
BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study is a survey design that investigated the benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Education of All (EFA) is a globally committed arrangement coordinated by UNESCO with laudable goals of realizing the educational needs of all persons irrespective of their diverse abilities and disabilities. One of the most important challenges in education is to develop an inclusive curriculum as well as create and nurture inclusive environments that support learning for all kinds of learners. The pressing global need to ensure that children of nature are accommodated with equal exposure and attention irrespective of their various physical, social, emotional and communication conditions. The degree to which learners can be well educated in an inclusive setting is directly correlated to the nature of the curriculum and the system or manner with which these challenges are handled. Using the purposive sampling technique, a total number of 400 respondents comprising of 200 from Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education (AIFUE) and 200 from Imo State University (IMSU), were selected to represent the entire population which the researcher could not accurately ascertain during the

time of this work. A researcher structured four-point Likert scale questionnaire titled *Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institution in Nigeria (BCICTIN)* was used for data collection and the data collected were analyzed with the mean and standard deviation at 2.50 decision mark while the independent z-test was used in testing the hypotheses. The result revealed that there is no significant differences between the mean score of psychology Lecturers in AIFUE and those in IMSU on the benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The researchers recommended that the government should sufficiently fund inclusive education activities to the lecturers and learners and make it practice based, special training for lecturers and staff of inclusive education, extensive public enlightenment for inclusive education etc.

Key words: *Inclusive Education, Inclusive Curriculum, Tertiary Institutions, Psychologists*

Introduction

Education is a vital tool for the acquisition of knowledge and skills for social change and transformation as well as national development. To this effect, it is a necessity as well as a right to every citizen of Nigeria regardless of gender, tribe, abilities, disabilities and economic status and this is evidenced by the various international summits, laws and policies which led to the globally accepted declaration on “Education For All” (EFA). Nigeria attended the international summit on “Education a Priority” where the idea of Education for All was coordinated and launched by UNESCO (1990) and this is a demonstration that Nigeria means well for her citizen. Formal education is one of the advantages of colonization and Nigeria has continued to show interest in the education of her citizenry and has actually been enjoying the benefits of western education on individual and for national development (Hassan & Shehu, 2022). According to Obizue & Obizue (2018), education is a basic human right and essential tool for the application of other

rights towards socio-economic development of the individual and nation at large therefore every child should be allowed equal access to it as it serves as a great empowerment strategy that yields a lot of important benefits. Adefila & Onoja (2018) sees education as a basic need to all citizens of Nigeria in order to equip all with the required development of their potential towards achieving some national developmental goals. The importance of education cannot be overemphasized because it produces the right personnel that will occupy the various service centers of the nation to drive the developmental processes. Colman (2013) affirms that “Education for All” is a world agreed system of education which is expansive and inclusive in nature. He further emphasized that the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has given preference to inclusion as the best educational approach to attending to all kinds of children with different kinds of needs in the same

educational setting. Now the point is, if education is actually the right of all manner of children with all forms of abilities, disabilities and various special needs, there should also be an arrangement to welcome all and sundry to have equal access to same kind of education at same environment. Inclusive education answers the question. Before now, our children with disabilities are been segregated from the normal class setting where their normal peers are. The idea of “education for all” via inclusion is what reduced and would finally terminate the era of exclusion or segregation in our school system. Disability is a consequence of an impairment which may be visible, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional development or a combination of all or some of these that may have occurred right from birth or by accident and circumstances during the person’s life time.

Nwamtio (2013), Egbule (2014), and Uzoamaka (2022) observed that inclusive education accepts all children without exception or discrimination into the neighbourhood school where they ought to ordinarily attend. In this way, we will be redirecting our value system as Nigerians and becoming nation-conscious for socio-economic development. In validation to this, Obani (2006) and Vincent (2012) admitted that inclusiveness in education enables the special needs children to have equal access to affordable and relevant education within the normal educational setting with their counterparts in the society. Inclusive education system has the capacity to reach out to learners with diverse need hence it

responds to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in leading and reducing exclusion within education.

