

# MANAGEMENT OF ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

A BOOK IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR BALA ZAKARI

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## CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

### INCLUSION IN EDUCATION: A CASE FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY FOR THE CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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#### **Introduction**

Education was recognized as a human right in 1948. In 1960, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education stated what governments must do to prevent inequality in education access in its (Article 1). It emphasises that all children as well as learners should have unrestricted access to quality basic education but without reference to children with disability. The 1990 World Conference on Education for all again declared the year 1990 to 2000 as the period of Education for All. Despite the various declaration, no dedicated effort was put in place to support children with disabilities. The year 1994, witnessed a turning point in the education of people with disabilities when a pronouncement at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain, made a strong and clear case for inclusive education: 'Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, albeit with the provision 'unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise (UNESCO and Spain Ministry of Education and Science, 1994, Art. 2 and 3). The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) guaranteed the right to inclusive education. Article 24, is aiming to realize the right to education of people with disabilities without discrimination and based on equal opportunity committed countries to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning. The first paragraph Article captured its spirit "Inclusive education would ensure the development of the 'sense of dignity and self-worth of people with disabilities and of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential' to enable them to 'participate effectively in a free society. The second paragraph continues by including access to education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live' and 'support required within the general education system' (United Nations, 2006). The 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report called for inclusive education and states "it has been more crucial to make education a universal right, and a reality for all our rapidly changing world faces constant major challenges from technological disruption to climate change, the conflict that forced movement of people, intolerance and hate which further widen inequalities and exert an impact for decades to come. It went further to add that the Covid-19 pandemic has further exposed and deepened these inequalities and the fragility of our societies. This, therefore, make it mandatory for the educational system to open its doors wide to accommodate the various categories of children that are excluded due to reasons, not of their own but those of where they come from, colour disability, culture, race, religion or reasons of being an orphan. The only way to achieve this is through inclusive education.

#### **Inclusive Education: Concept, Forms, Reasons and Benefits**

A form of education known as inclusive education allows all students, regardless of their physical or cognitive limitations, to receive instruction in the same learning environment. In contrast to the conventional segregated method of educating children with disabilities, inclusive education entails adapting standard school procedures to meet the requirements of

disabled students (Obi & Ashi, 2016). By fully integrating students with and without special needs into the same classrooms and schools, inclusive education exposes both groups of students to the same opportunities (Sambo & Gambo 2015). An impetus to the position of the Global Education Monitoring Report came from the strong call by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on their General Comment No. 4 on Article 24 in 2016, following a two-year process involving submissions from countries, non-government organizations (NGOs), organizations for people with disabilities, academics and disability advocates as they defined

"A process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers with a vision serving to provide all students of the relevant age range with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their requirements and preferences. Placing students with disabilities within mainstream classes without accompanying structural changes to, for example, organisation, curriculum and teaching and learning strategies do not constitute inclusion. Furthermore, integration does not automatically guarantee the transition from segregation to inclusion" CRPD (2016). Strengthening this position, the Global report further states Inclusion in education refers to all students being able to access and gain equal opportunities for education and learning. Global Education Monitory Report 2020 reminded us that "inclusion may constitute an issue on its own. As indices of exclusion are much more than disabilities, the exclusion does not only exclude people with disability but exclusion could also be on account of age, religion, ethnicity, poverty, colour, language, migration, location, sex, gender, beliefs and attitudes. It is from this perspective that inclusion in education could be described as a process contributing to the achievement of the goal of social inclusion. It is a process that embraces diversity and builds a sense of belonging rooted in the belief that every person has value and potential, and should be respected, regardless of their background, ability or identity. In a simple form Inclusion in Education is the foundation of Education for All. Inclusive Education (IE) is a new approach towards educating children with disability and learning difficulties with that normal one within the same roof. It brings all students together in one classroom and community, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, and seeks to maximize the potential of all students. It is one of the most effective ways in which to promote an inclusive and tolerant society. It is known that 73 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2010, down from a high of over 110 million out-of-school children in the mid-1990s, according to new estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

This policy and decisions should embody the principles of dialogue, participation and openness, bringing all stakeholders together to resolve emerging tensions and dilemmas. This is the more reason why the Committee on the Right of Children with Special Needs described the right to inclusive education as encompassing. Meaning that it is the transformation in culture, policy and practice in all formal and informal educational environments to accommodate the differing requirements and identities of individual students, together with a commitment to remove the barriers that impede that possibility. It involves strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students, especially those who, for different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized. Inclusion involves access to and progress in high-quality formal, non-formal and informal education without discrimination.

