

Staff Management in the Assessment of Inclusive Education in Private Secondary Schools, Rivers State.

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Abstract

This study investigated Staff Management in the Assessment of inclusive education in private secondary school, Rivers State. Two objectives and two research questions were used. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study consisted of all the 140 staff (53 male and 87 female staff) of the four (4) inclusive education centres in Rivers State. The sample size consisted of 140 respondents (53 male and 87 female staff); representing 100% of the population. Census sampling techniques were adopted. The instrument for data collection was 20-item questionnaire titled: ‘The instrument is a self-structured titled “Staff Management for Assessment of Inclusive Education Questionnaire (SMAIEQ)”. on 4-point modified Likert rating scale. The reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. Data obtained was analyzed using the mean (\bar{X}) and Z-test. Specifically, the mean (\bar{X}) was used to answer the research questions while the Z-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance the management. Findings shows that staff management techniques and solutions to challenges enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent while it was recommended that Rivers State Government should provide policy focus on the project of inclusive education, private owned secondary schools should embark on school improvement programme by providing the platform for promoting inclusive practices at school levels through systematic head teacher and teacher support programmes by way of workshop organizations, and staff should be trained in basic knowledge and skills that will enable them perform essential special education leadership tasks.

Keywords: Staff, management, assessment, inclusive, education.

Introduction

Administratively, there are interacting personalities whose aim and objectives are to ensure the actualization of organizational goals, inclusive education staff play significant roles in promoting and ensuring quality inclusive assessment and feedback; that is, without quality staff for thorough coordination, there would be disorder and misuse of the structures thus leading to the failure of the goals of secondary education. Staff are performing a fundamental obligation in the realization and development of any country by providing standard education

to the next generation. In all, FRN (2013) maintains that the achievement of educational goals and objectives cannot be accomplished without the staff, made up of teachers, and non-teaching staff. This indicates that every educational system at every level depends heavily on staff for the execution of its programmes. However, in every organization, there are interacting personalities whose aim and objectives are to ensure the actualization of organizational goals. Therefore, there must be an effective coordination, monitoring and supervision of all units on the activities of the overall system. Oluwuo and Uche (2014) reaffirmed that programmes must be initiated, developed, implemented and assessed by the personnel; hence the activities must be performed by individuals who have an aspiration and wish to actualize it through the organization. The teaching and non-teaching staff in different inclusive educations (IEC) centre plays a vital role in the school environment, as they uphold the organizational ethics by performing their assigned task effectively.

Staff management can be defined as a process of managing subordinates in an institution in such a way that the goals of the institution are achieved through the staff (Chima, 2019). It is the procedure through which one or more individuals coordinate the activities of others to obtain results that ordinarily cannot be actualized by a particular person alone (Koko, 2018).

Nkwoh (2011) reviewed that quality education assessment on the other hand provides staff with the needed knowledge, feedback, skills, attitudes and creativity for problem solving in the institution. Hence, changes in the secondary education can only be achieved with the help of staff assessment hence the principals have to come up with strategies for managing the changes as a result of the assessment. On his premise the principals' capabilities are not usually innate in fact good principals are made not only born because their expertise and knowledge have to be constantly refined and redefined overtime due to changes in education policy as well as managerial skills (technical, human and conceptual). Also, Richardson (2013) observed that either in private or public secondary schools, male or female principal, all principal engages in the functions of educational assessment such as planning, organizing, directing, controlling, coordinating and motivating that makes the school effective. The principalship which is an integral office of the principal of secondary schools, is a systematic process of acquiring, motivating, developing and controlling of human resources in any given education system to achieve set educational goals, failure to these administrative elements will be a mirage.

Assessment is not done by the teacher alone, it is equally used for monitoring quality, standard administration, selection of staff, diagnosis and proper decision making, there are other types of assessment that can determine provisions and support allocation, as well as learners' placement. When comparing results of inclusive education (IE), according to (Watkins, 2007 cited in Weingrat & Weldon, 2015), we may look at:

- a) Why learners are assessed?
- b) What is the assessment information used for?
- c) How is the assessment done?
- d) What are the results compared against?

In the words of Palmer (2017), assessment in an IE could take the form of formative or summative. Formative assessment approach is the type of assessment that helps the teacher to plan the next step for the individual learners hence, its non-comparative for its aim is to

inform the teaching and learning process. Summative assessment deals with comparing individual academic activities over a period of time. It is the type of assessment that helps individual learners to rate themselves in the classroom accordingly, hence, it is used to compare present and past performances among peers in order to provide the needful information on learners' grade or the level of performance after writing examination at the end of the term, it could be WAEC or NECO, or at the end of the academic session, such that will aid educational administrators, policy makers, principals, teachers, parents, students and the society at large on vital decisions concerning educational experiences and the future expectations. Inclusive education is an education system that gives learning opportunities to all children in the same classroom and in the same school environment. It is the most effective way of giving all children a fair chance to go to school, learn and develop the skills they need to thrive. Inclusive Education is the real learning opportunity for people who have been traditionally excluded from school to grow side by side with people from other backgrounds (Sambo & Gambo, 2016).

