

# Factors associated with negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria

Francesca Uko

## Abstract

This study investigated factors associated with negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. A sample of seventy-five (75) teachers of children with hearing impairment was selected through the purposive sampling technique. A thirty (30) item questionnaire with a five-point rating scale and reliability coefficient of 0.78 to 0.82 was used to collate teachers' opinions of factors associated with negative attitudes towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment. The data collected were statistically analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation which was also used to determine significant relationships in the stated research questions while Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to verify whether the independent variables predicted the dependent variable or not. The findings revealed that teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss were associated and predicted negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment. The authors recommended among others, that teachers' ongoing development programs in form of conferences, workshops and specialized training should be organized for teachers by the Government to provide them with the right pedagogical knowledge, practical skills and attitudes needed to foster inclusive education of children with hearing impairment.

**Key words:** negative attitudes, teachers, inclusive education.

## **Faktory spojené s negativními postoji učitelů k inkluzivnímu vzdělávání dětí s poruchami sluchu v Uyo v Nigérii**

### **Abstrakt**

Tato studie zkoumala faktory spojené s negativními postoji učitelů k inkluzivnímu vzdělávání dětí s poruchami sluchu v Uyo v Nigérii. Vzorek sedmdesáti pěti (75) učitelů dětí s poruchami sluchu byl vybrán pomocí techniky záměrného výběru. Třicetipoložkový (30) dotazník s pětibodovou hodnotící škálou a koeficientem spolehlivosti mezi 0,78 a 0,82 sloužil k porovnání názorů učitelů na faktory spojené s negativními postoji k inkluzivnímu vzdělávání dětí s poruchami sluchu. Získaná data byla statisticky analyzována za použití Pearsonova korelace součinu momentů, pomocí které byl také určen významný vztah ve stanovených výzkumných otázkách. Dále byla použita mnohonásobná regresní analýza (MRA) pro verifikaci otázky, zda nezávislé proměnné předpovídají závislou proměnnou, či nikoli. Zjištění ukázala, že nízká kompetentnost učitelů, nedostatek motivací pro učitele a závažnost ztráty sluchu u dítěte se pojí s negativními postoji učitelů k inkluzivnímu vzdělávání dětí s poruchami sluchu a předvídají ho. Autoři mimo jiné doporučili, aby vláda organizovala program dalšího rozvoje učitelů, a poskytla jim tak správné pedagogické vědomosti, praktické dovednosti a postoje potřebné pro podporu inkluzivního vzdělávání dětí s poruchami sluchu.

**Klíčová slova:** negativní postoje, učitelé, inkluzivní vzdělávání.

## **Introduction**

Education of learners with special needs at regular schools has its origin in international documents, which support inclusion of all learners in general education classroom. Such documents include: 1948–United Nations Human Rights to Education, 1989 – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1993 – United Nations Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities UNESCO, 2006 and the Salamanca Statement 1994. Inclusion is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility

of the regular system to educate all children (UNESCO, 1994; UNESCO, 2003). Similarly, Obani (2014) sees inclusion as a higher level of integration which requires that schools prepare, plan for, and adapt their systems and practices to meet the learning needs of every school child (with or without disabilities) in the same neighbourhood schools.

The Salamanca Statement is a commitment to integrate children with hearing impairment into the educational and social mainstream. Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the educational system to reach out to all learners, and could thus be understood as a leeway strategy to achieve access and quality education for these children (Kinar, 2011). It is a common knowledge that placing children with hearing impairment in segregated schools result in their segregation from those without disabilities, consequently isolating them from day-to-day experiences with other children, while integrating them into regular schools will help them to achieve their maximum potentials in a more favorable educational and social environment. Inclusive education is a universal mandate to promote unity in diversity and acceptance. The philosophy of inclusive education is that all learners with or without disabilities receive educational provision in the same learning environment. The purpose of inclusive education is to promote scholarship, friendship, understanding of diversities, acceptance of differences and respect for human dignity.