The 21st century has ushered in a new era of globalization, technological advancements, and unprecedented interconnectedness, underscoring the imperative of fostering inclusive, diverse, and equitable learning environments that cater to the needs of a rapidly evolving global community Mastina & Gusman (2023). Nigeria is a nation renowned for its rich cultural heritage, linguistic diversity, and a burgeoning youthful population and her tertiary institutions are uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role in shaping the minds of future generations and driving socio-economic development. Within this context, the pursuit of inclusive curriculum development in Nigerian tertiary institutions is a multifaceted endeavor that seeks to create learning environments that value, respect, and celebrate diversity in all its forms. By integrating diverse perspectives, experiences, and epistemologies into the curriculum, educators can foster a sense of belonging, promote social cohesion, and empower students to become active participants in the global community. Akaleme (2014) averred that inclusive approach to education has the potential to yield numerous benefits, including improved academic outcomes, increased student engagement, and a more nuanced understanding of the complex issues that shape our world.

Dike (2017), Ayodele (2018), Obizue & Obizue (2018) and Hassan & Shehu (2022)

exposed that the development of inclusive curricula in Nigerian tertiary institutions is a complex and challenging task. The legacy of colonialism, the impact of socio-economic disparities, and the prevalence of cultural biases in educational systems all pose significant obstacles to the creation of inclusive learning environments. Furthermore, the dearth of resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of trained educators equipped to navigate the complexities of inclusive education further exacerbate the challenge. Ayodele (2018) asserted that, despite these challenges, the importance of inclusive curriculum development in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overstated. By embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion, these institutions can produce graduates who are better equipped to navigate the complexities of a globalized world, contribute to the socio-economic development of their communities, and become agents of positive change in their societies. Moreover, inclusive curriculum development can help to promote social justice, challenge dominant narratives, and foster a more nuanced understanding of the complex issues that shape our world.

This article seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on inclusive education in Nigeria by exploring the benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum development in tertiary institutions. Through a nuanced examination of the opportunities and obstacles that educators, policymakers, and stakeholders face in creating inclusive learning environments, this article aims to provide insights that can inform policy, pedagogical

practice, and future research in this critical area of educational development. By shedding light on the complexities and potentialities of inclusive curriculum development, this article hopes to inspire a new wave of educational innovation that can help Nigeria's tertiary institutions become beacons of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In exploring the benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum development in Nigerian tertiary institutions, this article will examine the current state of inclusive education in Nigeria, highlighting the progress that has been made and the challenges that remain. It will also discuss the theoretical frameworks and pedagogical approaches that underpin inclusive curriculum development, providing insights into the ways in which educators can create learning environments that are inclusive, diverse, and equitable. Furthermore, the article will explore the role of policy and leadership in promoting inclusive curriculum development, highlighting the ways in which policymakers and institutional leaders can support educators in their efforts to create inclusive learning environments.

Ultimately, this article aims to contribute to the development of a more inclusive and equitable educational system in Nigeria, one that values, respects, and celebrates diversity in all its forms. By exploring the benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum development in tertiary institutions, this article hopes to inspire a new wave of educational innovation that can help Nigeria's tertiary institutions become models

of inclusivity, diversity, and equity, and empower students to become active participants in the global community.

The general purpose of this study is to examine the benefits and challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. examine the current practices of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria
2. identify the benefits of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria
3. determine the challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

To achieve the specific research objectives the following research questions were posed to guide this study;

1. What are the current practices of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
2. What are the various benefits inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges facing inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

In line with the research objectives and questions, a null hypothesis was formulated thus.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference on the mean responses of Lecturers of AIFCE and IMSU on the current practices, benefits and

challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria

Conceptual Dialectics

For the purpose of proper understanding, some concepts are clarified in this section

Inclusive Curriculum

Inclusive curriculum is a comprehensive approach to curriculum development that values, respects and celebrates diversity in all its forms. It aims at creating a learning environment that is welcoming, supportive and inclusive for all students regardless of background, culture, language, identity and ability.

Inclusive education is a skill and the direct opposite of exclusive system of education where normal children are segregated from their disabled counterparts.

According to UNESCO (2005) inclusive curriculum is seen as responding to diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within education. Inclusive education system has the capacity to reach out to learners with diverse need thereby giving all children equal right to quality education that caters for their individual needs (Godman & Ahmed, 2017). The main aim of inclusive education is that special need children should have equal access to normal school experience with the needed support and attention while being educated within the same educational environment alongside other child that may not have any need or even have dissimilar need and this involves

developing curriculum that is inclusive and collaborative.

