

**TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONAL PREPARATION TECHNIQUE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE****BY****Umeh, Mary Hilary Carol: Education Foundation/GST French, Tansian University, Oba-Umunya,
Anambra State, Nigeria, umehmary68@gmail.com****Abstract**

The paper investigated teachers' instructional preparation technique for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. Three research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Three research questions were answered and three hypotheses tested in the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study while the population of the study was 7376 teachers in the public senior secondary schools in Rivers State out of which 379 teachers were sampled for the study using random sampling technique. Instrument adopted for data gathering was a 15 item questionnaire titled "Teachers Instructional Preparation Technique for Inclusive Education Questionnaire" (TIPTIEQ) which was face and content validated by three Measurement and Evaluation experts at University of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha statistics as used to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire with an index of 0.80. There were 379 copies of the questionnaire administered while 364 copies representing 96.0% were retrieved. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study indicated that the teachers practiced organization of their learning activities and assembles needed learning materials as part of their instructional preparation technique. It was revealed that lack of adequate resources and difference in learners need was challenges faced by teachers in the instructional preparation process. The study recommended based on the findings that adequate instructional materials should be provided for teachers to enable them deliver inclusive education in the secondary schools.

Keywords: *Teachers, Instructional Preparation, Inclusive Education, Secondary Schools, Nigeria*

Introduction

The school is an educational setting where teachers and students interact for meaningful teaching and learning to take place. The teacher who serves as in-loco-parentis to the learner has the obligation of teaching while the students learn and this places huge expectation on the teacher. Similarly, among the several duties that teachers are expected to carry out in the school, the process of preparing for teaching vis-à-vis the instructional preparation method is essential for effective teaching and learning to take place in the classroom. This is because, most times, some of the learning challenges faced by students are traceable to the inability of the teacher to adequately prepare for the instructional delivery process. According to Ali (2021), the process of classroom management and ensuring inclusion of all learners in the teaching process is one of the major challenges teachers face in the school. Amosa (2015:8) stated that "instructional strategies are all the things the teachers use to aid the learners in their learning process and they are the means used to bring about effective teaching and learning". However, if the teacher fails to prepare for this process, effective teaching and learning and an inclusive education that addresses the need for diverse learners will not be achieved. This means that even when relevant resources are available, poor instructional preparation may still make some if not all the students to be excluded from the actual teaching that takes place in the classroom.

The ability to motivate students to learn is more important than how much effort the teacher puts into delivering lessons. Every educator who wishes to impart knowledge must first create an outline of their subject or topic in writing or at their level of understanding (Okenjom et al., 2016:44). In addition to this, the teacher must put adequate time and resources into the instructional preparation process to ensure that no learner is excluded from the teaching process. Owuamanam (2018) alluded to the fact that in the instructional preparation process, attention must be paid to series of activities which include lesson planning, preparation, presentation, classroom management and evaluation to ensure that all learners benefit from the instructional delivery process and this can sometimes be achieved using available technologies in the school.

Scholars such as Okwelle and Allagoa (2014) have asserted that in order to carry out an effective instructional preparation, the attention must be paid to a few tactics to improve proficiency in choosing, creating, and utilizing educational resources for effective delivery, as well as focusing on positivity, reflection of learner's individual differences, learning objectives, and content. Putting all of these in the right perspectives are part of the strategies that enable the teacher to prepare and deliver an inclusive lesson where no learner is deprived. Similarly, Awodeyi (2019) pointed to the fact that teachers must be trained in all of these processes in order to make positive impact. They must be equipped with necessary skills and abilities required to prepare their lessons in order to assist all lessons acquire the required skills, knowledge and change of attitude that is required in the instructional process. Amosa et al., (2015) studied instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning in Nigeria secondary schools. Three research questions were raised to guide the study. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. There were 220 teachers working in secondary schools made up the study's population, and 176 of them were randomly selected to participate in the study. Data were gathered using a 42-item questionnaire. The study's findings revealed that teachers generally agreed that their teaching methods did not encourage effective teaching and learning and that there were issues with the application of instructional strategies in their teaching process. Some of the teachers said it was challenging to incorporate instructional strategies into their classroom activities.