Nigeria as a signatory nation to these international treaties became encouraged to setup educational mechanism to achieve inclusive education. This is evident in the Government's recognition of inclusive education as an effective means of combating discrimination and promoting inclusive society. The National Policy on Education 2008 states categorically that persons with special needs shall be provided with inclusive education services (as far as possible) at schools which normal children attend, in age appropriate general education classes directly supervised by general teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008). Florien (2012) stated that the Nigerian government has responded positively in line with global trend by ensuring that all children with disabilities, including those with hearing impairment, access neighborhood schools as they would without disability. As inclusion has seemingly become the preferred placement model for children with special needs in Nigeria, teachers' attitudes toward children with hearing impairment have become an important variable in creating a successful learning experience. Research in special needs education and inclusion has the assumptions that teachers' attitudes may act to facilitate or inhibit the efforts toward the implementation and practice of inclusive education for children with hearing impairment as well as the learning experience of these children in inclusive classrooms. During the past two decades, the inclusion movements have made a significant progress in supporting the rights of children to have their special educational needs identified and met through education legislation and the right of individuals with disabilities to equal opportunities, minimizing unjustified discrimination, and developing support facilities and services for individuals with special needs (Disability Rights Task Force Final Report, 2004).

Despite the apparent benefits of inclusion, and regardless of the schools' commitment to ensuring all learners participate and progress in the same curriculum and in the same classroom, achieving potentials at individual pace and learning styles, attitudes of teachers have proven to be the key determinant of sustainable inclusive education influenced by a variety of factors. Research has suggested that teachers' attitudes might be influenced by numerous factors which are in many ways interrelated. Several inclusion studies have been concerned with determining teachers' attitudes towards different categories of children with hearing impairment and their perceived suitability for inclusion. These factors could be termed 'child-related' variables or grouped under the heading 'teacher-related' variables or finally could be termed 'educational/environment related' variables (Jenkins, 2010; and Adeyemi, 2011).

Inclusive education studies (such as Adeyemi, 2011, Fullan, 2013, and Lampe, 2017) as well as a recent study by Uko (2017) in Nigeria have revealed that even teachers initially held supportive views about inclusive education of children with hearing impairment but in the process of its implementation and practice in the classroom they developed negative attitudes towards it. Such negative attitudes may have been emanated and largely influenced by factors such as insufficient knowledge on inclusive education of a child with hearing impairment, severity of the hearing impairment and lack motivation or incentives by the government on the extra responsibilities of teachers. Many teachers complain about a lack of specialist training or orientation on the learning needs of these children and how to circumvent their learning challenges. This makes teachers become limited in their knowledge and professional response to the learning needs of these children. Fullan (2013) argued that teachers are more supportive of learners with mild hearing loss than those with severe or profound hearing loss noting that it requires less efforts and commitment to accommodate these in instructional delivery than those with profound hearing loss. On the other hand, government has stated laudable goals and objectives of inclusive education without commitment to achieving such objectives. Teachers are not given incentives on their extra work to ensure these children benefit as much as others in class. Thus, discouragement and negative attitudes have set in on the part of the teachers.

In the light of the above, Muir (2011) and Lampe (2017) explained that one of the most significant constraints to successful inclusion of children with hearing impairment is negative attitudes of teachers towards these children. Classes are now becoming more diverse with respect to students' abilities requiring improved classroom management skills, knowledge and competence in providing need-based education to these learners as well as motivation of teachers on the part of the government for their increased responsibilities. These increased classroom responsibilities incite negative attitudes in teachers which ultimately hamper successful learning experience by children with special needs. It is reported that regular classroom teachers do not hold supportive attitudes towards educational inclusion and this has a significant impact on inclusion

of these learners in the regular school system. A research by Lampe (2017) also notes that certain factors are associated with negative attitudes of regular education teachers towards children with hearing impairment. One of such factors is the knowledge and competency level of regular education teachers in providing quality service delivery in compliance to the best global practices in special needs education. Another striking factor is the severity of the hearing loss. The attitudes of teachers change with a varying degree of severity of the disability. Many teachers prefer mild or moderate hearing loss to others in reflection of their socio-cultural and educational backgrounds. Additionally, a lack of incentives for teachers of children with special needs has proven to incite negative attitudes towards children with special needs in the classroom. Teachers with good motivation to teaching these children tend to be committed to their work and are more concerned about the educational and social progress of the child.

