



**NIGERIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES AND
TECHNOLOGY**

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**BUILDING AND SUSTAINING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY: THE NIGERIA
EXPERIENCE**

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To cite this article:

Olaiya, F., Adeniyi, S. O. & Kuku, O. O. (2024). Building and sustaining inclusive education society: the Nigeria experience, *Nigerian Online Journal of Educational Sciences and Technology (NOJEST)*, 5 (2), 175-186

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BUILDING AND SUSTAINING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY: THE NIGERIA EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

Article Infor

Article History

Received:

03 Feb 2024

Accepted:

March 28, 2024

Keywords

Inclusive

education,

Stakeholders'

participation,

Instructional

delivery,

Environmental

factors,

Recourses availability.

Inclusive education is a global policy aim at total integration of individuals with special needs into the society most importantly total adaptation and adjustment into learning environment without negative feeling of neglect and abandonment from anybody in the school setting and by extension, the society. Though the policy has gained popularity, but the practice and acceptance differ from country to country and region to region. Hence, this study is on building and sustaining inclusive education society: the Nigeria experience. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The samples for this study comprised the inclusive schools, teachers, administrators, parents, students, NGO where there is inclusive school. The instrument for the study is stakeholders' participation inventory with reliability of 0.70 consisting of teacher perception, administrator attitudinal, parents' perception, NGO attitudinal, community members' attitudinal, and learning environment rating scales (environmental factors) and classroom assessment checklist for instructional delivery and facilities and resource checklist. The inventory, assessment scale and facilities and resource checklist were administered. Three hypotheses were tested and the results revealed that that there was joint significant prediction of instructional delivery and stakeholders' participation on inclusive education implementation, resources availability relate positively to the implementation of inclusive education and there was joint prediction of environmental factors, instructional delivery, resource availability, NGO involvement, learner participation, parent involvement and stakeholders' participation on the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. Parents, teachers, Government and non-governmental agencies should work in synergy in the implementation of inclusive education.

Introduction

Since year 1990, efforts at advancing education for all throughout the world became imperative and almost synonymous with ensuring that no child is left behind without attending school and having formal and basic education. In view of this, the Education for All (EFA) in 1990, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016 were all targeted toward universal access to basic education by all children not minding the degree of differences and relative different abilities.

In line with EFA, MDGs and SDGs, inclusive education as a global initiative aim integrating those learners with different abilities that have hitherto suffered neglect as a result of lack of pedagogical understanding among the conventional teachers, societal perception and attitudes towards admission into school community and society. According to Ahmed, Sharma & Deppeler, (2012), inclusive education as a worldwide reform in education is intended to integrate students with different abilities in mainstream regular schools with curriculum, pedagogy, organisation and teaching resources be adapted to ensure that all learners, irrespective of their abilities can participate in regular classroom without serious challenge. The concept of inclusive education as opined by the World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain in 1994 was basically on standard rule for equalisation and principles that all children regardless of ability and disability must have a basic right to education in least restrictive environment (LRE) (Adeniyi, Owolabi & Olojede, 2015). With this in practice, social prejudice and alienation characterised conventional classroom and outside the classroom environment will be reduced.

Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education is a global initiative aim at total integration of individuals with special needs in to the mainstream of the society. The initiative was an outcome of the world conference on people with disabilities at Salamanca, Spain in 1994. The policy statement developed as contained in Salamanca Framework for Action spelt out the modalities and responsibilities of major stakeholders in order to aid smooth implementation of the policy. It is expected of countries across the globe to fully buy in to the initiative with full compliance. Nigeria, being part of the countries that signed the pact has started the implementation with Federal and state governments putting in place local policies that will aid proper implementation. The Lagos State government has taken active roles in inclusive education implementation process. Nevertheless, so far inclusive education practice should be holistic approach, it is imperative to investigate the extent to which

stakeholders' participation, resources availability, environmental factors and instructional delivery factors have contributed to the success or failure of the programme in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

This study aim at investigating stakeholders' participation resources availability, environmental and instructional delivery factors in the implementation of inclusive education in Lagos State, Nigeria.

