

***Influence of Community Resources on the Development and Implementation of Inclusive Early Childhood Education in Kano State, Nigeria***

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the influence of community resources on the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis. Descriptive survey design was adopted; the study sample consisted of 500 community members; convenience and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Questionnaire was adapted for data collection; it was validated and a reliability index of 0.74 was obtained. Two research questions were answered through mean and standard deviation while one hypothesis was tested through the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents are of the view that awarding of scholarships and provision of teaching and learning facilities are most community resources adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis; it was also revealed that community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education were moderately high; and that community resources positively and significantly influenced the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education. It is recommended that more resources should be provided by the relevant stakeholders in*

*order to improve the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.*

**Keywords:** Community, resources, Development, Implementation, Inclusive, Early, childhood

## **Introduction**

Education is a long term investment that a society can provide. It is the greatest force that can be used to bring about positive changes. Hence, it is believed that through the process of education, the individuals are prepared to become useful and acceptable members of the society. In preparing individuals for meaningful living, the community has a great responsibility of educating its people and providing necessary resources. It is also a strong machinery for national development; it shapes a nation and facilitates positive impacts in children's early education through inclusive and segregated schools (Precey & Mazurkiewicz, 2013). The early years are crucial for the development of every individual, and any resources and supports given at this stage influence the growth and development of every child. It is observed that early years' experiences in the life of a child have a significant influence on the child's later life. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the quality of early childhood education. Similarly, early childhood education centres on the education given to children at the early stages of development. It also connotes education given in an educational institution to children aged 3 to 5 years prior to their entering primary school (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), (2004). Early childhood education is seen as a pre-school, semi-formal education outside the home environment. The programme was organized for children between ages 0-5 years (Osho, Aliyu, Okolie & Onifade, 2014). The quality of care and nurture, which a child receives during this period, affect the whole future of the child. Yet many families are resource poor and parents lack both the materials and the know-how to prepare their children adequately for school or to help them through the schooling process (Osanyin, 2004).

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), early childhood education spans the human life from birth to age 8. Infant and toddlers experience life more holistically than any other age group. For this fact, social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical lessons are acquired by every young child. A child learns from an entire experience, not just that part of the experience to which the adult gives attention (Eyengho, 2008). Nigeria, in accordance with the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in Thailand in 1990, signed up to provide quality and comprehensive early childhood education and care for all preschoolers. Nigeria had early childhood centers prior to this but it was left to the private sector, which either provided sub-standard services or charged very high fees, thereby making this educational provision inaccessible to every child. The Federal Government of Nigeria is now responsive to early childhood education by virtue of its

inclusion in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme and even moved a step further to inaugurating early childhood education policy on 8 October 2007 (*Punch*, 9 October 2007, p. 16). This constitutes a step in the right direction in the provision of good early childhood education.

Inclusive education is a programme primarily designed to afford every child with or without disability to participate fully and actively in the life activities and work of mainstreamed settings to meet his or her daily needs. It also gives equal opportunity for all students to jointly undergo learning situations without segregation, and any student who seems to have any challenge as a result of deformation physically, mentally, emotionally, socially or otherwise is entitled to belong to mainstreamed environment. Children with various disabilities have encountered segregation, stigmatization and discrimination in having equal right to education. More significantly, inclusive early childhood education is considered as a means of initiating viable and successful educational and social experiences for people with various disabilities and challenges and special educational needs and children without such needs roughly aged 0-8 in early childhood education settings (Francis, 2016).

Recently, inclusive early childhood education is considered as a major goal to accomplish equitable education for every individual (Odom, Buyusee & Soukakou, 2011; Simpson & Warner, 2010; Winter 2007 cited in Francis, 2016), as well as having a collective educational system (Ackah Jnr, 2010). Early childhood inclusive education refers to the practice of educating children with disabilities, aged 3-5 years, along with their normally developing counterparts. Inclusive classrooms can be found in community based child care and preschool programmes (Odom, et al, 2004 cited in Sharmila & Rashida, 2016). There are various empirical studies in this area of study conducted by different researchers in relation to different variables. For instance, Holohan and Costenbader (2000) asserted that children with disabilities who performed at the higher level of social-emotional development achieved more progress on social skills in inclusive setting than in segregated settings, while those performing at a lower level progress at the same level in both inclusive and segregated settings. Similarly, Green et al. (2014) revealed that there is a positive influence of inclusive education on the language and literacy performance of the children with impairment in inclusive classrooms setting that established strong teaching practices and methods and good learning environments. According to Odom et al. (2004), children with impairment in inclusive classrooms are more likely to engage in peer interactions compared to their counterparts with impairment in segregated settings.