It is against this background that the researchers need to investigate factors associated with negative attitudes of teachers toward children with special needs in Uyo, Nigeria. Thus, under this investigation, the researcher is keen on finding out how teachers' incompetence, a lack of incentives for teachers as well as severity of hearing loss relate to negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment.

## Statement of the Problem

The global trend in the provision of educational services to individuals with disabilities today is inclusion. Inclusive education has been recognised globally as the most effective means of providing education for children with special needs including those with hearing impairment. However, studies have shown that one of the factors influencing the effective implementation of inclusion is teachers' attitudes. Research and experience have demonstrated that this universal right has incited negative attitudes among teachers towards children with hearing impairment. Teachers who play a central role in the implementation of inclusive education of children with hearing impairment manifest negative attitudes due to certain factors.

Research and experience have demonstrated that many teachers have insufficient knowledge of classroom pedagogical practices required for inclusion of these children. This inadequacy results in negative attitudes towards these children which hampers successful learning experience. Similarly, experience has revealed that the severity of the hearing loss influences the attitudes of teachers towards the child and the motivation teachers receive from the Government for their increased responsibility in the class impact their attitudes towards these children. Inclusion of children with hearing impairment may not be successful if negative attitudes of teachers are not removed at an early stage. Such attitudes may negatively affect their readiness to

accommodate these children in their classrooms. To achieve this universal mandate and ensure these children are educated in the spirit of inclusive education, there is an urgent need to identify those factors that incite negative attitudes towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment among teachers so that realistic measures can be taken to forestall the current ordeal in education of these learners so as to attain global sustainable inclusive education in 2030. It is against this background that this research is keen on investigating what factors incite negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment. The problem of this study therefore is, what is the composite and relative contribution of teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss to negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors associated with negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aimed:

- i. To find out the relationship between the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment).
- ii. To determine the composite contribution of the independent variable to the independent variables.
- iii. To examine the relative contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variables.

## **Research Question**

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What is the relationship between the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment)?
2. What is the composite contribution of the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) to the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment)?

3. What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) to the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment)?

## Methodology

The research adopted a correlational survey design and purposive sampling technique was used to sample 75 (seventy-five) teachers having children with hearing impairment in their classrooms. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire of ten (30) items with a 5-point rating scale. It was used to survey teachers' opinions on factors associated with their negative attitudes towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment. The instrument was validated by three experts and has reliability coefficient 0.78 to 0.82 obtained through Cronbach Alpha method of determining reliability. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship in the stated research questions while Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to verify whether the independent variables predicted the dependent variable or not.

## Presentation of Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria?

Table 1

*Correlation between the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria*

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Df	R	P	Remark
Negative attitudes towards Inclusive Education	5.94	2.505	75	3	—	—	—
Teachers' poor competency	5.98	2.62			.685*	.000	Sig.
Lack of teachers' incentives	6.99	2.911			.812*	.000	Sig.
Severity of hearing loss	5.30	2.19			.255*	.000	Sig.

\* Correlation Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 above revealed that there was significant relationship between the independent variables (teachers’ poor competency, lack of teachers’ incentives and severity of the child’s hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment. That is negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment has correlation with teachers’ poor competency ( $r = 0.685$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), lack of teachers’ incentives ( $r = 0.812$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and severity of hearing loss ( $r = 0.255$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), since  $P$  was lesser than 0.05 level of significance, therefore, there was a significant relationship between the independent variables (teachers’ poor competency, lack of teachers’ incentives and severity of the child’s hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria.

**Research Question 2:** What is the composite contribution of the independent variables (teachers’ poor competency, lack of teachers’ incentives and severity of the child’s hearing loss) to the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment)?

Table 2  
*Summary of Regression Analysis of the combined prediction of the independent variables and the dependent variable*

R		R Square		Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate
0.859		0.738		0.737		1.386
SUMMARY REGRESSION ANOVA						
	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Remark
Regression	336.809	3	78.801	9.486	.000	Sig.
Residual	201.023	71	1.312			
Total	537.832	74				

Table 2 above showed that there was a significant composite contribution of the independent variables (teachers’ poor competency, lack of teachers’ incentives and severity of the child’s hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers to inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation ( $R$ ) of 0.859 and a multiple  $R$  Square of 0.738. This means that 73.7 % ( $\text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.737$ ) of the variance in teachers’ negative attitudes towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment is accounted by 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 ( $df = 3/74$ ). The Table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded a  $F$ -ratio of 9.486 (sig. at 0.05 level).



