

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PORT HARCOURT METROPOLIS

Osuji, U. Catherine and Semenitari, M. G. Tamunoibim

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University Port-Harcourt

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Abstract: The study investigated school administrators' strategies for implementation of the National Policy on Inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis in Rivers State. Seven specific objectives, research questions and seven corresponding hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The study was carried out in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The population of the study was 759 school administrators comprising 718 school administrators in government approved private secondary schools and 41 school principals in public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The sample size of the study was 328 school administrators comprising 287 private school administrators and 41 public school administrators. The purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample of private schools while the entire 41 public school administrators were studied without sampling. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled: "School Administrators' Strategies for Implementation of Inclusive Education in Secondary Schools Questionnaire". The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation respectively. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Method which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.83, 0.77, 0.82, 0.70, 0.75, 0.81 and 0.91. Mean and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that majority of the principals in public and private secondary schools are aware of inclusive education in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The study further found that stakeholders' engagement and advocacy, training of stakeholders, accessibility and safety, creating support for inclusive teaching, adequate resource mobilization, allocation and utilization, and adaptation of curriculum and resource materials would enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State to high extent. The study recommended among others that the government through the Ministry of Education should encourage school administrators to commence the implementation of inclusive education as stated in the National Policy of Inclusive Education for secondary schools since a considerable number of the principals are aware of inclusive education.

Keywords: School Administrators, Inclusive Education

Introduction

The quest to create a universally acceptable learning environment which respects diversity and equality among learners avidly supports the concept of inclusive education. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights (United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A 1948) provides the basis for the agitation for inclusive education. The provision states that, “every one has the right to education and it shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.” Providing quality education for every child is thus a moral imperative for any society. Though discussed and agreed on at the UN General Assembly in 1948, governments continuously failed to provide education for all children in the society irrespective of their status, ethnicity, religion, abilities or disabilities. Thus “education as a right” was further re affirmed by articles 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child which also includes the right to quality education (United Nations, 1989). Article 28 (1) states that State Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- i. make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
- ii. encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- iii. make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- iv. make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children and
- v. take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

Following that, Article 29 urges state parties to agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- i. the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
- ii. the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- iii. the development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- iv. the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- v. the development of respect for the natural environment.”

However, the epidemiological transitions in low- and middle-income countries, accompanied by rapid population growth and increasing educational demands, have raised ethical concerns about the quality of education that are solely focused on abled children without adequate consideration for the development and well-being of gifted and talented children or those with disabilities. According to Olusanya, Boo, Camargo, Hadders-Algra, Wertlieb and Davis (2022), more than 53 million children younger than 5 years and over 291 million children younger than 20 years are estimated to have disabilities from birth. They further estimated that 95 percent of children with a disability (younger than 5 years) reside in low and middle-income countries. Hence, inclusive education is an essential education system for ensuring equality in accessing quality education

in the society. Although over the years there has been no universally accepted definition of inclusive education and no consensus on a standardized set of procedures that must be followed to practice it (Kirschner, 2015), the United Nations (2013) described inclusive education as the transition from separate, segregated learning environments for persons with disabilities reflected in the “special education” approach, to schooling in the general education system.

The term inclusion in the context of education is often confused to mean special education referring to engagement of persons with physical and mental impairments, such as sensory or mobility limitations, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, language disorders, behavior disorders and autism spectrum disorders. Beyond this general perspective, Kirschner (2015) viewed inclusive education as the deliberate and self-conscious structuring of whole-school and classroom environments so that they are accessible and congenial not only to students with impairments, but also to those who can face exclusion or disempowerment due to their ethnicity, social class, gender, culture, religion, immigration history or other attributes. That is, inclusive education does not only consider learners with physical disabilities but also those whose learning abilities could be affected by their social background, religion, races, or ethnicity.

The afore-mentioned definitions of inclusive education appear to be misleading and not in tandem with the true meaning of inclusive education as stated in the national policy of inclusive education. The National Policy on Inclusive Education, NPIE (FGN, 2017) puts this confusion to rest as it exhaustively defines the term inclusive education and sets out the parameters to be followed in achieving this noble idea in the country. According to the policy, inclusive Education “has been internationally recognized as a means of attaining equity, justice, and quality education for all learners, especially those who have been traditionally excluded from mainstream education for reasons of disability, ethnicity, gender, giftedness or other characteristics (FGN, 2017). While others define inclusive education with focus on only disabilities, ethnicity and gender, the policy included also the gifted children. This shows that inclusive education is not only focused on students’ with learning difficulties but also those who have the ability to learn at a faster pace than others in the classroom.

