

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCE RESEARCH IN PUBLIC POLICY,
ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
VOL.1 NO.2, AUGUST 2013.

List of Contributors

- HASSANA OSEIWU ALI PhD & GLADYS PROMISE
Department of Science Education, Faculty of Education,
Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi State – Nigeria
Dept. Of Educational Foundations, Guidance And Counselling
University Of Calabar P.M.B. 1115 Calabar
Community Participation In Provision Of Educational
Programmes For Children With Special Needs
Page No.: 1-9
- ¹ODOEMELAM CHINEDU CHRISTIAN,
²ANYADIKE DOMINIC O.,
³EBEZE UCHE VICTOR & ⁴OKOROM EMMANUEL MORGAN
¹Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
²School of General Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
³Department of Mass Communication, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
⁴Department of Mass Communication University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Social Media, Environmental Health Development Campaigns,
Participation And Behaviour Change Among The University
Of Nigeria, Nsukka Staff
Page No.: 10-20
- INNOCENT, KASARACHI HAYFORD
Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies
University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State
Diffusion Of Development Information In 3rd World Countries:
A Mix-grill Media Approach
Page No.: 21-31
- AMINU MOHAMMED LAWAN
Department of Political Science,
Yobe State University Damaturu. Nigeria
The Role of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOS) In
Agricultural and Rural Development In Nigeria: A Case Study of
Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN).
Page No.: 32-43

- AVONG, HELENN.
 Part-time Lecturer, ECWA Theological Seminary Kagoro
 Kaduna State - Nigeria
 Type of Marriage Among The Atyap In Nigeria: Effect of
 Religious Denomination and Religiosity
 Page No.: 44-58
- FAMOUS S. ESEDUWO, PhD
 Political Science Department
 Federal University, Otuoke, Bayelsa State – Nigeria
 Behaviouralism, Neo-behaviouralism and National Development:
 Interrogating Research Works of Progressing Social Scientists in Nigeria
 Page No.: 59-73
- EZEIGWE, FRANCISCA OGOEGBUNAM
 Department of Public Administration,
 Federal Polytechnic, Oko - Anambra State
 Governance, Civil Society and Public Policy-Making in Nigeria:
 A Study of The 2010 Electoral Act
 Page No.: 74-88
- MATTHEW D. OGALI, PhD
 Department of Political & Practical Studies
 University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt
 The Developmental State, Infrastructure Collapse and Public
 Procurement Practice in Nigeria
 Page No.: 89-102

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PROVISION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

HASSANA OSEIWU ALI (PhD) & GLADYS PROMISE
Department of Science Education, Faculty of Education,
Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi State – Nigeria
Dept. of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counselling
University of Calabar P.M.B. 1115 Calabar

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the level of community participation in educational development programmes for exceptional children. The population of the study comprised all adult members in Ahoada East Local Government Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria, which is 282,410 and the sample size of 1000 was selected through simple random sampling techniques. Data were generated using a structured questionnaire and analysed using percentage, mean and standard deviation. The result of the study revealed that community participation in the provision of education for children with special needs is at a low level, as a result of several factors; lack of awareness about programmes of special education for exceptional children and people, insensitivity of relevant authorities to the plight of community members in terms of their needs to cope with exceptional children, and lack of sponsorship. Some strategies for improving community participation in special needs education were identified; the need for community enlightenment programmes, sponsorship of community members to various programmes of special education, and taking immunization campaign to the door steps of communities. Based on the findings some recommendations were made to Rivers State Government and development agencies in Nigeria for the implementation of education policy for special needs people in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Community participation, Educational Programmes, Special needs.*

Introduction

There is need for all- round involvement of stake holders in education to ensure high quality of education for the exceptional or special needs children as well as adults community members who are the first custodians of these groups of people. The higher percentage of exceptional children with special needs abound in our communities. This is because, some prevalent causes of impairments or disabilities are common in the rural areas, such as lack of adequate health facilities, ignorance, prolong protracted illness due to some superstitious beliefs which can eventually leads to disabilities, illiteracy and the likes. Community participation in special needs education will go a long way to solve the

problems of exceptional children or children with disabilities/impairments.

Special education as defined (National Policy on Education [NPE], 2004) is 'a formal special education training given to people (children and adults) with special needs'. Special education can therefore be defined as 'an area within the framework of general education that provides, appropriates facilities, specialized materials, methods, and teachers with specialized training for children considered handicapped (Ali, 2009). National policy on education further classified people with special needs into;

- I. Disabled people with impairments, such as hearing, mentally retarded, emotional disturbed, learning

- ii. disabled, multiple handicapped and etc
The disadvantaged – the children of nomadic pastorals, migrant fisher men, farmers and hunters.
- iii. The gifted and talented: people who Have/posses very high intelligent quotient and are naturally endowed with special traits, such as in arts, creativity, music, leadership, intellectual precocity, and therefore find themselves in sufficient challenged by the regular school/College/Universities programmes. The easy identification of three categories can easily be through community participation.