It seeks to enable communities, systems and structures to combat discrimination, including harmful stereotypes, recognize diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all by focusing on the well-being and success of learners with disabilities. It requires an in-depth transformation of education systems in legislation, policy, and the mechanisms for financing administration, design, delivery and monitoring of education. (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016).

### **Forms of Inclusion**

Begum (2007) identifies three forms of inclusion as follows:

- **Physical inclusion:** This form of inclusion has received consistent promotion and support from the government. In this case, all policies and regulations are made toward the realization of free and compulsory education for all children. Thus, no institution can deny admission to a child with any form of physical disability.
- **Cognitive inclusion:** This is the process in which educational institutions allowed children with special educational needs to study in general classrooms with their non-disabled colleagues. This process gives all children equal opportunity to learn, understand, and respond to questions at appropriate times and in the manner in the course of teaching and learning process in the class.
- **Social inclusion:** This form of inclusion generally occurred in our day-to-day activities in society. It involves the general acceptance of a person with physical and cognitive disabilities in the socio-economic strata of society. This gradual acceptance by the public was achieved through the help of the mass media, government policies, and educating the populace which brings about attitudinal changes in society.

### **Reasons and Benefits for Inclusive Education**

Inclusive Education is essential because, careful planning and provision of inclusive education can deliver improvement in academic achievement, social and emotional development, self-esteem and peer acceptance. Main-streaming allows diverse learners in classrooms and schools can prevent stigma, stereotyping, discrimination and alienation. The reformation of curricula to suit the needs of children with special needs will make the school environment more conducive to learners. It is the foundation of an education system of good quality that enables every child, youth and adult to learn and fulfil their potential. Gender, age, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, indignity, language, religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, incarceration, beliefs and attitudes should not be the basis for discrimination against anyone in education participation and experience. Inclusive education is to see learner diversity not as a problem but as an opportunity. Education systems need to be responsive to all learners' needs.

Inclusive education is beneficial to children with special needs, this is because communication with peers helps them improve their social, emotional, cognitive, motor, and verbal skills; the practical mastery of knowledge and skills; concentrate on the child's learning process strengths and talents and involvement in society and building positive relationships with other kids. For other children, inclusive education helps in the development of a tolerant mindset and a perceptual readiness for others with various traits; building and keeping cordial relationships with those who are different from them; collaborating socially with those who are different from them and the creation of an unconventional strategy and inventiveness to arrive at a shared outcome. A better comprehension of the unique traits of

children for teachers by becoming proficient in a variety of instructional methods for efficient work that takes into account individuals; using children's perspective to develop a comprehensive image and a better knowledge of many situations and using children's perspective to develop a comprehensive image and a better knowledge of many situations.

Inclusion has academic and social benefits for all students, whether with or without disabilities, such as increased communication and social interaction opportunities, age-appropriate models of behaviour skills, more active participation in the school community, individualized education goals, as well as access to rich core curriculum (Salend, 2005). Inclusion acknowledges that all students are learners who benefit from engaging, appropriate, and challenging curricula as well as diversified teaching strategies that take into account their individual needs and strengths (GEMR, 2020)

### **Nigeria's Efforts on Inclusion in Education**

To ensure inclusive education in Nigeria, the Nigerian government ratified the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Nigerian government, in 2015, adopted the National Policy on Special Needs Education. Also, the Child Rights Act outlines that every child has the right to free, compulsory and basic education. To achieve the objectives of the Child Rights Act laws in the country, in January 2019, Nigeria signed into law the prohibition of discrimination against persons with disabilities bill (source?). The law provides that a person with a disability shall have an unfettered right to education without discrimination or segregation in any form. The law also stipulates that all public educational establishments shall be run to be inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities. Basic education schools in Nigeria are one of the educational institutions Nigeria designed for the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria.

Foundation for the right to education starts with an umbrella agency on basic education which is the Universal Basic Education Commission. The UBE 2004 Act puts the responsibility of implementing basic education on the agency. Other agencies include the Nomadic Education Commission and the Mass Education Commission. A review of the different agencies revealed the fact that a sure way to establish what has been put in place in form of policy, funding and delivery of inclusive education is located in the Basic Education Commission. Through it, it goes to the states and local government areas. It is for these reasons, existing documents emanating from the Agency were examined. Based on this, further recommendations were made to bring about an improved delivery process with a view to strengthening inclusive education in the country.