This position supports the various positions of global agencies as stated earlier and keys in with the position of the, Jomtein conference on Education for All (EFA) which emphasized urgent priority to ensure access to and improve the quality of education for all children (Lawal & Isah, 2022). Hence, the need for education systems that include all students; welcomes and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements. This means making sure that teaching, the curriculum, school buildings, classrooms, play areas, transport and toilets are appropriate for all children at all levels. It means all children learn together in the same schools (UNICEF, 2017).

The principle of inclusion in education is that all students, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, should be given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the educational experience in the same space (United Nations, 2013). Just as the community is not segregated, students with special education needs must have full participation in and access to the regular school setting, and they must also be provided with appropriate modifications to the curriculum and pedagogy in order to be successful there. The ultimate goal of inclusive education is that the whole education system will facilitate learning environments where teachers and learners embrace and welcome the challenge and benefits of diversity. Within an inclusive education approach, learning environments are fostered where individual needs are met and every student has an opportunity to succeed.

However, not only has the inclusion policy frequently been criticized as failing to provide clear, systematic, or consistent strategies, but also the actual practices of Learning in Regular Classroom (LRC) have been found to merely concern children's physical integration into the mainstream settings (Qu, 2022). This is found to be the case in developing countries like Nigeria, hence the implementation of the inclusive education policy (NIPE) since its inception has become an issue of a "great cry and little wool". According to Lawal and Isah (2022), the implementation of inclusive education in Nigerian has faced many hindrances and obstacles which consequently led to the poor functioning of this system of education in the country. Although the policy developed by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017) placed emphasis on making all public and private primary and secondary schools inclusive and accessible to all students, the actual implementation has been quite poor and futile. School administrators and other key stakeholders critical to the implementation of the policy may either be unaware or in some cases face a myriad of challenges including funding, manpower, infrastructure, equipment and society.

School administrators may also sometimes be school principals. School Administrators oversee administrative tasks in schools, colleges or other educational institutions. They ensure that the academic organization runs smoothly and they also manage facilities and staff. According to Education College (2021), administrators are leaders who take pride in their strategic planning, tremendous support in every sector, respect for the education system, including faculty, students, parents, and school board members. School administrators are responsible for the implementation of policies guiding education in schools.

It is believed that the implementation of inclusive education will be more effective if school administrators have a clearer perception and understand its need. School administrators are critical stakeholders and play key roles in supporting inclusive education (Nguluma, Bayrakci & Titrek, 2017). Based on the academic and social benefits that children with disabilities as well as gifted and talented children can get from inclusion, the school administrators must understand the need to integrate these children into the main stream in order to make non-disabled children to be familiar with the children with disabilities (Nguluma, et al, 2017). Studies have shown that most school administrators are yet to see the need for integrating inclusive education in secondary schools (Sharma & Crow, 2008; Ball & Green, 2014).

According to Ball and Green (2014), negative attitude of the school administrators creates less inclusive placement for students with disabilities in general schools, which primarily resulted from the lack of adequate training and experience related to special education and inclusion practices. It is not just the children with disabilities who face exclusion; school administrators, teachers and other learners also find it difficult to deal with gifted and talented children, thus denying them the appropriate environment to bloom. "In conversations about educational policy and issues of equity and inclusivity, gifted learners who were discovered to be in the top 0.1 per cent of intelligence in the United Kingdom, tend to occupy a marginal space. This marginalisation mostly stems from the assumption that in displaying signs of exceptionality and high intelligence, learners identified as gifted will inevitably achieve educational success without additional support. In reality, however, gifted students can happen to be left behind and underserved in classrooms unable to meet their specific educational needs." (OECD, 2020).

Inclusive education encompasses a range of aspects that promote equity, access, and participation for all students in the educational environment. It involves valuing diversity, providing accessibility, individualizing instruction, fostering collaboration, promoting a positive school climate, supporting social and emotional learning, engaging parents and communities, providing policy and systemic support, conducting ongoing assessment and monitoring, and continuously improving practices to ensure that all students are included and empowered in their educational journey.

Generally, people mistake inclusive education for integration. These persons think that inclusive education relates only to learners experiencing barriers resulting from impairment or disability. This is not at all the case. Inclusive education differs both in philosophy and practice from integration. It involves the entire education system and all learners. With inclusive education, “quality education should be provided in a learner – friendly environment where diversity is experienced, embraced and recognised as enriching to all.” (National Policy of Inclusive Education, 2017, FGN).

