.Ed.	17	
	PGDE	2	
	M.Ed.	1	
Experience	1-5 years	6	22
	6-10 years	8	
	11-15 years	1	
	16-20 years	7	
Training	Yes	19	22
	No	3	

Note that seven schools produced the 11 teachers got in public schools, while only 4 private schools have the same number of English studies teachers. This may be attributed to the fact the in Lagos public secondary schools, there is clear demarcation between senior and junior schools with separate management and staff, whereas these are lumped together in private secondary schools. Of interest is also the gender of all the teachers sampled in the 11 schools. Is gender a factor of interest in language teaching? Most of the teachers have the minimum required qualification- first degree, with only 2 from private schools having NCE.

English Studies teachers' knowledge of techniques LCI

Table 2: Teachers knowledge of the Techniques of the LCI

S/N	Knowledge of Learner-Centred Techniques	Mean
1.	Role playing requires students to act out situations/events in a managed setting.	3.62
2.	Open-ended questions are used to get answers that stem from students' own knowledge/experience.	3.29
3.	Reflection involves opportunities for students to explore what they have previously learned	3.65
4.	In flipped classrooms, students study at home and share the learning amongst peers	3.72
5.	Debate involves advocating opposing views usually on controversial topics	3.59
6.	Peer teaching is a learner-centred technique that involves one or more students teaching other students in a particular subject area.	3.69
7.	Case study involves students reviewing a real-world situation that poses thought-provoking problem	3.31
8.	A story map and graphic organizer are used to achieve same purpose in teaching a narrative story	3.55
9.	Demonstration involves some modeling by the teacher	3.72
10.	Student presentation requires the teacher to assign topics to the students and have them present information on each assigned topic to the entire class.	3.54
11.	Role-plays can vary from highly structured, mainly scripted, through to semi-structured with role cards, to very spontaneous performances	3.55
12.	Learner-centred techniques combine direct and indirect instruction	3.23
13.	Reading and writing are both activities that build on and reinforce each other,	3.43
14.	Discussions help learners to think critically about the subject	3.62
15.	Discussions develop their skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation	3.51
16.	Discussion is effective way of allowing students to share their knowledge and experience	3.62
17.	In discussions, students can feel that they are making a real contribution to their own learning	3.69
18.	Engaging in projects generates interest, curiosity among learners and enforces cooperation and solidarity between learners and the teacher.	3.54
19.	In learner centred classroom, students be willing to take risks in exploring their ideas	3.61
20.	Learner-centred techniques promotes learners interdependence and active involvement	3.69
21.	LCI gives increased quantity/frequency and enhanced quality of students language use	3.42
22.	In cooperative learning every member of the group plays a unique role	3.33
23.	To maximize questioning technique, teachers should ask questions that cover different degrees of cognitive complexity	3.68
24.	In case studies, students often need real life data to analyze situations and draw effective conclusions or proffer solutions.	3.60
25.	Discovery learning is used when students are encouraged to derive their own understanding or meaning for something	3.62
Average mean		3.60

Table 2 reveals that, to a significant extent, English Studies Teachers in public and private junior secondary schools are aware and have knowledge of the techniques of the learner-centred approach to teaching. A grand mean score of 3.60 was derived to show the extent English Studies teachers are aware of the techniques of LCI using a benchmark of 2.5. This implies that English Studies teachers are not only aware of the techniques of LCI but also have a good knowledge of its techniques. This finding concurs with Bekele and Melesse (2010) who conducted a study to qualitatively explore the application of learner-centred methods in Mathematics and Science from the perspectives of teachers and students. They found that the teachers and students who participated in the study were aware and had a clear knowledge of the learner-centred approach to teaching.

Level of acceptance of LCI amongst teachers of English Studies

Table 3: Level of Acceptance of LCI among teachers

S/N	Level of Acceptance	Always %	Sometimes %	Rarely %	Never %
1	I use role-play to teach certain aspects of English Studies to my students.	74.0	26.0	0.0	0.0
2	I ask my students open-ended questions to enable them to think critically and draw from their own knowledge before giving their responses.	40.6	49.0	10.4	0.0
3	I have my students reflect on what they have learnt to make them remember key aspects of what they have been taught.	93.1	6.9	0.0	0.0
4	I employ the technique of the flipped classroom to enable my students take greater responsibility for their learning.	27.3	45.5	22.7	4.5
5	I organize debates for my students because it gives them the opportunity to share their opposing views of the questions or topics of discussion.	56.0	44.0	0.0	0.0
6	I encourage my students to clarify topics and ideas they have been taught with each other (peer teaching).	60.4	31.5	8.1	0.0
7	I use case studies to create real-life scenarios in order to make my students use their knowledge to solve problems in the real-world context.	40.9	40.9	13.6	4.5
8	I teach my students to use story maps to help them learn the elements of a story or book.	55.8	20.3	24.0	0.0
9	I demonstrate how to perform certain skills and tasks before making my students do theirs and provide feedback on how they carried out their given task	67.0	33.0	0.0	0.0
10	I have my students do presentations in class as it improves their public speaking skills and demonstrates their understanding of the topic being presented.	56.0	44.0	0.0	0.0

