

INCLUSIVENESS OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: PREDICTIVE FACTOR FOR IMPROVED LEARNING OUTCOME OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS IN CALABAR METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This study investigated inclusiveness of school environment and learning outcome of students with physical impairment in Calabar Metropolis. The study determined the relationship, composite and relative contribution of adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude to learning outcome of students with the disability. Three null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study, the study adopted survey research design. The population for the study was 150 persons physical impairments who are members JONAPWDs in Calabar Metropolis and 50 of them who are students in public secondary schools were sampled using purposive and convenience technique. The instrument for data collection was a 20 item self-designed questionnaire tagged Inclusive School Environment and Learning Outcome (ISELO) was used, Cronbach Alpha method was used to determined reliability and it yielded high internal consistency reliability of 0.85. The data collected were statistically analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and multiple regression analysis. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level and the result showed that the adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude has there was significant relationship with learning outcome of students with physical impairments just like the variables have significant contribution. Based on the findings, it was recommended that, government, school administrators and other stakeholders should ensure that school structures, facilities, environment are architecturally accessible, inclusive teachers' attitudes and instructional activities carried out in compliance with global standards for inclusion to meet the needs of all students inclusive of those with physical impairment.

Key words: Inclusiveness, Physical Impairment, Learning Environment, Adaptation & Disability



Introduction

Inclusiveness of schools as learning environment is based on the fundamental right of all learners to quality education that meets their basic learning needs and encourages their personal development. The diversity in their background and abilities is considered as opportunity to learn rather than a barrier (Lidor & Hutzler, 2019, Garland, 2012 & Lindsay, 2003). The inclusiveness of school environment as conceived here simply means schools plant that are to a reasonable extent or completely free from architectural, mobility, social and psychological barriers that hinder effective, efficient and equal participation of students with physical impairments in all school activities. According to Ozoji (2005), Koeny (2019), schools with inclusive learning environment are those that their physical structure (buildings and school layout), social structure (inter- personal relationship among members of the school community including those with disabilities) psychological structure (attitude, belief system and how others perceived self-image of person with disabilities) and curriculum architecture) are adjusted to be disability-friendly. They are learning environments where students with every ability level receive teaching in the same place and progress at their pace. Fundamentally, inclusive school recognizes all students' entitlement to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers, anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences. Schools environment can only be made inclusive when there are enforceable legislation, implementable policy and government strong political will and commitment.

A survey of infrastructure in Nigeria public school system by Ozoji (2023), Orim, Ikwen and Ewa (2021) show that even with passage of the Discrimination Against persons with Disability Prohibition Act, 2019, school environment still poses access-limitations to students with physical impairments; as they are many architectural and mobility barriers in schools. They are many adaptation strategies such as provision of ram, expansion of office,

lecture hall/theater doors that can be used as interim-measures within the window period of the aforementioned act. This means that inclusive of school environment can simply be achieved through adapted infrastructure, assessment strategies, co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes (Valle-Florez, Fuertes, Bello, & Marcos-Santiago (2023). This is why Orim, Ikwen and Ewa (2021) observed that learning outcome of students with disabilities is influenced by inclusiveness of their learning environment.

The present Nigeria education system is a negation of Salamanca Declaration of 1994, National Policy on Education, National Policy on Inclusive Education and National Policy on Special Needs Education. As noted by Al-Houz (2017), this has undermined the vision, goal and philosophy of aforementioned Policies just like educational and personal fulfillment of students with physical impairment. The author further observed that non-inclusive learning environment systematically puts students with disabilities at disadvantage position and are unable to compete with their peers without disabilities and gives them a false sense of poor self-concept and learned helplessness.

Students with physical impairment encountered personal, psychological, mobility and architectural challenges in school environment that affect their participation in academic activities. To address these challenges, they need and depend on adapted, special materials or equipment, improved teachers attitudes to learn and perform other routine functions required to live as fulfilled students and responsible citizens. Architectural infrastructure or designs are significant aspect of an inclusive school as a result the success of the teaching and learning process is largely dependent on how sensitive the building designs are to the needs and peculiarity of learners. However, the building designs of inclusive schools in some countries are yet to comply with the Salamanca's statement on building schools that do not constitute barriers to the learners (Kayffman & Hallahan 2000, Ozoji, 2023).