Regardless of these identified challenges, the National policy of inclusive education provides various strategies for effective implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. These include but are not limited to stakeholders’ engagement and advocacy, training and retraining of stakeholders and accessibility and safety among others. The engagement and advocacy strategy is concerned with raising public awareness on inclusive education and engaging stakeholders to support the full implementation of the policy.

In the view of Omede (2016) for inclusive education to be effective, the following engagement and advocacy strategies have to be in place. These include teachers working together to provide for the needs of all students; parents, general education and special education teachers and science providers working together to determine the students’ needs; programme practices must be research based and culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate; children must have opportunity to work and play with each other throughout the school day; the school must provide a welcoming and on-going relationship with the families, focusing on the needs; raise awareness on rights to education for all to persons with special educational needs; there must be a collaboration and partnership with families and communities; and the pre-school must be accountable for the improved outcomes for all students. The active engagement of the education stakeholders is essential when considering effective implementation of the inclusive education policy.

Training and retraining of stakeholders is another crucial strategy for implementing inclusive education in secondary schools. Training could be described as an organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the sufficient execution of the functions for which he was hired while retraining involves the renewal or updating of worker’s skills, knowledge, attitude, work habits and competencies to enable them perform their assigned responsibilities creditably (Oyitso & Olomukoro, 2012). Schools who are yet integrate inclusive education in their school activities require training of teachers so as to equip them with relevant skills to create and maintain an inclusive learning environment. Similarly, every educational system in the world needs to improve and work towards best practices, good results and making sustainable progress. Stakeholders who are already into inclusive education would therefore need consistent professional development to keep them abreast of trends in implementation. Stakeholders must learn about the practice of inclusive education during pre-service and in-service training, and they must be provided opportunities for

continuing professional development throughout their careers rather than just attending one off trainings, if they are to develop the knowledge, experience, and confidence to be inclusive in their teaching (Ibeagha & Ulochukwu, 2019). Anwe in Ibeagha and Ulochuku (2019) asserted that training and retraining of teachers is a veritable tool for ensuring effective access to inclusive education in Nigerian secondary schools.

Accessibility and safety is an important aspect of the implementation plan of inclusive education. The school environment must be accessible to learners and safe for their learning. It is a fact that a student with disability cannot learn in an inclusive classroom if he cannot enter the classrooms, dormitories and hostels. Equally gifted children may feel singled out, antisocial or not provided for in a school environment that does not make provision for their educational needs. Some schools are still inaccessible to students in wheelchairs or to those other elevators, ramps, paved pathways and lifts to get in and round buildings (Omede, 2016). He further reiterated that accessibility could go beyond passageways, stairs, and ramps to recreational areas, paved pathways, and door handles. Ibeagha and Ulochukwu (2019) in their views stated that accessibility in inclusive education entails all learners' ability to have access to not only the curriculum content but also curriculum activities. Therefore, it is expected of teachers to differentiate lessons so that all students can have access to the curriculum. However, even this may prove to be challenged, For instance one major constraints that visually impaired students face in Nigeria is non availability of text books and other educational resources in braille. This is worse in the STEM subjects. The exclusion continues even up to the West African Examination Council O' level examinations where visually impaired children are unable to sit for mathematics as provision is not made for this subject. The present study therefore examined school administrator's strategies for enhanced implementation inclusive education in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Various international instruments as well as educational policies in Nigeria have sought to guarantee the rights of every child to education that meets their needs. The National Policy on Inclusive Education which came into effect in 2017 was targeted at "putting in place an all-inclusive education system that would guarantee the right of every child to education. The intention of the policy was thus to safeguard the right of every learner particularly "gifted children, children with disabilities, the girl child, those belonging to ethnic minorities, hard to reach communities, and other out of school children, youth and adults. (National Policy on Inclusive Education FGN, 2017).

UNESCO (2020) says that although since 2018, States in Nigeria have been requested to domesticate the main provisions of the national inclusive education policy into their own education policies, the Federal Ministry of Education does not yet report clear information on how many states have domesticated it.

