# PERCEIVED IMPACT OF CURRICULUM OVERLOAD ON TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN UDENU LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY, ENUGU STATE

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority of Enugu State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Four research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised of all the 382 teachers in the 31 government primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority of Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 primary school teachers. The research instrument for the study was a 23item questionnaire designed by the researchers titled "Questionnaire on the Impact of Curriculum Overload on Teachers' Effectiveness in Primary Schools" (QICOTEPS). To determine the validity of the instrument, three experts validated the instrument. The Cronbach alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that overloaded curriculum makes it difficult for teachers to teach topic in-depth. Findings also shows that curriculum overload results to excessive workload due to vast amount of content. Again, Findings also revealed that team teaching should be utilized to reduce teachers' workload among others. It was recommended among others that regular workshops, seminars, and training programmes should be organized to equip teachers with modern pedagogical skills, time management strategies, and collaborative teaching techniques to help them cope with curriculum demands effectively.*

**Keywords**: Curriculum, Curriculum overload, Primary school, teachers, teachers' effectiveness

## Introduction

Education is widely recognized as the foundation for national development, and teachers are the key drivers in achieving educational goals at all levels. In the context of primary education, teachers play a crucial role in shaping children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. However, their effectiveness is often influenced by the structure, content, and scope of the curriculum they are required to implement. Ugochukwu, Akuh, and Adaka (2024) defined education as an organized process of teaching and learning made up of instruction designed to change the behavior of the learner for transformation of the society and nation. Education is the process that turns people into resourceful agents by instilling in them the values and information necessary to succeed in society. One of the educational levels that this study concentrated on was the primary level.

In many countries around the world, including Nigeria, the primary level of education is one of the essential and fundamental stages of education. Also, according to Nwachukwu and Umeh (2021) primary education refers to the early phase of structured learning that provides children between the ages of 6 and 11 with fundamental knowledge, values, and skills essential for lifelong learning and social integration. Primary education, according to the researchers, is defined as instruction intended and delivered to children aged six to eleven years or older. In order to prepare pupils for secondary education, primary education is a necessary educational level.

The primary level of education is one of the significant levels of education necessary for the development of every individual. The Federal Government of Nigeria gave the primary education prominence in her National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) where the objectives of primary education were stated among others: to inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively; lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking; give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society; mold the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child; develop in the child ability to adapt to the child's changing environment; give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child to function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity; provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and craft of the locality. The curriculum is one of the essential tools in achieving the stated educational objectives of primary education.

In all educational settings, including primary schools, a curriculum is an essential tool. Eduwem and Ezeonwumelu (2020) stated that the curriculum is at the heart of every defined educational programme. A curriculum is a structured plan for education that outlines the total learning experiences of primary school pupils. Kridel (2021) considers the curriculum to include documents that must be covered and followed closely by teachers and institutions. According to the researchers, a curriculum is a collection of information outlining the learning goals, subject matter, and experiences that learners will have in a specific course, programme, or educational setting. The curriculum as a body of knowledge has undergone numerous revisions and simplifications to satisfy the knowledge and educational needs of the modern world. Olugbenga, Yakubu and Ali (2023) states that the 21st century curriculum needs to incorporate knowledge, thinking, innovation, skills, media, and information technology literacy and real-life experience; and these experiences should form the body of knowledge or core academic subjects.

In the past, when curricula were relatively short, it was true and typical for the curriculum to be continuously modified and streamlined. But in the modern era, since there are many fields to research, with the addition of a variety of disciplines and curricular content, the curriculum has continued to grow significantly. According to Majoni (2017), deciding what should be taught in the curriculum, particularly in basic education, appears to have transcended historical norms and turned into something of a trap for planners in certain nations, as new subjects are constantly added to the curricula without the removal of outdated and unnecessary ones. In most educational institutions, especially primary schools, the constant addition of new courses and contents to the current curriculum has resulted in a phenomenon known as "curriculum overload."

