

## TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MODES OF ASSESSMENT OF INCLUSIVE LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners. Descriptive survey research design was successfully adopted. Sample size of seven (7) schools of 15 teachers each in the selected schools in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area, Lagos State was employed using simple random sampling technique. Descriptive statistics (frequency tables, percentages, mean and standard deviation) was used for the research questions while inferential statistics (Analysis of Variance) was used for testing the hypotheses. Finding revealed that there is no significant effect of effect of teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners ( $p=0.000$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The study concluded that the implementation of assessment requires teachers' understanding toward the principles and how to conduct the assessment appropriately, so that the students' learning achievement might be measured accurately. It was recommended that teachers should develop sound pedagogical attitudes in the three domains of learning so as to enhance the students' performance.*

**Keywords: Inclusion, Mode, Assessment, Special Needs, Teachers, Attitudes.**

### Introduction

Education is a critical instrument that contributes to the advancement of the country in all areas. It has a significant impact on the students' lives by instilling a feeling of citizenship and preparing them for the world of employment. However, achieving pupils' potential is dependent on the quality of education, particularly the curriculum. The quality of any nation's output is determined by the quality of its professors. It is critical to emphasize that instructors play a critical role in shaping the quality of education that students get. Teachers play a significant role in ensuring strong academic success in public examinations. It's no surprise that teachers are regarded as a vital resource in any educational system. According to Aina, Ogundele, and Olanipekun (2013), the teacher is the most important educational resource in the educational system. According to Obadara (2005), instructors are critical to the successful operation of the educational system and act as a cornerstone to educational progress.

To fulfill its goals, the teaching and learning process requires ongoing monitoring. As a result, assessment is necessary to ensure that instructional goals are met (Asale, 2017). Assessment is an important component of educational institutions because it gives complete information about the overall learning progress of teachers and students in educational settings. Teachers must utilize several classroom assessment approaches to evaluate students' performance or focus on quality evaluation. Literature gives sufficient information that teachers should focus on self-development, for which they should have extensive knowledge and abilities in classroom assessment. Dhindsa, Omar, and Waldrip (2017) discovered that students are creating a genuine and realistic approach that is tied to their actual learning rather than gauging luck.

Attitude is the way people think or act, and it can often make or break an individual's performance when carrying out their activities and obligations. It is frequently stated that attitude can be either positive or negative. Negative attitudes expressed by teachers in school may result in poor performance, whereas good attitudes displayed by teachers in school may result in excellent achievement. A teacher's attitude, whether conscious or unconscious, has a direct or indirect impact on inclusive learners' academic achievement during assessment. According to Shittu and Oanite (2015), teachers' attitudes have a significant impact on students' motivation to learn. Teachers' professional attitudes about communication, classroom management, and pedagogy may be a powerful factor influencing inclusive students' academic performance in school. Positive professional attitudes of instructors toward their teaching job will go a long way toward bringing about positive student performance, but bad attitudes displayed by teachers in the discharge of their obligations may impair inclusive learners' academic success.

Despite the fact that students with special needs have been placed in general education classrooms for many years, various studies have indicated that many general education teachers are not completely aware of what is required to make the inclusive setting a successful environment (Bruggnick, Goel & Koot, 2015). Teacher preparation programs and professional development can provide educators with the knowledge and skills needed to provide learning opportunities for all pupils. However, most pre- and in-service programs continue to struggle with informing general educators in a way that equips them with the tools they need to interact effectively with kids with special needs in a general education classroom (Rock et al., 2016).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The inclusive education model has become a paradigm for educational communities seeking to implement their fundamental principles of equality and nondiscrimination, with the goal of responding to pupils regardless of their specific qualities and needs. The success or failure of this model's implementation is determined by a number of elements, including the center's organization and infrastructure, curricular and methodological management, and the availability of personal and material resources. The teacher's attitude, as well as the perspective, beliefs, and humanity assigned to students with disabilities, are extremely important for the implementation of inclusive education since they can either help or hinder the processes of integration, learning, and involvement of students.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes are influenced by elements such as training, experience, years of teaching practice, and so on, and they play a critical part in the success or failure of inclusive procedures (Castro, Alvarez & Baz, 2016). The poor academic achievement of inclusive students may be due to the inadequate quality of teachers employed in schools. It is unknown how many teachers are knowledgeable about and have a positive attitude toward assessing inclusive learners. Because the education of inclusive learners is dependent on teachers, it is critical to understand their perspectives on inclusive learners. It is on the basis of these problems that this study was carried out to examine teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners. While specific objective of the study are to:

1. determine the extent at which teachers attitude towards mode of assessment affects inclusive learners.