Nigerian educational system has suffered greatly due to lack of political will by leaders to overhaul, restructure and reposition the educational system. The underfunding of the sector affects everything from qualified teachers, educational administrators and managers to structures, resources and equipment. Inclusive education has faced many challenges in the country due to quite a number of factors related to the governments, parents, pupils/teachers and the community (Lawal & Isah, 2022). The failure to effectively implement inclusive education policy is quite notable in high number of disabled children without educational background, rise in ethnic discrimination in Nigerian schools, students without proper adjustment to school environment thereby leading to low academic performance, segregation of gifted children from others and many more.

James *et al.*, (2020) assert that there is a neglect of inclusive education in public schools and even in private schools, as government, educators, the community, or even parents have not made actual efforts to support the policy. Researchers have also observed that both public and private secondary schools in the study area, majorly do not implement inclusive education despite the policy.

How abreast are School Administrators Education in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis with the National Policy on Inclusive Education and what strategies would they use in implementing the policy? Providing answers to this question is the problem of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine school administrators' strategies for the implementation of the National Policy on Inclusive Education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the extent to which stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategy enhances the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.
2. establish the extent to which training of stakeholders enhances the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.
3. ascertain the extent to which accessibility and safety enhances the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- 1 To what extent do stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?
- 2 To what extent does training of stakeholders enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?
- 3 To what extent does accessibility and safety enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Port-Harcourt Metropolis Rivers State. The population of the study was 759 school administrators comprising 718 school administrators in government approved private secondary schools and 41 school principals in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis (RSSSB, 2021). The sample size of the study was 328 school administrators comprising 287 private school administrators and 41 public school administrators. The sample size for private school administrator was 287. The purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting 287 private secondary school administrators whose schools were duly registered and approved by the State Government. This was done to enable the researcher access easily the respondents for data collection. However, the entire 41 administrators from the public senior secondary schools were studied without sampling. This is because the population of public-school administrators was small and manageable. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled: "School Administrators' Strategies for Implementation of Inclusive Education in Secondary Schools Questionnaire (SASIIESSQ)". The instrument was divided into eight sections. Section A elicited information on the demographic data of respondents while section B contains items which

elicited information on school administrators' awareness on inclusive education. Section C elicited information on the extent stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies would enhance effective implementation of inclusive education, section D elicited information on the extent training and retraining of stakeholders would enhance effective implementation of inclusive education. All the sections in the instrument were designed on a 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE).

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. This was done to determine the relevance and adequacy of the instrument for the study. To determine whether the instrument measures correctly what it ought to measure, the statement of problem, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses alongside the instrument were subjected to close examination by three experts (One from Educational Management and two others in Measurement and Evaluation). The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Method. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. 20 copies of the instrument were administered on school administrators in private secondary schools in Okrika Local Government Area Rivers State who are not part of the study. The responses on seven clusters of questionnaire were analyzed using Cronbach alpha. The reliability of the coefficient obtained were 0.83, 0.77, 0.82, 0.70.

The instrument was directly administered by the researcher with the aid of three (3) research assistants. The research assistants were briefed on the procedure for administration and collection of the instrument from respondents. The instrument was administered on the respondents in their respective schools. The researcher and her research assistants retrieved the completed copies of the questionnaire from respondents on the spot and where this is not possible, they would repeat within seven days for collection and retrieval. All was to ensure that adequate time was given to the respondents to make their inputs. Out of the 41 copies administered to public school administrators, 38 copies (92.7%) were retrieved. Also, 287 copies of questionnaire were distributed to private school administrators, however only 99 copies (34.5%) were retrieved and use for data analysis. This was after numerous efforts by the researcher to reach the private school administrators including going through the Rivers State Branch of the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS); making personal phone calls and one on one engagements; using a google form and sending it to personal emails and also by whatsapp messages to the individuals. In the end the researcher had to proceed with the available information as there was seeming reluctance by some private school proprietors to divulge what they may have considered sensitive business information.

Data collected for the study were analyzed by the researcher using descriptive statistical method. Mean scores and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions. Decisions in respect of the research questions was based on the criterion mean. This implies that items in research questions with mean less than 2.50 were rated "Low Extent" while items with mean greater than or equal to 2.50 were rated "High Extent".