Burgstahler (2007) posited that the building designs of most inclusive schools

completely discriminate against students with physical impairment; as they are usually inflexible and often not adapted to respond to changes in the psychological or bodily functioning of most students. The outcome is often that most students are unable to function in such environment that this placed them unto dependence on others to enable their access to, and use of different parts of the school and materials. Scanford (2019) asserted that adapted architectural designs have the potential to enhance performance and participation of students with physical impairment while it militates the stigma and segregation that often-characterized traditional architectural designs. More so, accessibility of students with physical impairment to educational environment is imperative for successful learning and attainment of academic goals and it also served as an opportunity for these students to compete favourably with their peers and meet self-set goals.

Mulligan, Calder and Mulligan (2018) submitted that the built environment can facilitate or impede an individual's ability to participate in the educational activities in inclusion. Physical features within the school that we take for granted may constitute serious problems for students with physical impairment mostly because they were not considered in designing those features. Ntui (2016) reiterated that students' achievement can be affected either positively or negatively by the architectural component of the school. He posited that the physical structures of inclusive schools provide a mechanism for transmitting ideas and fosters individualism, creativity and self-esteem. Therefore, if all these must be achieved then the physical structure of the schools in an inclusive setting must embrace different categories of children particularly those with physical impairment. The author further opined that, students in a restrictive learning environment are posed with challenges of dependence on other peers and teachers and this affect their learning negatively.

Besides the architectural accessibility, critical to the success of inclusive schools learning environment for students with physical

impairment is adapted assessment strategies and principles. Assessment remains a very important activity and phase in identification process of persons with disabilities as educational programmes, placement, etc are determined just as evaluation of mastery of content area is anchor on it. Assessing students with physical impairment is one of the most challenging and yet misunderstood aspects of teaching students in inclusive schools. Consequently, most students with physical impairments struggle with assessment processes testing situations and strategies and cannot compete with counterpart students. By inclusive standards, assessment processes and strategies are to be adapted to the students' needs to use reasonable accommodations (Orim, 2018). Assessment format and strategies provide students with opportunities to demonstrate skills and understanding to content taught in the classroom.

Watson (2018) submitted that students with physical impairment are at greater risk of underperformance when less diverse and adapted assessment strategies are employed in assessment for diagnosis and instruction. The use of paper-and pencil-task should be at the bottom of the list of assessment strategies for many students with problem in mobility and manual dexterity as it will not alone impact negatively on the learning outcome of those students but also deviate from the principle of inclusivity of modern schools' system. Unfortunately, most inclusive schools still used one-size fit all approach in assessment of this category of students. Consequently, they often perform poorly because teachers do not always consider and provide for their unique needs in assessment process.

Inclusive school environment requires adopted programme on co-curricular activities because it plays a pivotal role in the inclusive learning and holistic development of students with physical impairment. Adapted co-curricular activities as feature of inclusive school learning environment are defined as the activities that accommodate the needs of all students and enable the teachers to supplement and complement the curricular or main syllabi activities. Students' theoretical knowledge gets

strengthened when a relevant adapted co-curricular activity is organized related to the content taught in the classroom. However, students with physical impairment are at risk of limited participation with others in most schools as co-curricular activities do not accommodate their interest and needs such restriction has significant lifetime consequences on achievement, quality of life and wellbeing (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt & Oort, 2011; Cheryan, Ziegler, Plaut & Meltzoh, 2014). Therefore, students with physical impairment should always be incorporated in the co-curricular activities with other students.