Inclusive education is oriented for the old and young people, parents, teachers, and the society at large. Omede (2016) established that staff at one point or the other may exhibit different behavioural traits that makes management very tasking, however policy makers, educational administrators and managers, must possess some managerial skills to enable them take charge as to lead effectively in order not to create a lacuna, hence leadership that supports followership is pertinent to solving organizational problems. The teacher as an indispensable personality in the classroom determines the outcome of every educational system be it in the regular classroom, formal, non-formal or informal classroom. Inclusive education (IE) is an educational process that welcomes the achievement of education for all the citizens irrespective of their sex, race and any other factor that may hinder the child's entitlement to education (Sambo & Gambo, 2016). It provides all children of the same age with access to learning facilities and choices for the actualization of educational goals, since they are valued equally and thus deserves equal educational opportunities, it is education for all.

Article 26(1) of Universal Declaration of Human Right emphasized on the education right of every child, and maintained that "no child should be left out" including the internally displaced people (Onyeike in Wenenda & Okeke, 2018). The national centre on universal design for learning provides instructional materials that works for all learners as they learn, remember, perform and understand in different ways. Inclusive education gives room for trained and specialized teachers to work in the same environment as it benefits all students. Omede (2016) averred that inclusive education needs tactful teachers and assistants with special training to meet with the needs of every learner, buttressing that teachers with such training works in mainstream schools in the United Kingdom with the aim of helping learners with one particular impairment or the other such as blindness, deafness, speech and language impairment etc. Ivancevich, Konopaske and Matteson (2017) reveal that the United States of America, Britain, Salamanca, Spain, Ghana, Uganda, Gambia, Kenya, Serrielo, Nigeria among other countries accepted and welcomed the integration of IE maintaining that schools should accommodate all children in the educational policy despite the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistics or any other condition including students without any form

of disability in an inclusive centre, disabled learners are categorized by the National Policy on Education 2013 as listed below:

1. visually impaired (blind and partially sighted)
2. hearing impaired (deaf and partially hearing)
3. physical and health impaired (deformed limbs asthmatic)
4. mentally retarded (educable, trainable, bedridden)
5. emotionally disturbed (hyperactive, hypoactive, the socially maladjusted behavior disorder)
6. speech impaired (stammers, stutters)
7. learning disabled (Having psychological/ neurological educational phobia or challenge)
8. multiple disabilities
9. the gifted and talented and
10. the albinos (vision and skin problems, lack of self-esteem, myths about albinism, stigmatization and stereotype)

However, in Rivers State where this study is carried out, the only school for the disabled or handicapped owned by the State government is the "Special School for the Handicapped" situated in Creek Road Town area of Port Harcourt which was established by the state government in 1985 as a primary school, but has gradually grown to have a secondary section although, observations, interviews and trips by the researchers have established that they have inadequate facilities such as assistant listening device ALDs, in fared system, FM systems etc.

In 1986, Sancta Maria Nursery and Primary School for the disabled was established by the Catholic mission, the Diocese of Port Harcourt. Other Non-governmental organizations and individuals with great love, care and passion for the handicapped have opened inclusive education centres in the state with the sole intention to advocate, identify, develop persons with special needs, the centres according to Wenenda and Okeke (2018), includes,

1. Christie Toby Inclusive Education Centre located in Iriebe, along Oyibo Road Port Harcourt
2. Otana Inclusive Centre for regular and special needs located at NDDC Road Alakahia, Off East West Road Port Harcourt
3. Olive Tree Inclusive Centre, Off NTA Road Mgbouba Port Harcourt and
4. Hanmed Inclusive Centre Port Harcourt, Igwuruta off Airport Road.

Assessment of inclusive education in the mentioned centres cannot be actualized without the staff, staff in the school environment are, the security, drivers, gardeners, teachers, nurses, doctors, principals who are used to actualize the school goals, Amaikievi (2018). Assessment is a concept that explains how learners demonstrate mastery of that which they have learnt. It describes the methodology adopted by the teacher to take decisions on the level of achievement or performances of her learner based on the class activity (Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education has been neglected for too long in the third world countries especially in Nigeria where we have a high number of exclusive forms of educating special need children which should be discouraged. Inclusive education has not been successfully implemented because there are still barriers that are detrimental to the successful implementation of inclusive education at all levels of education in Nigeria. Children with disabilities are often robbed of the right to learn and sometimes are denied the chance to participate in community workforce and decisions that affect them. There is a high level of discrimination, stigma and routine failure of decision makers to incorporate disability in school services.

