

**PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' AND PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN KATSINA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
KATSINA STATE**

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Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of primary school teachers and parents on inclusive education in Katsina local government area, Katsina state. It explores the attitudes and beliefs in the implementation of inclusive education. Descriptive survey design was used. Primary school teachers and parents of primary school pupils form the study population. 150 respondents (82 teachers and 68 parents) were selected using stratified sampling technique. Teachers and Parents Perceptions on Inclusive Education Instrument (TPPIEI) was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined using (PPMC) test-re-test method which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.70. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while hypothesis was tested using independent sample t-test. The findings revealed that both teachers and parents have positive perceptions of inclusive education, with no significant difference observed between their views based on gender. Based on these results, the study recommended that government should organize workshops and professional training for teachers, partner with parents to equip schools with necessary materials such as movable chairs, assistive devices, learning aids, and well-trained personnel to support inclusive education. Revise the curriculum to ensure that it supports inclusiveness that caters for the diverse needs of all learners.

Key words: Teachers, Parents, Perceptions, Inclusive education

Introduction

Inclusive education signified a fundamental shift in educational philosophy. It promotes the integration of all pupils into mainstream classrooms, regardless of their abilities, diverse needs, or backgrounds. This method recognizes the core value of every child and attempts to create an equal educational setting that supports learning and progress for everyone. In contemporary years, global deliberations on inclusive education have increased, driven by improved awareness of the rights of individuals with or without disabilities and the necessity for educational structures to adjust to the diversity of learners (Rosenbaum & Gorte, 2023). As a precarious element of educational reform nationwide, inclusive education targets to ensure equal learning opportunities for all children, notwithstanding of their experiences or abilities.

UNESCO (2017) defines inclusive education as a procedure of addressing and responding to the varied needs of pupils by increasing active involvement in learning, principles, and societies, while actively dropping exclusion. This model emphasizes transforming educational systems to accommodate every learner whether they have disabilities, come from socio-economic challenges, or possess cultural differences.

In addition, Ainscow (2005) view inclusive education as the effort to increase involvement of pupils in school accomplishments and lessen their rejection from school curricula activities. His perception stresses the practical aspects of incorporating all children into mainstream education, promoting for adjustments in teaching methods and classroom setting to ensure active involvement for children with varying needs. This definition places a strong emphasis on the practical integration of all children into mainstream education. It further calls for modifications in both teaching methods and the school environment to warrant that children with varying needs can entirely partake in learning. The UNESCO agenda advocates for an inclusive model where kids with special needs are integrated into mainstream schools, moving away from segregated educational settings.

In Nigeria, the commitment to inclusive education is embedded within the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013), which highlights offering quality education to children. However, despite these policy directives, implementation remains challenging, particularly at the primary education level. Many teachers report feeling inadequately prepared to manage inclusive classrooms due to limited resources, training, and support (Ogunyemi, 2020). This lack of preparation often compels teachers to rely on traditional methods that may not address the varied learning needs of all children, ultimately hindering the educational development of students with and without disabilities.

The commitment to inclusive education in Nigeria is enshrined in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) which put emphasis on the importance of providing quality education for all children. Despite these policy frameworks, the concrete implementation of inclusive education remains with challenges, particularly at the basic education level. A lot of teachers express feelings of inadequacy in their capability to teach in inclusive classroom settings due to a lack of resources, training, and support (Ogunyemi, 2020). This lack of preparation often makes teachers to depend on traditional techniques that may not address the diverse learning needs of all children, in the long run hindering the educational development of pupils with and without disabilities.

Subsequently, the parents play a crucial role in the implementation of Inclusive Education. Parents are often the primary advocates for their children's educational rights, yet many face societal stigma and misrepresentation about disabilities, which can limit their contribution in the educational development (Nwogu & Nwokolo, 2021). In Katsina Local Government Area, where cultural beliefs and practices may further complicate these dynamics, understanding the attitudes of both teachers and parents is essential for fostering an inclusive educational setting.

