



# International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation.

## Attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the regular schools in Obio/Akpor local government area

Valentine Osi<sup>1</sup>, Priscillia Osi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Chemistry, Physical Chemistry Unit, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup> Special Education Unit, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: **Priscillia Osi**

---

### Article Info

**ISSN (online):** 2582-7138

**Volume:** 03

**Issue:** 01

January-February 2022

**Received:** 04-12-2021;

**Accepted:** 24-12-2021

**Page No:** 66-73

**DOI:**

[doi.org/10.54660/anfo.2021.3.1.7](https://doi.org/10.54660/anfo.2021.3.1.7)

### Abstract

The study investigated attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the normal school settings in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. A descriptive survey design was used for the study. Six research questions and six null hypotheses was formulated to guide the study. The population of study involved 3025 teachers in the area. A stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of three hundred and ninety nine (399) teachers. Chi-square was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Out of the 399 teachers, 253 were involved in the study. The result of the findings shows that teachers only teachers training and teacher's age significantly influence inclusion of students with learning disability whereas teacher's gender, experience, qualification and marital status had not significant effect on inclusion of students with learning disability. The finding also indicated that generally teachers had positive attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities. The attitude of teachers is perceived to have been influenced by lack of provision for additional programme that will improve education of students with learning difficulties and required training for teachers in special needs education.

**Keywords:** Inclusive education, Learning disability, teacher, students, specialization and experience

---

### 1. Introduction

Nigeria National Policy on Education (2005) adopted inclusive education as the educational option for children with special needs or disabilities. With the adoption, many children find themselves in regular or normal school setting. This means that the children will be educated alongside with their normal peers. Educating these children with their normal counterparts in the regular setting which is inclusion added challenge to the regular teacher. The normal school setting or regular classroom is the most least restricted environment in which a child is placed in the regular classroom, under the control of the regular classroom teacher. Here, students with learning disabilities receive special services<sup>[1]</sup>. Hallahan and Kauffman<sup>[2]</sup> posited that the regular education initiative (REI) started in America and Europe. It was first and formally introduced by Madelein C. Will former assistant secretary of Education. In 1986 Will called on the general education to become more responsible for the education of students with special needs in the school environment, including those who are economically disadvantaged and those that are bilingual as well as those with learning disabilities. Inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the regular or normal school settings produces significant changes in their behaviour.

Since the mid-late 1980s, there has been a strong international movement to include students with disabilities in the general setting<sup>[3, 4]</sup>. Kezleski<sup>[5]</sup> considered inclusion to be multi-dimensional concept that includes the celebration and valuing of differences and diversity and the consideration of human rights, social justice, and equal opportunities as well as of a social model of disability.

It encompasses the process of school transformation and a focus on children's entitlement and access to education. Inclusive schools have been as schools in which all children learn together, receiving quality education and support through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, use of resources and partnership with their communities. The uniqueness of inclusive education is that it receives all learners to the neighbourhood schools regardless of their learning differences <sup>[3]</sup>.

The Internal Institution of Democracy and Electoral Assistance act for individuals with disabilities education requires that a continuum of placement options be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities <sup>[6]</sup>. The law requires that to the maximum extent appropriate, children who have disabilities are educated with normal children and that special classes, separate schooling or removal of children with disabilities from the regular environment occur only when the nature or severity of the disabilities is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be attained satisfactorily. Farrel in (Agomoh, 2012) <sup>[1]</sup> defined inclusive education as the extent to which a community admits all people as full members of the group and values them for their contribution. The National Policy on Education categorically stated that as much as possible children with disabilities should be educated in inclusive setting. Inclusive education refers to the practice of educating students with disabilities with their normal peers in regular school. This is to enable them maximize their potentials and to be self-sufficient in life. Inclusion refers to practice of educating students with disabilities learning alongside with their peers in general education classroom <sup>[7]</sup>. Thus, classroom that engage in this practice can be referred to as being inclusive.

