



Teachers' perception on inclusive education policy implementation for the physically challenged students in junior secondary schools in Katsina, Katsina state, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined teachers' perception on Inclusive Education Policy Implementation for the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state, Nigeria. Two research objectives and research questions were raised to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of all the Public Junior Secondary School (JSS) with a total number of 345 teachers in Katsina metropolis. The sample for this study was drawn from the entire population of the study. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select all the schools. With the aid of Israel (2013) table for determining sample size, a sample size of 235 was determined. Also proportionate sample technique was used to distribute samples based on the population of each school. The researchers' designed questionnaire was used for data collection after going through proper psychometric test with a reliability index of 0.84 and the analysis of the data collected was based on the research questions raised. The data collected in this study were subjected to descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviations. The study concluded that, implementation of inclusive education implementation policy benefits to the physically challenged students and there are challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state. Thus, the study recommended among others that government should provide grants to State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) for students with physical disabilities at junior secondary schools.

Keywords: inclusive education, policy implementation, and physically challenged students

Introduction

In the arena of education, national policies, especially in developing countries, are driven by international organization manifestos especially those from the United Nations International Children and Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declarations. From the late 1980s UNICEF began to take on the issue of education for children as a central goal. In pursuance of this goal, the organization produced a binding international instrument known as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989. The Convention sets out 54 articles and two Optional Protocols. Part I, Article 2, Section 1 of the Convention states. "State Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status" (Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, (<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>). Nigeria has also enacted its own Child's Rights Act, Laws of the Federation 2004. Also of significant importance is the UNESCO's Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in 1990, the Salamanca Statement Framework for Action 1994, and the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. All of these form the coherent force that influenced the adoption of National Policies on the Education of children

with disabilities in Nigeria (Agunloye, Pollingue, Davou & Osagie, 2011)^[2].

Attempts to entrench an inclusive education policy in Nigeria dates back to 1976 when the Universal Primary Education was introduced although with little success. In 1977, the first National Policy on Education was formulated. This document contained some provisions for special education including the idea of equalizing education for all children irrespective of their physical, mental, and emotional state (Garuba cited in Omede, 2016)^[17].

As a result of political instability, Nigeria was unable to formulate a coherent national policy on education, especially the education of children with special needs until 1999 when a democratic system of government began to take root again; following three decades of military dictatorship. In 1999 the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy was adopted and enacted into law in 2004 as the UBE Act which makes a provision of 2% of its Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) to finance the UBE program. Thus, the compulsory free Universal Basic Education Act, 2004, provides a legal framework within which the Federal Government supports states towards achieving uninterrupted nine-year compulsory Universal Basic Education for all children in primary and junior secondary school levels throughout the country (<http://www.fme.gov.ng/pages/cati.asp>). However the actual provision for funding of the education of children with special needs, as a National Education Policy under the UBE Act, was not put into effect until 2008 (Ajuwon, 2008)^[3].

This was when the policy of Inclusive Education was officially and formally adopted as an integral part of the UBE policy. Section 7 of the revised National Policy on Education (2014) ^[6] explicitly recognizes that children and youth with special needs shall be provided with inclusive education services. The commitment is made to equalize educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their physical, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities. Undoubtedly, these are lofty goals intended to improve the quality of special education services, but much more is needed to translate the goals into concrete action.

Olawale, Ogunwale and Dafwat (2016) ^[16] posited that for inclusion to be successfully practiced, support staff, disability friendly environment, appropriate facility and equipment for teaching/learning process, curriculum modification, early identification, positive attitude, awareness of what inclusion is all about and accurate census of physically challenged students are central factors that would ensure appropriate inclusive education worldwide and which is not available in Nigeria. This is supported by Yeo (2018) ^[19] who reported the World Health Organization (WHO) as estimating that 'there are approximately 19,000,000 (Nineteen Million) disabled people living in Nigeria'. Yeo further reported WHO as claiming that this figure is equivalent to 20% of Nigeria's total population. Nigeria cannot afford to ignore persons with disabilities because of their high population and because of their inalienable right to education.