Inclusive curriculum is internationally recognized as a philosophy for attaining equity, justice and equality in education for all children, especially those who have been excluded from education for the reason of disabilities (Dike, 2017). Obizue & Obizue (2018) agreed that the major aim of inclusive education is to enable the special need children have equal access to affordable and relevant education within the normal educational setting with their counterparts in the society.

Current Practices of Inclusive Curriculum in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Inclusive curriculum practices in Nigerian tertiary institutions have made some notable progress in promoting diversity and accessibility. According to Egbulie (2014), Okwuchukwu (2014), Adefila & Onoja (2018) and Ayush & Jetroni (2022), the following are some current practices of inclusive education in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Inclusive Curriculum Development

Some institutions are developing curricula that cater for diverse student needs by incorporating inclusive perspectives and promoting cultural responsiveness.

Support Services

Various universities are presently establishing support centers and programs for

students with disabilities such as language interpretation and assistive technology.

Digital Literacy

Different tertiary institutions are incorporating digital literacy into their curriculum to empower some students with foundational competencies required for academic success in online and onsite learning environments.

Institutional Strategies for Disability Inclusion

Some tertiary institutions are explicitly mentioning disability inclusion in their objectives and positively pursuing and supporting same with comprehensive strategies notwithstanding the attending challenges.

Benefits of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

According to Egbulie (2014), Okwuchukwu (2014), Adefila & Onoja (2018) and Ayush & Jetroni (2022), inclusive curriculum will be beneficial in the following ways;

Preparation for Future Adult Life

Children that school under an inclusive setting are better opportune because they are highly prepared against the diverse perspectives, experiences and challenges inherent in our inclusive society that they will surely meet in their adult life time thus enabling them to navigate and contribute to a multicultural real world society

Empowerment of Marginalised Students with Equal Opportunity to Teaching and Learning

The philosophy of inclusive education is aimed at helping all children to be exposed and learn in the class, shares facilities equally and benefits together. Children learn at their own pace and style within an inclusively monitored learning environment. Inclusive education empowers students from different backgrounds, including those with disabilities, ethnic minorities and disadvantages backgrounds, by providing them with equal opportunities to receive effectual educational services.

Realization of Family Vision

Family's visions of a typical life or profession for their children are easily realized as children school with their peers get empowered. All parents want their children to be accepted by their peers, have friends and live normal, meaningful regular lives, inclusive settings can make this vision a reality for many children with hearing disabilities.

Acquisition of Academic Knowledge and Improved Academic Performance

In inclusive classrooms, children with and without disabilities are expected to learn how to read, write, and possess some vital academic skills and competences. With higher expectations and good instructional supervision children with disabilities learn and acquire academic skills and do have greater outcomes. Again, students are exposed to the richness of general education

curriculum leading to better learning and improved academic performance.

Development of Positive Understanding

When children are exposed to classes that reflect the similarities and differences of people in the real world, they learn to appreciate and accept individual similarities and diversities and begin to develop a positive understanding of themselves and other people around them. Relating with children of different abilities and cultures makes one to appreciate and respect others.

Social Benefits of Developing Friendship and other Relationship

Inclusive education is a setting that encourages children to learn together with other children with and without disabilities and by so doing develop meaningful friendships and social skills that will be useful in their life time. It creates opportunity for students to develop relationships, improve in their social behavioural life style thereby enhancing their social cognitive leading to a harmonious society. This helps to reduce social differences and promote social equality and cohesion

The Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Inclusive curriculum practices in Nigeria is still evolving but challenges persist. It is true that Nigeria is one of the signatories of the Jomtien (1990) on education for All (EFA), she is still struggling to respond fully to the demands of EFA. In respect of this, the Federal Government has called on every

government to provide free compulsory basic education to every child of school age including the less privileged but there is still this traditional discriminating, uncaring and unconcern attitudes of Nigerians towards the children with disabilities especially as it relates to their education. Apart from the challenge of stigmatization and discrimination, the other challenges facing inclusive development in Nigerian tertiary institutions include; (Egbulie (2014), Okwuchukwu (2014), Adefila & Onoja (2018) and Ayush & Jetroni (2022),