### **Current Practice of Inclusive Education**

The record of performance of the Department of Social Mobilisation revealed the followings; (UBEC annual report, 2019, 2020 & 2021).

Conduct yearly needs assessment activities to ensure proper planning in the implementation of special needs education programmes.

Advise the commission on the provision of appropriate instructional assistive technologies, instructional facilities and equipment for the effective implementation of special needs education programmes.

Collaborate with the relevant departments and agencies on the development of framework and training of State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) in the implementation of Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE).

Implementation of policy direction and activities that are geared towards inclusiveness and acquisition of practical entrepreneurial skills in the basic education sub-sector.

Advise the commission on how to solicit support from International Development partners and philanthropists for the implementation of special needs education, ECCDE programmes as well as vocational-technical and second chance education among others. The department over the years has carried out the following programmes and activities.

Conduct monitoring of special needs education intervention for both private and public providers nationwide.

Collation of data and reports from 36 states and FCT on Special Needs Education Intervention for both public and private providers

### **Development of instruments for Data collection**

Monitoring the level of utilization of resources disbursed to all providers nationwide

Conduct data collection on Needs Assessment and situation analysis on Special Needs Education Intervention

Engagement of stakeholders in the development of a roadmap for special needs education nationwide.

Meeting with experts for the selection of prioritized assistive technologies for special education The Commission through its Finance Department has disbursed funds to States and Private Non-Governmental Organisation implementing Special Education Programmes (UBEC Annual Reports 2016-2018)

The period covering the 2016 to 2018 operational years witnessed the disbursement of N1,474,546,362.93 Special Education funds to 21 States and to duly registered Non-Governmental Organizational (NGOs) that provide free special education to the public as follows.

This is domicile in the Department of social mobilization.

S/N	STATE	PERIOD	AMOUNT
1	Abia	2016 and 2017 Special Education Fund	54,909,076.18
2	Akwa Ibom	2017 and 2018 Special Education Fund	67,128,415.00
3	Anambra	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
4	Bayelsa	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
5	Cross-River	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
6	Delta	2016,2017 and 2018 Special Education Fund	91,363,990.68
7	Ebonyi	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
8	Ekiti	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
9	Enugu	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
10	Jigawa	2017 and 2018 Special Education Fund	67,128,415.00
11	Kaduna	2017 and 2018 Special Education Fund	67,128,415.00
12	Kogi	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
13	Kwara	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
14	Lagos	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
15	Niger	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
16	Osun	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
17	Plateau	2018 Special Education Fund	67,128,415.00

18	Rivers	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
19	Sokoto	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
20	Taraba	2016,2017 and 2018 Special Education Fund	91,363,990.68
21	Yobe	2018 Special Education Fund	36,727,914.50
	NGOs	2018 other payments to private providers of Special Education	454,204,842.39
TOTAL			1,474,546,362.93

Source: UBEC Annual Report 2016-2018

1. Inclusive education helps disabled children to develop a sense of pride in their work because
2. they fill like they accomplished something. We know that Albert Einstein was learning
3. disabled but still managed to become the greatest mind of the 20th century. Educating children
4. with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers is considered one of the better ways to
5. provide education to the population in Nigeria. The Government of Nigeria needs to bridge the gaps in its education system to build a strong system of inclusive education in the country. The above showed that much has been done in the provision of services to children with special needs but more could be put in place to bring about quality basic education. It is for these reasons that the following areas of policy, implementation and service delivery could be addressed. Such areas include data gathering, teacher preparation both pre and in-service, and provision of teaching assistants and relevant equipment that will make teaching and learning meaningful and interesting.

For access and inclusion in basic education, the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has set in motion its plans to accommodate 189,071 children with special needs captured during the 2018 UBE National Personnel Audit Exercise. This was as reported by the Executive Secretary of the Commission Dr Hammid Bobboyyi (This Day Nov 29 2022) He stated that a framework would re-direct the implementation of basic education to meet up with international education competitiveness that would make Nigeria and Nigerian children equal among peers. He added that thereafter, teacher training on the utilisation of the framework and assistive technologies as well as other activities will follow.