Table 3 reveals reported level of acceptance and, consequently, usage of learner-centred techniques by the teachers. Except in the use of flipped classroom and case studies where minimal percentage of the teachers reported using neither, the rest of the techniques have high usage report. In total, 57% of the participants claimed to always employ the use of learner-centred techniques in their classroom teaching, 34.2% of them do claimed occasional use, and 7.9% of them rarely use learner-centred techniques while 0.9% of the participants never use any of the above-mentioned learner-centred techniques. The reported high level of acceptance of learner-centred techniques is expected to translate into regular use of these techniques in the teaching.

Interpretation of LCI in instructional practices

This segment was reported through the classroom observation of eleven teachers. In drawing inference from the means on this research objective, the following critical range of scores of scales of 0 to 3 was used; as shown in Table 4.

<i>Critical ranges</i>	<i>Inferences</i>
• 0-1.99	<i>Not seen</i>
• 2-2.49	<i>Not Sure</i>
• 2.5-3	<i>Seen</i>

Table 4: English Studies teachers' interpretation of LCI in instructional practices

S/N	Items	Mean	Inference
Using students' existing knowledge			
1	Teacher begins the lesson by involving students in talking about their prior knowledge.	2.78	
2	Teacher elicits students' ideas about the new topic is before stating it	1.52	
3	Teacher elicits student's ideas of what the new topic is before making them study ideas from a textbook.	1.32	
4	Teacher-generated learning objectives are shared and discussed with students	2.49	
5	Students are asked to generate their own learning objectives	1.43	
6	Teacher challenges initial ideas offered by the students	1.69	
7	Teacher links the new idea/lesson topic with the prior knowledge of students.	2.27	
	<i>Average Mean</i>	2.28	<i>Not Sure</i>
Encouraging students to generate explanations and alternative interpretations			
8	Teacher directs the students to observe and describe scenarios or phenomena in their own words	2.28	
9	Students offer their own explanations and interpretations of concepts and phenomena.	1.84	
10	Teacher probes students on their responses	1.56	
11	Students explain contradictions and misconceptions.	1.48	
	<i>Average Mean</i>	1.79	<i>Not Seen</i>
Effective use of questions			
12	Teacher uses thought-provoking questions	1.91	
13	Teacher raises questions based on students' responses.	1.82	
14	Teacher gives students sufficient time for them to answer questions.	2.67	
15	Teacher accepts and values students' questions	1.67	
	<i>Average Mean</i>	2.02	<i>Not Sure</i>
Providing classroom environment conducive for discussion/group work			
16	Teacher encourages interaction among students	2.27	
17	Students share their ideas freely and discuss them with their teacher	2.45	
18	Students share their ideas and discuss them with each other	2.09	
19	Opportunities for effective pupil talk (pairs/ groups/feedback to class)	1.91	
20	Students help each other on group work assigned to them	1.18	
21	Students' grouping is well managed, appropriate and effectively engineered	1.36	
22	Evidence of learner differentiation – i.e. teaching to specific learners' needs, learning styles and interests.	2.00	
23	Effective use of different learning strategies	1.57	
24	Teacher intervenes and monitors progress of pupils	2.00	
25	On-going assessment evident (peer/self/teacher)	2.64	
	<i>Average Mean</i>	1.95	<i>Not Seen</i>
Using materials and activities			
26.	Students are actively engaged in working with materials that are key to the content being learned.	2.18	
27.	Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students	2.00	
28.	Students work independently with minimum help from their teacher.	2.09	
29.	Students produce learning materials	1.00	
30.	Students focus on the use of instructional materials	2.91	
31.	Students used as instructional materials	1.36	
	<i>Average Mean</i>	1.69	<i>Not Seen</i>