One of the emerging challenges confronting primary education in Nigeria is curriculum overload a situation where teachers are required to cover an excessive amount of content within limited instructional time and with inadequate resources. Adeniran et al. (2023), argued that meaningful curriculum implementation requires aligning content demands with available instructional time and classroom realities. Curriculum overload occurs when the volume of topics, learning activities, and assessment requirements exceed what can realistically be taught and learned within the available school timetable. Yusuf and Mande (2024), states that compressed teaching schedules and vast curriculum content lead to "surface-level teaching," where teachers rush through lessons without adequate learner participation or reinforcement. This problem often results from attempts by curriculum developers and policymakers to integrate numerous subjects, competencies, and emerging issues such as digital literacy, environmental education, and civic values into the basic education curriculum. While these additions aim to enrich pupils' learning, they also increase the workload and responsibilities of teachers, thereby affecting their instructional effectiveness.

In Nigeria and other countries throughout the world, one of the main problems and threats to primary education is curriculum overload. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) as cited in Askary, Javadipour, Hakimzadeh and Salehi (2024) defined overloaded curriculum to suggest some imbalance or incongruity between the capacity to enact or activate a curriculum which itself is perceived as overloaded. According to Olugbenga, et. al (2023) curriculum overload is also known as curriculum expansion which simply means the injection of new content items in the curriculum as an adjustment to new trends in the society without considering what needs to be discarded. Curriculum overload, according to the study, is when learners are exposed to an excessive amount of material, which results in a significant academic burden that causes stress and reduced motivation in both teachers and pupils.

One of the most current issues in primary schools has been highlighted as curriculum overload. According to Eduwem and Ezeonwumelu (2020) overloaded curriculum is one of the problems associated with educational systems in contemporary times. Overloading the curriculum can affect pupils' academic performance, learning outcomes, and the learning process in one way or another. Curriculum overload could also make learning tedious and monotonous, thereby negating the learners' attitude to school (Eduwem and Ezeonwumelu, 2020). Overloading the curriculum is a problem for teachers as well as pupils. Voogt et al, (2017) posits that if teachers feel anxious about teaching all the subjects in a busy curriculum, they may end up teaching a shallower version of the curriculum or relegating what is not covered in school teaching time to knowledge. In doing so, it can influence teachers' motivation, satisfaction, performance, and their overall effectiveness in carrying out their duties as teachers in primary schools.

Teachers' effectiveness covers the ability and competence of teachers to deploy appropriate teaching methods and approach to create a learning environment that supports learning and improves pupils' academic outcome. According to Osei and Amponsah (2020) teacher effectiveness is defined as the teacher's capacity to use content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and interpersonal skills to positively influence pupils' learning outcomes and motivation in diverse classroom settings. According to the researchers, an effective teacher is one who possesses the dispositions, dedication, and capacity to effectively assist pupils in learning and reaching their academic objectives. It addresses how well teachers can impart knowledge, provide a supportive learning atmosphere, and make sure that learners comprehend and remember the skills and information they are learning. Curriculum overload affects the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers. This is in agreement with Akhtar (2024) who states that curriculum overload affects teachers' teaching and learning experiences as they don't get time to enhance their teaching ability and knowledge.

A number of educational stakeholders, including researchers, have taken notice of curriculum overload as one of the current problems affecting primary education as well as other educational levels. In Udenu Local Government Education Authority of Enugu State, as in many other parts of Nigeria, teachers face the challenge of managing broad syllabuses under tight schedules, large class sizes, and limited instructional materials. These conditions hinder their ability to prepare adequately for lessons, teach topics in depth, employ diverse teaching methods, and assess learners effectively. Consequently, teachers may resort to teachercentered approaches like the lecture method, prioritize content coverage over meaningful learning, and experience stress or burnout due to excessive workload. The perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness is therefore a critical issue for educational quality and sustainability. It raises concerns about how well the goals of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme are being achieved, particularly in ensuring that every child acquires functional literacy, numeracy, and life skills. Teachers' perception of curriculum overload provides valuable insights into the practical realities of curriculum implementation and helps identify feasible solutions to enhance instructional efficiency. This study, therefore, seeks to

investigate the perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, curriculum overload has emerged as a critical concern in primary education across Nigeria, including Udenu Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) in Enugu State. Teachers in primary schools are increasingly burdened with an expansive curriculum that demands the coverage of numerous subjects, topics, and learning objectives within a limited instructional timeframe. The current curriculum, though designed to meet global educational standards and national development goals, often exceeds the realistic capacity of classroom teachers, especially in public primary schools where instructional resources and support are minimal.