### **Challenges of Inclusive Education in Nigeria**

It is important to discuss the various challenges facing inclusive education in Basic education in Nigeria. The following are the challenges affecting inclusive education in Nigeria

**Inadequate Funding:** The growth of inclusive education in Basic Education schools is being hampered by Nigeria's inadequate funding of education. It is very expensive to provide inclusive education because it includes both children with special needs and those without them in the same learning environment and infrastructure, and the inclusive education system is particularly comprehensive. To offer instructional resources for the two student populations at the schools, significant financial investment is needed. Second, materials for teaching students with special needs are highly expensive. This assertion is supported by Ogunode, Jegede, and Solomon (2021), who said that a major obstacle to the efficient management of

special needs education programs in Nigeria, particularly in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), is insufficient finance.

**Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities:** Many public Basic schools in Nigeria do not have facilities that support inclusive education at the Basic education level. Majorities of the school plants were built without factoring in the special needs learners and Basic schools with such facilities are few and not in rural areas where we have more special needs learners. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) observed that inadequate infrastructural facility is a very big challenge facing the administration of special needs education in Nigeria. There are inadequate facilities in the special education schools and even the inclusive schools. The specialized facilities designed for teaching and learning in the special need education programme are in short supply in most Basic schools. The Basic schools lack basic facilities such as special Needs laboratories, clinics, and resource centres within the various existing centres/schools with the provision of virtual learning resources, hyperlinks, and computer networks. The lack of facilities and materials has been one barrier to special needs education in Nigeria. The lack of support services poses a barrier to the enrolment and education of persons with special needs. Evidence suggests clearly that most students with special needs cannot enrol in special or regular schools in the country, as they may not receive support services to assist them in the schools (Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon, 2021).

**Poor Implementation of Special Needs Education Policies:** There are many policies and programmes formulated and passed into law for the development of inclusive education in Basic education in Nigeria. The poor implementation of these policies is affecting the development of inclusive education in Nigerian Basic schools. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) state that poor implementation of special needs education policies is another big challenge facing the administration of the special needs education programme in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Policies designed for implementing special needs education programs have not been implemented in the various states across the federation. Rufus, Jummai, Suraju & Eucharia (2014) observe that Article 3, Salamanca Framework for Action (1994) advocates that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and linguistic conditions.

**Inadequate Instructional Materials:** Special needs learners need special instructional materials in Basic schools to learn better and be in school. Special needs learners need to be handled especially with their learning facilities for them to learn and meet up with others in the schools. Unfortunately, many Basic schools today do not have those instructional resources for inclusive education to be possible in schools. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) conclude that inadequate instructional material is a major problem affecting the administration of special needs education programs in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The special needs schools and public Basic schools lack adequate instructional materials to deploy for teaching and teaching in the respective schools. Many teachers and students do not have adequate instructional materials and aids to support teaching and learning in the school. The shortage of this material is affecting the administration of the special needs program in the Federal Capital Territory. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) and Rufus, Jummai, Suraju & Eucharia (2014) submit that hearing and vision aids, electronically adapted mobility devices, are continuing to serve as barriers to providing equal access to education for persons with special needs, and the facilities and equipment needed for vocational and recreational education are inadequate or in-existent. There are slow efforts by federal and state governments to gain the equipment, materials, and

learning aids and in some states, governments differ somehow in the help given to persons with special needs (Rufus, Jummai, Suraju & Eucharia, 2014).

**Institutional Corruption:** Another problem that is affecting inclusive education in Basic schools is the high rate of corruption. Funds released for the acquisition of human and material resources for the implementation of inclusive education are diverted and looted by some officials within the educational administration. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) observed that institutional corruption is another problem facing the administration of education in Nigeria. Corruption has penetrated educational institutions. Allocation meant for the provision of educational services like planning, supervision, quality assurance, and procurement of infrastructural facilities are mismanaged and misappropriated by some officials and political officeholders.