1. Specifically, the study investigates whether stakeholders' participation and instructional factors will predict implementation of inclusive education in Lagos State, Nigeria.
2. It also determines whether resource availability will influence effective implementation of inclusive education.
3. To find out whether Stakeholders' participation, parental involvement, NGO contribution, learner participation, resources availability, environmental factors and instructional delivery factors will jointly predict the implementation of inclusive education.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Stakeholders' participation and instructional delivery factors do not significantly predict the implementation of inclusive education.
2. There is no significant relationship between resources availability and effective implementation of inclusive education.
3. Stakeholders' participation, parental involvement, NGO contribution, learner participation, resources availability, environmental factors and instructional delivery factors do not jointly predict the implementation of inclusive education.

Literature Review

Practicing and implementing inclusive education anchor on a number of factors. These factors range from socio- philosophical perspective to political cum economic dimensions. Research evidences have revealed that teachers attitudes, materials, mind-set, manpower and experience

contributed to successful implementation of inclusive education (Adeniyi, Owolabi & Olojede, 2015). In a related finding, length of training and attitudes to inclusive education practice also influence the implementation of inclusive education (Avramidis & Kalyva 2007; Koutrouba, Vamvakari & Steliou, 2006). Some other studies have also reported the importance of resources and teachers attitudes as major predictors of inclusive education (Ammah & Hodge, 2005 in Adeniyi, Owolabi & Olojede, 2015; Fakolade & Adeniyi, 2009).

The success of inclusive education in any sociological and geographical environment lies on the understanding and attitudes of all the stakeholders. These include the parents, teachers, head teachers, community members, government and non-governmental organisations. UNESCO (2020) submitted that many challenges hindering delivering education for people with disabilities in Nigeria have been linked to infrastructure quality and accessible infrastructure, trained teachers and availability of assistive devices for special needs children. Hence, with the status quo, there will be no meaningful progress toward building inclusive society. The goal of inclusive education is to activate zero tolerance to segregation no matter the degree of variance. UNESO (2020) further reported that students with disabilities who have made it to higher education have found challenges of discrimination and inaccessible infrastructure and materials. These create a sense of alienation in learners with special needs and further the gap of social injustices.

The roles of major stakeholders towards building inclusive society, studies have reported contentiously different dimension and reaction toward this policy. Adeniyi and Adeyemi (2015) conducted a research on the practice of inclusive education in Southwest, Nigeria reported that parents and government have negative disposition towards inclusive education while teachers disposition were positive. The age long believe that disabilities are infectious and sometimes, punishment for wrong doing from God still hold sway and have affected the way parents and community members react and treat people with special needs.

While predicating successes of inclusive education on what we regard as critical stakeholders such as government, parents and teachers. It is very important to find out the contributions of the society, infrastructures and resources availability. The infrastructural challenge occasioned by widespread failures of government in Nigeria which is a result of chronic underfunding of basic education services is critical to building and sustaining inclusive education (Dark, 2018; Samuel, 2018). Adeniyi and Kuku (2021) in a study on functionality and facilities compliant in inclusive schools

in Lagos State, Nigeria using exploratory investigation found that most equipment and facilities were obsolete and did not comply with global standard and best practice. They further found that most facilities needed for inclusive education were grossly inadequate and sometimes not available. The unavailability of resources and facilities can be linked to infrastructural decay as a result of negligence on the part of government and community where such schools for children with special needs established.

Furthermore, the Salamanca Framework for Action clearly indicated the roles of non-governmental organisations in making inclusive education to work worldwide. The NGO can play the roles of innovator and catalyst and extend the range of programmes available to the community (UNESCO, 1994). Also, the NGO in conjunction with the community can be supported in developing new ideas and pioneering innovative delivery methods. This helps in building broad based strategy for inclusive education practice. Quite unfortunately, viable data in this regards remain a scanty.

In view of the enormous importance of stakeholders, facilities, government and non-governmental organisations, resources availability, environmental and instructional delivery factors in the implementation of inclusive education practice, it is imperative to investigate their contributions to making inclusive education to work in Nigeria. This study is on building and sustaining inclusive education society; the Nigeria experience.