This situation has raised serious concerns among educators, parents, policymakers and even researchers. A major worry is that the overloaded curriculum is negatively affecting teachers' instructional effectiveness manifesting in rushed lessons, superficial teaching, limited pupils' engagement, and reduced use of innovative teaching strategies. Teachers are often compelled to prioritize syllabus completion over deep learning, leading to poor mastery of concepts by pupils and a decline in learning outcomes, and this becomes a concern to the present researchers.

Several studies have examined the implications of curriculum overload in various contexts. For instance, researchers have explored how it affects teachers' psychological wellbeing, classroom management, and pupils' cognitive overload or declining interest in learning. Despite these contributions, most of the existing literature focuses predominantly on secondary and higher education levels, with limited emphasis on the unique challenges faced by primary school teachers. Moreover, while previous studies acknowledge the existence of curriculum overload, few have specifically examined its direct impact on the effectiveness of teachers in delivering quality education at the primary level. Based on this backdrop, the researchers sought to examine the perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to examine;

1. How curriculum overload affects the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority.
2. How curriculum overload influence teachers' ability to plan and prepare lessons effectively in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority.
3. Challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority.
4. Possible solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

1. How does curriculum overload affect the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?
2. How does curriculum overload influence teachers' ability to plan and prepare lessons effectively in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

3. What are the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?
4. What are the possible solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

**Methods**

This study investigated the perceived impact of curriculum overload on teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority of Enugu State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This design is important because one has to understand the characteristics, behaviours or attitudes of a particular group or population. Four research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised of all the 382 teachers in the 31 government primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority of Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 primary school teachers from 10 schools out of the 31 primary schools in the study area. 10 teachers were selected from the 10 schools giving a total of 100 school teachers using sampling by balloting without replacement. The research instrument for the study was a questionnaire designed by the researchers from literature reviewed and previous study. The instrument was titled "Questionnaire on the Impact of Curriculum Overload on Teachers' Effectiveness in Primary Schools" (QICOTEPS). The instrument consists of two sections A and B. Section A sought information on respondents' personal data and section B was split into four clusters. The questionnaire instrument contained 23 total items in three subsections which were structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) =4, Agree (A) =3, Disagree (D) =2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1.

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, three copies of the questionnaire including the title, purpose of study and research questions were given to three experts. Two experts are in the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and the other expert in the Department of Educational Foundations, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The alpha coefficients gotten were 0.80, 0.78, 0.79 and 0.78 for Cluster I-IV with an overall coefficient of 0.79. Data obtained was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. A mean of 2.50 was used as the cutoff point for making decisions. The decision rule was that any item that scored a mean of 2.50 and above would be seen as having attracted positive responses and was agreed, while items that scored less than 2.50 would be regarded as having attracted negative responses and was disagreed.

**Results**

Research Question One: How does curriculum overload affect the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

Table 1: Mean Rating of Respondents on How Curriculum Overload affect the Instructional Effectiveness of Primary School Teachers

| S/N | As a teacher: | Mean( ) | SD(s) | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Overloaded curriculum makes it difficult for me to teach topic in-depth | 3.06 | 0.76 | Agreed |
| 2. | Overloaded curriculum makes me rely on lecture method | 3.10 | 0.60 | Agreed |
| 3. | It results to limited opportunities for hands-on learning | 2.92 | 0.88 | Agreed |
| 4. | Overloaded curriculum decreases my innovation in teaching | 3.02 | 1.02 | Agreed |
| 5. | Curriculum overload makes me stressed out easily resulting to ineffective instructional delivery | 3.01 | 0.91 | Agreed |
| | Grand Mean | 3.02 | 0.83 | Agreed |

The analysis in Table 1 showed that the mean score of items 1-5 are 3.06, 3.10, 2.92, 3.02 and 3.01 respectively, with a grand mean of 3.02. This revealed that the respondents agreed that item 1-5 is how curriculum overload affect the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The table reviewed that the standard deviation of the 5 items ranged from 0.60-1.06, indicating that the respondents are homogenous in their responses.