Malata and Muzata (2022) conducted another study on lesson preparation for inclusive teaching of learners with disabilities from grade 1 to 7 at Kankumba Primary in Zambia. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study used a case study approach. In the study, 18 participants consisting of 1 head teacher, 5 parents, 6 class teachers, and 6 disabled children were chosen using a purposeful sampling technique. The study's key conclusions showed that teachers did not plan lessons inclusively. The absence of inclusive methods in lesson plans, where teachers only planned group work and lecture methods without indicating how the learners with disabilities would benefit, were some indicators of inadequate inclusive planning. The choice of instructional materials and tools did not reflect inclusion of students with disabilities. The study also showed that teachers' lack of knowledge about inclusive lesson preparation contributed to improper inclusive lesson delivery and inadequate inclusive lesson preparation.

Ampofo et al., (2019) also investigated the influence of school heads' direct supervision on teacher role performance in public senior high schools, Central Region, Ghana. Three research questions guided the study. The study used a mixed-methods approach. A sample of 617 respondents, including 295 teachers, 222 class prefects, 86 department heads, 13 school heads, and 1 regional director for the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service, were chosen using simple random and purposeful sampling. Through the use of questionnaires and interview guides, data were gathered. Frequencies, means, and multiple regression were used to analyze quantitative data, while patterns and themes were created to analyze qualitative data. According to the study, school administrators gave teachers' lesson planning and delivery very little time to oversee. The study found that teacher role performance was significantly impacted by the school heads' lesson planning and delivery supervision ($p=0.043$ and 0.055 , respectively).

Furthermore, Munna and Kalam (2021) conducted a related study on teaching and learning process as a transformation process of knowledge from teachers to students. The effectiveness of teaching in the higher education setting was evaluated using academic journals, pedagogy, and inclusive practices. The study employed experimental research techniques with a primary focus on literary forms of reflection to analyze the theory while reinforcing the practice through university experiences. The results of the research point to the introduction of role-playing and the provision of constructive and adequate formative and developmental feedback as having a profoundly positive effect on students' confidence and self-esteem. Additionally, it was discovered that an inclusive environment fosters inclusivity and enhances faculty and student academic performance.

On the other hand, Yacap (2022) investigated lesson preparation practices of pre-service high school science teachers in Philippines. Surveys, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data

using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings showed that the pre-service science teachers prepared their lessons in a systematic way using detailed lesson plans. Their methods for lesson planning are sound, and they are equipped to handle the challenges that a real classroom teacher will encounter. Even so, there are still areas of lesson planning that require improvement, such as the formulation of affective domain objectives and the choice of suitable motivational and assessment techniques. The study suggests that Teacher Education Institutions continue to develop activities and programs regarding pre-service teachers' development in both science and other subject areas in order to further develop the pre-service program for science education. These studies show the gap that needs to be filled is teachers' instructional preparation techniques will contribute to inclusive education in secondary schools.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate teachers' instructional preparation technique for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. In specific terms, the objectives of the study were to:

1. describe the teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State
2. ascertain the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State
3. examine the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. What are the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. What are the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers the challenges to their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State
3. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the strategies for improving their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Methodology

The study utilized the descriptive survey design since the study focused on investigating a phenomenon that exists. The population of the study was the entire 7376 teachers in the public senior secondary schools in Rivers State comprising 3640 males and 3735 females. The Taro Yamane minimum sample size determination formula was used to arrive at a sample size of 379 teachers (187 males and 189 females) which was the sample size of the study while the respondents were drawn using random sampling technique. The instrument used for data gathering was a 15 item questionnaire tagged "Teachers Instructional Preparation Technique for Inclusive Education Questionnaire" TIPTIEQ). The instrument was responded to on a four point modified Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2) and Strongly Disagree (SD=1). The weights of the questionnaire were added together and divided by 4 to arrive at 2.50 which is the criterion mean score for agreeing or disagreeing with a questionnaire item. The face and content validities of the questionnaire were determined by three Measurement and Evaluation experts at the

University of Port Harcourt. Cronbach alpha statistics as used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and yielded a reliability index of 0.80. The researcher and two research assistants administered the questionnaire to 379 teachers but recovered 364 copies (173 males and 191 females) which represented a retrieval rate of 96.0%. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores on the teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Teachers n=173		Female Teachers n=191		Mean Set	
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Learning resources that will be needed for teaching and organized ahead of time	2.82	0.89	2.78	0.81	2.80	Agreed
2	Adequate research is carried out on the learning content that is to be delivered	2.85	0.87	2.73	0.83	2.79	Agreed
3	Practical lessons are pre-practiced before they are delivered in class	2.47	1.01	2.68	0.88	2.58	Agreed
4	Relevant approvals are gotten ahead for the teaching to take place	2.42	1.03	2.55	0.97	2.49	Disagreed
5	Students are informed to prepare for the upcoming lesson	2.40	1.05	2.67	0.93	2.54	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	2.59	0.97	2.68	0.88		Agreed