In Nigeria the influence of communities, religious organizations, philanthropists, non-governmental organizations and private individuals towards the growth and development of education cannot be underrated and ignored. Several literature had

shown that since late 19th century up till date, many Nigerian schools, specifically primary and post primary schools have been established through the contributions of the aforementioned agencies (Abiri, 2008 cited in Ismaila & Yusuf, 2012). Communities have also involved in a much broader range of actions such as supporting in the area of school management and maintenance in the area of students and teachers' code of conduct (discipline), mobilizing and generating funds and resources for effective and efficient teaching and learning, helping and supporting in the execution of school decision making among others.

More importantly, communities have acted as critical resources in the provision of standard education in emergencies by pivoting construction of schools etc. According to Berry (1976 cited in Ismaila & Yusuf, 2012), community resources are material resources, agencies, programme and activities of individuals within the community which could be used to provide and facilitate efficient and effective teaching and learning experiences. In the same vein, it is also described as the availability of human and non-human resources within the community that could be utilized to provide learning opportunities for the community members (Ismaila & Yusuf, 2012). These opportunities are provided by taking the school into the community or by bringing the community into the school. The tool for taking the school into the community could be the interactive relationship that exists between the school and the community. Also field trips, excursions, industrial training and students' tours are the elements of bringing the school into the community. Bringing the community into the school involves inviting resource persons (facilitators etc) of high integrity in the community to the school for teaching and learning purposes.

The mobilization of community resources for school educational purposes could have a significant influence on the sustainability of learning activities, growth and development of education and enhance students' academic achievement among others (Ismaila & Yusuf, (2012). In the same vein, Pallassana (2000, cited in Ismaila & Yusuf, 2012) found that there is a significant relationship between community resources and school development. He asserted that community provided land, funds, games equipment, teaching aids, put up buildings and rendered free labour as well as giving prizes and scholarship among other things to students for the development of their academic career. Similarly, the impacts of Parent-teacher association in the growth and development of education cannot be neglected and overruled based on the fact that they serve as community mobilizers from where consultative and representative groups emerge to form community education committee. These are school teachers and parents of students of particular schools coming together with the purpose of improving and enhancing the smooth running of the schools so as to facilitate effective and efficient maintenance of the schools and to improve the quality

of education that would facilitate and improve students' academic career (Baku & Agyman, 1997).

Several researches have been carried out in this area of study; however, based on the available literature at the researchers' disposal, none of these studies have been carried out in Kano State metropolis. The researchers therefore deemed it fit to investigate how community resources (human and material resources) affect and influence the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano State metropolis.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to survey the influence of community resources on the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis. Specifically the study examines:

1. The community resources adopted and used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.
2. The community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised and answered by this study:

1. What are the community resources adopted and used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis?
2. What are community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between community resources and the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study sample consisted of 500 community members in Kano metropolis, comprising of parents, teachers, community heads and youths. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used in the selection of the respondents (community members) in Kano metropolis. Convenience sampling techniques involve selecting respondents primarily on the basis of their availability and willingness to respond to the questions. In this study, the collection of data was carried out with the use of a questionnaire adapted from Ismaila and Yusuf (2012). Some modifications were done in the instrument. For instance, items number 1, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9 were modified under community resources used for development

and implementation of inclusive early childhood education. In the same vein, items number 1, 3, 4 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 were also modified under community resources strategies used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education. The instrument was scored on a modified five-point Likert-type scale of Strongly Agree = 5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, Disagree=2 and Strongly Disagree=1. The instrument contained two sections: A and B. Section A contained demographic data of the respondents and this includes: gender, age, educational background and religion. While section B consists of twenty one (21) items. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Test and Measurement. Test re-test method of reliability was adopted and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to establish a reliability co-efficient of 0.74. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents (community members) by the researchers and with the assistance of five trained research assistants. The data collected from the field were analyzed using SPSS software (Statistical packages for social sciences 21 version). Mean and standard deviation of descriptive statistics was used to answer the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to test the formulated hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Presentation of Results**

**Research Question 1:** What are the community resources adopted and used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis?