Insufficient Human and Material Resources

The major challenge of inclusive education is the issue of dearth of qualified human resources and material for efficient implementation of quality education to the hearing impaired persons in our inclusive schools. Obani (2006) opined that there are not enough special education teachers who will appropriately handle the challenges of impaired learner and give them the specially desired and deserved attention. Close to this is the fact that the little special teachers we have are not even appreciated by way of motivational incentives to encourage them to keep fit in doing best towards the impaired children that they are handling. Lack or insufficiency of the special education materials like the hearing aids, sign apparatus and modern technologies is another challenge. There are no up-to-date teaching devices and poor and devastated infrastructure is another challenge that needs attention. It takes a teacher that is specially

trained to be able to apply the new technology gadgets and understand the various needs of the hearing impaired persons in order to give them the right direction that will enhance their talents towards success in their academic endeavors.

Inadequate Funding

Special education is a capital intensive project and the federal and various state governments have not been able to fund it sufficiently as a result of this, it has been very difficult to procure the needed equipment and material for efficient service delivery and well the teacher are not adequately remunerated talk of giving them the necessary motivation they deserve. Obizue and Obizue (2018) opined that the funding of special education has been a problem in countries that have negative perception of education of children with disabilities and further explained that insufficient investment in tertiary education in Nigeria hinders the development and implementation of inclusive curriculum policies and programmes.

Inefficiency of the Supervisory Body

There is always a body charged with the supervisory function over the education of special needs children but the problem is that the board has been inefficient in the discharge of its duties. Okoro and Obizue (2016) asserted that it is the responsibility of the board to create awareness of inclusive education, ensure appropriate allocation and application of fund, protect the right of the disabled children who in most cases are being

segregated and denied admission and even when they are given admitted, they suffer a lot in the hand of the school administrators., teachers and peers just because no one is serious in supervision to know how these disabled learners are being attended to. According to Aisf, safdar & Ali (2020), various studies have exposed the unwarranted discriminating and marginalizing attitude of teachers and other learner against the disabled learners within their environment. There is also poor formulation and implementation of policies regarding inclusive education in Nigeria. The supervisory body has not being able to carry out regular census to identify the number of in and out-of-school children that are able and disabled as this will help in efficient planning and decision making concerning their affairs. Some of these efforts will help reduce the menace of poverty, street stealing and begging. Ordinary public awareness will do a lot good in shifting attention to inclusive education system loaded with high entrepreneurial education to enhance the capacities of the hearing impaired persons towards nation building.

Inadequate Data and Corruption

Lack of accurate data on students with disabilities makes it difficult to tailor support services to their needs. The supervisory body has not being able to carry out regular census to identify the number of in and out-of-school children that are able and disabled as this will help in efficient planning and decision making concerning their affairs. Brain drain and corruption have also exacerbated the

challenges facing inclusive curriculum development in Nigeria.

Method

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study is made up of all the academic staff of the Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education (AIFUE) and Imo State University (IMSU) respectively. This study adopted the purposive sampling technique in selecting 400 respondents comprising of 200 Lecturers from AIFUE and 200 from IMSU to whom the researcher-made questionnaire was administered. This study specified three objectives which was aligned with three research questions and one hypothesis. The instrument titled Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institution in Nigeria (BCICTIN) structured rating scale was subjected to face and content validation by the expert judgement of four academic experts; two from psychology, one from measurement and evaluation and one from educational administration. The questionnaire was arranged into three sections serving specific purposes within the context of the research objectives. The first section was dedicated to collect demographic information about the respondents. Section two comprised twelve items designed in three clusters of four questions each which were in consonance with the three specific objectives in this study. Each of these questions are accompanied with four-point Likert scale response format of SA for strongly agree, A for Agree, D for Disagree and SD for strongly disagree. Using the Person Product

Correlation coefficient formula, the questionnaire recorded a reliability coefficient value of 0.89 and this was reconfirmed through the Cronbach Alpha method and also obtained a validity index of 0.87. Having confirmed that the instrument is reliable by the two close reliability coefficients, it was then

administered face to face to the 400 respondents by the researchers who elicited information from the 387 respondents that complied. The data collected were analysed with mean and standard deviation and the single null hypothesis was tested using the z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results are presented in tables according to the research questions.