Method

Research design

This study employed descriptive survey research design investigating stakeholders' participation, resources availability, environmental and instructional delivery factors.

Population

The population comprised Parents of children with disabilities, Learners with special needs, officials of identified NGO, teachers and three inclusive schools.

Sample and Sampling technique

The study employed multistage sampling process including simple random sampling to select the schools and the teachers assessed while teaching, purposive sampling was employed to select learners with special needs, parents and NGO officials. A total of one hundred and thirty one

[(131) male: 61 and female: 70] learners with special need were selected eighty parents [(80) 41 female and 39 male), fifty one NGO officials [(51) 33 female and 17 male] and 9 teachers.

Instrument

The instruments used for the study is stakeholders' participation inventory with 0.70 using Cronbach alpha. It consists of teacher perception scale (self-constructed), parents' perception scale (self-constructed), NGO attitudinal scale and learners perception scale (self-constructed), classroom assessment checklist for instructional delivery adapted from classroom interaction sheet by Opala Onocha and Oyedeji (1993), learning environment rating scale (Self-developed) and facilities and resource checklist (Self-constructed). The classroom assessment checklist for instructional delivery, facilities, learning environment rating scale and resource checklist were administered by the researcher after due consents have been taken from the school authority and participating teachers. Parents' perception scale was administered during PTA meeting while NGO attitudinal scale was administered among identified registered NGO dealing with children with special needs and learners' perception scale was administered among pupils with special needs in various inclusive schools used for this study.

Data Collection

Prior the collections of data, the schools used were visited and the head teachers gave consent for such research to be conducted. Thereafter, the researchers together with research assistants visited each location and necessary data were collected anonymously.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Stakeholder participation and instructional delivery factors do not significantly predict the implementation of inclusive education.

Table 1

Model summary on stakeholders' participation and instructional delivery as it influences implementation of inclusive education

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.789 ^a	.623	.617

a. Predictors: (Constant), Instructional delie, stakeholders C Stakeholders participation

Table 2

ANOVA on stakeholders' participation and instructional delivery as it influences implementation of inclusive education

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	991.838	2	495.919	105.816	.000 ^b
	Residual	599.887	128	4.687		
	Total	1591.725	130			

a. Dependent Variable: Inclusive Implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Instructional delivery, Stakeholders participation

Table 3

Coefficient analysis on stakeholders participation and instructional delivery as it influences implementation of inclusive education

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.528	3.288		1.985	.049
	Stakeholders C Stakeholders participation	.605	.042	.788	14.467	.000
	Instructional deliv	.010	.032	.017	.314	.754

a. Dependent Variable: Inclusive implementation

A multiple regression analysis of 0.789 was derived as the measure of prediction of the implementation of inclusive education. Also, 0.623 was derived as the coefficient of determination (R square) result which measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable as explained by the instructional delivery and stakeholder participation. The F-ratio (F = 105.816; df1 = 2; df2 = 128; p < 0.05) shows a joint significant prediction of instructional delivery and stakeholders'

participation on inclusive education implementation. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted in lieu of the null hypothesis.

Table 4

Relative Effect of Instructional Delivery and Stakeholders' Participation on Inclusive Implementation

Variables	β	SE	β	t	P
Stakeholders' participation	0.605	0.042	0.788	14.467	0.000
Instructional delivery	0.01	0.032	0.017	0.314	0.754

In addition, computations in Table 4 shows that stakeholders' participation ($\beta = 0.788$; $p < 0.05$) significantly contributed to the implementation of inclusive education in Lagos state while instructional delivery's ($\beta = 0.017$; $p < 0.05$) contribution was insignificant.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between resource availability and effective implementation of inclusive education.