The term inclusive education was introduced in Salamanca, Spain at world conference on Special Needs Education Access and Quality which was held in 1994. This conference agreed on new dynamic ideas on education of individuals with disabilities. It adopted a new statement that all regular schools should admit all children regardless of their mental, physical, emotional, social and language conditions. This led to the concept called inclusion. The concept implies that, there should be educational opportunities for all children. The inclusive exercise is the most realistic and effective means of eliminating discriminatory attitude against persons with disabilities, and creation of a good social and learning environment. Inclusive education was introduced as a result of the exclusion practice against individuals with disabilities. Persons with disabilities seek the same opportunity as persons without disabilities. They want to go to school, develop skills for independent life, they do not want to be separated, segregated, ignored or isolated from others <sup>[8]</sup>. Smith <sup>[9]</sup> conceptualized the term inclusion; it refers to students with disabilities becoming part of the general education classroom, receiving a meaningful curriculum with necessary support, and being taught with effective strategies. Inclusion involves the placing of students with learning disabilities and/or impairments in general education classroom and integrating their education experience with students in a general education class. In the early 1900s John Dewey was instrumental in the beginning of the inclusion movement. He believed that inclusive education was a start in the "reform effort" <sup>[10]</sup>. Roach <sup>[11]</sup> said that inclusion is described as a place or a specific "method of instruction, but rather a philosophy of supporting children in their learning, a

philosophy that holds that all children can learn". David <sup>[12]</sup> stated that proponents of inclusion want to maximize the participation of all learners in the community schools of their choice, make learning more meaningful and relevant to all, particularly those learners that are vulnerable to exclusionary pressures and rethink and restructure policies, curricula, cultures, and practices in schools and learning environment so that various learning needs can be met, whether the origin or nature of such needs. The same policy went further to categorize children with disabilities into those with visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical disability, intellectual disability, emotional and behaviour disorder, speech and language disorder, multiple impairment as well as learning disability.

Learning disabilities refers to problems associated with poor learning in academic and social skills. Categorization of the population of students with learning disabilities started when teachers continuously reported persistent academic failure of some children in their classrooms such children were not able to learn what the teacher taught despite sound teaching. These children were reported to have normal growth and sound health. They were later referred to as the population with learning disabilities <sup>[13]</sup>. Children with learning disabilities are those who appear to be normal but exhibit some difficulties educationally, socially, emotionally and behaviourally. They may have some difficulties in some subjects and skills such as reading, writing, spelling, listening, speaking, reasoning, and mathematical calculation and social problems. Learning disabilities is a disorder that interferes with the development of basic skills that affects an individual's ability to learn.

Ozaji <sup>[14]</sup> stated that it is a policy which allows all children and young people with or without disabilities learn together in ordinary pre-school, primary, secondary, colleges/polytechnics and universities with appropriate network of support. It is a system of education that accommodates all people regardless of their physical, social, emotional, intellectual, linguistic, mental, behavioural or otherwise abilities. Ford <sup>[15]</sup> stated that, there is a great debate over including students with disabilities, in particular students with learning disabilities in inclusion classroom. Several strategies are available to support educating students with learning disabilities in inclusive classroom including co-teaching, differentiated instruction and peer mediated instruction and intervention.

Stainback and Stainback <sup>[16]</sup> explained that inclusive education is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieve equal educational opportunities for all. Inclusive education acknowledges that: All children can learn, Respect individual differences in children, Adopt education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children, Is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society Lerner <sup>[17]</sup> also said that children with learning disabilities encounter specific problem in the acquisition of speech and oral language, in reading, arithmetic, handwriting, motor, written expression, thinking, or in psycho-social skills and that there is a gap between what the children are potentially capable of doing and their achievement. Students with learning disabilities differ from students with other more severe disabilities as there are no physical characteristic that accompany their disability <sup>[18]</sup>. On the one hand, researchers have argued that the instructional needs of students with learning disabilities