Chiefs, villagers and family heads of various communities can encourage parents with disabled, disadvantage and the gifted children to come forward for attention instead of hiding them as a result of shame and myths associated with such group of people. With the current trend of effort on community participation for sustainability development, the researchers are of the opinion that community participation in education of special needs children will add impetus to sustainable development and the seven – point's agenda of President Jonathan (2007). Since proper education of children with special needs will go a long way to bring about laudable achievements of the President.

It is hopeful that the result of this study will reveal the level of community participation and development in education of special needs children in Ahoda East Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

The need for community participation in provision of education for children with special needs was recognized by Obi (2005), the researcher pointed out the needs for community based vocations for children with special needs; the visually impaired and the handicapped with the belief

that after training, the handicapped will acquire the necessary skills which will help them to be able to live in the community, mix socially and if possible work among their people. The guidance counsellor attached to rehabilitation/vocational centres could easy follow – up services if the handicapped live among their people. More so, the local skills could easily be tapped by the resource men, sometimes free, they may get involved on humanitarian grounds for these needy brothers/sisters of theirs.

The advocacy for inclusive education can only be achieved effectively, if community members are involved in the process of the education. A good example of such is the momentum for the inclusive education movement derives from the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO's) it proclaims that regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all (UNESCO, 1994). Also, the article of the same print, advocates for educational policies at all levels; national and local, stipulates that a child with a disability should attend the neighbour school that he /she would have attended in the absence of disability (UNESCO, 1994). The concept of inclusive education as reflected in NPE (2004) is stated within the broader of the Universal Basics Education scheme. Ajuwo (2008) posited that, there is a growing recognition that including students with disabilities in general education can provide them with the opportunity to learn in natural, stimulating settings, which may also lead to increased acceptance and appreciation of differences. Therefore inclusive education as a preferred approach to responding to the needs of all students in ordinary schools could only be a reality, if community members as the first stakeholder partake effectively, hence the need

for this study.

Furthermore the use of positive reinforcement which can be used to facilitate general and better performance of those with disabilities can also be an effective approach when they live within their own people; who on daily basis give kudos to their performance as they returned from school. Positive reinforcement according to Skinner (1969) is a consequence that increases the frequency of a behaviour being emitted usually due to the accompanying reward. The different types of positive reinforcement should be used to enhance students' performance by teachers and parents, and other community members.

Statement of the problem

The need for high level of community participation in the provision of education for people with special needs in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. This level of community members' partnership in creating education for people with special needs is a function of many factors ranging from level of awareness on the provision of such education, lack of sponsors for community members to attend seminars and conferences, lack of attention by various agencies of governments which has direct link to the provision of special education for people with special needs and the non-provision of ICT programmes at the rural areas to cater for general education at pre-nursery, nursery, primary and secondary education, with the addition of special education as enshrine in national policy on education (2004). All these contributed immensely to the overall performance and care of children with special needs, under the tutelage/care of communities' members (Parents, Aunties/Uncles and Friends of children with special needs). The problem of the study therefore is that community members have not been participating adequately in the education of special needs children.

Theoretical framework

This study is an evaluation study, since it is aimed at finding the level of participation of communities' members in provision of education for special needs children and adult. There is a particular level of participation expected of them, whether this level is attain or not is the concern of this study. Therefore Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) evaluation theory is applicable. Andres Steinmetz propounded Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) in 1986. In order to evaluate something, we inevitably make comparisons. More specifically we say that to evaluate a given object; it must be compared to a standard. By a standard we mean a list or description or representation of the qualities or characteristics of how the object should possess. In other words, a description of how something should be is called the standard S. We can proceed to find out whether they are that way. When we are engaged to finding out the actual characteristics of the object to be evaluated. We are taking performance P. In a sense, evaluating is a matter of comparing S against P.

There is another term involved in the comparison between S and P. We say that the comparison yields Discrepancy D information, and thus can speak of evaluating as being a matter of making judgement about the worth or adequacy of an object based upon D information between S and P. The S, P, and D concepts can be shown to underlie any cybernetic process and much of human behaviour (Andres, 1986). The DEM evaluator was the facilitator of a process. The actual evaluators, in the sense of making the judgement of worth are the client as further explained by Andres (1986). Therefore, DEM programme evaluation is aimed at programme improvement. DEM is applicable to this study, because it involves finding out the level of participation of community members in the provision of education programme for special needs children and adult.