Table 1 revealed that items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were responded to by the male teachers with mean scores of 2.82, 2.85, 2.47, 2.42 and 2.40 while the female teachers responded to the same set of items with mean values of 2.78, 2.73, 2.68, 2.55 and 2.67. Items 1 and 2 from the male teachers and 1-5 from the female teachers were above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making and as such were agreed while items 3, 4 and 5 from the male teachers had mean scores below the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making and as such were disagreed. The grand mean score of 2.59 from the male teachers and 2.68 from the female teachers as well as the average mean score of 2.64 implied that the respondents averagely agreed on the items listed as teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores on the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Teachers n=173		Female Teachers n=191		Mean Set		Decision
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	X \bar{X}		
6	Lack of adequate teaching resources	2.93	0.84	2.95	0.73	2.94		Agreed
7	School policy hinder proper preparation for instructional delivery	2.47	1.01	2.51	0.99	2.49		Disagreed
8	The curriculum used for teaching is complicated for adequate preparation	2.49	0.99	2.53	0.98	2.51		Agreed
9	Educational changes and innovation makes proper preparation difficult	2.60	1.05	2.91	0.75	2.76		Agreed
10	Difference in learners learning needs is a challenge	2.98	0.81	2.99	0.71	2.99		Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	2.69	0.94	2.78	0.83	2.74		Agreed

Table 2 showed that items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 were responded to by the male teachers with mean values of 2.93, 2.47, 2.49, 2.60 and 2.98 while the female teachers responded to the same set of items with mean values of 2.95, 2.51, 2.53, 2.91 and 2.99. Items with mean scores above the criterion mean value of 2.50 were agreed while the items with mean scores less than the criterion mean value were disagreed. The table shows that all the items from the female teachers were agreed while items 7 and 8 were disagreed from the responses of the male teachers. The grand mean scores of 2.69 and 2.78 from the male and female teachers align with the average mean set score of 2.74 to indicate that the respondents averagely agreed on the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: What are the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores on the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Teachers n=173		Female Teachers n=191		Mean Set		Decision
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	X \bar{X}		
11	The use of technology makes instructional preparation more efficient	2.77	0.93	2.90	0.76	2.84		Agreed
12	Teachers should evaluate their students ahead to determine what the instructional process should focus on	2.78	0.92	2.88	0.77	2.83		Agreed
13	It is important for teachers to have a schedule of targeted instructional activities	2.82	0.98	2.95	0.73	2.89		Agreed
14	Teachers should focus on their areas of competence in the	2.80	0.97	2.81	0.79	2.81		Agreed

	preparatory process							
15	Teachers should consult other experts with better experience when preparing their lessons	2.83	0.97	2.84	0.7	2.84	3	Agreed
	Grand Mean and SD	2.80	.95	2.88	0.7	2.84	6	Agreed

Table 3 revealed that the male teachers responded to items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 with mean values of 2.77, 2.78, 2.82, 2.80 and 2.83 while the female teachers responded to the same set of items with mean values of 2.90, 2.88, 2.95, 2.81, and 2.84. The table shows that all of the items listed had mean values that were above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making and as such were all agreed. Item 13 had the highest mean set of 2.89 implying that the teachers believe having a schedule of activities is the best strategy for inclusive education. The grand mean score of 2.80 and 2.88 from the male and female teachers as well as the average mean set score of 2.84 indicated that the respondents averagely agreed on the items listed as the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Male Teachers	173	2.59	0.97	362	0.93	1.96	0.05	Retained
Female Teachers	191	2.68	0.88					

Table 4 showed that while the estimated value of z-cal. was 0.93, the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 362 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the value of z-cal. of 0.93 is less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was retained indicating that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers the challenges to their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 5: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers the challenges to their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Male Teachers	173	2.69	0.94	362	0.97	1.96	0.05	Retained
Female Teachers	191	2.78	0.83					

