

The Role of Special Educator in Implementing Inclusive Education in Nigeria

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Abstract:- The paper is on the role of special educator in implementing inclusive education in Nigeria. The paper discussed that Inclusive education is linked to the idea of regular education initiative. It is built on the notion that it is more effective for students with special needs to have mixed experience for them to be more successful in social interactions leading to success in life. The paper also discussed that inclusion involves a radical rethink of policy and practice and reflects a fundamentally different way of thinking about the origin of learning difficulties. Also discussed is the global trend in the provision of educational services. The paper stated that the aim of inclusive education is to develop all round aspects of human nature. Teaching children with diverse needs call for appropriate planning and adaptation. Also discussed are the basic principles of inclusive instructions. Teachers involved must be trained in that regards. Some suggestions were made as a way forward for inclusive education in Nigeria.

Keyword:- Role Special Educator Implementing Inclusive Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is linked to the idea of regular education initiative (REI) arising from the U.S PL 92 - 142. According to Obi (2006), regular education Initiative was initiated in the 1980's. It was initially an attempt to educate the children with special needs especially cases that are mild and moderate. For many years, educators have questioned the rational for a continuous, segregation of children with special needs. Inclusion in education refers to a model where students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-special needs students. It arise in the context of special education with an Programme plan, and is built on the notion that it is more effective for students with special needs to have said mixed experience for them to be more successful in social interactions leading to further success in life.

Globally, services for children with special needs evolved in three distinct phases, relative isolation, integration (or mainstreaming) and inclusion due the nature of instructional policy and practices in regular education certain modification can be made to suit learners with special needs

(Darling-Hammond,1990.). The relative isolation phase denied children access to public schools; children were mainly educated in residential institutions. They were in isolated and segregated settings and had no interactions with non- special needs children because of the avoidance principle. In the integration phase, children were mainstreamed into general education programmers when deemed appropriate. It involves the children spending part of their time in the regular class, and part in the special class. The inclusion phase started in the early 80's in the U.S and U.K and is yet to be fully implemented in most African countries where children with special needs are principally educated in isolated, separated, institutionalized settings.

II. WHAT IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusion involves a radical rethink of policy and practice and reflects a fundamentally different way of thinking about the origin of learning and Behaviour difficulties. Inclusion as a global trend of educating special needs children is seen as a philosophy and practice of educating special needs children in general education setting. This is based on the equality principle that makes every child a valued member of his society. It involved bringing the ancillary and related services and resources to the child in a general class rather than placing the child in an isolated setting where services are located.

Peterson and Hittie, (2003) admitted that inclusive teaching is the best for creating effective schools for all learners. As inclusive education is the practice of educating children with and without special needs in the same classroom with some modifications in physical structures, teaching resources and methodology to suit the conditions of each learner.

Inclusive education according to (Bowe, 2005) is the most effective way of combating discriminatory attitudes, of creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. It helps to open move access to children with special needs as they attend neighborhood schools and makes the quality of education received more acceptance and competition.

III. GLOBAL TREND IN SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES DELIVERY

The global trend in the provision of educational services to special needs children today is inclusion. It is the ideal way of making education accessible to special needs children for the 21st century Sands, Kozleski, and French (2000). The aim is to achieve better academic and social integration than the traditional segregated approach and institutionalization of special needs children. Inclusion like education is a fundamental human right issue where the world affirmed commitment to education for all. It is based on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. Bowe, (2005) empathized the need to make education of PWDs an integral part of the education system; the Salamanca statement and framework of action on special needs education affirmed the placement of special needs children in general education where the Salamanca declarations were revisited with the challenge of ensuring the broad vision of EFA (Bowe, 2005).

IV. TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SETTINGS

The primary aim of education is to develop all round aspects of human nature so that the person may be able to use his talents to the maximum capacity (Enya, Nanjwan and Amalu 2014).

Teaching children with diverse needs call for appropriate planning and adaptation of instructions to suit these learners. As had been argued by proponents of inclusion, children with special needs require instruction in most of the same skills that other learners need.

Hallahan, (2012) advised that teaching in inclusive settings, the teacher may adapt instructions to accommodate the children and enhance their learning skills. Instructions should be made more relevant to the needs of the individual learner. To maximize success with learners in inclusive settings, Mintz, (2014) suggested that knowledge and good relationship in the Classroom is quite certain with the PASS variables should be used. PASS represents a way of thinking and approaching instruction for learners in general inclusive education settings. According to author, the PASS variables stand for:

- Prioritize objectives
- Adapt instruction, materials and the environment
- Systematic instruction usage during instruction.
- Systematic implementation evaluation measures.

➤ *Prioritize Objectives*

To prioritize objectives means to examine which instructional objectives, determine the ones that are most appropriate for learners with special needs and eliminates any objective that is not important for the special learner. For example, the teacher may decide to prioritize instructions for

a child with physical disabilities poor class activity that involves the use of fine motor.