### **Research Question**

This study was guided by the following question that was grounded on the research objectives;

1. To what extent is the effect of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment of inclusive learners?

### **Research Hypothesis**

The hypothesis tested in this study is:

Ho: There is no significant effect of teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The population consists of all teachers and head teachers of learners with special needs in selected schools in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area, Lagos State. The sample size is a representative fraction of the larger population. In carrying out the research, to avoid relying solely on intuition and to make this research as scientific as possible, a sample size of 15 teachers for each of the seven (7) selected schools in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area, Lagos State was chosen from the targeted population. In order to obtain responses from those who have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, simple random sampling technique was adopted. The questionnaire was designed on Teachers Attitudes towards Modes of Assessment of Inclusive Learners Questionnaire (TATMAILQ). The data was tabulated and then analyzed using percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation. The tabulation and analysis was done using statistical computer packages which included SPSS version 25.0. These packages enable the researcher to obtain Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) among other statistical outputs so as to come up with empirical relationship in research variables.

### **Data Analysis and Discussions**

This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected through the questionnaires distributed and retrieved in order to examine teachers' attitudes towards modes of assessment of inclusive learners with special needs. The responses were collected while Statistical Package

for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used and aid for descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)) in analyzing the responses and testing the hypotheses respectively. A total of one hundred and five (105) copies of the questionnaires were administered to selected schools teachers while one hundred and two (102) questionnaires were duly filled and returned.

**Table 1:** Background Information of the Respondents

Items	Characteristics	Regular School		Special School	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	27.3	13	52.0
	Female	56	72.7	12	48.0
Age Bracket	Below	18	23.4	6	24.0
	31-40 years	40	51.9	6	24.0
	41-50 years	15	19.5	8	32.0
	51-60 years	4	5.2	5	20.0
Highest Level of Education	OND/NCE	29	37.7	16	64.0
	HND/BSC	41	53.2	6	24.0
	PGDE	6	7.8	3	12.0
	MBA/MSC/M.ED	1	1.3	-	-
Marital Status	Single	24	31.2	6	24.0
	Married	51	66.2	15	60.0
	Divorced/Separate	2	2.6	3	12.0
	d	-	-	1	4.0
Ethnicity	Others (specify)				
	Yoruba	46	59.7	23	92.0
	Igbo	24	31.2	2	8.0
	Hausa	3	3.9	-	-
Religion	Others (specify)	4	5.2	-	-
	Christianity	66	85.7	20	80.0
	Islam	7	9.1	5	20.0
Working Experience	Traditional	4	5.2	-	-
	Below 5 years	20	26.0	4	16.0
	6-10 years	33	42.9	6	24.0
	11-15 years	23	29.9	14	56.0
Do you have any skills of teaching learners in an inclusive Education?	16 years & above	1	1.3	1	4.0
	Yes	45	58.4	20	80.0
	No	32	41.6	5	20.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 above shows the responses for both regular and special needs school. About 21(27.3%) respondents in regular school were males while 56(72.7%) were females. Also, special needs school shows that 13(52.0%) respondents were males while 12(48.0%) were females. Result

shows that 18(23.4%) respondents in regular school were below 3 years, 40(51.9%) were between 31-40 years, 15(19.9%) were between 41-50years while 4(5.2%) were between 51-60 years. Also, special needs school shows that 6(24.0%) respondents were below 3 years, 6(24.0%) were between 31-40 years, 8(32.0%) were between 41-50years while 5(20.0%) were between 51-60 years. Finding shows that 29(37.7%) respondents in regular school had OND/NCE, 41(53.2%) had HND/BSC, 6(7.8%) had PGDE while 1(1.3%) had MBA/MSC/M.ED. Also, special needs school shows that 16(64.0%) respondents had OND/NCE, 6(24.0%) had HND/BSC, 3(12.0%) had PGDE while none had MBA/MSC/M.ED. Findings also shows that 24(31.2%) respondents in regular school were single, 51(66.2%) were married, 2(2.6%) were divorced/separated while none were other status. Also, special needs school shows that 6(24.0%) respondents were single, 15(60.0%) were married, 3(12.0%) were divorced/separated while 1(4.0%) were other status.