can be met with collaborative efforts between general and special educators [19]. Inclusion of children with learning disabilities will no doubt pose more challenge to the job of the teacher who is already overworked which result in populated classes. Inclusion may also require some teaching strategies, modification and individualized attention to enable the students with disabilities to achieve success. The ability of the teacher to cope with the challenges associated to inclusive education will be based on the knowledge or skills acquired which are dependent on teachers gender, teaching experience, teachers qualification, teachers specialization, teachers marital status, and teachers age.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Teachers especially those in public schools are overworked many have large number of children in their classes. Opening Allen to children with learning disabilities into the regular school means more workload for the teacher hence transmission of desirable knowledge and skills to the students will be difficult. This new burden will definitely elicit different reactions and attitude from the teachers. The attitude of regular school teachers toward children with learning disabilities in regular school will one way or the other have effect on their behaviour which may either lead to acceptable or unacceptable attitude of such children. By this attitude; which is based on the willingness and enthusiasm of teachers to accommodate students with disabilities [20, 21], the success of inclusive education programme may suffer some setbacks if negative attitude is expressed towards the education of children with learning disabilities. By the negative attitude teachers sometimes should expect low performance from such children.

In Nigeria, the growing population of students with learning disabilities in the country has contributed largely to low education quality and students' underachievement. Improvements in teaching quality and student achievement can as well reduce drop-out and failure rates, which may result to positive outcome. Hence, the need to survey attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the regular schools and possibly aid in finding solution to change of teachers attitude towards inclusive education.

## 3. Hypotheses

Based on the research question the following hypotheses are formulated to guide the study.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between gender and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between years of experience and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference between qualification and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference between specialization and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There is no significant difference between marital status and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**H<sub>6</sub>:** There is no significant difference between age and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

## 4. Methodology

Descriptive survey study was adopted for the study. Nwankwo [22] explained that descriptive survey study is that in which the researcher collects data from a large sample drawn from a given population and describes certain features of the sample as they are at the time of the study and which are of interest to the researcher, however without manipulating any independent variables of the study. The population of the study involved 3025 teachers and the area (UBE Board, 2018 and PPSB, 2018). The stratified random sampling is process of selecting a sample when the population consists a number of subgroups strata that are homogenous, each group containing subjects with similar characteristics such as sex, age, socio-economic or occupational status, educational background among others [23]. The teachers were stratified based on gender, teaching experience, teachers' qualification, teacher's training, teachers marital status and teachers' age. The sample of the study comprise 399 teachers in public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The sample is specified using Taro Yemen Statistical formula.

$$\text{Sample (n)} = \frac{N}{(N + 1) (e)^2}$$

Where N = Population of the study

e = Level of precision or Sampling of error ( $\pm 5\%$ )

The questionnaire was administered by me with the help of the head of the various public schools used for this study, the pen and paper method was used in the administration of the questionnaire and collected on spot.

## 5. Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The study was a self-designed modified likert type scale. The individuals are required to indicate for each statement their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The instrument validated by the supervisor and three others who are vast in measurement and evaluation. However, their comments and observations were all incorporated in the final draft of the instrument. The questionnaire was given to the respondents and collected after they have been completed. The questionnaires consist of 30 items, which sort to get the response of teachers concerning facility availability, special need children accommodation, willingness to accept special need children in regular schools and so on

## 6. Method of Data Analysis

Chi-square was used in testing the null hypotheses of 0.05 level of significance.

## 7. Data Presentation

The data was generated from 253 teachers (63.41%) in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area Rivers State which were able to completely attend to the survey items out of the intended 399 teachers earlier stated. The data was generated from survey questionnaire asking respondents to rank their agreement or disagreement with questions regarding their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the regular schools. Table 1 consist of the demographic data of the correspondents, while Table 2 is the overall response of correspondents to survey items.

**Table 1:** Demographic Presentation of Participant

Variable	Sample N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	81	32
Female	172	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Experience</b>		
0 – 10 yrs	127	50
11 – 20 yrs	85	34
21 yrs - above	41	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Qualification</b>		
OND/NCE	27	11
HND/B.Sc	180	71
MA/M.ED	38	15
PhD	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Specialization</b>		
Professional	161	64
Non-professional	92	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	137	54
Single	116	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>		
20-30 yrs	85	34
31 – 40 yrs	95	38
41 – 50 yrs	59	23
51 – 60 yrs	14	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics of response to survey items