Omede (2016) ^[17] in a study titled policy framework for inclusive education in Nigeria, issues and challenges opined that, the following challenges faced inclusive education in Nigeria; expense, misinformation, lack of qualified personnel, inaccessibility of the programme by students, lack of co-operation among teachers, community and government. Okroma (2003) ^[14] assesses the effective implementation of the UBE programme (inclusive education included) revealed significant inadequacy in the implementation efforts. Among the constraints that impede effective implementation are; inadequate qualified teachers, insufficient funds, inadequate teaching and learning facilities, poor motivation of teachers and lack of guidance and counseling services.

Universal Basic Education Board lamented that children with special needs do not access education due to the followings; lack of equipment and facilities, misappropriation of fund, lack of trained specialist, lack of accurate data (Isuad & Akinmosire, 2010) ^[9].

This paper was hinged on Bugesk (1962) theory of dynamic assessment of the physically challenged. According to him the structure of physically challenged person is so complex and it can be studied through simple summing up symptoms primary disorder (visual, hearing, language and impairment) and these symptoms lead to the children exclusion from the social, cultural, traditional and educational environment. He stressed the importance of social learning in the upbringing and educational of the physically challenged persons. Bugesk also criticized the teacher, parents, and psychologist to the child's normality and suggest the need for psychologist to be concerned on the adjustment of physically challenged individuals.

Statement of the problem

The Nigerian National Policy on Education though laudable, but has not translated into adequate inclusive educational

opportunities for physically challenged students. The policy for now remains mere rhetoric. Oladejo and Oladejo (2011) ^[15] in buttressing this observation reported that strategies that will make inclusion work in Nigeria are yet to be put in place. Regular education teachers are the pivot on which inclusive education stands. Their relevance to the success of inclusion is so important that the world cannot afford to ignore them. Olawale, Ogunwale and Dafwat (2016) ^[15] posited that for inclusion to be successfully practiced support staff, disability friendly environment, appropriate facility and equipment for teaching/learning process, curriculum modification, early identification, positive attitude, awareness of what inclusion is all about and accurate census of physically challenged students are central factors that would ensure appropriate inclusive education worldwide and which is not available in Nigeria.

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Research objectives

The objectives of this research work were to:

1. Determine the benefit to the implementation of Inclusive Education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.
2. Determine the challenges to Inclusive Education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.

Research questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the benefit to implementation of Inclusive Education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state?
2. What are the challenges to Inclusive Education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state?

Methodology

Research design

This study adopted a descriptive survey method. Descriptive designs are used in a research as strategy that enable the investigator to describe the occurrence of variance and it also involve assessing attitude or opinion of individuals, organization or events. A descriptive survey research is the one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people and the items are considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu 2006:55) ^[13]. A descriptive survey is chosen in order to assess Inclusive Education Policy Implementation

for the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina metropolis.

Population of the study

The population of the study consisted of 13 Public Junior Secondary School (JSS) with a total number of 345 teachers in Katsina metropolis.

Sample and sampling techniques

The sample for this study was drawn from the population of teachers in the study area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the thirteen public senior secondary schools in Katsina metropolis. This was appropriate to this research because the researcher find it more appropriate and convenient. Purposive sampling also referred to as judgmental sampling technique is a technique to be used for this study based on the assumption that with good judgment, one can handpick element of cases in a population, which are satisfactory in relation to one’s needs. Fraenkel and Wallen in Abdulkadir (2019) [1] opined that purposive sampling is a non-random sample used when those to be selected have the requisite information, Nworgu (2006) [13]

noted that purposive sampling specifies element which satisfy some predetermined criteria for selection, for example, possessing certain characteristics relevant to the study.