Research Question Two: How does curriculum overload influence teachers' ability to plan and prepare lessons effectively in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

Table 2: Mean Rating of Respondents on How Curriculum Overload Influence Teachers' Ability to Plan and Prepare Lessons Effectively in Primary Schools.

| S/N | As a teacher: | Mean($\bar{X}$) | SD(s) | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | Curriculum overload results to insufficient time to prepare my lessons | 3.20 | 1.03 | Agreed |
| 7. | Overloaded curriculum makes me to prioritize covering large content over quality content | 3.29 | 0.78 | Agreed |
| 8. | Curriculum overload often makes it difficult for me to identify important concepts | 2.16 | 0.91 | Disagree |
| 9. | Overloaded curriculum gives me inadequate time to prepare instructional materials | 3.25 | 0.65 | Agreed |
| 10. | Curriculum overload causes poor reflection in teaching | 3.04 | 0.77 | Agreed |
| 11. | Curriculum overload limits my autonomy to prepare lessons that meets pupils' needs | 3.21 | 0.63 | Agreed |
| | Grand Mean | 3.02 | 0.79 | Agreed |

Data in Table 2 showed that item 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 had a mean score of 3.20, 3.29, 3.25, 3.04 and 3.21 respectively and item 9 had a mean score below 2.50 which was disagreed. A grand mean of 3.02 was obtained. This indicated that the respondents agreed that item 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 is how curriculum overload influence teachers' ability to plan and prepare lessons effectively in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. However, the standard deviation of the 6 items ranged from 0.63-1.03, indicating that the respondents are homogenous in their responses.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

Table 3: Mean Rating of Respondents on the Challenges Encountered by Teacher in Association with Curriculum Overload in Primary Schools

| S/N | Challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload include: | Mean($\bar{}$) | SD(s) | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. | Curriculum overload results to excessive workload due to vast amount of content | 3.34 | 0.91 | Agreed |
| 13. | Teachers are faced with insufficient instructional time as a result of curriculum overload | 3.18 | 0.67 | Agreed |
| 14. | Overloaded curriculum makes it difficult for teachers to assess pupils' learning progress | 2.01 | 0.55 | Disagreed |
| 15. | Curriculum overload often results to teacher burnout/stress | 3.09 | 0.63 | Agreed |
| 16. | Overloaded curriculum results to over reliance on traditional teaching approach | 3.14 | 0.78 | Agreed |
| 17. | Difficulty in balancing the need to cover a wide range of topics with the need to teach each topic in depth | 3.11 | 0.77 | Agreed |
| | Grand Mean | 2.97 | 0.71 | Agreed |

Table 3 analysis showed that item 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 had mean scores of 3.34, 3.18, 3.09, 3.14 and 3.11 respectively while item 14 had a mean score of 2.01which is below the beach mark for agreement. This revealed that the respondents agreed that items 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 are the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The standard deviation ranges from 0.55-0.91, this shows that they are not far apart.

Research Question Four: What are the possible solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority?

Table 4: Mean Rating of Respondents on the Possible Solutions to the Challenges Encountered by Teacher in Association with Curriculum Overload in Primary Schools

| S/N | Solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload include: | Mean($\bar{}$) | SD(s) | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18. | Team teaching should be utilized to reduce teachers' workload | 3.36 | 1.03 | Agreed |
| 19. | Allocating adequate instructional time through flexible scheduling and timetabling | 2.56 | 0.92 | Agreed |
| 20. | Teachers should make use of diverse assessment methods | 2.19 | 0.66 | Disagreed |
| 21. | Curriculum developers should review, revise and modify the curriculum at intervals | 3.29 | 0.88 | Agreed |
| 22. | Streamlining the curriculum in order to support the use of innovative teaching strategies | 3.24 | 0.76 | Agreed |
| 23. | Merging similar subjects in primary schools in order to reduce excessive subjects | 3.41 | 1.02 | Agreed |
| | Grand Mean | 3.00 | 0.87 | Agreed |