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean Responses on the Extent Stakeholders' Engagement and Advocacy Strategies Enhance Implementation of Inclusive Education

S/ No	Item	Private = 99			Public=38		
		Mean	S.D	Rmk	Mea n	S.D	Rmk
1	Building partnerships with inclusive professionals and non-governmental organization to aid inclusive education implementation	3.17	0.90	HE	3.00	0.89	HE
2	Sharing information on the benefits of inclusive education for parents can enable parent feel comfortable with their child learning with others despite far-reaching discrepancies	3.25	0.97	HE	3.03	1.11	HE
3	Supports and commitment from teachers, parents, and government would enhance inclusive education policy implementation	2.90	0.98	HE	3.03	0.90	HE
4	Town-hall awareness meeting would encourage stakeholders' commitment to the implementation of inclusive education policy	3.03	1.00	HE	3.05	1.26	HE
5	Meetings with educators at the grassroot level would help to drive implementation process of inclusive education	3.37	0.86	HE	3.37	0.81	HE
6	Obtaining students' opinion on inclusive education policy could be resourceful for implementation	2.88	1.06	HE	2.97	1.09	HE
7	Organizing workshops to develop efficient tools for inclusive education policy implementation	3.37	0.84	HE	3.11	1.07	HE
8	Organizing conferences at state and national levels to obtain scholastic views on inclusive education policy implementation	2.92	0.95	HE	3.11	1.10	HE
9	Taking initiative by principals and teachers would enhance implementation process of inclusive education policy	2.92	0.98	HE	2.97	0.99	HE
10	Meetings with parents and other school stakeholders in the school community to initiate inclusive education would enhance implementation	3.19	0.97	HE	2.84	0.93	HE
Grand Mean		3.10			3.05		

S.D-Standard Deviation; HE- High Extent

Table 1 presents the mean responses on the extent stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The data on the table shows that majority of the respondents agreed with the items on the table. This is seen in the mean scores of the items that fall within the range of high extent. Therefore, the grand mean scores of 3.10 and 3.05 for private school and public school administrators respectively indicate that stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools to a high extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does training of stakeholders enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Responses on the Extent Training of Stakeholders Enhance Implementation of Inclusive Education

S/No	Item	Private=99			Public=38		
		Mean	S.D	Rmk	Mean	S.D	Rmk
11	Organizing workshop for teachers on inclusive teaching techniques would enhance implementation of inclusive education policy	3.24	0.85	HE	3.08	1.16	HE
12	Training for policy makers on the implementation techniques of inclusive education policy will enhance implementation process	2.93	1.02	HE	2.50	1.07	HE
13	Training of school administrators and other school management personnel on resource management to address inclusion would aid the implementation of inclusive education policy	3.02	1.09	HE	3.13	0.92	HE
14	Training for Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, and media officers on implementation of inclusive education would aid implementation process	3.07	1.04	HE	3.47	0.79	HE
15	Training teachers on participatory problem-solving method can help in the implementation of inclusive education	3.03	1.04	HE	2.82	1.12	HE
16	Enhancing teachers' ability in teaching diverse learning can aid the implementation of inclusive education	3.03	1.00	HE	3.16	1.06	HE
17	Continuous training of teachers on classroom management skill for addressing educational needs of individual learners would enhance implementation	3.23	1.03	HE	2.61	1.04	HE
18	Training teachers/facilitators on modern communication techniques can aid implementation	2.80	1.08	HE	2.61	1.20	HE

	process of inclusive education policy						
19	Provision of access to relevant materials that can equip teachers/administrators with implementation techniques	3.03	1.06	HE	3.32	0.86	HE
	Grand Mean	3.04			2.97		

S.D-Standard Deviation; HE- High Extent

Table 2 presented the mean responses on the extent training of stakeholders enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. All the mean scores in the table fall within the range of high extent. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed with the items. The grand mean values of 3.04 and 2.97 for private school and public-school administrators respectively indicate that stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies would enhance the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools to a high extent.

Research Question 3: To what extent does accessibility and safety enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean Responses on the Extent Accessibility and Safety Enhance Implementation of Inclusive Education in Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/No	Item	Private = 99			Public = 38		
		Mean	S.D	Rmk	Mean	S.D	Rmk
20	Strengthening protection guidelines at school and community would aid implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.04	1.03	HE	3.16	0.93	HE
21	Providing easy access to first-aid and other relevant health care facilities in the school would enhance implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	2.86	0.93	HE	2.97	0.93	HE
22	Involving parents and school management committee in the provision of school security would facilitate implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.04	0.92	HE	3.18	1.05	HE
23	Creating access to library materials on the implementation techniques of inclusive education policies would ensure implementation of	2.66	1.09	HE	3.18	1.05	HE