Research Question One

What are the current practices of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Table 1: The Mean Score of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU on the Current Practices of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	AIFUE LECTURERS		IMSU LECTURERS		AVERAGE	REMARKS
		X	SD	X	SD	X	
1	Developing curricula that cater for diverse student needs by incorporating inclusive perspectives and promoting cultural responsiveness	2.75	1.07	2.64	0.90	2.70 0.99	Accepted
2	Establishment of support centers and programs for students with disabilities such as language interpretation and assistive technology	2.91	1.17	2.80	1.11	2.86 1.14	Accepted
3	Disability inclusion in institutions' objectives and positively pursuing and supporting same with comprehensive strategies	2.78	1.09	2.73	1.00	2.76 1.05	Accepted

	notwithstanding the attending challenges.							
4	Incorporating digital literacy into institutions' curriculum to empower some students with foundational competencies required for academic success in online and onsite learning environments.	2.68	0.97	2.73	1.00	2.71	0.99	Accepted
Grand Scores		2.78	1.08	2.73	1.00	2.76	1.04	

Table 1 above presents the responses from Lecturers of AIFCE and IMSU on the current practices of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institution in Nigeria and it revealed that the respondents accepted items 1 to 4 as the current practices of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This is because all the items scored above the 2.5 critical value. This result is further validated by the grand mean score of 2.76 which is higher than the 2.5 critical value thus implying that inclusive curriculum is practised in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Research Question Two

What are the benefits of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Table 2: The Mean Score of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU on the Benefits of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	AIFUE LECTURERS		IMSU LECTURERS		AVERAGE		REMARKS
		X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
5	It provides equal opportunities to students from different backgrounds with disabilities, ethnic minorities and disadvantages backgrounds, to receive effectual educational services	2.91	1.17	2.80	1.11	2.86	1.14	Accepted

6	Equal opportunity to teaching and learning in same environment towards the acquisition of academic knowledge and improved academic performance	2.77	1.05	2.80	2.79	1.08	Accepted	
				1.11				
7	Development of relationships and improved social life style and social cognitive which reduces social differences, promotes social equality and cohesion and fosters a harmonious society.	2.75	1.07	2.73	1.00	2.74	1.04	Accepted
8	Prepares students against the diverse perspectives, experiences and challenges inherent in our inclusive society that they will surely meet in their adult life time thus enabling them to navigate and contribute to a multicultural real world society	2.64	0.92	2.68	0.97	2.66	0.95	Accepted
Grand Scores		2.77	1.05	2.75	1.05	2.76	1.05	

Table 2 represents the responses of Lecturers of AIFCE and IMSU on the benefits of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institution in Nigeria. A critical look at the result showed that all the items in table 2 recorded mean scores higher than the 2.5 critical value and this indicates that both sets of Lecturers perfectly agreed to the fact that item numbers 5 to 8 are the benefits of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Table 2 revealed that the grand mean and standard deviation scores as 2.76 and 1.05 respectively laid credence to the result.

Research Question Three

What are the challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Table 3: The Mean Score of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU on the Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	AIFUE LECTURERS		IMSU LECTURERS		AVERAGE		REMARKS
		X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
9	Insufficiency and poor motivation of inclusive education teachers	2.64	0.90	2.75 1.07		2.70 0.99		Accepted
10	Inadequate funding and poor budget allocation by federal and state governments in Nigeria	2.78	1.09	2.73 1.00		2.76 1.05		Accepted
11	Adequate care of the children with rejected Special needs	2.09	0.41	2.31 0.23		2.20 0.32		Rejected
12	Poor infrastructure and lack of modern inclusive education teaching devices	2.60	0.89	2.73 1.00		2.67 0.89		Accepted
Grand Scores		2.53	0.82	2.63	0.83	2.58	0.83	

In table 3 above, we can see the responses of AIFUE and IMSU Lecturers on the challenges of inclusive education Nigerian tertiary institutions and the result showed that the means scores for items 9, 10 and 12 are above the critical mean of 2.5 hence accepted as the challenges facing inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. However, item 11 recorded an average mean score of 2.20 below the critical value and this gives credence for its rejection. This implies that all the Lecturers accepted items 9, 10 and 12 but rejected item 11 as the challenges of inclusive education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In conclusion, it is obvious that despite the benefits of inclusive curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institution, there are still some challenges limiting its effective practice.