**Lack of Data:** The lack of accurate and current data on special needs learners across the various form of education in Nigeria is affecting the development of inclusive education in Basic education. Data is needed to plan for facilities, teachers, and funding. Ogunode & Abashi (2020) and Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) point out that the lack of data to plan and take the decision is a major problem facing the administration of the special need education program in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory. There is no data on the actual number of people with special needs that needs educational services in every form of the educational system. There are no data on special needs enrolment and teachers' needs. The inability to access quality and reliable data is affecting the administration of the Special Needs Program in the Federal Capital Territory and Nigeria. (Noun, 2005) observes that data collection is an important variable of consideration while setting targets. It is based on the data that any target can be quantitatively set. However, without data, a realistic target cannot be set. While gathering data, there is a need to ensure that the mode of collecting such data is to a great extent reliable and consistent with the set target. Invariably, the reliability and validity of data must be taken into consideration as much as targets are being set. Ogunode (2021) submits that the lack of educational data for educational planners constitutes a very big problem for effective educational planning in Nigeria.

**Insecurity Problem:** Insecurity in Nigeria especially in the Northeast and Southeast geo-political zone of Nigeria is affecting the development of inclusive education in Nigeria. Many Basic schools in the country are affected by insecurity. Ogunode and Ahaotu (2021) and Ogunode, Ahaotu and Obi (2021) posit that students, teachers, and school administrators are afraid of going to school because of insecurity. Many girls have been kidnapped, and killed, teachers killed, and school infrastructural facilities destroyed by the insurgencies in the states (Ogunode, Ohibime, Nasir and Gregory, 2021). There is no meaningful educational policy, programme or plan that can be implemented in a state of insecurity. UNICEF (2017) submitted that the insurgency in northeastern Nigeria has been especially damaging to the education system. Since 2011, about 19,000 teachers have been displaced and 1,200 schools have been damaged or destroyed. Approximately 1 million children are in need and 600,000 children have lost access to learning due to the conflict. Ogunode and Kolo (2021) submit that disruption of school administration, learning loss due to school closure, low enrolment, retention, and completion rate of the Basic school programme, reduction in manpower, disruption in the academic calendar of Basic school, killing of students, delay in development or progress of girl's child education and delay in the development of Basic education were identified as the effects of insecurity on the administration of Basic schools in Northern Nigeria. Also, in Southeast, Nigeria, Ogunode & Chijindu (2022) observe that the implications of the sit-home order on basic education in the southeast geo-political zone

include disruption of school administration, teaching program implementation, student learning programme, school examinations, academic calendar, brain-drain and may affect the funding of Basic Education.

**Inadequate Professional Teachers and Language interpreters:** Inadequate professional teachers with specialisation in special needs education is also affecting the development of inclusive education in Nigerian Public Basic schools. Most teachers teaching and providing academic support for special needs learners are not professional teachers in that field. The majority of the teachers have not even been trained on how to teach the special needs learners in their respective classes. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) asserts that inadequate professional teacher is another challenge preventing the effective administration of Special Needs Education in Nigeria. Professional teachers trained to teach in special needs schools are inadequate in the country and this is affecting the administration of the programme. Teachers are key to implementing a teaching programme. The place of teachers cannot be replaced in the administration of special needs programmes. The administration of education is influenced by the availability of qualified professional teachers. Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) and Rufus, Jummai, Suraju & Eucharia (2014) observe that manpower employment and development is one of the major barriers to special needs education and its policies at national and international levels. Universities and Colleges turn out graduates in disability-related fields every year but ever remained under-used and unemployed. Special Needs education teachers, psychologists, physiotherapists, social workers, Nurses, Doctors, vocational instructors, and so on are not employed directly to take care of the educational, motor, social, psychological, and vocational needs of persons with disabilities. Rufus, Jummai, Suraju & Eucharia (2014) disclose that the successful education of students with special needs requires the involvement of different professionals, who will be of help in the areas of identification, referral, diagnoses, treatment, and provision of appropriate educational services. The 2018 National audit report on the Universal basic education program in Nigeria revealed that there is a deficit of 135,319 teachers in Early Childhood Care Development Education, 139,772 deficits in primary schools, and 2,446 shortages in Junior Secondary Schools across the nation. 27756 teachers in the early childhood education program, and 3564 teachers at the basic schools (Oweh, 2019). Ogunode & Paul (2021) and Ogunode, Jegede & Solomon (2021) submit that there are factors responsible for the inadequate professional teachers in educational institutions today poor manpower planning, corruption, inadequate funding, limited teachers' training institutions, and poor motivation of teachers.