The sample size was drawn from the population of 345 teachers. This was achieved through the aid of Isreal (2013) [8] table for determining sample size to simplify and justify the work and a sample size of 235 participants was determined. Thereafter, the sample of 235 teachers was proportionately selected across the 13 schools. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select corresponding numbers from the various institutions to ensure equal or proportional representation (Creswell, 2008) [5]. With proportionate sampling method, the researcher does not leave the representativeness of the sample entirely to chance. It ensures that the sample is similar to the population in certain respects, or matches the population on certain key variables (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007) [12].

In selecting teachers to represent the sample in each school, the researchers used simple random sampling to select the final participants. The number of respondents selected in each schools was presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample size for the study

S/N	Schools	No. of Teachers	Sample Size
1	Government Day Secondary School K/Yandaka	45	29
2	Government Day Secondary School Natsinta	32	26
3	Government Day Secondary School D/Safe	13	9
4	Government Day Secondary School Kamarawa	32	21
5	School of the Blind	19	12
6	Sir Usman Nagoggo College of Arabic and Islamic Studies (SUNCAIS)	44	28
7	Government College Katsina (GCK)	23	15
8	Katsina College Katsina (KCK)	31	20
9	Dikko College Katsina (DCK)	19	12
10	Hassu Iro Inko Girls College (WTC)	36	23
11	Family Support	12	8
12	Government Day Pilot Secondary School K/Sauri	18	12
13	Government Day Secondary School K/Kaura	21	14
	Total	345	235

Instrumentations

Researchers designed Questionnaire tagged: Inclusive Education Policy Implementation for Physically Challenged Students Questionnaire (IEIPCSQ).

The questionnaires has two major sections; Section A, elicit personal data of the respondents while Section B, elicit questions central to the topic. Altogether, there was an average of 20 items on the questionnaire.

Validity of IEIPCSQ

To determine the validity of the instruments, the questionnaire was given to experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Department of Psychology/Guidance and Counselling, School of Education, Federal College of Education, Katsina to vet. At the end, observations and suggestions were raised and affected by the researchers before the production of the final copies. Thus, their independent judgment adjudged the face and content and validity of the instrument.

Reliability of IEIPCSQ

To determine the reliability of the instruments. The researchers subjected the instrument to a test-retest

reliability measure. The questionnaire was administered to 15 teachers at interval of three weeks between the first and second administration. The scores were then subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics and a reliability index of 0.84 was obtained.

Method of data analysis

The data collected in this study were subjected to descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviations for answering the research questions through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 27.

Results presentations

This section highlighted the demographic analysis of the participants. This includes gender and teacher type as was highlighted in table 2-4.

Table 2: Questionnaire return rate

Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned	Percentage
235	229	97.4

Result in table 2 reveals that 229(97.4%) of the questionnaires distributed were dully completed and returned by the respondent.

Table 3: Gender distribution of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	163	71.2
Female	66	28.8
Total	229	100

Result in table 3 reveals that 163(71.2%) of the respondent of the study were male teachers who formed the majority while 66(28.8) of the participants were female.

Table 4: Teacher type distribution of the respondents

Teacher Type	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	211	92.1
Special	18	7.9
Total	229	100

Result in table 4 reveals that 211(92.1%) of the respondent of the study were normal teachers whom formed the majority while 18(7.9%) of the participants were special teachers.

Research question 1: What are the benefit to implementation of inclusive education policy of the physically challenged students in junior secondary schools in katsina, katsina state?

Table 5: Benefit to the implementation of inclusive education policy of the physically challenged students in junior secondary schools in katsina, katsina state

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Low	19	8.3		
Average	115	50.2		
High	95	41.5	2.33	.624
Total	229	100		

Table 5 revealed that 19(8.3%) of the respondents indicated benefit to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy as low, 115(50.2%) benefit to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy as average and 95(41.5%) benefit to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy as high. This implies that 91.7% benefit to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state. Also, a close interpretation of these responses indicated a (M=2.33, SD=.624) thus, revealed the benefit to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina as average.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in junior secondary schools in katsina, katsina state?