Testing of Null Hypothesis

H₀: there is no significant difference between the mean score of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU on the Current Practices, Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institution in Nigeria

Table 4: Summary of Z-test Analysis on the Mean Responses of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU on the Current Practices, Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Subjects	N ₄₀₀	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
AIFUE Lecturers	200	2.69	0.98	387	1.17	1.96	Accepted
IMSU Lecturers	200	2.70	0.96				

The data on table 4 showed the summaries of the scores, means, standard deviations and the z-test of difference between the mean responses of Lecturers of AIFUE and IMSU Lecturers on the current practices, benefits and challenges of Inclusive Curriculum in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. The data revealed that the z-test calculated value stood at 1.17 while the z-critical showed a higher value of 1.96, hence the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that both sets Lecturers shared the same view that the practice of inclusive curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions enjoy some profound benefits but are also limited by some challenges. Given this position, it is therefore concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of Lecturers of AIFCE and that of IMSU on the current practices, benefits and challenges of Inclusive curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. the null hypothesis is hereby accepted and it is hereby concluded that, the benefits of inclusive curriculum notwithstanding, the are still some challenges facing its practice in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study empirically examined the practices, benefits and challenges of inclusive curriculum development tertiary institutions in Nigeria using AIFUS and IMSU as case studies. There are three research question involved in this study. The

first research question tried in establishing the current practices of inclusive education the various tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the second revealed the benefits while the third showed the various challenges of inclusive curriculum in tertiary education in Nigeria. As shown in the results from the first and second research questions, the responses of

the respondents indicated that inclusive curriculum is currently practiced in Nigerian tertiary institutions and the practice has a lot of benefits on the academic performance of the students and also have profound impact on the tertiary education system in Nigeria. These result gained the support of scholars like Egbulie (2014), Okwuchukwu (2014), Adefila & Onoja (2018) and Ayush & Jetroni (2022) just to mention a few who in their assertions stated that inclusive curriculum is beneficial to Nigerian Tertiary education sector. The result did not stop at that but also exposed in table 3 that there are some inherent challenges facing the practice of inclusive education in tertiary sector of Nigerian education system. The above findings also agree with the view of Obizue and Obizue (2018) as they observed that poor funding, insufficient resource personnel and infrastructure and policy implementation are major barriers to inclusive education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Education is as essential as empowering all and sundry with necessary knowledge and skills to better their lives and contribute significantly to national development. It is obvious that inclusive education is an educational reform for individual development and empowerment of all persons for their sustainable and better livelihood as well as overall economic growth in Nigeria. Therefore inclusive education must be given due attention and necessary awareness thereby protecting the "right to education" of the all the citizens in

this country as effective implementation of this programme will definitely achieve the major goals of sustainable development in Nigeria. To eradicate the issues of unemployment, poverty, hunger, dependable lifestyle and dwindling economy, every well meaning nation has no option than to absolutely pursue the reorientation of our value system and begin to embrace quality inclusive system of education in order to equip the disabled persons alongside with the able ones towards national development.

The feasibility of education for all (EPA) through inclusive education of the persons in Nigeria anchors mostly on the removal of the barriers to inclusion like the stigmatization and discrimination of the disabled persons which must be fully eliminated if this the goals of this system will ever be realized. In line With this reasoning, it therefore becomes important for all Nigerian to welcome the every person as bonafide citizens of this country while noting that they have equal right to quality education in same environment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends thus;

The government is advised to make adequate budget allocation for funding of inclusive education sufficient provision of new technology teaching and learning aids if ever extensive education will thrive.

1. Government should engage in extensive public enlightenment campaigns to sensitise the citizenry of

the rights and privileges of the all persons to equal educational opportunity no matter their nature and peculiarities.

2. Teachers and guidance and counselors should be adequately and specially trained and prepared to be able to attend to the diverse needs inherent in an inclusive arrangement

3. Learners and graduates of inclusive education should reciprocate by acting as counselors and mentors to their special need counterparts thereby encouraging and motivating them to be educated for their individual livelihood and sustainable national development in Nigeria.

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