**Research Question 3:** What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and the dependent variable (negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria)?

Table 3

*Relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable (Test of Significance of the regression Coefficients)*

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	(B)	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	7.461	.346	—	21.577	.000
Teachers' poor competency	.113	.018	.266	12.419	.000
Lack of teachers' incentives	.709	.023	.871	30.838	.000
Severity of the hearing loss	.452	.036	.143	6.149	.000

Table 3 above reveals that there is a significant contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights. There is correlation coefficient, teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives, and severity of the hearing loss on negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. That is, teachers' negative attitudes towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria has relative contribution on teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives, and severity of the hearing loss. Using the standardized regression coefficient to determine the relative contribution of the independent variables, lack of teachers' incentives ( $\beta = 0.871$ ,  $t = 30.838$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indicates most potent contributor to the prediction, followed by teachers' poor competency ( $\beta = 0.266$ ,  $t = 12.419$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and severity of the hearing loss ( $\beta = 0.143$ ,  $t = 6.149$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) has a contribution to negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. It implies that there is a significant relative contribution of the independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria.

## Discussion

The research question of this study investigated what relationship existed between independent variables (teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss) and negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. The findings in this study indicated that teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss correlated with negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in the regular classroom. The implication of this is that teachers' poor competency, lack of teachers' incentives and severity of the child's hearing loss contribute greatly to negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Uyo, Nigeria. The challenge of achieving full educational and social integration of children with hearing impairment within the educational setting could be easily achieved if the teachers possessed better knowledge about hearing impairment, and competencies to handle the children in the classroom. Such knowledge and understanding would enable them to develop positive attitude towards these children which in turn leads to acquiring or developing better competencies to handle the children. General education teachers usually have very little knowledge about learning difficulties of these children. This supports the findings by Kaidhi and Deli (2017) which affirmed that common reasons for teachers' negative attitudes were that teacher training programs devoted little or no class hours to understanding the challenges learners with hearing impairment faced and how to help them learn. Second, general education teachers typically do not undertake any further studies that focus on effective ways to teach learners with hearing impairment and possibly on sign language. Last, educational authorities do not provide ongoing in-service training for teachers about teaching learners who are deaf and hard of hearing. Due to the increasing number of children with hearing impairment at schools—mostly primary schools, it seems necessary for primary school teachers to be increasingly familiar with the learning difficulty to be able to identify these kinds of students in their classes and provide child-centered teaching strategies to help the progress in the general curriculum at par with others (Komidy & Fhildar, 2015).

The findings of this study are also in agreement with Adoryre (2013) which supported that class teachers had responsibility for providing an environment incorporating techniques and strategies recommended for the teaching of pupils with hearing impairment, choosing appropriate learning objectives which challenged and supported them, managing, accessing strategies and various teaching styles to support the unique learning profile of each child, working with parents to keep them informed of the strategies and approaches being used and finally, liaising with colleagues. Teachers who have the knowledge and practical skills required to accommodate these children in the classroom tend to develop positive attitudes towards their inclusion in

the regular education classroom. Recognizing the students with hearing impairment and employing educational methods for teaching this group of students give teachers satisfaction which promotes positive attitudes towards these children daily both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Negative attitudes are developed when teachers do not meet the educational goals of these children due to teacher-based factor such as knowledge on pedagogical principles for teaching children with hearing impairment.

The knowledge of regular classroom teachers on hearing impairment and the pedagogical expertise required are considered a central point in developing positive attitudes to include these students in regular schools. Several studies reported that regular classroom teachers did not possess the wherewithal to teach children with hearing impairment and thus, hold negative attitudes towards educational inclusion as coping and defense mechanism (Minkeet, 2016; Reite, 2017). Florien (2012) supported that many general classroom teachers in Nigeria resisted children with special needs in their classes due to insufficient knowledge on instructional accommodation, believing that inclusion interfered with the quality and effective education of other students without disabilities.