S/N	Items	A (%)	DA (%)
1.	Provisions have been made for additional programmes in my school for the inclusion of students with learning difficulties	96 (39.9)	157 (62.1)
2.	All efforts should be made to educate students with learning disabilities in the regular classroom.	236 (92.3)	17 (6.7)
3.	Teachers support students with learning difficulties to enable them maximize their potentials in the regular classroom	186 (73.5)	67 (26.5)
4.	Both regular education and special education teachers should teach students with learning problems.	195 (77.1)	58 (22.9)
5.	I am willing to make necessary accommodations for students with learning disabilities.	187 (73.9)	66 (26.1)
6.	I need more training in order to appropriately plan and advocate effectively for students with learning disabilities	229 (90.5)	24 (9.5)
7.	The administrator should allow for the sensitization of teachers about inclusive education	234 (92.5)	19 (7.5)
8.	Teachers are provided with sufficient training opportunities in order to teach students with learning disabilities.	126 (49.8)	127 (50.2)
9.	I believe teachers feel supported when faced with challenges presented by students with learning problems in the classroom.	136 (53.8)	117 (46.2)
10.	Special education teachers should teach students with learning difficulties in the classroom	183 (72.3)	70 (27.7)
11.	Students presenting educational performance below grade level should be in special education classes	152 (60.1)	101 (39.9)
12.	Students diagnosed with autism should be in a special education classroom.	207 (81.8)	46 (18.2)
13.	Students who are verbally aggressive towards others can be maintained in regular education classes.	176 (69.6)	77 (30.4)
14.	Teachers feel comfortable in approaching their colleagues for help when teaching students with learning disabilities.	161 (63.6)	92 (36.4)
15.	Are you discouraged over lack of time to collaborate with special educators regarding appropriate intervention and modifications that could grant further exposure to the general education curriculum?	168 (66.4)	85 (33.6)
16.	Teaching students with learning difficulties requires specialized training.	230 (90.9)	23 (9.1)
17.	Students with learning difficulties should be given equal educational opportunities with others.	223 (88.1)	30 (11.9)
18.	It is usually gladdening to educate students with learning disabilities.	166 (65.6)	87 (34.4)
19.	Several challenges accompany the teaching of students with learning disabilities.	235 (92.9)	18 (7.1)
20.	It is necessary to adopt appropriate techniques while teaching students with learning disabilities.	224 (85.5)	29 (11.5)
21.	Important learning resources is employed in teaching students with learning disabilities.	229 (90.5)	24 (9.5)
22.	Teachers need collaboration while teaching students with learning disabilities.	241 (75.3)	12 (4.7)
23.	Teaching students with learning disabilities requires appropriate assessment strategies.	247 (97.6)	6 (2.4)
24.	Teaching students with learning disabilities requires adequate preparation.	244 (96.4)	9 (3.6)
25.	I can always cope while teaching students with learning disabilities.	121 (47.8)	132 (52.2)
26.	Teaching students with learning disabilities requires a lot of patience.	248 (98)	5 (2)
27.	It is burdensome to teach students with learning disabilities.	181 (71.5)	72 (28.5)
28.	Communicating with students with learning disabilities is often different.	213 (84.2)	40 (15.8)
29.	It takes a lot of effort to teach students with learning disabilities.	231 (91.3)	22 (8.7)
30.	It is time consuming to teach students with learning disability.	204 (80.4)	49 (19.4)



Although not yet common in the Nigerian Educational system a lot of teachers showed positive attitudes towards the idea of inclusive education but are afraid of it because of the perceived difficult nature of handling students with learning disabilities. The fact that majority of the teachers are willing to also collaborate with specialist is good this indeed shows that the teachers really support the idea of inclusive education. So a major factor to consider is that of putting the

enabling environment and facilities in place so that these students with special needs can fully benefit from the idea of inclusion.