Providing opportunities for students to utilize new ideas and to process information		
32	Teacher ensures that current teaching points were related to students' previous knowledge	2.64
33	Students provide real world examples of class content	2.55
34	Teacher invites students to apply their acquired knowledge to a real situation/real life problem	2.18
35	Teacher gives homework to students	1.55
		<i>Average Mean</i> 2.23 <i>Not Sure</i>
General use of learner-centred techniques		
36	Teacher uses role play to teach the lesson topic	1.28
37	Teacher asks the students open-ended questions	3.01
38	Teacher makes the students reflect on what they have learnt	2.09
39	Teacher employs the technique of flipped classroom	1.05
40	Teacher organizes debate for the students to deepen their knowledge of the topic	1.18
41	Teacher encourages students to clarify topics and ideas they have been taught with each other	1.15
42	Teacher uses a case study to create a real-life scenario	1.56
43	Teacher uses a story map to help the students to learn the elements of the lesson	1.38
44	Teacher demonstrates how to perform a certain skill before making the students do theirs	2.27
45	Teachers makes the students engage in presentations in class	1.36
46	Teacher provides feedback to the students' questions and answers	2.00
47	Teacher provides feedback to students' on performance of specific skills & tasks	2.27
48	Teacher engages students in brainstorming	1.18
49	Students are involved in comparing and contrasting concepts and ideas	2.00
50	Students engage in games and puzzles such as the matching game	1.36
51	Teacher uses folktales	1.18
52	Students engage in journal writing	1.18
53	Students engage in creative writing activities	1.00
54	Teacher organizes a short quiz for the students	2.27
55	Teacher presents an issue and has the students discuss it in detail	1.00
56	Teacher makes students use a KWL Chart	1.00
57	Teacher uses learning stations which involves breaking the classroom into different activities (stations) in order to explain a topic	1.00
58	Teacher has the students engage in the "muddiest point paper" in order to provide guidance to students and elicit performance from them	1.00
59	Teacher establishes and builds upon mental models of concepts with the students	2.36
60	Teacher involves the student in the "gallery walk" in order to assess students' performance and ability to retain and transfer knowledge.	1.00
		<i>Average Mean</i> 1.82 <i>Not Seen</i>

Table 4 reveals that out of the sixty (60) items that addressed the interpretation, items 1 to 7 on using students existing knowledge has a an average mean of 2.28 which also indicates not seen was ranked 1st, items 8-11 on encouraging students to generate explanations and alternative interpretations which indicates not seen with an average mean of 1.79 was ranked 6th, items 12-15 on effective use of questions indicates not sure with an average mean of 2.02 was ranked 3rd, items 16-25 on providing classroom environment conducive for discussion/group work indicates not seen with an average mean of 1.95 was ranked 4th. Furthermore, items 26-31 on using materials and activities indicates not seen with an average mean of 1.69 was ranked 7th, while items 32-35 on providing opportunities for students to utilize new ideas and to process information indicates not sure with an average mean of 2.23 was ranked 2nd and items 36-60 on the use of learner-centred techniques indicates not seen with an average mean of 1.82 was ranked 5th. This

shows that prevalent and effective use of learner-centred techniques amongst the English Studies teachers was not observed.

Examining the individual values of each of the items in the classroom observation guide, one could notice that in exploiting students' prior experience, teachers only use this at the beginning of the lesson when students are allowed to talk about what they have been taught in previous lessons, and where these are related to the current learning objectives. Also, students are rarely encouraged to generate their own interpretation, which definitely will affect their level of analytical and critical thinking. The use of questioning as technique is also not very effective, as seen from the different values, and the total value for that cluster. Under the general techniques, a lot of learner-centred techniques have values of 1.0 which calls to questions teachers' awareness, understanding and use of these techniques. The findings here therefore contradict the self-reported claims in the questionnaire. Anyawu and Iwuamadi (2015) noted that the metaphoric transition from teacher-centred to learner-centred learning has not fully taken effect in Nigerian schools. According to them, this is because "most of the classroom activities are still carried out by the teachers as they still bear the responsibility of organizing the learning content, interpreting and applying the concepts as well as evaluating the students' learning".