Inclusive education is designed to meet the needs of every child that the regular classroom setting could not meet; it is demonstrated to provide education for all, according to EFA goals. In Rivers State, Amakievi (2013) revealed that the State government does not have passion for the disabled; hence they are in alliance with other States who accepted inclusive in the school curriculum but up till now, is unable to own or establish, not even an inclusive education centre in the State, since its introduction. However, private individuals and non-governmental organizations with the love and passion for inclusive education (IE) have demonstrated the duty of care since they accepted the need for inclusive centres and as well opened and implemented the centres in suburbs of Rivers State. The researchers are bothered and want to find out whether there is adequate staff management to ensure that IE is embraced and assessed as directed in the state. This is the problem the researchers want to unravel.

Aim/ Objectives of the Study

The aims and objectives of the study are:

1. To find out staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Find out challenges to staff management for assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research Questions;

1. What are the staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What are the staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels;

1. There is no significant difference between the male and female staff on management technique for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female staff on management challenges for assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research survey design. The population of the study consisted of all the 140 staff (53 male and 87 female staff) of the four (4) inclusive education centres in Rivers State. The sample size consisted of 140 respondents (53 male and 87 female staff); representing 100% of the population. The study adopted a census sampling technique. The instrument is a self-structured titled “Staff Management for Assessment of Inclusive Education Questionnaire (SMAIEQ)”. The instrument were structured on a validated modified four-point rating scale response options of: Very High Extent (VHE) = 4 Points, High Extent (HE) = 3 Points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 Points, Very Low Extent (VLE) =1 Point. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the researcher adopted a pilot study of 15 respondents (6 male and 9 female staff, not part of the sample size). The reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. Data obtained was analyzed using the mean (\bar{X}) and Z-test. Specifically, the mean (\bar{X}) was used to answer the research questions while the Z-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Results

Analysis of Data and Results/ Hypotheses Testing

Research Question 1: What are the staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean for staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education

S/N	Statements	Male (N=53)			Female (N=87)		
		M	S.D.	RMK	M	S.D.	RMK
1.	Staff management on educational current practices	3.42	0.49	HE	3.50	0.50	HE
2.	Leadership team	3.56	0.50	HE	3.42	0.49	HE
3.	Staff action planning	3.69	0.46	HE	3.46	0.50	HE
4.	Implementation of educational tasks	3.52	0.50	HE	3.27	0.65	HE
5.	Unprofessional development	1.43	0.50	LE	1.46	0.50	LE
6.	Family engagement	3.40	0.49	HE	3.31	0.72	HE
7.	Implementation measures	3.46	0.50	HE	3.35	0.48	HE
8.	Monitoring implementation	3.32	0.47	HE	3.58	0.49	HE
9.	Revision	3.53	0.50	HE	3.50	0.50	HE
10.	Management meetings negligence	1.42	0.49	LE	1.49	0.50	LE
Grand Mean		3.07	0.49	HE	3.03	0.53	HE
Mean cut-off mark		2.50					

Field data 2023 (HE=High Extent; LE=Low Extent).

Result from Table 1 shows the mean responses of male and female staff regarding staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State. As shown, the grand mean response for male staff is 3.07 while that of female is 3.03. This result shows that male and female staff regarding staff management techniques for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State is to a high extent.

Research Question 2: What are the staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean for staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education

S/N	Statements	Male (N=53)			Female (N=87)		
		M	S.D.	RMK	M	S.D.	RMK
11.	Lack of adequate guidance services for special needs children and their parents	3.51	0.50	HE	3.51	0.50	HE
12.	Lack of policy focus and implementation	3.48	0.50	HE	3.48	0.50	HE
13.	Lack of specially trained teachers to teach special needs children	3.53	0.50	HE	3.13	0.70	HE
14.	Transition of special needs of children to unfit regular schools	1.60	0.66	LE	1.58	0.49	LE
15.	Lack of innovative management for inclusive education in secondary schools of Nigeria	3.60	0.49	HE	3.62	0.49	HE
16.	Lack of support for special needs children	3.33	0.47	HE	3.54	0.50	HE
17.	School facilities and infrastructures for students with special needs	3.39	0.49	HE	3.46	0.50	HE
18.	Funding of disability education	3.50	0.50	HE	3.47	0.50	HE
19.	Staff management issues	3.42	0.49	HE	3.47	0.50	HE
20.	Poor attitudes and misinformation about disability	3.55	0.50	HE	3.56	0.50	HE
Grand Mean		3.29	0.51	HE	3.28	0.52	HE
Mean cut-off mark		2.50					

Field data 2023 (HE=High Extent; LE=Low Extent).