**8. Results**

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between gender and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**Table 3:** Gender and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Gender	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical – Value	Remark
Male	1917 (1906.2)	513 (523.8)	2430	1	0.415	3.84	<b>P &lt; 0.05</b> Not Significant
Female	4037 (4047.8)	1123(1112.2)	5160				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5954</b>	<b>1636</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Table 3 shows that calculated X<sup>2</sup> value is 0.415, critical X<sup>2</sup> value is 3.38 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated X<sup>2</sup>value (0.415) is less than (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis that attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities does not significantly differ based on gender is accepted. The result is that teacher’s gender does

not differ in their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the normal school setting in OBALGA.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between years of experience and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**Table 4:** Teaching experience and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Experience	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical – Value	Remark
0 – 10	2992 (2988.8)	818 (821.2)	3810	2	0.3994	5.99	<b>P &lt; 0.05</b> Not Significant
11- 20	1991 (2000.4)	559 (549.6)	2550				
21 – above	971 (964.7)	259 (265.1)	1230				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5954</b>	<b>1636</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Table 4 shows that calculated X<sup>2</sup>value is 0.3994, critical X<sup>2</sup> value is 5.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated X<sup>2</sup> value (0.3994) is less than (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance and 2 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis that attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities does not significantly differ based on experience is accepted. This means that teachers years of

experience does not differ in their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the general classroom.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference between qualification and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**Table 5:** Teachers qualification and attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Qualification	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical – Value	Remark
OND/NCE	674 (635.2)	136 (174.8)	810	3	2.5	7.82	<b>P &lt; 0.05</b> Not Significant
HND/B.Sc.Ed/B.ED	4174 (4234.6)	1226 (1165.4)	5400				
MA/M.ED/M.SC	929 (894)	211 (246)	1140				
PhD	175 (188.2)	65 (51.8)	240				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5952</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Table 5 shows that calculated X<sup>2</sup> value is 2.5, critical X<sup>2</sup> value 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculate X<sup>2</sup> value (2.5) is less than (7.82) at 0.05 level of significance and 3 degree of freedom the null hypothesis that attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities does not significantly differ based on qualification is accepted. The result is that teacher’s qualification does not differ in their

attitude toward inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the regular classroom.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference between specialization and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**Table 6:** Teachers specialization and attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Specialization	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical – Value	Remark
Specialized	3827 (3785.1)	1003 (1044.9)	4830	1	5.89	3.84	<b>P &gt; 0.05</b> Significant
Not specialized	2121 (2162.9)	639 (597.1)	2760				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5948</b>	<b>1642</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Table 6 shows that calculated X<sup>2</sup> value is 5.89, critical X<sup>2</sup> value is 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated X<sup>2</sup> value (5.89) is greater than (3.84) at 0.05 level of

significance and 1 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis that attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities does not significantly differ based on

specialization is rejected.

**Hypothesis Five:** There is no significant difference between

marital status and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of student with learning disabilities.

**Table 7:** Teachers marital status and attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Marital Status	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical – Value	Remark
Married	3173 (3205.2)	937 (904.8)	4110	1	3.2	3.84	<b>P &lt; 0.05</b> Not Significant
Single	2746 (2713.8)	734 (766.2)	3480				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5919</b>	<b>1671</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Teacher marital status does not significantly influence students with learning disabilities. Chi-square was used in testing the null hypothesis as shown in table 7 above. It shows that calculated  $X^2$  value is 3.2, critical  $X^2$  value is 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated  $X^2$  value (3.2) is less than (3.84) the hypothesis is accepted. This means that teacher's marital status does not differ in their attitude

towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the school environment.

**Hypothesis Six:** There is no significant difference between age and attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

**Table 8:** Teachers age and attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities

Age	A	DA	Row Total	Df	Cal-value	Critical-Value	Remark
20 – 30	2041 (2003.7)	509 (546.3)	2550	3	13.50	7.82	<b>P &gt; 0.05</b> Significant
31 – 40	2260 (2239.5)	590 (610.5)	2850				
41 – 50	1339 (1390.8)	431 (379.2)	1770				
51 – 60	324(330.0)	96 (90.0)	420				
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>5964</b>	<b>1626</b>	<b>7590</b>				

Table 8 shows that calculated  $X^2$  value is 13.50, critical  $X^2$  value is 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated  $X^2$  value (13.50) is greater than (7.82) at 0.05 level of significance the null hypothesis that age does not significantly influence attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities is rejected. This means that the age of a teacher significantly differ in his/her attitude towards the inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