Another variable that is instrumental to the learning outcome of students with physical impairment and depict inclusiveness of schools as learning environment is the inclusive attitude of teachers towards all students including those with disabilities. Fishbein and Ajzen (2002) posited that attitudes of students and all other stakeholders involved in inclusive education play a crucial role in shaping the learning of students with disability like physical impairment. A positive attitude would be the basis for generating inclusive environments that encourage positive change in attitude towards these groups of students (Wolfensberger, 2002, Hayes & Lee 2005, Banaji, & Heiphetz, 2010). One of the most important indicators of success among students in inclusive classrooms is the interpersonal relationships between students with physical impairment with others. Good performance thrives when attitudes are positive or inclusive (Moukebayeva, Kabdyrova Duzelbayeva, Denissova and Tynybeyeva 2017). Negative attitude is commonly considered to be a major barrier to full inclusion of students with physical impairment in schools. Students have identified attitudinal barriers, including inappropriate comments and rude behaviour from adults and other students as the worst aspect of their school experience (Gideau, Vignes, Sentenac Ehlinger, Navarro, Grandjean and Arnaud, 2010, & Coleman, 2006). Negative attitudes toward student with physical impairment often result in patho-psychological conditions such as, isolation, suicide ideation, negative feelings, frustration, anger, loneliness,

depression, negative self-concept, learned helplessness as well as behavioral problems on the part of the victim which ordinarily cannot foster meaningful learning on the students. Conversely, students tend to be motivated to learn and perform outstandingly when the attitudes of teachers and other students are inclusive and are devoid of disrespect on the personality and ability of students with physical impairment.

Statement of the Problem

Students with physical impairments are an integral part of the school community as formal learning environment in Nigeria like in other parts of the world. However, it lacks inclusiveness as a feature of modern educational institution in the 21st century where accessibility, flexibility, digitalization and inclusion are contemporary trends in education system in the world. This constitute limitations to their right to access quality education to the extent of their ability. They find it very difficult to easily access some parts of school environment like the lecture halls, laboratory, library, resource room, parking space, staff offices, walkways etc and this poses architectural, mobility, social and psychological barriers in addition to inability of the schools to unlock the curriculum through adaptation of inclusive and modern pedagogical strategies. This is considered not only as a breach of their fundamental rights and needs but also accounted for their inability learn at their own pace to maximize their potentials and sufficiently explore the school environment and learning resources. Besides the problems of inaccessible architectural infrastructures, negative attitudes, poor assessment strategies, some schools lack adapted co-curricular activities for their holistic development of students. Consequently, many of these students underperformed in their respective academic activities, do not achieve their personal and societal goals or expectations; some even drop out of school and become psychologically discouraged to pursue their careers of interest while others become public nuisance in the society as beggars. Thus, the present study investigated the inclusiveness

of learning environment of public secondary school system as predictive factor of learning outcomes of students with physical impairments in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State.

Objectives of the study

The study is design to achieve the following objectives;

- ❖ To ascertain the strength and direction of relationship of adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes and the learning outcome of students with physical impairment.
- ❖ To determine the joint or composite contribution of adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes to the learning outcome of students with physical impairment.
- ❖ To investigate relative contribution of adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes to the learning outcome of students with physical impairment.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by three hypotheses and tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. Adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes has no significant relationship with learning outcome of students with physical impairment.
2. Adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes has no significant composite

contribution to learning outcome of students with physical impairment.

3. Adapted infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitudes has no significant relative contribution to learning outcome of students with physical impairment

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, with focus on correlational type. The population consist of 150 persons with physical disabilities who are registered members of Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWDs), while a sample of 50 of them who are students in public secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis were drawn through purposive and convenience sampling techniques. The instrument used for data collection was a 20 item self-designed questionnaire tagged Inclusive Schools Environment and Learning Outcome (ISELO). Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to establish the reliability scores of 0.85 while Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between the variables and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to determine composite and relative contribution of independent variables to dependent variable all at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between independent variable (adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude) and dependent variable (learning outcome of students with physical impairment).

Table 1: Correlation between the adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude and learning outcome

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Learning outcome	9.09	3.20			-	-	-
Adapted architectural infr.	10.01	3.50			.688*	.000	Sig.
Adapted Assessment Str.	9.81	3.313			.627*	.000	Sig.
Inclusive Co-curricular Act.	10.20	3.97			.762*	.000	Sig.
Inclusive Attitude	10.40	3.99	98	4	.875*	.000	Sig.