**Absence of Provision for Training of Teachers in General and Specialist Information Communication Technology (ICT):** The successful exploitation of ICT in inclusive education is hinged on teachers. This requires the education and training of teachers to equip them to succeed. As advocated by European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE) and UNESCO IITE (2011), Nigerian teachers should be educated or trained in education and pedagogy, working in inclusive educational settings to support learners with diverse needs, and using ICT for learners with special needs and disabilities. Currently, Nigerian teachers lack knowledge and/or information on how to choose and use ICT to improve access and support the inclusion of learners with special educational needs and handicaps. To achieve this, Nigeria needs to develop hardware and software product databases that describe product capabilities, including their suitability, or issues they may have with learners with special educational needs, as researchers reveal (Polivstok, 2015; Henriskgard, 2019). It is also important to expose teachers to practice case studies or lesson delivery, which focus primarily on access to learning (Turner-Cmuchal & Aitken, 2016). Szufliita (2015) claims that it is not enough for teachers to undergo basic inclusive education

instruction and to be well versed in inclusive education pedagogy with a clear knowledge of the values of e-learning / ICT, they must be able to translate this into effect and be aware of how this will impact the success and association of pupils. Beecham (2011) suggests that teachers need a clear awareness of the possible effects of digital exclusion to improve incentives within the classroom for integration mechanisms such as trust and collaborating with or with others. Teachers' awareness of the barriers created by some ICTs is essential for delivering quality inclusive classroom education. As is currently being done in some of Europe's developing countries, Nigeria will expand the use of a virtual learning system built to support students with special educational needs by offering a bold, simple well-designed interface and customized learning and interaction resources. Using this framework can be incorporated into the curriculum of pre-service teacher education students as a means to develop enquiry-based learning and incorporate innovative use of ICT into their classes, and develop their professional development skills. Nigeria needs to consider teacher preparation as a crucial factor among the factors that decide the progress or lack of educational advancement linked to ICT. Nigeria should imbibe the statement by EADSNE (2013) that the usage of technology in classrooms is socially contextualised, engaging with schools' structural and corporate environments and representing aspects of the dominant social structures within and outside the framework of use. Simple ICT skills training is required in initial instructor preparation, with an emphasis on operating system features and usability tools. Within schools, Nigerian teachers are not well prepared to cope with diversity. While perceptions, values, expertise, and awareness will be an important part of Nigeria's schooling. Teacher education should take a developmental, competency approach for all teachers (Masih & Vidyapati, 2018), which is lacking in Nigerian teacher training. This makes it difficult for student teachers to form clear opinions about inclusion in initial teacher education just as initial teacher education will not provide an opportunity to influence attitudes and no delivery of carefully designed learning programmes. Teachers have an important role to play in promoting and implementing inclusive education (European Special and Inclusive Education Agency, 2020), but Nigerian teachers lack information and guidance on how to select and use ICT to achieve this objective.

### **Suggestions for improved Inclusive Education**

Adequate funding by way of an increase in the allocation for special needs children. If this is done, there will be an improved provision of Instructional materials with adequate equipment. Also, more attention will be paid to the professional development of teachers and adequate provision for teaching assistants, particularly in the area of language interpreters/sign language teachers.

The recent efforts by UBEC in data generation are in the right direction, but more efforts should be made to ensure that both school-going and out-of-school children will be captured with a view of having comprehensive data on children with special needs for both public and private schools.

Governments and non-government organisations with members of the communities should put more efforts into matters of insecurity across the Country so that the school environment will be child friendly and peaceful.

On matters of institutional corruption, various agencies set up with the sole purpose of preventing corruption needs to focus on educational institutions and governments with a view of reducing incidences of corruption

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Inclusive education for improved delivery should take into consideration the following every Nigerian citizen must be covered by the Right to Education (RTE). The relevance of an expanded definition of inclusive education that takes into account the various requirements of every student should be acknowledged by local, state and federal governments as well as by all other social actors; every school and the entire Nigerian educational system must adopt an inclusion policy. Schools must transform into environments where students are taught life skills and ensure that all students, particularly those with disabilities from underserved groups and those living in challenging situations, benefit as much as possible from this crucial component of education. The school is primarily in charge of assisting students in learning alongside their typically developing peers. An inclusive school must be able to adapt its educational structures, techniques, and procedures to meet the requirements of all students, especially those who are most likely to encounter obstacles to fulfilling their right to an education.; parents have a right to participate in all choices affecting their children. They ought to be considered collaborators in the educational process. Parents have been discovered to be highly valuable resources for the instructors and the schools where there is such cooperation.

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