Teachers and parents are crucial to effective inclusive education. UNESCO (2017) describes parents as primary caregivers with an essential role in their child's development, an opinion buttressed by Lareau (2003) who stresses their critical stake in educational aftermaths. Epstein (1995) highlights the significance of school-home partnerships in supporting diverse learners. Teachers' perceptions also meaningfully influence inclusive education. Studies in Nigeria, such as Garba (2018), Olayiwola (2019), Adebayo and Yusuf (2020), Muhamma (2022) and Abdullahi and Suleiman (2021) reveal that though teachers mostly support the values of inclusion, they often lack adequate training, resources, and self-confidence to effectively manage diverse classrooms setting. Insufficient teaching aids, Overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate professional development opportunities added aggravate these problems, stressing the need for better investment in teacher training and inclusive infrastructure.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the perceptions of primary school teachers on inclusive education in Katsina local government area.
2. To examine the perception of parents on inclusive education in primary schools in Katsina local government area based on gender.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of primary school teachers on inclusive education in Katsina local government area?
2. What are the perceptions of parents on inclusive education in primary schools in Katsina local government area?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between primary school teachers' and parents' perceptions on inclusive education in Katsina local government area.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised 2,675 primary teachers and parents in public primary schools in Katsina Local Government Area. This study used a stratified random sampling technique to select 150 respondents, consisting of 82 teachers and 68 parents. Researcher designed an instrument titled 'Teachers and Parent Perceptions on Inclusive Education Instrument (TPPIEI) with four point modified Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The instrument was validated by experts in test and measurement and special educators. The reliability of the instrument was determined using (PPMC) test-re-test method which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.70. Ethical consideration, researcher seek approval from the respondent before data collection. Research questions were answered using mean, and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested using independent sample t-test.

Results

Research Question One: What are the perceptions of primary school teachers on inclusive education in Katsina local government area?

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation showing the perceptions of teachers on inclusive education in Katsina local government area.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	Inclusive education ensures all pupils with or without disabilities have access to educational opportunities	3.11	0.69
2.	Teachers are adequately trained to handle inclusive classrooms	3.04	0.81
3.	Inclusive education improves the learning outcomes of all students/pupils in respective of their disabilities.	3.12	0.73
4.	Teaching in an inclusive classroom is challenging due to lack of resources	2.99	0.82
5.	The curriculum at the basic education level supports inclusive education	2.84	0.81
6.	Teachers need more professional training to implement Inclusive education effectively	3.24	0.66
7.	Inclusive education fosters better social integration among students/pupils	3.12	0.73
8.	Teachers are overburdened when managing inclusive classrooms.	2.91	0.72
9.	Schools in Katsina Local Government Area are adequately equipped for inclusive education.	3.23	0.67
10.	Collaboration between teachers and parents is crucial for the success of inclusive education.	3.18	0.67
11.	Inclusive education benefits both children and their parents with and without disabilities.	1.96	0.82
12.	I support the idea of inclusive education at the basic education level.	1.96	0.76
13.	Teachers and parents should collaborate to create a supportive environment for inducive education.	2.07	0.77
14.	I am satisfied with the quality of education provided in inclusive classrooms.	2.22	0.74
15.	Parents should be involved in decision-making about inclusive education.	2.15	0.82
16.	There are sufficient awareness programs about inclusive education for parents.	1.94	0.89
17.	Parents play a significant role in supporting inclusive education.	2.07	0.75
18.	Inclusive education helps children with disabilities build self-confidence.	1.87	-.84

19.	Parents face challenges in understanding the concept of inclusive education.	2.32	0.75
20.	The government should provide more resources to support inclusive education.	2.41	0.70
	Average Mean	2.59	

Table 1 revealed the mean and standard deviation showing the perceptions of teachers on inclusive education at the basic education level in Katsina local government area. The respondent positively agreed with all items above 2.50 cut off point, while the respondent negatively disagree with all item below 2.50 cut off point for decision. The average mean of 2.59 is greater than the cut off of 2.50 cut off point, which implies that the teachers has positive perceptions on inclusive Education at the basic Education level in Katsina local government area.

Research Question Two: What are the perceptions of parents on inclusive education at in Katsina local government area?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing the perceptions of parents on inclusive education in Katsina local government area.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1	Inclusive education ensures all students/pupils with or without disabilities have access to educational opportunities	3.13	0.62
2	Teachers are adequately trained to handle inclusive classrooms	3.18	0.67
1.	Inclusive education improves the learning outcomes of all students/pupils in respective of their disabilities.	3.25	0.66
2.	Teaching in an inclusive classroom is challenging due to lack of resources	3.01	0.80
5.	The curriculum at the basic education level supports inclusive education	2.96	0.76
6.	Teachers need more professional training to implement Inclusive education effectively	3.26	0.59
7.	Inclusive education fosters better social integration among students/pupils	3.26	0.67
8.	Teachers are overburdened when managing inclusive classrooms.	3.10	0.67
9.	Schools in Katsina Local Government Area are adequately equipped for inclusive education.	3.31	0.63
10.	Collaboration between teachers and parents is crucial for the success of inclusive education.	3.18	0.57
11.	Inclusive education benefits both children and their parents with and without disabilities.	1.93	0.78