* Correlation Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 Indicated that there was significant relationship between the independent variables (adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude) and the dependent variable (learning outcome of students with physical impairment). This meant that learning outcome has a correlation with adapted architectural infrastructure ($r=0.688$, $P < 0.05$), with adapted assessment strategies ($r=0.627$, $P < 0.05$), inclusive co-curricular activities ($r=0.762$, $P < 0.05$) and with inclusive attitude ($r=0.875$, $p<0.05$) since P-

value was lesser than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there was significant relationship between independent variable (adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude) and the dependent variable (learning outcome of students with physical impairment).

There is no significant composite contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

Table 2: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the composite contribution of adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude to learning outcome of students with physical impairment

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
0.820	0.729	0.727	1.312			
SUMMARY REGRESSION ANOVA						
	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Remark
Regression	1961.281	4	118.148	712.113	.000	Sig.
Residual	1231.134	95	77.182			
Total	3192.415	98				

Table 2 showed that there was a significant composite contribution of the independent variables (adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude) and the dependent variable (learning outcome of students with physical impairment). The table also showed a coefficient of multiple

correlations (R) of 0.820 and a multiple R Square of 0.729. This means that 72.9% (Adj. $R^2 = 0.727$) of the variance with the independent variables, when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at $p<0.05$ using the F-ratio at the degree of freedom ($df = 3/98$). The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the

regression yielded F-ratio of 712.113 (sig. at 0.05 level).

There is no significant relative contribution between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing relative contribution of adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude to learning outcome of students with physical impairment

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	(B)	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	14.001	.371	-	16.117	.000
Adapted Architectural Infrastructure	.715	.045.	.581.	29.034	.000
Adapted Assessment Str.	.782	.031	.343	20.100	.000
Inclusive co-curricular Act.	.801	.051	.567	27.02	.000
Inclusive Attitude	.867	.056	.724	34.392	.000

Table 3 indicated that there is a significance relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed by beta weights. There is correlation coefficient of adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude on learning outcome of students with physical impairment. That is, the learning outcome of students with physical impairment has relative contribution from adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude. Using the standardized regression coefficient to determine the relative contribution of the independent variables, inclusive attitude ($\beta = 0.724$, $t=34.392$, $p<0.05$) indicates most potent contributor to the prediction, followed by adapted architectural infrastructure ($\beta = 0.581$, $t=29.034$, $p<0.05$), adapted assessment strategies ($\beta= 0.567$, $t=27.02$, $p<0.05$) and inclusive co-curricular activities ($\beta = 0.343$, $t=20.100$, $p<0.05$) has the least contribution to the learning outcome of students. It implies that there is a significant

relative contribution of the independent variables (adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude) and the dependent variable (learning outcome of students with physical impairment) in Calabar Metropolis.

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study were discussed in line with the stated hypotheses and compared with the results and observations of the previous studies conducted by other researchers. The findings from hypothesis 1 focused on relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable is in congruent with previous researches which revealed that adapted architectural designs or infrastructure is mark of inclusive school environment and is fundamental to the integration of students with physical impairment into the inclusive education. Hence, Ntui (2016) agreed with the findings of this study that since learning cannot take place in a vacuum, therefore, the school structures and physical buildings or facilities

are very important for organized and meaningful learning. He further asserted that the physical building correlate with the quality of education such that poorly structured and insensitive designs can limit accessibility to classrooms and other aspects of the school environment thereby creating barriers for most students especially those on wheelchairs and crutches. From his vantage, every learning environment especially in a heterogeneous school with all categories of students, should embrace all the learners and make school buildings or physical structures must be in a way that students are not restricted from navigating and going wherever they want. This is when every child will feel motivated to learn like others at self-determined pace. Imrie and Luck (2014) study also reflected the findings of this study, it noted that accessible physical buildings and architecture structure are part of inclusive school for smooth learning experiences of students with physical impairment. According to them, in as much as school designs are inattentive to the needs of these students, their independent movement will be restricted and this affects their personality, social activities and academic performance. Research has indicated that even structure build in some schools after the Persons with Disabilities Discrimination Act, 2018 are still not disability-friendly. As reflected by the findings of this study, students learning outcomes are only worthwhile and competitive when equal access is gained across the school environment. Sanford (2014) revelation is also in line with the findings of this study that students' especially those with physical disability learning autonomy is only accommodated and enhanced when disabling school designs are eliminated and replaced with universal designs for learning. Universal design learning has potential of reducing stigmatization and segregation consequently promoting more diversity and inclusiveness of learning.