The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study therefore was to assess the level of community participation in special needs education and to recommend ways to improve the community participation in provision and development of special education programmes in Rivers State and Nigeria at large. Specifically, the study determines;

- (1) The extent to which communities engage in provision and development of special needs education.
- (2) Factors affecting community participation in provision and development of special education programmes
- (3) The strategies that could help to get community members participate in education of children with special needs.

Research questions:

The following research questions guided the study.

- (1) To what extent are community members involved in education programmes of children with special needs?
- (2) What are the likely factors affecting the level of participation of community members in provision of education programmes for people with special needs.
- (3) What strategies could be adopted to get community members participate in education of children with special needs?

Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey design. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which consisted of 18 items formulated in line with the research questions using a four point rating scale type. The response categories for research question one were Very Often Used (VOU), Often

Used (OU), Rarely Used (RU), and Not Often Used (NOU), while those for research questions two and three were Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The population of the study comprised of all community adult members in Ahoada East Local Government Area Rivers State which stood at 282,410 by the last population census (2006), of which a simple random sampling method was used to select 1000.

The instrument was validated by senior colleagues and they recommended that it was adequate for the study. 5 percent of the sample (50) of the questionnaire was pilot tested on those who did not partake in the study, and split-half reliability was used to analyse the data, using Pearson moment correlation and the result was 0.78, which was considered high enough for the instrument to be used for the study.

The researchers personally distributed and administer 1021 questionnaires to the subjects, of which 1006 was retrieved out of which only 1000 were properly filled.

The data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation. The cut-off mean was 2.50, and it was used to judge the Responses. That is, any item with mean score below 2.50 is not often used (N .O.U), while the item with mean score above 2.50 is often used (O.U) for research question one. While for research questions 2 and 3, the items with mean score above 2.50 were considered as agree, while those with mean score below 2.50 were considered as disagree.

Research question 1

To what extent are community members involved in education programmes of children with special needs?

Table 1: techniques that can be use for community participation in special needs education

S/N	ITEMS (Techniques that can be use for community participation in special education)	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
1.	Subscription to new information on educational programmes for people with special needs	1.84	0,34	N.O.U
2.	Seminars, conferences and workshops organized by various agencies (federal, state and local education ministry) and involving local members in attendance	1.95	0.60	N.O.U
3.	The chiefs, villagers, family heads and headmasters of rural schools are educated on the need to participate in education of people with special needs.	0.97	0.25	N.O.U
4.	Computer literacy programme and computer utilization in solving problems of people with special needs.	1.87	0.35	N.O.U
5.	Refresher training for teacher in our community schools and some members of the community	1.76	0.46	N.O.U

Cut – off Mean = 2.50

All the techniques that can be used to involve them in participating in education for children with special needs are not often used. Their means scores were below the cut-off mean score of 2.50; this is an indication that community members were not always involved in provision of education for children with special needs, which ought not to be so.

Research question 2

What are the likely factors affecting the level of participation of community members in provision of education programmes for people with special needs.

Table 2: factors affecting community members' participation in special needs education

S/N	Factors affecting community members participation in special needs education	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
6.	Lack of awareness about programmes of education for people with special needs	3.78	0.72	Agree
7.	Lack of sponsorship to embark on programmes of education for people with special needs	3.23	0.60	Agree
8.	Insensitivity of relevant agencies/authorities to the plight of communities in Nigeria	3.46	0.63	Agree
9.	Non- motivation of community members to embark on self help programmes.	2.09	0.60	Disagree
10.	Most communities' members cannot afford cost of educating their children with special needs in cities schools.	3.55	0.3	Agree
11	Non – provision of ICT facilities in rural schools teachers and members of the community.	3.89	0.41	Agree
12	Lack of enlightenment campaign in our communities by relevant agencies to eradicate some superstitious believes.	3.57	0.73	Agree

Cut-off Mean = 2.50

Source: Field work

Research question 3

What strategies could be adopted to get community members participate in education of children with special needs?

Table 3: strategies for getting community members participate in education of children with special needs.