Similarly, these findings support Sideri and Vachou (2016) who reported that regular education teachers held many restrictive as well as conflicting beliefs towards disability and educational inclusion. These teachers reported that although educational inclusion was necessary as a means of improving the way ordinary school functioned and reducing the marginalization and stigmatization of students with hearing impairment, special segregated education was more important as a means of providing a secure and protective shelter to these students and as a way of covering many ordinary education's deficiencies. Teachers' insufficient knowledge on the disabilities, teachers' inability to conduct assessment-teaching process, teachers' inability to collaborate with stakeholders and teachers' inability to build self-esteem of these children result in developing negative attitudes towards this category of learners. In the same vein Tuloi (2015) reported that teachers' competence on the therapeutic pedagogy of children with hearing impairment is not sufficient. Thus, they resist including them in their classes to shy away from their responsibility. Further findings revealed that teachers do not have sufficient knowledge on the causes, nature, clusters of characteristics, psychological and learning/instructional needs of children with hearing impairment consequently denying these learners the right to quality education. In consonance with these findings, Munto (2012) stated that a high percentage of the influx of UBE teachers into Nigerian classrooms had no knowledge of disabilities and how this disability manifested itself in and out of classroom environments.

Also, the nature and severity of the hearing loss influence the attitudes of teachers. Smith (2014) affirmed that children with less severe hearing loss who also were less demanding in terms of teachers' input, were generally viewed more positively as candidates for inclusion than children with severe hearing loss. The findings of this study

also supported Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2016) who maintained that the nature and severity of a student's hearing loss was related to teachers' willingness to include the students in general education classrooms. One major factor that influences teachers' attitudes toward inclusion is severity of the students' hearing loss and the amount of the teacher's responsibility needed to facilitate inclusion. Teachers also tend to believe that students with severe hearing loss may require more teacher attention and sign language. Teachers appear to favor the inclusion of students with mild or slight hearing loss because they require the least amount of support in general education settings. The inclusion of students with profound hearing loss is less favorable among teachers because of their perceived poor language and the difficulty to accommodate the learner in the classroom. Most teachers (86%) were opposed to including students with severe and profound hearing loss in general education classes. Responses indicated that teachers thought that including a student with severe or profound hearing loss in general education environments would require additional assistance (e.g., use of sign language). Teachers do generally not feel responsible for differentiating instruction to meet diverse learning needs. Thus, the research noted that modifying and differentiating instruction was not a skill that came easily for any teacher (novice or experienced). Teachers generally exhibit a more positive attitude toward the inclusion of students that require less responsibility.

Similarly, Skrug and Dier (2016) reported that the highest level of support was given to the inclusion of students with mild hearing loss who required the least amount of modification in curriculum and instruction. Teachers indicated that the severity level of student disability and the amount of additional teacher responsibility required were the two factors that influence teachers' perspectives toward inclusion. For about one third of the sample, these two factors appeared to be related to the belief that including students with severe hearing loss would have a negative effect on the general education class. Students with mild hearing loss have been portrayed as not being significantly different from students without distinguished disabilities and, therefore, were more likely to be welcomed in the inclusive classrooms. Accordingly, students who do not reward the teachers' investment of time and effort do not attract the same level of concern and attachment as students who reward their teachers' efforts by being successful. Students who reward additional teacher time and effort, such as those with only a mild level of hearing loss, remain within the teachers' "instructional tolerance". Students who remain outside this sphere of tolerance are easy to reject. Instructional tolerance is related to teacher efficacy, which is directly related to such outcomes as student achievement, and classroom management. When students fail, teachers do not experience the traditional reward and satisfaction that teaching affords: the reward of seeing a student do something he could not do before. Teachers' perceptions of their own professional competence are eroded by the failure of some students to learn, and

by continual challenging behaviors in the classroom resulting to negative attitudes towards further inclusion of this category of learners in their classroom.