## 8. Discussions

The result of hypothesis one (Table 3) shows that teacher gender does not significantly influence their attitude towards inclusion of student with learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (OBALGA). The finding is in agreement with Chhabra [24] and Alharthi [25] who observed no relationship existed between a demographic variable like gender and teachers attitude towards inclusive education, but it did not corroborate with those of Alquraini [26] and Saloviita [27] who observed female teachers having a more positive attitude towards inclusion than their male counterpart; and Ernst [28] and Bhatnagar [29] who observed male teachers showing a more positive attitudes towards inclusion than their female counterpart. Table 4 (hypothesis 2) shows that teacher teaching experience does not significantly influence their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The findings of this study was in opposition those of Al-Zyoudi [30] who when studying teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Jordanian schools observed three factors strongly influencing teachers attitudes towards inclusive education of which length of experience was among them. The result of hypothesis three (table 5) shows that teacher's qualification does not significantly influence their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The study is in corroboration with Saloviita [27], who found no similar differences among

teachers qualification based on their categories. But when the qualification was tagged along with area of expertise, qualification was found to be of a significant factor [27,31]. The result of hypothesis four (table 6) shows that teachers training significantly influence their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The finding is in agreement with the study of Alharthi [25] who reported that teachers develop positive attitudes after in-service training, with specialist showing more positive attitudes towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities and are of the opinion of the introduction of in-service and pre-service education programmes for teachers. Also Maduabum [23] observed that teachers with appropriate training more clearly emphasize the need to change in education and far greater encouragement for development of inclusion, whereby necessary resources and training about inclusion must be provided for teachers. Generally teachers are trained as content area specialists, equipped with knowledge about their area of expertise. The result of hypothesis five (table 7) shows teachers marital status does not significantly influence their attitude towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The finding is in agreement with Rose [32] that teachers who personally support inclusive practice and accept the concept of inclusion can more readily adapt the learning environment to the diverse needs of students and use a variety of approaches and teaching strategies. The result of hypothesis six (table 8) shows that teachers age significantly of students will learning disabilities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. This result indicated that different considerations and factors are responsible for attitude of teachers towards inclusion of students with learning disabilities. The finding corresponded with those of Ryan [33] who observed that younger teachers within ages 20-30 showed positive attitudes towards the inclusive education. Although teachers within the ages of 20-30 had positive attitudes towards inclusive education in this study, teachers

within the ages of 31-40 showed the greatest positive attitudes towards the idea of inclusive education

## 8. Conclusion

From the results obtained it can be thus observed that teacher's gender, teacher's experience, teacher's qualification and teacher's marital have no significant effect on their attitudes toward inclusive education. While teachers specialization and age has a profound significant on the attitudes of teacher towards inclusive education in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

## 9. Recommendations

Enlightenment campaigns should be organized to educate teachers on the need to adopt strategies, methodologies to suit their learning need, this is necessary as from the results obtained, specialization of teacher an effect on their attitude. Government should organize workshops, seminars, conferences to enable teachers acquire the require skills on ways to interact with instructional materials and impart knowledge on students with special needs. Necessary facilities and equipment to reduce teachers' workload and to facilitate learning for students with learning needs should be introduced. nroduction of special needs education at all levels in the regular schools to enable teachers cope with the stress associated with inclusion of students with learning disabilities.