Factors that affect effective implementation LCI in English Studies classrooms

Table 5: Factors that affect effective implementation LCI in English studies classrooms from teachers' perspectives

S/N	Teacher identified factors	Rating (from 1-10)
A.	Inadequate knowledge and understanding of learner-centred techniques	6 th
B.	Unavailability or lack of the requisite teaching qualification(s)	7 th
C.	Teachers' belief that students are too immature to decide how to assess and evaluate their learning.	8 th
D.	Negative attitude of students towards English Studies as a subject	5 th
E.	Lack of interest or motivation on the part of the students to take greater responsibility for their learning.	4 th
F.	Large class sizes	3 rd
G.	Unavailability of an English Studies curriculum that is tailored towards the learner-centred learning approach.	9 th
H.	Teachers' belief that practicing learner-centred approach is a waste of their time and effort	2 nd
I.	Teachers' belief that it is wrong and inappropriate to work alongside their students in planning key aspects of the teaching-learning process (lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessment procedure and evaluation).	10 th
J.	Teachers' refusal to move away from the ease, convenience, and familiarity of the old, conventional method in order to adopt modern learner-centred teaching practices.	1 st

Table 5 reveals the opinions of English Studies teachers on the factors that could affect the effective implementation of LCI in the classroom. Teachers' refusal to move away from the ease, convenience, and familiarity of the old, conventional method in order to adopt modern techniques ranked 1st, teachers' belief that practicing LCI is a waste of their time and effort because they never receive any reward or support from the government was ranked 2nd, large class sizes was ranked 3rd, lack of interest or motivation on the part of the students to take greater responsibility for their learning was ranked 4th, negative attitude of students towards English Studies as a subject was ranked 5th. Also, inadequate knowledge and understanding of learner-centred techniques was 6th, unavailability or lack of the requisite teaching qualification(s) was ranked 7th, teachers' belief that students are too immature to decide how to assess and evaluate their learning was ranked 8th, unavailability of an English Studies curriculum that is tailored towards the learner-centred learning approach was ranked 9th and teachers' belief that it is wrong and inappropriate to work alongside their students in planning key aspects of the teaching-learning process (lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessment procedure and evaluation) was ranked 10th as the factors affecting the effective implementation of LCI in the classroom. The concern of teachers' refusal to move away from the ease, convenience and familiarity of the old, conventional method in order to adopt modern learner-centred methods agrees with Salau (2018) who indicated that learner-centred teaching has had slow adoption in Nigerian schools because teachers are still stuck on traditional teaching methods. A good reason for this is the country's huge dependence on standardized testing despite the availability of other methods of evaluating student performance. The problem of teachers believing that that practicing learner-centred approach is a waste of their time and effort because they never receive any reward or support from the government agrees with Adegbija (2018) who lamented the poor working conditions, poor remunerations and allowances that teachers in Nigeria endure. According to him, this seriously discourages capable and qualified teachers from taking up teaching jobs and promotes a low level of dedication towards their teaching duties amongst those who are forced to take up teaching jobs for lack of a better job. It is his submission that this did not bode well for the practice of learner-centred teaching. Their efforts would go unrecognized by the Government. Anyawu and Iwuamadi (2015) also identified large class sizes as one of the major challenges facing the effective practice of the learner-centred teaching Nigerian schools. Marinko et. al. (2016) also believe that teachers take their responsibilities very seriously and are not very fond of experimenting with their students' futures by dabbling in strategies that have not been trialed or proven to regularly give positive results. While they can be obligated to implement the LCI in their classrooms, best results are always recorded if the teachers actually believe in the teaching practice.

In essence, the study revealed that:

- English Studies teachers in public and private junior secondary schools are aware of the techniques of the learner-centred approach to teaching.
- Majority of the teachers are perceived to accept learner-centred teaching practices because they claimed to always use it.

- Despite the extent of knowledge and acceptance of LCI through self-reported questionnaire, the use of techniques was not seen in the observed lessons. A major finding of the research is the fact that despite the teachers' claims of having a good knowledge and acceptance of the practice of learner-centred approach to teaching, the observation of the classes of the teachers working in public junior secondary schools showed that the use of most of the learner-centred classroom practices was 'not seen' that is, it was not observed. More importantly, the extensive use of learner-centred techniques was 'not seen' which meant that it was not observed. This shows that teachers' interpretation of learner-centred approach to teaching English Studies was poor and insufficient.
- Also, teachers' refusal to move away from the ease, convenience, and familiarity of the old, conventional method in order to adopt modern learner-centred teaching practices ranked as the greatest factor while teachers' belief that it is wrong and inappropriate to work alongside their students in planning key aspects of the teaching-learning process (lesson planning, lesson delivery, assessment procedure and evaluation) ranked as the least factor affecting the effective implementation of the Learner-centred learning approach in the classroom.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The call for the practice of a more learner-centred pedagogy in education across the globe is strengthened and driven by the multiple benefits that learners stand to gain from the approach which acknowledges their views, needs and interests as central to the learning process. Students would not only be more motivated to learn, but also develop critical thinking and problem solving skills that are crucial for facing the sustainable challenges of the contemporary world in which we live in. According to Emaliana (2017), a student-centred classroom is a place where teachers consider the needs of their students and encourages them to participate in the learning process all the time. Qutoshi & Poudel (2014), explain that in this approach, the role of the teacher is that of a helper, facilitator, mentor, and guide to their students. The tenets of the learner-centred instruction remain set in stone despite the fact that it doesn't have a generally agreed-upon definition and its mode of application is dependent on the type of students involved, the type of environment in which learning takes place and the subject area being studied. No matter the manner in which it's applied, it is important that students should do more (active participation) and have greater responsibility for their own learning.