UNESCO (2016) and Uganda (2012) studies are in line with findings of this study, they observed that once the school environment is uncaring, non-accommodative and unfriendly students learning outcome will be

retrogressive. Similarly, Findeli (2007), Cunningham (2013) study corroborated the finding of this study that unmet mobility needs and non-adapted architectural designs are not features of inclusive education. The study opined that, adapted architectural design is the surest way to promote quality and realizable inclusion of students with special needs into the general education setting. In the same vein, Ozoji, (2023, Neves, Almeida, and Frreira, (2023), observed and opined that inclusiveness school depends partly on how teachers and other members of the school community relate with students with disabilities, including them in extra-curriculum for holistic development and adapting curriculum to meet their educational, assessment and instructional needs as learners with equal in same school is critical to improve learning expectations. This will also lead to self-confidence, increased participation, stronger interpersonal relationship among students (Mansur, et al, 2023).

The findings as revealed by analysis of hypothesis 2 which focused on composite contribution of adapted architectural infrastructure, adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude to learning outcome of students with physical impairment confirmed the work of previous researchers on the concept of assessment strategies and the need to diversify assessment options in order to address the peculiar needs of students in inclusive education. In light of the above, the works of Obi et al (2014), NKiruka and Ntui (2014), Imina (2016), Allen and Murphy (2012) all agreed that one of debilitating factors that lead to student's withdrawal, demotivation and poor learning outcomes is the use of non-inclusive assessment strategies. Furthermore, the works of Watson (2018); Bestman and Carrington (2013) strongly support the findings of this study which indicate that students with physical impairments are often victims of poor assessment as most teachers employed one-size fit all approach without consideration of needs of students. Once, teachers failed to accommodate variety of student's needs, they rely on inferences about the student's ability. Therefore, the foundation of quality inclusive

education begins from appropriate and adapted assessment strategies of all students. The finding of this study strongly underlined that conventional paper-pencil test to a child-based are not fashionable for inclusive learning environment as it leads to bias and inaccurate decisions.

It highlighted adapted assessment strategies as better approach to promoting fair and accurate judgment for informed decision-making which is vital in quality inclusive education for student with physical impairments. As also highlighted by Hammond and Hercules (2001) in line with this study, adapted assessment is often neglected by teachers but is essential in the evaluation of most students with challenges presenting their answers using conventional options employed by the teacher. This often gives rise to learning outcome that are unreflective of students' actual ability. As further expatiated by these researchers, for instance, students with problems in manual dexterity who find it difficult to write or type may perform poorly when asked to provide their answers in writing or typing like others. Aside from the fact that judgments from such assessment are often wrong and bias, the students are affected psychologically, socially and educationally. This may equally result to consistent poor learning outcome, poor self-concept, depression and discouragement, and eventual withdrawal from school. The results from the hypothesis substantiate that inclusive co-curricular activities influences students' learning outcome such that students who frequently participate in co-curricular activities with others have been found to have better performance in terms of learning when compared with others who do not participate. Anuar et al (2017) work is confirmed by the finding of this study that adapted co-curricular activities spice learning and strengthen the knowledge of the curriculum content. Hence, this helps to motivate students faster and ensures quality learning and holistic development is achieved. Accordingly, adapted co-curricular activities provide opportunity for students with physical impairment to share ideas and knowledge with their peers, interact

and have the sense of belonging and dignity as members of one school community. Again, the findings of Barnbe (2014), Kleese, (2008) is similar to the result of this study which indicate that adapted co-curricular activities are holistic as they involve a variety of activities that promote physical, emotional, educational and psychological wellbeing of students. Monroe (2004) equally confirmed that students who were regularly involved in co-curricular activities were found to be socially and educationally stable than their peers. Students with physical impairment in inclusive settings who are permitted to play, act, debate, interacts and perform one role or the other during co-curricular activities are likely going to learn and be functionally integrated into the educational system and the socio-political mainstream of the society than others who are excluded. Conversely, from the finding of this study and previous studies, students with physical impairment like their counterparts in inclusive education depend on many activities outside the classroom settings to acquire and maximized their curricular knowledge. So, if inclusive education is aimed at developing students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities, then one of the best ways to achieving it is through appropriate and adequate inclusion of co-curricular activities to enhance the participation all children irrespective of ability or disability.