## Data Availability

The source of Data on request can be made available

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest

## 10. References

1. Agomoh OE. Understanding and managing children with learning disabilities in the regular schools, Port Harcourt: Akanso Publishers, 2012.
2. Hallahan DP, Kauffman MJ. Exceptional Learners: Introduction to special education 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. Needham Heights, Mass USA, Allyn and Bacon Aviacom Company, 1997.
3. UNESCO. World conference on special needs education: Access and quality (Final Report). Salamanca. 1994.
4. UNESCO. Salamanca-five years on: A review of UNESCO activities in the light of the Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education. Paris, 1994.
5. Kozleski EB, Arliles AJ, Waitoller FR. Introduction: Equality in inclusive education: Historical trajectories and theoretical commitments", in Kozleski, E.B., Arliles, A.J. and Waitoller, F.R. (eds) Inclusive Education, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2011.
6. Internal Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Education for persons with disabilities, Geneva Erickson Commission Ltd, 2005.
7. Gilhool TK. The right to an effective education: From Brown to PL, and beyond, In D. Lipsky & A. Ganttner (eds), Beyond, separate education: Quality education for all X, Baltimore: Paul H. Books, 1989, 94-142.
8. International Labour Office. Count us in: How to make sure that women with disabilities can participate effectively in mainstream women's entrepreneurship development activities. Geneva: International Labour Office. 2008.
9. Smith TE, Polloway JR, Dowdy CA. Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New Jersey: Pearson-Merrill Practice Hall, 2004.
10. Thousand J, Villa V. Inclusion welcoming, valuing, and supporting the diverse learning needs of all students in shared general education environments. *Special Services in the School*. 2000; 15(1-2):73-108.
11. Roach V. Supporting inclusion: Beyond the rhetoric. *The Phi Delta Kappan*. 1995; 77(4):295-299.
12. David JY. Focus on Autism and other developmental disabilities. New York. John Wiley Publication, 2006.
13. Agomoh OE, Kanu SA. Introduction to psychology of special needs children: Understanding special needs education, Port Harcourt, Kanissi Books, 2015.
14. Ozoji ED. Rudiments of special education, Jos. Deke Publications, 2005.
15. Ford J. Educating students with learning disabilities in inclusive classroom, electronic. *Journal for Inclusive Education*, 2013, 3(1).
16. Stainback MA, Stainback MS. Experiences of an inclusion link scheme: The perspectives of pupils with severe learning difficulties and their mainstream peers. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*. 2001; 24(91):9-19.
17. Lerner JW. Learning disabilities Theories, diagnosis, and reaching strategies. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000.
18. Raymond EB. Learners with mild disabilities A characteristics approach. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. M.A Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2008.
19. Raymond MC, Wang MC, Walberg HC. The necessary restructuring of special education and regular education. *Exceptional Children*. 1987; 53:391-398.
20. Mngo Zachary Y, Agnes Y Mngo. Teachers' perceptions of inclusion in a pilot inclusive education program: Implications for instructional leadership. *Education Research International*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2018/3524879>.
21. Barrio BL, Miller D, Ojeme C, Tamakloe D. Teachers' and Parents' Knowledge about Disabilities and Inclusion in Nigeria. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*. 2019; 22(1):14-24.
22. Nwankwo OC. A practical guide to research writing": For students of research enterprise. 5<sup>th</sup> ed.: Port Harcourt. University of Port Harcourt, 2013.
23. Maduabum MA. Fundamentals of Educational Research. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Port Harcourt Firstborn Printers, 2007.
24. Chhabra S, Srivastava R, Srivastava L. Inclusive education in Botswana: The perception of school Teachers', *Journal of Disability policy studies*. 2010; 20(4):219-228.
25. Alharth N, Evans D. Special Education Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities in Middle Schools in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Modern Education Studies*. 2017; 1(1):1-15.
26. Alquraini TA. Factors related to teachers' attitudes towards the inclusive education of students with severe intellectual disabilities in Riyadh, Saudi", *Journal of Research in Special Education Needs*. 2012; 12(2):170-182.
27. Saloviita T. Attitudes of teachers towards inclusive

- education in Finland, *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 2018. doi:10.1080/00313831.2018.1541819.
28. Ernst C, Rogers MR. Development of the inclusion attitude scale for high school teachers. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*. 2009; 25(3):205-322.
  29. Bhatnagar N, Das A. Attitudes of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education in New Delhi, India, *Journal of Research in Special Education Needs*. 2014; 14(4):255-263.
  30. Al- Zyoudi M. Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Jordanian schools, *International Journal of Special Education*. 2006; 21(2):55-62.
  31. Hsien M, Brown P, Bortoli A. Teacher Qualifications and Attitudes toward Inclusion, *Australasian Journal of Special Education*. 2009; 33(1):26-41.
  32. Rose R, Kaiklonen L, Koiv K. Estonian vocational teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education for students with special education needs. *International Journal of Special Education*. 2007; 22(3):97-108.
  33. Ryan TG. Inclusive attitude: A pre-service analysis, *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. 2009; 9(3):180-187.