Also, motivation or teachers' incentives comes from many sources. Some teachers are motivated by their love for children and teaching, some by more external factors such as a stable salary or the advantages of having more leave time. In this context, motivation and incentive are interchangeably used to convey the same meaning. To the extent that education leaders understand what motivates teachers, it may be possible to provide incentives in ways that promote positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with hearing impairment into their class. Most teachers are motivated by a complex combination of internal and external factors. There is little doubt that incentives, when used wisely can be an important means of improving teachers' attitudes, deployment, and pedagogical practices for children with special needs. Incentives are an important tool available to education managers seeking to shape teacher behavior towards the atypical population in the school (Stoiber, Gettinger, & Goetz, 2017). Incentives are sometimes used by government and education leaders to motivate teachers of special needs children to behave differently, presumably in ways that promote positive attitudes towards special needs children. For example, motivation or incentives are designed to attract current teachers to remain in teaching, to accept assignments in remote schools, accept inclusion of children with disabilities or to use new teaching methods in their classroom for overall academic development of all children including those with disabilities. The idea of using incentives to shape teacher behavior is not new. Virtually all educators understand the basic idea.

The findings of this study are in line with the study of Billingsley (2014) which reported that overall, all the teachers expressed that they needed motivation and supports, noting that they did not have to successfully integrate a student with hearing impairment into the general education classroom without adequate motivation or incentive that commensurate their extra work. Of the general education teachers, 79 % reported not having adequate or no motivation, 78 % lacked personnel support, and 73 % report needing adapted tools. Forty-nine percent of the special education teachers reported they needed but did not have appropriate class-size and 48 % reported that they needed in-service workshops with the general education teachers. Participants pointed out that such outright lack of motivation can only give them negative attitudes towards the inclusion of these children. The study concluded that to promote positive attitudes toward inclusion there is a need for adequate provision of incentives. The most effective incentive system for a country is based on a careful study of what teachers in that country value. In designing incentive systems, it is useful to ask teachers what matters to them and then try target the design of incentives towards those actions. It is also important to note that addressing issues of teacher incentives is just one part of developing an effective system for attracting, retaining and motivating highly qualified teachers to raise the learning of students with disabilities. There are several other areas

related to working conditions, including support from other education colleagues, professional expectations, and professional autonomy and authority.

Special education teachers are valued mostly for their commitment to serve a vast dimensional group of children with educational needs, which is one of the most hardest and most complicated jobs in the field of education (Payne, 2015). Thus, there is a need to improve teachers' motivation to promote good disposition of teachers towards special needs children including those with hearing impairment. It has been noticed that there is a disparity between pay structures of the younger and experienced teachers in inclusive schools. Research has shown that most regular teachers who do not teach these children are satisfied with the salary they have, but those teachers teaching these children are not paid according to their functions and increased responsibilities. They all earn the same amount of salary so the wage structures require further attention (Khan, 2011). This disparity brings negative attitudes towards inclusion. Intensity of job satisfaction depends on the discrepancy of expectations of person, what he or she wants and what he or she gains. Job satisfaction is an extent to which a teacher feels positively or negatively motivated about different aspects of job, e.g. job conditions, timing, structure, compensation, tasks, collaboration and responsibilities (Williams, 2014). Pay is thought to be a key factor behind job satisfaction besides promotion, recognition, job involvement and commitment. Job satisfaction by inclusive education teachers is a feeling they have about their job which is a factor that determines whether the teacher would have negative or positive attitudes to work.

## Conclusion

Several factors are reported to be associated with negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Nigeria. These factors include poor competency of teachers, lack of incentives and severity of the hearing loss. The ability of all education stakeholders to adopt appropriate measures that circumvent these challenges is key to providing sustainable inclusive education for children with hearing impairment.

## Recommendations

- i. Ongoing teachers' development programs in form of conferences, workshops and special training should be organized for teachers by Government to equip them with the right pedagogical knowledge, practical skills and the attitudes needed to foster inclusive education of children with hearing impairment.

- ii. The Government, nongovernmental organization, schools and corporate bodies should provide monetary and other forms of incentives to teachers to strengthen their vigor toward including these children in their classrooms.
- iii. Specialized training should be provided for teachers on deaf education to empower their capacity and knowledge on instructional accommodation for all children with hearing impairment regardless of the severity of the hearing loss.