The analysis in Table 4 showed that item 18, 19, 21, 22 and 23 had mean score of 3.36, 2.56, 3.29, 3.24 and 3.41 respectively while item 20 had a mean score of 2.19 which is below the bench mark for agreement. This revealed that the respondents agreed that items 18, 19, 21, 22 and 23 are the possible solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The standard deviation ranges from 0.66-1.03, this shows that they are not far apart.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study revealed that overloaded curriculum makes it difficult for teachers to teach topic in-depth and overloaded curriculum makes teachers rely on lecture method among

others are how curriculum overload affect the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The finding of this study aligned with Akhtar (2024) which revealed that curriculum overload affects teachers' teaching and learning experiences as they don't get time to enhance their teaching ability and knowledge. Furthermore, the finding of this study is in consonance with Yusuf and Mande (2024), who posits that overloaded curriculum content and time pressure hindered lesson preparation and the adoption of interactive teaching methods. The findings of this study have important implications for the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The inability of teachers to teach topics in-depth due to curriculum overload implies that pupils may not gain a thorough understanding of key concepts. Lessons become rushed, leaving learners with fragmented knowledge and limited opportunities for critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. The reliance on lecture methods as a result of curriculum overload suggests a shift away from interactive, learnercentered pedagogy. This limits pupils' participation, engagement, and practical experiences factors that are crucial for meaningful learning at the primary school level.

Findings revealed that curriculum overload results to insufficient time for teachers to prepare their lessons, overloaded curriculum makes teachers to prioritize covering large content over quality content, overloaded curriculum gives teachers inadequate time to prepare instructional materials, curriculum overload causes poor reflection in teaching and curriculum overload limits teachers autonomy to prepare lessons that meets pupils' needs are how the curriculum overload influence teachers' ability to plan and prepare lessons effectively in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. These findings agreed with Abdullah et al, (2024), who states that teachers often lack sufficient time to prepare engaging and innovative lessons due to their administrative duties, leading to a reliance in outdated teaching methods and materials. These findings support Adeniran et al. (2023), who argued that meaningful curriculum implementation requires aligning content demands with available instructional time and classroom realities. The findings indicate that curriculum overload has significant implications for teachers' effectiveness in lesson planning and preparation in primary schools within Udenu Local Government Education Authority. When teachers have insufficient time to prepare lessons due to curriculum overload, they are likely to adopt a superficial approach to teaching. This results in less engaging, less creative, and less learnercentered instruction, which ultimately affects pupils' understanding and academic performance. The pressure to cover an extensive curriculum compels teachers to focus on completing syllabus content rather than ensuring mastery of key concepts. This undermines deep learning and limits opportunities for critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity among pupils.

Findings also shows that curriculum overload results to excessive workload due to vast amount of content, teachers are faced with insufficient instructional time as a result of curriculum overload, and curriculum overload often results to teacher burnout/stress among others are the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The finding of this study is in consonance with the finding of Yusuf and Mande (2024), who posits that compressed teaching schedules and vast curriculum content lead to "surface-level teaching," where teachers rush through lessons without adequate learner participation or reinforcement. This outcome also resonates with Adeniran et al. (2023), who argued that a mismatch between curriculum content and available classroom time produces instructional misalignment and poor learning outcomes in Nigerian schools. The present study thus strengthens the argument that time constraints are a central mediating factor between curriculum design and teacher effectiveness. Also, the finding of this study is in harmony with the findings of Ifejika (2022) who posits that overburdened teachers often suffer emotional exhaustion

and physical strain, which in turn reduce their ability to plan effectively and sustain learner engagement.

The study's findings contradict the optimistic claims of Oduolowu and Akintunde (2018) that teacher time management and personal organization can significantly mitigate the challenges of curriculum overload. Evidence from this study shows that even experienced and well-organized teachers in Udenu find it difficult to maintain instructional quality when constrained by unrealistic curriculum expectations and limited instructional time. This contradiction underscores that the problem is structural rather than individual rooted in curriculum design, scheduling, and workload policies that do not align with practical classroom realities.