Table 6: Challenge to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in junior secondary schools in katsina, katsina state

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Not Challenge	1	.4		
Mild	109	47.6		
Serious	119	52.0	2.52	.510
Total	229	100		

Table 6 revealed that 1(.4%) of the respondents indicated not challenge, 109(47.6%) of the respondents indicated mild challenge while 119(52.0) of the respondents indicated serious challenge. This implies that there are challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.

Summary of findings

The following are the findings of the study:

1. The finding indicated that 91.7% supported the benefits to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.
2. The finding also indicated that there are challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.

Discussion of findings

Research question one revealed that 91.7% supported the benefits to the implementation of inclusive education implementation policy in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state. This finding was in line with the study by Maria and Bwoi (2015) [10] who revealed the benefit of inclusive education as specialized assistance for overcoming handicapping situations in the form of scientifically oriented/technology devices and human assistance. Wheel chairs; life support gadgets or drugs; constant human care and assistance; are the types of services always required by physically challenged persons. Also, physical and architectural special designs and adaptations for enhancing access and enabling easier overcoming of physical barriers. Moreover, physical adjustments and reservations in the homes, community spaces, schools and classrooms for ease of accommodation. Specialized medical services for those who are on chemotherapy and who may also need intermittent medical attention while at home, school or rehabilitation facility. And lastly, physiotherapy and psychotherapy services for attending to personality and physical illness conditions respectively in the homes, schools and rehabilitation centres.

Research question two revealed that, there are challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state. This finding concur with the study by Tinklin and Hall (1999) [18] the study revealed five areas in relation to higher education namely; entrance to higher education; access to information; the physical environment; assumptions of 'normality' as well as levels of awareness. One of the central findings from the study was the way in which the built environment was designed solely with persons without disabilities in mind. This created the obvious access barriers, and impeded independence, as disabled students had to rely on peer support in order to engage with their environment.

Another study by Chataika (2010) [4] revealed that although the University of Zimbabwe appears to be inclusive by accepting participation of disabled students from 1982 in some of its programmes, once entered, these students experience marginalization and disempowerment. This included negative attitudes, problems with the admissions process and a built environment that was not inclusive.

Also, Howell (2000) [7] study on disabled students and higher learning revealed that although the schooling system has the potential to support greater participation by persons with disabilities in higher education, barriers still remain. Traditional attitudes and stereotyping of the abilities of learners still lead to exclusion and reinforcement of the notion that learners with disabilities particularly physical disabilities do not have a future in higher education. Barriers are exacerbated by inequalities inherent in the higher education system. This includes the ways in which higher education institutions are structured and function, dominant attitudes that inform and shape the practices of such higher education institutions as well as the role that higher education plays within society as a whole. Meanwhile the study by McLean *et al.*, (2003) [11] stated that whilst facilities and assistive devices play an important role in supporting students with disabilities and have received much attention from higher educational institutions, limited attention has been paid to the extent to which teaching and learning processes marginalize or exclude learners/students specifically with disabilities. A lack of curricula flexibility and a lack of inclusive teaching and learning methodologies remain important barriers within higher education that must be further interrogated.

Conclusion

Conclusion drawn from this study indicated that, implementation of inclusive education implementation policy benefits to the physically challenged students and there are challenges to inclusive education implementation policy of the physically challenged students in Junior Secondary Schools in Katsina, Katsina state.

Recommendations

In view of the above findings, it is recommended that:

1. Government should provide grants to State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) for students with physical disabilities at junior secondary schools; and
2. Buildings and infrastructures such as classrooms, dormitories, dining halls, toilets and play grounds should consider people with physical disabilities. Institutions could put slopes, lumps and lifts in higher buildings in order for them to reach intellectual goals.

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