➤ *Adapt Instruction, Materials and Environment*

Instructional adaptation is necessary to accommodate more, children with special needs. Adaptation could take many forms. A general education teacher with impaired child with visual in the class may adapt instructions, materials and the environment to suit the child's needs. In learning, every child has a unique characteristic Salamanca statement asserts that education systems should take into account the wide diversity of children's characteristics and needs are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming atmosphere in an inclusive society and achieving education for all (kyauta 2013). The teacher needs to plan ahead of the lesson what adaptations need to be made of the lesson what adaptations need to be made for the different learners with disabilities. Adaptation that will require minimal effort by the teacher is preferable.

➤ *Systematic Teaching*

This refers to the use of appropriate presentation of learning variables by effective teacher. These variables have been formed into an acronym SCREAM by Mastropen and Scruggs, (2000).

SCREAM means:

- Structure
- Clarity
- Redundancy
- Enthusiasm
- Appropriate space

Maximize evaluation, including questioning and feedback SYSTEM EVALUATION: systematic evaluation means frequently measuring student's progress toward meeting the set objectives of the class as well as IEP objectives. This will also give the teacher feedback as to the rate of progress of the learners.

V. THE INCLUSION CONTROVERSY

Many professionals have questioned the appropriateness and effectiveness of the inclusive policy. As stated earlier, there are many people who feel that not all children will benefit from inclusion and that only those who can meet the standard should be included. At the other extreme are those who content that all students belong to the general education and there should be full inclusions. These persons leweke, and Rodda, (2010) There are many others who think that a midway approach should be adopted.

These professionals think that two little has been done to ensure that children's potentials are maximized and, that general educatiargued that general and regular classroom teachers should adopt that pedagogy and environment to suit

children with special needs. Eon teacher may not be able to work with children with special needs effectively without assistance from specialist.

Inclusion is based on the social model theory of disability. The social model sees disability as an emancipation move aimed at liberating children with special needs. The social model rejects the medical model of disabilities and believes that it is the social system rather than the physical impairment that creates disability.

VI. SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The following are the basic principles of inclusive instructions to include:

Teach diagnostically: Diagnostic teaching involves an initial diagnosis to identify the child's deficit. This could be general or specific skills.

Establish the experiential base for each lesson: The teacher should understand that just like skills facilitate task performance, learner's background facilitates understanding.

➤ *Use Appropriate and Realistic Examples and Demonstrations:*

Examples and demonstration that are relevant to the child in his everyday life promotes understanding and aid learning.

Actively involve the learners: Teachers should involve learners in class activities to facilitate active learning.

Use appropriate questioning techniques: Effective questioning encourage active children participation in learning.

Provide appropriate practice and generous review: Practice reinforces learnt concept while review helps learners to master skills and concepts already learnt. Review should be done periodically.

Build interest and enthusiasm: Teachers should understand that unless children are interested in what they are learning and doing, learning cannot effectively take place. .

Collaborate and coordinate efforts with others: Inclusion generally calls for collaboration between special and general education teachers Nanjwan, Ikwen, and Egaga, (2019). The different professional should be involved in providing the best instruction for all learners particularly the special learners.

VII. SUGGESTED WAYS OF INCLUSIONS

Vandeh (2013) suggested that there is every need for proper training of personnel to handle inclusive education Programme. Teachers involved must be trained in that regards. Simpson, Richard, Sonja de Boer (2009) suggested way forward for inclusive education include:

1. Developing and implementing a functional curriculum that meets the needs of children with special needs to enable them acquire requisite skills for independent living.
2. Carrying out an authentic and meaningful assessment to guide the teacher and learner in the teaching and learning environment.
3. Ability to design and create a classroom environment that will make teaching and learning efficient.
4. Ability to tailor instructions to meet individual learning needs.
5. Creating learning opportunities that will address the needs and goals of children with special needs.
6. Paying individual attention to children to enable them overcome challenging behaviour.
7. Parental involvement in all aspects of the education of their children, especially in curriculum design, assessment, and evaluation.
8. Monitoring of the progress of the children as a feedback mechanism for all the stake holders.
9. Forging collaborative partnership with special educationists and other professionals.
10. Leadership of teachers and administrators
11. Legislations and access to special education services provision.
12. Government efforts of access and quality.
13. Time for teachers to plan, meet, create, and evaluate the students

VIII. CONCLUSION

Inclusion in education refers to a model wherein students with special needs spend most or all of their time with those who are non-special needs. Nanjwan, and Ashi, (2019) admitted that it arise in the context of special education with the development of national policy on education and is built on the notion that it is more effective for students with special needs to have said mixed experience for them to be more successful in social interactions leading to further success in life.

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