Table 5 indicated that while the estimated value of z-cal. was 0.97, the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 362 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the value of z-cal. of 0.97 is less than the value of z-

crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was retained suggesting that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers the challenges to their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the strategies for improving their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Table 6: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the strategies for improving their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Male Teachers	173	2.80	0.95	362	0.89	1.96	0.05	Retained
Female Teachers	191	2.88	0.76					

Table 6 revealed that while the estimated value of z-cal. was 0.89, the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 362 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the value of z-cal. of 0.89 is less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was retained implying that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the strategies for improving their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The data collected and analyzed from the teachers indicated that they averagely agreed on the items listed as teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. It was also established that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. The teachers in their responses both agreed that part of their instructional preparation techniques was that they organized their learning materials required for instructional delivery ahead so that no learner will be left out during instructional delivery. This agrees with the outcome of the study by Yacap (2022) which pointed out that teachers plan their lessons ahead so that learning objectives can be actualized. They equally pointed out that they make effort to prepare adequate learning materials that will be needed for inclusive education. However, while the male teachers disagreed, the female teachers agreed that they carry out pre-practical demonstrations to prepare for the teaching ahead, seek approval for lessons and other resources that will be needed for teaching and learning and that they inform students ahead of every lesson about what will be taught. According to the result of the study by Munna and Kalam (2021) this kind of preparation has positive effect on students' confidence and self-esteem. It was shown that an inclusive environment fosters inclusivity and enhances faculty and student academic performance. This suggests that the female teachers adopt more pre-instructional preparation techniques more than the male teachers to achieve inclusivity during instructional delivery which is essential for educational goals and objectives to be achieved.

The teachers indicated from their responses that, averagely, they agreed on the challenges to teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State and that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers the challenges to their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. The teachers were able to indicate from their responses that lack of adequate resources, continuous educational changes and innovations, difference in learners need were major challenges that affect teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education. This result is buttressed by the outcome of the study by Amosa et al., (2015) which established that teachers are unable to use certain teaching methods in the class which may largely be due to some of these identified challenges. However, while the male teachers disagreed, the female teachers agreed that the curriculum was a challenge in their preparation to lesson delivery. This

implies that the composition of the curriculum may still pose a challenge to some of the teachers making preparation for their lessons either because of its obsolete nature or other technical challenges that the teachers face in the process of implementation. The male teachers equally disagreed while the female teachers agreed that the school policy hinders their preparation for instruction. This means that the policy of the school may also hinder some teachers in the process of lesson preparation and delivery and some of these may include restricting teachers' access to take school resources home or prepare for lessons weeks before delivery and all of these hinder the teacher from being able to implement inclusive education.

The result of the study indicated that the respondents averagely agreed on the items listed as the strategies for improving teachers' instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. It was equally shown that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the strategies for improving their instructional preparation strategies for inclusive education in secondary schools in Rivers State. According to the findings of the study by Malata and Muzata (2022), any instructional delivery that is not properly coordinated will leave some students such as those with disability disenfranchised. The teachers both agreed that the use of technology, evaluation of the learners' need ahead of delivery, preparing a schedule of activities, concentrating on areas of teachers' strength and consulting other teachers with better experience are strategies that enable teachers carry out effective instructional preparation for inclusive education. However, study by Ampofo et al., (2019) indicated that school administrators gave teachers' lesson planning and delivery very little time to oversee and this lack of collective approach significantly impacted lesson planning and delivery. This calls for a more collective approach in the instructional preparation and delivery process in schools. This shows that successful instructional delivery that will be inclusive for all learners is a joint responsibility in schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there was no difference in the instructional preparation strategies of the male and female teachers for inclusive education. The study showed that the teachers did not explore relevant instructional preparation strategies needed for inclusive education and the factors responsible for this included lack of teaching aid, lack of internet services among others. This hindered the ability of teachers to prepare lessons that will promote inclusive education in the schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. The teachers need to be trained through workshops, seminars and conferences on how to prepare for instructional delivery that will promote inclusive education. This training will help sharpen the skills and knowledge of the teachers on how to prepare lessons that will promote inclusion in the classroom.
2. Adequate instructional materials need to be provided for the teachers in the right quality and quantity as this will assist the teacher to be able to put together an inclusive lesson that will meet the needs of all learners for the goals and objectives of education to be achieved.
3. Principals should ensure that they carry out adequate supervision of the instructional preparation techniques of the teachers before, during and after teaching so that adequate guidance can be provided that will promote inclusive education in the schools.

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