Inclusive Education Policy.							
24	Ensuring constant power supply through alternative sources such as solar system would guarantee implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.07	0.98	HE	3.13	1.15	HE
25	Guaranteeing inclusive and accessible recreational and sport facilities would aid implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.15	0.95	HE	2.84	1.11	HE
26	Providing of inclusive and accessible infrastructural facilities in the school such as classrooms, hostels, laboratory, toilets etc would facilitate implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.05	0.99	HE	3.21	0.92	HE
27	Rehabilitating existing classrooms and other school facilities to be accessible by all kinds of learners would ensure implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.36	0.90	HE	2.63	1.09	HE
28	Encouraging all registered schools to accept all school aged children regardless of their peculiarities would help implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.30	0.78	HE	2.87	1.00	HE
29	Enhancing report mechanisms to prevent all sorts of abuse, gender-based violence in the school would guarantee implementation of Inclusive Education Policy.	3.20	0.95	HE	2.68	1.08	HE
Grand Mean		3.07			2.99		
S.D-Standard Deviation; HE- High Extent							

Table 3 shows the mean responses on the extent accessibility and safety would enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. The grand mean scores of 3.07 and 2.99 for private

school and public-school administrators respectively indicate that stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools to a high extent.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from research question revealed that stakeholders' engagement and advocacy strategies enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent. In specific, the study found that at high extent building partnerships with inclusive professionals and non-governmental organization will aid inclusive education implementation; sharing information on the benefits of inclusive education for parents can enable parent feel comfortable with their child learning with others despite far-reaching discrepancies; supports and commitment from teachers, parents, and government would enhance inclusive education policy implementation amongst others. The finding aligns with Aniefiok (2020) who stated in his findings that, school administrators agreed on the stakeholders' engagement, advocacies as some of the administrative strategies that could be adopted by the government and school administrators respectively to enhance inclusive education for national development. Again, in his study there was no significant differences in the mean responses of head- teachers and principals on the administrative strategies that could be adopted by the government as well as school administrators to enhance inclusive education for national development. Okyere (2019) aligns with the findings by concluding in his study that inclusion goes beyond teachers and requires strong commitment of other stakeholders such as families and governments.

Findings from research question two showed that training of stakeholders enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent. The items from table 2 revealed amongst others that; organizing workshop for teachers on inclusive teaching techniques would enhance implementation of inclusive education policy; training for policy makers on the implementation techniques of inclusive education policy will enhance implementation process; training of school administrators and other school management personnel on resource management to address inclusion would aid the implementation of inclusive education policy; training for Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, and media officers on implementation of inclusive education would aid implementation process; training teachers on participatory problem-solving method can help in the implementation of inclusive education. The finding corroborates with Tunde-Awe et al (2019) who observed in their studies that teachers' professional training influenced their formation of positive attitudes towards inclusion. Also, Mwangi and Orodho (2014) posited that a major hindrance to implementation of inclusive education is inadequate specialized teachers to handle the special needs education curriculum. This explicitly intensifies the need for the training and retraining of teachers to enable them fit into the inclusive education system.

The result obtained from research question three of this study established that accessibility and safety enhance the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent. From table 3 the analysis showed that; strengthening protection guidelines at school and community; providing easy access to first-aid and other relevant health care facilities in the school; involving parents and school management committee in the provision of school security; creating access to library materials on the implementation techniques of inclusive education policies; ensuring constant power supply through alternative sources such as

solar system; guaranteeing inclusive and accessible recreational and sport facilities. The finding is related to Agarwal and Chakravarti, (2014) implementation of inclusive education would require modifying school strategies and the school environment to adapt to the diversity of students. It is by this modification that variety of students would be motivated to enroll in an inclusive school. Also Njoka et al (2012) who stated that ensuring the safety and accessibility of students is essential in an inclusive environment whereby variety of learners would struggle for their survival in a competitive environment.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that majority of the principals in public and private secondary schools are aware of inclusive education and its possibilities in secondary school's education in Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Stakeholders' engagement and advocacy, training of stakeholders and accessibility and safety are the strategies to enhance implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State at high extent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were:

1. School principals should sensitize school stakeholders especially parents on the necessity of implementing inclusive education projecting its benefits to the academic and social development of the students. This will help to encourage parents to fully support the idea of inclusive education in secondary schools.
2. Government and School proprietors should fund training programmes for teachers in secondary schools. This will equip them for the challenges that are associated with inclusive classroom.
3. Government and School proprietors should make accessibility and safety means available in all schools to accommodate variety of disabilities. This will help create an inclusive learning environment for gifted students, disabled students and others.

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