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications for teachers' welfare, instructional delivery, and the overall quality of education in primary schools within Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The excessive workload arising from curriculum overload implies that teachers have limited time to plan lessons, prepare teaching aids, or employ diverse instructional strategies. This affects lesson quality and leads to superficial coverage of content rather than deep understanding by pupils. When teachers are constrained by time, they tend to rush through topics to meet syllabus requirements. Consequently, pupils are denied adequate opportunities to engage actively in lessons, practice skills, or receive individualized attention, leading to learning gaps and reduced comprehension. Overburdened teachers experience physical and emotional exhaustion, which can reduce their enthusiasm, creativity, and overall job satisfaction. In the long run, this may increase teacher absenteeism or turnover rates.

Findings also revealed that team teaching should be utilized to reduce teachers' workload and allocating adequate instructional time through flexible scheduling and timetabling among others are the possible solutions to the challenges encountered by teachers in association with curriculum overload in primary schools in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The findings of this study are in line with Yusuf and Mande (2024), who posits that cooperative instructional approaches among teachers such as joint lesson planning, shared subject responsibilities, and peer mentoring helped teachers to manage large curricular content more effectively. Likewise, the finding of this study resonates with the findings of Aibangbe and Ahmodu (2023) who posits that peer collaboration reduced stress and improved teacher morale during the implementation of new curriculum. These parallels confirm that collective teaching strategies enhance professional support, improve instructional depth, and promote consistency across classes, particularly in resource-constrained contexts. Furthermore, this finding confirms that of Okeke and Eze (2020), who argued that collaborative teaching and cooperative lesson planning can help reduce workload pressure and enhance instructional quality in basic schools. Similarly, Akinsolu (2019) emphasized the importance of innovative scheduling and teamwork in supporting teachers facing curriculum intensification. Both studies align with the present research in suggesting that systemic, school-based approaches can help teachers cope with the burden of curriculum overload.

The findings of this study have important implications for educational policy, curriculum implementation, and teacher welfare in primary schools within Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The identification of team teaching as a viable solution implies the need to strengthen collaboration among teachers. This approach can also foster professional learning communities within schools. Flexibility in scheduling allows for better pacing of lessons, improved lesson delivery, and adequate time for remediation and enrichment activities that benefit pupils. Implementing these solutions can significantly improve teachers' job satisfaction and reduce burnout.

## Conclusion

This study examined curriculum overload on the instructional effectiveness of primary school teachers in Udenu Local Government Education Authority. The findings revealed that curriculum overload imposes excessive workload on teachers, limits instructional time, and often results in stress, burnout, and reduced teaching efficiency. It was also found that overloaded curriculum makes it difficult for teachers to teach topics in-depth, encourages reliance on lecture methods, and hinders the use of creative, learner-centered instructional strategies. Furthermore, the study identified that strategies such as team teaching, flexible timetabling, and adequate allocation of instructional time can help reduce teachers' workload and enhance teaching effectiveness. The implications of these findings emphasize the need for curriculum reform, improved teacher welfare, and the provision of supportive instructional environments. In conclusion, addressing curriculum overload is essential for improving the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Curriculum planners at the state and local education levels should review the existing curriculum to reduce content overload.
2. Schools should implement team teaching strategies to distribute workload among teachers. This collaborative model will enable teachers to share responsibilities, exchange ideas, and collectively plan lessons, thereby improving instructional quality and reducing stress.
3. Regular workshops, seminars, and training programs should be organized to equip teachers with modern pedagogical skills, time management strategies, and collaborative teaching techniques to help them cope with curriculum demands effectively.
4. Education authorities should formulate policies that address teacher workload and welfare. Supportive supervision, equitable workload distribution, and the provision of incentives for teamwork and innovative teaching practices should be prioritized.
5. The Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) should formulate teacher workload management policies that include provisions for team teaching incentives, time allocation for lesson preparation, and stress management programmes within schools.

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