On school structures and attitudes Ozoji, (2023), Florian, L (2019) agreed with the present study that, adapted architectural infrastructure, and inclusive attitude of members of the school community especially teachers are factors with multifaceted contributions to learning outcomes of students with disabilities as they affect students' independent mobility and psychological disposition to school activities. The study further revealed in line with the present one that inclusive architectural infrastructure and attitudes promote and meet mobility and psychological needs of students with disabilities including those with physical impairment.

The findings from hypothesis 3 which deals with relative contribution of variables

under study confirmed the postulation that attitude and architectural design of school infrastructure are a cardinal determinant of the success of social participation among people, hence inclusion is based on social model of interaction in one society. However, each of factor contributes in unique way to learning outcome of students with physical impairment. This is corroborated by the works of Barnes (2004), Picken (2010), Ajzen, (2008) and Yaker, (2008) that, attitude is fundamental in the way people behave, interact with others and participate community activities and physical facilities are constructed in community affect free movement and interaction of those with disabilities. Therefore, the attitude of teachers, other students and state of school facilities are hallmark of inclusive school and education as it significantly influence the way students with physical impairment learn and fulfil self-set goals in life. More so, students who are accommodated, cared for, welcomed, and supported by teachers and peers feel motivated to learn and easily integrate with others. When students are embraced and shown positive attitude, that is they tend to have a psychological advantage to pursue their life goals inclusive of educational goals and achieve them. Inclusive school learning environment require positive attitude of all members of school for meaningful achievement. Winter (2011) and McGregors (2003), in line with when observed that since disability is not tantamount to inability, students with physical impairment in a supportive and non-inhibitive learning environment blended with adapted curriculum, unique extra -curriculum activities and assessment practices and strategies the reflect each profile can perform optimally in all school activities and reach their desired goals provided the teachers and their peers do not create additional barriers through their attitude towards persons with disability. In furtherance to the correlation of the finding of this study Fuller (2004) and Copper (2000), corroborated that successful inclusion of students with physical impairment into the regular programme is possible only in school with

healthy, emphatical, welcoming attitudes and equitable interpersonal communication.

Contrarily, students subjected to abusive bias, unsupportive and unfriendly learning environment may often find it difficult to learn and even perform as expected. Barnes-Holmes, Hayden, & Stewart, (2008), Fullan (2016) observations are similar to the findings of this study that successful learning is fostered when students with physical impairment are given a level-playing ground to learn and not looked upon as unfit beings not meant to be taught in the same classrooms with other students. Like this study, Ainscow and Sue (2019) , Orim et al, (2022) report that positive attitude and inclusive assessment practices and strategies are critical to students learning outcome, as cardinal pillars of inclusive schools and education they provide students with physical impairment opportunity to maximining their potentials and attainment of self-set goals in life.

Conclusion

By the provisions of international and national legal and policy framework, students with physical impairment have right to access quality education as declared in Salamanca document of 1994. This place enormous demands on stakeholders to among others provide schools with inclusive learning environment for holistic development of all children. Cardinal to inclusive learning environment are many factors such as adapted architectural infrastructure adapted assessment strategies, inclusive co-curricular activities and inclusive attitude. Many studies just like the present one indicated that above variables did not just strongly correlate with improved learning outcome but also have multifaceted contributions to holistic development of students with the disability.

Recommendations

Base on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended among others that stakeholders in education sector should:

- Ensure that inclusionary culture should be entrenched and sustained in Nigerian school system for effective

participation of all children in every school activity.

- Implement policy on accessibility in line with global best practices participation of every learner in all school activities for holistic development.
- Members of school communities especially teachers should develop inclusive attitudes to foster social actions that will birth inclusive schools and develop good rapport with all learners.
- Legislations on rights of Persons with Disabilities should be enforced by appropriate authorities in Nigeria.

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