13	Relevant authorities should see to the sponsorship of community members to various education programmes for peoples with special needs, such as seminar, conferences, workshops and ICT training Programme.	3.55	0.67	Agree
14	Community members should be encouraged by relevant authorities to belong and participate in the activities of relevant NGOs and professional bodies such as Natural council for exceptional children (NEC)	3.89	0.41	Agree
15	ICT facilities should be provided by government in our communities, especially in primary and secondary schools, even in community halls.	3.34	1.18	Agree
16	The relevant agencies responsible for maternal death reduction and prevention of polio related disease should embark on enlightenment campaigns in our communities, to encourage ante-natal/post-natal attendance and immunization programmes.	2.70	1.18	Agree
17	The relevant agencies and the NGOs should carry their enlightenment campaign programmes to the rural areas and immunization programmes.	2.70	0.71	Agree
18	Special education schools should be open in all local government headquarters in Nigeria.	3.40	1.05	Agree

Cut-off Mean = 2.50

Deductions from analysis: Table 1 presented above shows that all the items have their mean less than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This means that the techniques are not often used by the community members; neither do the relevant authorities encourage community participation in the provision of special education for people with special needs.

The data in table 2 showed that only one (item nine) have it mean less than the cut-off mean of 2.50, which states that non-motivation of community members to embark on self help programmes is one of the factors affecting the participation of community members in special education. This implies that this factor did not affect the participation of community members in provision of education programmes for peoples with special needs. However, the remaining seven items listed to seek opinion of respondents on factors responsible for their non-participation in provision of education programmes for peoples with special needs, have their mean above 2.50, which implies that the factors are actually responsible for non-participation of

the community members on programmes of education for people with special needs.

The data presented in table 3 indicated all the items have their mean above the cut-off mean of 2.50, which implies that all the items were accepted as strategies for improving and encouraging community members in participation or provision of education programmes for people with special needs.

Summary of findings

The following findings emerged from the study

1. Subscription to new information on education programmes for people with special needs is not often been used by community members.
2. Seminars, conferences, and workshops are not organized by the relevant agencies to involve community participation.
3. There is no regular organization to educate the chiefs, villagers and family heads, and headmasters of rural

- schools are often used to get them participated.
4. There is no computer literacy programmes, neither is there computer utilization in solving problems of people with special needs in our communities, so they cannot participated.
 5. Refresher training for teachers in communities' school and some members of our communities were not often being used by the relevant authorities.
- b) Community members should be encouraged by relevant agencies/authorities to belong and participate in the activities of NGOs and professional bodies such as National Council for exceptional children (NCEC).
 - c) ICT facilities should be provided in all our communities, especially our primary and secondary schools.
 - d) The relevant agencies responsible for maternal death reduction and prevention of polio related diseases should embarked on enlightenment campaigns and take these campaigns to our rural areas.
 - e) Special education schools should be cited in all local government headquarters in Nigeria.

As for factors militating against community participation in provision of education for people with special needs, the findings were as follow;

- I. Lack of awareness of education programmes for peoples with special needs.
- II. Lack of sponsorship to embark on programme of education for people with special needs.
- III. Insensitivity of relevant agencies/authorities to the plight of communities in Nigeria.
- IV. Most communities' members cannot afford cost of educating their children with special needs in city schools.
- V. Non-provision of ICT facilities in rural schools to encourage teachers and members of the community.
- VI. Lack of enlightenment campaign in our communities by relevant agencies/authorities to eradicate some superstitions believes affecting children with special needs.

Finally, all suggested strategies and solution to get community members involve in provision of education for people with special needs are:

- a) Relevant agencies/authorities should see to the sponsorship of community members to various education programmes for peoples with special needs, such as; seminars, conferences,

- workshops and ICT training Programme.
- b) Community members should be encouraged by relevant agencies/authorities to belong and participate in the activities of NGOs and professional bodies such as National Council for exceptional children (NCEC).
 - c) ICT facilities should be provided in all our communities, especially our primary and secondary schools.
 - d) The relevant agencies responsible for maternal death reduction and prevention of polio related diseases should embarked on enlightenment campaigns and take these campaigns to our rural areas.
 - e) Special education schools should be cited in all local government headquarters in Nigeria.

Discussions of findings

The data presented in table 1 provided answers to research question one which states thus 'to what extent are community members involved in education programmes for peoples with special needs?'. The findings showed that all the items are not often used or it has not been used at all to address the problem of non-participation in provision of education programmes for children with special needs. This finding is in support of the need for participation in provision of education for children with special needs; the Petroleum Trust Development Fund (PTDF) promised the Albino body in Nigeria one scholarship for the M. Sc degree programmes. In United States and during the 1st conference of stakeholders on Albino held in Abuja, the President of Albino Association in Nigeria ask for sympathy and compassion on Albinos (NTA News: 2009).