Result from Table 2 shows the mean responses of male and female staff regarding staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State. As shown, the grand mean response for male staff is 3.29 while that of female is 3.28. This result shows that male and female staff regarding staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the male and female staff on management technique for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-Test for management technique for the assessment of inclusive education

Groups	n	M	S.D.	A	DF	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Male	53	3.07	0.49	0.05	138	0.96	1.96	Not Rejected
Female	87	3.03	0.53					

Field data 2023

Result from Table 3 shows the Z-test analysis for the hypothesis, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female staff regarding the extent management technique enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State. From the data in Table 3 above, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 138 Degree of Freedom. The result further shows a calculated Z-test value of 0.96 while the critical value of Z is 1.96. Since the calculated value of Z is greater than the critical value of Z, hence the null hypothesis is 'Not Rejected'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the opinion of male and female staff regarding the extent to which management technique enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female staff on management challenges for assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-Test for management challenges for assessment of inclusive education

Groups	n	M	S.D.	A	DF	Z-cal	Z-crit	Decision
Male	53	3.29	0.51	0.05	138	0.24	1.96	Not rejected
Female	87	3.28	0.52					

Field data 2023

Result from Table 4 shows the Z-test analysis for the hypothesis, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female staff regarding the extent management challenges enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State. From the data in Table 4 above, it can be observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 138 Degree of Freedom. The result further shows a calculated Z-test value of 0.24 while the critical value of Z is 1.96. Since the calculated value of Z is greater

than the critical value of Z, the null hypothesis is 'Not Rejected'. This implies that there is no significant difference in the opinion of male and female staff regarding the extent to which management challenges enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Staff Management Techniques for the Assessment of Inclusive Education

This result shows that male and female staff management techniques enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent. The study further examined staff management on educational current practices, leadership team, staff action planning, implementation of educational tasks, family engagement, implementation measures, monitoring implementation, and revision. However, on the negative note, unprofessional development, and management meetings negligence towards staff management techniques that negates assessment of inclusive education. Hypothetically, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female staff regarding the extent management techniques enhances assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Ogbonnaya (2020) further submitss that staff management with adequate techniques ready for implementation enhance assessment of inclusive education

Staff Management Challenges for the Assessment of Inclusive Education

This result further shows that male and female staff regarding staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State to a high extent regarding lack of adequate guidance services for special needs children and their parents, lack of policy focus and implementation, lack of specially trained teachers to teach special needs children, transition of special needs of children to unfit regular schools, lack of innovative management for inclusive education in secondary schools, lack of support for special needs children, school facilities and infrastructures for students with special needs, funding of disability education, staff management issues, and poor attitudes and misinformation about disability. Also; hypothetically, there is no significant difference in the opinion of male and female staff regarding the extent to which management challenges enhance assessment of inclusive education in private secondary schools in Rivers State.

However, staff management challenges for the assessment of inclusive education are numerous to mention that attended to by both the private and public section, all disadvantages learners can have a fair atmosphere regarding learning (Dyson & Gallannaugh, 2018).

Conclusion

From the findings, the researchers conclude that while Rivers State has made no concerted efforts in a bid to achieve inclusive education at the secondary education levels, there is still much more that could be done in the private owned secondary schools. This conclusion is reached after assessing the level of inclusion in private owned secondary schools on a holistic level and comparing practical efforts of the government at ensuring that education is inclusive and accessible to all, especially the females and the elimination of all differential treatment in the classroom. Inclusive educational practices demand that everyone, irrespective of distinctive characteristics, is appreciated and allowed to participate in

available educational opportunities. The school is a microcosm of society and the inclusiveness of a society where true appreciation is practiced can only be tested and fine-tuned in the school. As an educationist, one should constantly evaluate performance. Hence, assessing inclusive educational practice should take into account the input of the government in terms of policy legislation, adaptation in structure and curriculum and practical implementation in the classroom, if significant improvement is expected.

Recommendations

1. Rivers State Government should provide policy focus on the project of inclusive education. They should present policy focus especially in the area of classification of criteria for personnel training and co-ordination of its special education unit to create awareness and direct inclusive education efforts towards goals achievement and most especially be an archetypal.
2. Private owned secondary schools should embark on school improvement programme by providing the platform for promoting inclusive practices at school levels through systematic head teacher and teacher support programmes by way of workshop organizations.
3. Staff should be trained in basic knowledge and skills that will enable them perform essential special education leadership tasks. Novice administrators should not be assigned inclusive education schools as their primary responsibilities.
4. Private owned secondary schools should set up model inclusion education schools as experimental centres for eventual take off of systematic inclusive education policy.

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