Table 1 above also shows that 46(59.7%) respondents in regular school were Yoruba, 24(31.2%) were Igbo, 3(3.9%) were Hausa while 4(5.2%) were other ethnic. Also, special needs school shows that 23(92.0%) respondents were Yoruba, 2(8.0%) was Igbo while none were Hausa and other ethnicity. Study shows that 66(85.7%) respondents in regular school were Christian, 7(9.1%) were Muslim while 4(5.2%) were traditional/idol worshipers. Also, special needs school shows that 20(80.0%) respondents were Christian, 5(20.0%) was Muslim while none was traditional/idol worshipers. Study also shows that 20(26.0%) respondents in regular school had below 5 years work experience, 33(42.9%) had 6-1 years, 23(29.9%) had 11-15 years while 1(1.3%) had 16 years and above. Also, special needs school shows that 4(16.0%) respondents had below 5 years work experience, 6(24.0%) had 6-1 years, 14(56.0%) had 11-15 years while 1(4.0%) had 16 years and above. It was noted that 45(58.4%) respondents in regular school agreed they have skills of teaching learners in an inclusive Education while 32(41.6%) disagreed. Also, special needs school shows that 20(80.0%) respondents agreed they have skills of teaching learners in an inclusive Education while 5(20.0%) disagreed.

**Table 2:** Showing Result on Mode of Assessment in Inclusive

Statements	Scale	Regular School			Special School		
		Percent	Mean	SDT	Percent	Mean	SDT
Separate exams should be set for learners with special needs in inclusive education.	SA	35(45.5%)	1.64	0.647	18(72.0%)	1.36	0.700
	A	35(45.5%)			6(24.0%)		
	D	7(9.0%)			0(0.0%)		
	SD	0(0.0%)			1(4.0%)		
Time set for examination should be added to learners with special needs in inclusive education.	SA	25(32.5%)	1.92	0.823	14(56.0%)	1.56	0.712
	A	37(48.0%)			8(32.0%)		
	D	11(14.3%)			3(12.0%)		
	SD	4(5.2%)			0(0.0%)		
Oral testing is the best for assessment of learners in inclusive learning.	SA	23(29.8%)	2.12	0.917	6(24.0%)	1.96	0.790
	A	27(35.1%)			16(64.0%)		
	D	22(28.6%)			1(4.0%)		
	SD	5(6.5%)			2(8.0%)		

Reading and comprehending is the major area that lowers performance in inclusive setting.	SA	10(13.0%)	2.44	0.866	10(40.0%)	1.76	0.723
	A	32(41.5%)			11(44.0%)		
	D	26(33.8%)			4(16.0%)		
	SD	9(11.7%)			0(0.0%)		
The climate in the inclusive classroom fosters emotional discipline in learners.	SA	12(15.6%)	2.12	0.707	9(36.0%)	1.80	0.707
	A	47(61.0%)			12(48.0%)		
	D	15(19.5%)			4(16.0%)		
	SD	3(3.9%)			0(0.0%)		
<b>Total</b>			<b>10.24</b>	<b>3.96</b>		<b>8.44</b>	<b>3.632</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 shows the represented mode of assessment is inclusive. Overall, table 2 indicates factors responsible for the mode of assessment in inclusive with their mean and standard deviation (Regular; M=10.24, SD=3.96 & Special; M=8.44, SD=3.632).

Those in support of the statement in regular school “Reading and comprehending is the major area that lowers performance in inclusive setting” represented the highest item scored with mean and standard deviation of (M=2.44, SD=0.866) while those in support of the statement “Separate examination should be set for learners with special needs in inclusive education” represented the lowest mean and standard deviation of (M=1.64, SD=0.647).

Also, those in support of the statement for special school “Oral testing is the best for assessment of learners in inclusive learning” represented the highest item scored with mean and standard deviation of (M=1.96, SD=0.790) while those in support of the statement “Separate examination should be set for learners with special needs in inclusive education” represented the lowest mean and standard deviation of (M=1.36, SD=0.700).