Table 5

Relationship between Resource Availability and Effective Implementation of Inclusive Education

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	R	p
Resource availability	131	30.69	4.10	130	0.493	0.000
Inclusive Implementation	131	34.05	3.50			

The analysis shows a positive relationship exist between resources availability and inclusive education implementation in Lagos State. Thus, as resource availability increases, this has led to an increase in the implementation of inclusive education in Lagos State and vice versa. In addition, a correlation coefficient of 0.493 ($p < 0.05$) shows that a significant relationship exists between resources availability and inclusive education implementation in Lagos State. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was concluded that significant relationship between resource availability and effective implementation of inclusive education.

Hypothesis 3: Stakeholder participation, parental involvement, NGO contribution learner participation, resources availability, environmental factors and instructional delivery factors do not jointly predict the implementation of inclusive education.

The result of the multiple regression analysis shows that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.948 was gotten as the variance of implementation of inclusive education that could be explained by the seven predictors (environmental factors, instructional delivery, resource availability, NGO involvement, learner participation, parent involvement and stakeholders' participation). The result was observed to be significant ($F = 156.669$; $df_1 = 7$; $df_2 = 123$; $p < 0.000$)

Table 6

Relative Effect on Inclusive Implementation

Variables	β	SE	β	t	p
Stakeholders' participation	1.469	0.057	1.913	25.879	0.000
Resource availability	-1.042	0.058	-1.222	-18.06	0.000
Parent involvement	-0.184	0.084	-0.159	-2.189	0.030
NGO involvement	0.012	0.037	0.015	0.317	0.752
Learner participation	0.316	0.117	0.162	2.711	0.008
Instructional delivery	-0.026	0.018	-0.044	-1.436	0.154
Environmental factors	-0.026	0.077	-0.018	-0.337	0.737

Besides, indications from computation displayed in Table 6 shows that stakeholders' participation ($\beta = 1.913$; $p < 0.05$), resource availability ($\beta = -1.222$; $p < 0.05$), parental involvement ($\beta = -0.159$; $p < 0.05$) and learner participation ($\beta = 0.162$; $p < 0.05$) significantly contributed to the implementation of inclusive education in Lagos state.

Discussion

The results of the study revealed that there was joint significant prediction of instructional delivery and stakeholders' participation on inclusive education implementation. The results indicated the extent to which instructional delivery and stakeholder participation are critical to the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. The results corroborated the findings by Ammah and Hodge in Adeniyi, Owolabi and Olojede (2015) and Fakolade and Adeniyi, (2009) who reported the importance of teachers' attitudes and instructional modes delivery and availability resources as critical to the implementation of inclusive education. It must be noted that teacher as

one of the major stakeholders needs to understand diverse pedagogical and instructional styles in order for them to make impact in the process of implementation of inclusive education.

The results further revealed that resources availability relate positively to the implementation of inclusive education. Resources are working tools that will aid the implementation of inclusive education. One of the major constraints to the implementation of inclusive education is the unavailability and inadequacy of resources. This study corroborated the finding by Odebiyi (2016) that reported that the challenges facing inclusive education are lack of qualified teachers, absence of support service, relevant materials, inadequate personnel and training programmes, lack of funding structure and the absence of enabling legislature in Nigeria.

Again, the study revealed that there was joint prediction of environmental factors, instructional delivery, resource availability, NGO involvement, learner participation, parent involvement and stakeholders' participation on the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. The outcome of this study corroborated the findings of Faolade and Adeniyi (2009), Lawal and Isah (2022), Odebiyi (2016) and Adeniyi, Owolabi and Olojede (2015) who all reported at different time or the other the importance of both materials and human resources in the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of human, materials and instructional delivery on the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. The study revealed the joint prediction of instructional delivery and stakeholders' participation in the implementation of inclusive education, there was also relationship between availability of resources and implementation of inclusive education and joint prediction of environmental factors, instructional delivery, resource availability, NGO involvement, learner participation, parent involvement and stakeholders' participation on the implementation of inclusive education.

Recommendations

Parents, teachers, Government and non-governmental agencies should work in synergy in the implementation of inclusive education by making available relevance resources, monitoring of the implementation process and constant advocacy and sensitisation of the society on the need to build all inclusive society through implementation of inclusive education.

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