The effective implementation of a learner-centred teaching approach in teaching English Language has implications on the curriculum, teaching activities and assessment practices thus teacher undoubtedly play a vital role in initiating and maintaining learner-centred activities in their teaching responsibilities. The teacher is instrumental towards achieving success because he or she would ensure that students participate actively in learning tasks in the classroom. Qutoshi & Poudel (2014) stated that this active participation of students would create enjoyment in their learning through exploration and construction of knowledge where the teacher encourages, mentors and engages them in critical thinking

process to achieve the desired objectives of learning. Thus, it behooves the teacher to have adequate knowledge and understanding of the approach; they need to have a solid background in pedagogical training and engage in continuous professional development to hone their skills and be constantly updated on current teaching practices and ideologies. Failure to achieve this would mean the continued practice of the conventional approach which has been proven not only to stall learners' deep thinking and growth, but also cannot drive the essence of education for sustainable development.

According to Iwuamadi & Anyawu (2015), Nigeria may have begun the transition to learner-centred pedagogy but it remains more in principle than in actual practice. This is as a result of a number of challenges facing the education sector. One of which is the heavy presence of unqualified teachers and the lack of constant training for those who are qualified. The announcement made by TRCN of there being more than 300,000 unqualified teachers which constitutes 50% of teachers working in schools all over the country in 2017 does not augur well for the successful practice of the learner-centred approach. Adegbija (2017) also stated that the adequate measures are not being taken by the government to ensure that "teachers undergo continuous periodic training program to keep them in tune with modern practices and also help to remodel their interrelationship with the students and their guardians". This, however, does not negate the fact that teachers in public schools may have knowledge of the student centred teaching approach. Some teachers who recognize its value may try to practice their versions of it in their classrooms. Meanwhile, there may also be other teachers who may know of the learner-centred approach but reject it because they feel it's not suitable for their students or because they feel it requires too much work on their part and are not willing to change from what is already convenient for them. Some may not even have heard of the concept at all. These possible scenarios may have played out differently from the findings of the study.

It is thus recommended that:

- Teachers should be encouraged to put their knowledge and expertise in learner-centred teaching approach into practice in their classrooms as it would help their students to learn critical thinking, problem- solving and collaborative skills. They would need these skills to grow up to be productive members of the ever-changing, technology-driven society.
- Government and private stakeholders in the education sector should take steps to sensitize teachers on the short and long term benefits of learner-centred learning for themselves and, more importantly, their students so as to discourage teachers from stubbornly maintaining their practice of the old, conventional teacher-centred approach.
- Teacher motivation is a factor of going the extra mile. Government should provide avenues for rewarding teachers who are dedicatedly implementing learner-centred teaching techniques in their classrooms especially when their students record positive results in their performance. These rewards can be in the form of cash prizes, plaques,

special recognition by the Minister of Education, etc. This would encourage other teachers to follow suit in utilising learner-centred techniques in their classrooms.

- Steps should be to resolve the issue of large class sizes by upgrading existing and building new classrooms and facilities to accommodate the teeming population of students in the country.
- Teachers would be further encouraged to practice the principles of the learner-centred approach if they receive adequate training and are provided with sufficient instructional materials and teaching aids with which to teach their students to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- In order to ensure a smoother and faster transition from teacher-centred to learner-centred pedagogy, Nigeria need to carve out for herself her own brand of the learner-centred practice that is in accordance with her societal needs but also, in line with the globally-accepted principles of the teaching approach.
- In addition, the government should re-work the curriculum to make it more learner-centred friendly so that teachers would be obligated to utilise certain key practices of the learner-centred approach in their classrooms.

Finally, there is a great need to engage in more investigative research that goes way beyond the focus of this study. The concept of learner-centred teaching is complex and Nigeria is still in the process of transitioning from the teacher-centred to the learner-centred teaching approach. (Anyawu & Iwuamadi, 2015) To aid this transition, there is a need to build a vast body of research for extensive research on learner-centred teaching approach and how best teachers can implement it in their classrooms for the benefit of their students.

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