The need for concern, support and participation with provision of education and any other assistance for people with special

needs; this motivated the then Minister of Women affair and social development (Mrs Salametu Hussaini Suleiman) to provide for people with disabilities, materials, such as sewing machines, crutches and she added that there is the need for community based rehabilitation centres. This idea was supported by Tijani Muhammed Tanko who advocated for the physically challenge and asked for rehabilitation centres in Nigeria. This entire advocacy is pointing to the fact that there is ability in disabilities.

The findings in this study are also in agreement with the findings of Fujimoro, Hirose, and Uchida (2009) who found that the system for promoting special support education from central education council are related closely to promote special support education. In other words, any education plan/method should be tie to any support agencies/councils including the community members. In their two researches on the consideration of educational method based on the diversification of disabilities of special support education and the provision of education for children with special needs cannot be neglected as well as the participation of community members to aid the provision cannot also be over emphasized. It is then recommended that Rivers State and Federal governments should take our recommendations for effective educational services for children with special needs, especially at the grass roots levels.

Answer to research question two revealed that all factors enumerated are actually responsible, except non-motivation of community members to embark on self help programmes. In other words, if every other factor are taking care of, the chiefs, family heads and the headmaster can encourage themselves and their communities to embarked on self help projects to utilized the amenities and the facilities provided by the relevant agencies/authorities to the barest maximum.

Findings in research question three (What strategies could be adopted to get community members participate in education

of children with special needs?), all the items are accepted as strategies or solutions for solving the problems of non-participation by community members in provision of education programmes for people with special needs. These problems which includes lack of awareness, lack of sponsorship, insensitivities of the relevant agencies/authorities, and the need for special education were highlighted in the recommendations.

Conclusion / Recommendations

The need for community participation in provision of education has been established in the study. There is no argument as per the fact that there are constrains militating against community, and the suggested solutions could help to solve the problems associated provision of education for peoples with special needs. The following recommendations were then made;

- 1 Relevant authorities should see to the sponsorship of community members to various programmes of education for children with special needs.
- 2 Community members should be given adequate incentives and financial assistance to take care of children with special needs.
- 3 Mass literacy agencies and NGOs should take their campaign to the rural areas to create awareness.
- 4 The state/federal government should provide ICT facilities in all the local government headquarters in Nigeria for a start.
- 5 Special education centres or schools should be open in all the local headquarters in Nigeria.
- 6 The relevant authorities (local/state/federal) should sponsor members of the communities and the teachers who are yet combining the regular children with special needs to give attention to exceptional children with respect to education.

References

- Ajuwo, P. M. (2008). Inclusive education for students with disabilities in Nigeria: Benefits, Challenges and Policy Implication. *International Journal of Special Education*, 11-17.
- Andres, S. (1986). The discrepancy evaluation model. In G. F. Madus, M. S. Scriven, & D. L. Stublebeam (Eds.). *Evaluation models: Viewpoints of educational and human services evaluation*. New York: Kluwer – Nijhoff.
- Akwa - Ibom State Ministry of Education (2009). Special education centres for exceptional children. Retrieved from the net on 26th June, 2009 at <http://www.akwaibomstate.gov.com/min-Ed4html>.
- Ali, H. O. (2009). Special needs education, an unpublished lecture notes. Nigeria: Imo State University
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Nigeria: Federal Printing Press.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2006). *National population census*. Nigeria: Nation Population Commission.
- Furimo, H., Hirose, Y., & Uchida, T. (2009). Study on promotion of "Effective educational support system and exchange and cooperative study for children with disabilities in elementary and lower-secondary schools. Retrieved from the net on 10th July, 2009 at www.nise.go.jp/eseach/project.html/top.
- Goodluck, J. E. (2007). Seven – point agenda of the federal government. Nigeria: Press released by the presidency August 2007 retrieved from
- file:///c:/users/desltop/seven_point_agenda.html
- Obi, F. B. (2005). *Essentials of special education needs*. Calabar – Nigeria: Klentin Printers Publishers.
- Skinner, B. F. (1969). *Contingences of reinforcement*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Suleiman, S. H. (2009). On providing for people with disabilities. Nigeria: National Television Authority (NTA) news.
- Tanko, T. M. (2009). An advocacy for the physically challenge. Nigeria National Television Authority (NTA) news.
- Petroleum Trust Development Fund (2009). *Albino Advocacy: Fighting against discrimination*. Nigeria: National Television Authority (NTA) news.
- UNESCO(1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Adopted by the World Conference on special needs education: Access and Quality. Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June