## References

- Adeyemi, A. D. (2011). Literature review of the principles and practices relating to inclusive education for children with special educational needs. *Journal of Extension*, 11, 12–17.
- Adorye, S. G. (2003). Perceptions by teachers about benefits and liabilities of inclusion. *Preventing School Failure*, 42(1), 63–71.
- Avramidis, R., Bayliss, A. and Burden, C. (2000). Teachers' attitudes, knowledge and perception towards inclusive education in Malaysia. *Journal of Education*, 21(3), 36–44.
- Billingsley, I. (2014). High school teacher attitudes toward inclusion. *High School Journal*, 84(2), 7–21.
- Disability Rights Task Force Final Report. (2004). *From Exclusion to Inclusion*. Retrieved from [http://www.disability.gov.uk/drtf/full\\_report/index.html](http://www.disability.gov.uk/drtf/full_report/index.html). In October 1, 2017
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2008). *The national policy on education*. Lagos: NERDC.
- Florien, W. I. (2012). Inclusion and the standards agenda: negotiating policy pressures in England. *Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10, (4–5), 295–308.
- Fullan, M. (2013). The New Meaning of Educational Change. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 2(3), 25–28.
- Jenkins, S. B. (2010). Taking an inclusive turn. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 7(1), 3–7.
- Kaidhi, D. and Deli. L. (2017). Integration of severely handicapped students and the proportion of IEP objectives achieved. *Exceptional Children*, 51, 168–175.
- Kharn, E. B. (2011). Incentive: A predictor of teachers' attitudes to inclusion of children with disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 20(4), 219–228.
- Kinar, E. C. (2011). Perceptions by teachers about benefits and liabilities of inclusion. *Child Success*, 42(1), 63–71.
- Komidy, S. F. & Hildar, C. B. (2015). Inclusive education in Botswana: the perceptions of school teachers. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 20(4), 219–228.
- Lampe, L. C. (2017). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28, 117–148.
- Minkeet, A. (2016). Social integration and severe disabilities. A longitudinal analysis of child outcomes. *Journal of Special Education*, 25, 340–351.
- Muir, E. (2011). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129–147.
- Munto, E. Y. (2012). What do special educators need to know and be prepared to do for inclusive schooling to work? *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 26(1), 42–50.
- Obani, T. C. (2014). "Developing library and information policy for the visually impaired in Nigeria. *Journal of the Association of Libraries for the Visually Impaired*. 1, 2: 1–7.
- Payne, F. (2015). Special education in Turkey. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 13(3), 254–261.

- Reite, F. (2017). Teacher attitudes in Italy after twenty years of inclusion. *Remedial and Special Education*, 19(6), 350–356.
- Sideri, R. and Vachou, I. (2016). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion: Survey results from elementary school teachers in the southwestern rural school. *Rural Education Quarterly*, 22(1), 255–261.
- Skrug, A. R. and Dier, N. (2016). Are regular education classes equipped to accommodate students with deafness? *Exceptional Children Series*, 56(6), 515–526.
- Smith, E. (2014). Teachers' perceptions towards inclusive education in Uganda. *Journal of Inclusion Development*, 21(3) 1–15.
- Stoiber, A., Gettinger, C. and Goetz, W. (2017). Teachers' attitudes toward increased mainstreaming: Implementing effective instruction for students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28(2), 87–94.
- Tuloi, E. R. (2015). Inclusion of students with emotional behavioral disorders: A survey to teachers in general and special education. *Journal of School Accommodation*, 43(3), 103–111.
- Uko, F. (2017 in press). Attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education of children with hearing impairment in Calabar, Nigeria.
- UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (2003). *Overcoming exclusion through inclusive approaches in education: A challenge and a vision*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Williams, G. (2014). Teacher and administrator perceptions of heterogeneous education. *Exceptional Children*, 63(1), 29–51.

**Contact:**

Francesca Uko

Institute of Special Education, Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc

Uko, Francesca Uche-Ezekiel Ministry of Education, Special Education Centre Uyo Akwa Ibom State Nigeria

E-mail: easyfavo@gmail.com

**Francesca Uche-Ezekiel Uko, Ph.D.** student at the Institute of Special Education, Palacký University in Olomouc. She is specialising in Hearing Impairment. A holder of B.Ed. in Guidance and Counselling/English language and M.Ed. in Special Education both from University of Ibadan, Nigeria. She has attended conferences and published in different professional journals.