**Table 3: Showing Result on Teachers’ Attitudes**

Statements	Scale	Regular School			Special School		
		Percent	Mean	SDT	Percent	Mean	SDT
I would like to be mentored by a teacher who models effective differentiated instruction.	SA	13(16.9%)	1.96	0.549	8(32.0%)	1.76	0.597
	A	54(70.1%)			15(60.0%)		
	D	10(13.0%)			2(8.0%)		
	SD	0(0.0%)			0(0.0%)		
I believe including learners with special needs in the regular education classrooms is effective because they can learn the social skills necessary for success.	SA	26(33.7%)	1.92	0.839	17(68.0%)	1.32	0.476
	A	35(45.5%)			8(32.0%)		
	D	12(15.6%)			0(0.0%)		
	SD	4(5.2%)			0(0.0%)		
Learners with special needs can be more effectively educated in regular classrooms as opposed to	SA	11(14.3%)	2.22	0.788	5(20.0%)	1.88	0.526
	A	44(57.1%)			18(72.0%)		
	D	16(20.8%)			2(8.0%)		
	SD	6(7.8%)			0(0.0%)		

special education classrooms.

I would like people to think that I can create a welcoming classroom environment for learners with special needs.	SA	17(22.1%)	2.01	0.698	13(52.0%)	1.48	0.510
	A	43(55.8%)			12(48.0%)		
	D	16(20.8%)			0(0.0%)		
	SD	1(1.3%)			0(0.0%)		
Learners with special needs can be trusted with responsibilities in the classroom.	SA	16(20.7%)	2.29	0.971	5(20.0%)	1.96	0.611
	A	35(45.5%)			16(64.0%)		
	D	14(18.2%)			4(16.0%)		
	SD	12(15.6%)			0(0.0%)		
<b>Total</b>			<b>10.4</b>	<b>3.845</b>		<b>8.4</b>	<b>2.72</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 shows the represented teachers' attitudes. Overall, table 3 indicates that factors responsible for the teachers attitudes with their mean and standard deviation (Regular; M=10.4, SD=3.845 & Special; M=8.4, SD=2.72).

Those in support of the statement regular school "Learners with special needs can be trusted with responsibilities in the classroom" represented the highest item scored with mean and standard deviation of (M=2.29, SD=0.971) while those in support of the statement "I believe including learners with special needs in the regular education classrooms is effective because they can learn the social skills necessary for success" represented the lowest mean and standard deviation of (M=1.92, SD=0.839).

Also, those in support of the statement for special school "Learners with special needs can be trusted with responsibilities in the classroom" represented the highest item scored with mean and standard deviation of (M=1.96, SD=0.611) while those in support of the statement "I believe including learners with special needs in the regular education classrooms is effective because they can learn the social skills necessary for success" represented the lowest mean and standard deviation of (M=1.32, SD=0.476).

### Test of Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant effect of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment of inclusive learners.

**Table 4:** ANOVA on influence of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment of inclusive learners

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	288.356	11	26.214	7.554	.000
Within Groups	312.321	90	3.470		
Total	600.676	101			

### Significant at <0.05

Table 4 shows that the one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is  $F(11, 90) = 7.554$  and the p value ( $p=0.000$ ) on the influence of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment on inclusive

of learners with special needs was significant at 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected while alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, this implies that there is significant effect of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment of inclusive learners.

### **Discussion of Findings**

It has been revealed in the findings of the study that, there is significant effect of teachers' attitude towards mode of assessment of inclusive learners ( $p=0.000$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Corroborating this, Byabato and Kisamos (2014) found that the implementation of school based CA are not properly carried out by the teachers as many problems such as: lack of teachers' integrity (favouritism and inflation of marks), lack of uniformity in both the assessment tools used and procedures for CA recording and reporting were evident. In general, they noted that "teachers showed little or no in-depth capacity of the assessment practices. This is in consonance with the findings of Awofala and Babajide (2013) who found that teachers attitudes toward some assessment practices, tended to be either negative or neutral.

### **Conclusion**

The work with special needs learners is a challenge in itself. Dealing with a host of difficulties and specific situations, depending on equally specific needs of students in the classroom, requires teachers to have an oriented training in order for them to manage such situations in the best possible ways and to contribute to optimal learning and development of the students in the classroom. This study showed that teachers are willing to work and enjoy working with inclusive learners in their classrooms, and that they are very aware of the fact that their approach towards these learners positively affects not only their learning, but their social integration, as well. Also, assessment is one of the important components in curriculum. The implementation of assessment requires teachers' understanding toward the principles and how to conduct the assessment appropriately, so that the students' learning achievement might be measured accurately.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the discussion, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers should put to use full ethics of their profession when teaching in inclusive schools. They should display the knowledge of psychology and use appropriate methods that would help all the students learn.
2. Teachers should develop sound pedagogical attitudes in the three domains of learning so as to enhance the students' performance.
3. Rewards and incentive mechanism should be given for those who practice assessment effectively so as to motivate other teachers.

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