12.	I support the idea of inclusive education at the basic education level.	2.06	0.77
13.	Teachers and parents should collaborate to create a supportive environment for inducive education.	2.19	0.74
14.	I am satisfied with the quality of education provided in inclusive classrooms.	2.19	0.74
15.	Parents should be involved in decision-making about inclusive education.	2.24	0.76
16.	There are sufficient awareness programs about inclusive education for parents.	1.96	0.90
17.	Parents play a significant role in supporting inclusive education.	2.07	0.72
18.	Inclusive education helps children with disabilities build self-confidence.	1.93	0.85
19.	Parents face challenges in understanding the concept of inclusive education.	2.44	0.68
20.	The government should provide more resources to support inclusive education.	2.41	0.67
	Average Mean	2.65	

Table 2 revealed the mean and standard deviation showing the perceptions of parents on inclusive education at the basic Education level in Katsina local government area. The respondent positively agreed with all items above 2.50 cut off point, while the respondent negatively disagree with all item below 2.50 cut off point for decision. The average mean of 2.65 is greater than the cut off of 2.50 cut off point, which implies that the parents has positive perceptions on inclusive Education at the basic Education level in Katsina local government area.

HO₁: There is no significance differences between primary school teacher's and parent's perception on inclusive education in Katsina local government area.

Table 3: Independent sample t-test showing significance differences between teachers' and parent's perception on inclusive education

Status	N	Mean	St.dev	T	Df	Sig	Decision
Teacher	82	51.78	7.9753	-.902	148	.368	Not Significant
Parents	68	52.96	7.9032				

Table 3 showed $t(150) = -.902$, $df = 148$ at the 0.05 level of significance. The significant value is .368, which is greater than the 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the formulated hypothesis was accepted, which implies there is no significance differences between Teacher's and Parent's perception on inclusive education at the basic education in Katsina local government area. This

implies that both teachers and parents have positive perception on the need for inclusive education in primary schools in Katsina local government.

Discussion of Findings

The study finding reported that teachers in Katsina local government area have positive perceptions of inclusive education. Supporting this finding, Ajuwon (2012) found that Nigerian teachers generally support inclusive education due to its potential to foster both social and academic development among all learners. Likewise, Omede (2015) reinforced this view by reporting that teachers believe inclusive education enhances peer relationships and promotes equal learning opportunities. Additionally, Abdullahi and Shehu (2019) further supported this perspective by revealing that teachers in northern Nigeria acknowledge the benefits of inclusive education, although they highlighted challenges such as inadequate teaching resources and insufficient training.

Another findings indicated that parents in Katsina Local Government Area have positive perceptions of inclusive education. In agreement with this finding, Afolabi and Nwadiani (2016) reported that parents, particularly those with children with disabilities, strongly support inclusive education because it helps children develop essential social skills and prepares them for real-world interactions. Similarly, Okeke and Madike (2017) reinforced this position by finding that parents in northern Nigeria favor inclusive education but remain concerned about the availability of resources and the readiness of schools to accommodate children with diverse learning needs.

This study found that there is no significant difference between teachers' and parents' perceptions of inclusive education in Katsina Local Government Area. In support of this Eke (2018), Adamu and Ibrahim (2020) concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between teachers' and parents' attitudes toward inclusive education in Nigeria. Both studies strongly agree that while both groups support inclusion, teachers tend to be more aware of policies, whereas parents emphasize the social benefits of inclusive education.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that inclusive education is widely accepted among teachers and parents in Katsina Local Government Area. However, effective implementation remains a challenge due to limited resources, inadequate teacher training, and low parental awareness. The study highlights the need for government and educational stakeholders to provide better support systems, professional development for teachers, and increased awareness programs for parents to enhance the success of inclusive education.

Recommendations

1. Government should organize workshops and professional training for primary teachers and parents on inclusive education in Katsina Local Government Area.

2. Government should collaborate with developing partners to equip schools with necessary materials such as movable chairs, assistive devices, learning aids, and well-trained personnel to support inclusive education.

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