**Table 1:** Community Resources used for the Development and Implementation of Inclusive Early Childhood Education in Kano Metropolis

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Ranking
1	Community members organize extra lesson for the children	3.22	.921	7 <sup>th</sup>
2	Community awards scholarship to the exceptional children	3.37	1.236	1 <sup>st</sup>
3	Community provides teaching and learning facilities to the pupils	3.33	1.244	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Community provides enabling environment for the children to learn well	3.31	1.257	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Community supervises school activities and programmes	3.21	.920	8 <sup>th</sup>
6	Community builds libraries for the school to improve children's education	3.29	1.254	5 <sup>th</sup>
7	Community rehabilitates road network for the children's easy movement to school	3.34	1.251	2 <sup>nd</sup>
8	Community builds more classrooms to support government funding	3.28	1.254	6 <sup>th</sup>
9	Community partakes in the school meeting and activities to improve children's standard of education	3.20	.929	9 <sup>th</sup>

It can be deduced from the responses and the results in table 1 that majority of the respondents are of the view that awarding of scholarships for exceptional students, rehabilitation of road network and provision of teaching and learning facilities are most community resources adopted and used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.

**Research Question 2:** What are the community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis?

**Table 2:** Community Resources Strategies Adopted for the Development and Implementation of Inclusive Early Childhood Education in Kano Metropolis

S/N	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	Provision of qualitative education facilitates the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education	32	147	79	139	103
2	Provision of adequate funding and making realistic budget for the programme	31	147	75	145	102
3	Provision of regular and adequate supervision in the inclusive early childhood education programme	-	135	60	170	135
4	Good government policy enhances the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education	31	147	75	145	102
5	Provision of early childhood education centers leads to the development of inclusive early childhood education in the community	-	135	60	170	135
6	Inclusion of early childhood education in the universal basic education (UBE) programmes	25	138	76	151	110
7	Provision of good health centers contributes to the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education	25	148	73	146	108
8	Developing a standard curriculum for inclusive early childhood education programme	29	147	73	144	107
9	Provision of teacher education programmes for specialization in the inclusive early childhood education	-	135	61	169	135
10	Provision of free education to every citizen promotes inclusive early childhood education	30	147	76	143	104
11	Formation of parent-teacher association	27	145	72	147	109
12	Provision of meal for the school children facilitates the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education	31	147	75	145	102
<b>Total</b>		<b>261</b>	<b>1718</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>1814</b>	<b>1352</b>

Table 2 revealed that out of 6000 responses on twelve (12) indicators of community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education from 500 respondents, a total sum of 3166 (52.76%) responses were agreed, 1979 (32.98%) responses were disagreed and 855 (14.25%)

responses were undecided. This result shows that the community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis is moderately high.

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between community resources and the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.

**Table 3:** The Relationship between Community Resources on the Development and Implementation of Inclusive Early Childhood Education in Kano Metropolis

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>p</b>
Community Resources	500	29.52	4.07			
Development and Implementation of Inclusive Early Childhood Education	500	39.36	5.53	498	0.878	.000

$P < .05$

The analysis result showed that there is a significant high positive relationship between community resources and development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education ( $r = 0.878$ ) and significant value (0.000) at  $p < .05$ . This result indicated that p value is less than the critical alpha level (0.05), therefore this hypothesis was rejected. This implies that community resources were positively and significantly related to the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of this study revealed that majority of the respondents are of the view that awarding of scholarships for exceptional students, rehabilitation of road network and provision of teaching and learning facilities are most community resources adopted for implementation and development of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis. It is also revealed that the community resources strategies adopted for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis is moderately high and that community resources (both human and materials) are positively and significantly related to the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria. These findings are in agreement with the finding of Osho, Aliyu, Okolie and Onifade (2014) who found that community resources significantly influenced the implementation of early childhood education. They explained further that majority of

the respondents are of the opinion that they had facilities for the running of early childhood education.

The finding of this study is also in line with the finding of Ismaila and Yusuf (2012) who found that there is a significant relationship between the communities, community resources and secondary schools in the State. They added that communities have helped to establish and commit resources to the development of the schools and education. Similarly, communities partake and commit resources to the development of the school programme (Ismaila & Yusuf, 2012). In the same vein, Pallassana (2000) found that there is a significant relationship between community resources and school development; He explained further that community provided land, funds, games equipment, teaching aids, put up buildings and rendered free labour as well as giving prizes and scholarship among other things to students for the development of their academic career.

### **Conclusions**

The study concluded that majority of the respondents are of the view that awarding of scholarships, rehabilitation of road network and provision of teaching and learning facilities are most community resources adopted for implementation and development of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis. The community resources strategies used for the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis is moderately high; and community resources (both human and materials) have positively and significantly influenced the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. It is recommended that more resources (both human and material resources) should be provided by the government, community members, Parent-Teachers Association, philanthropists, and all relevant stakeholders in order to improve the level and the rate of development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education in Kano metropolis.
2. There is a need for proper supervision and monitoring of those resources to enable the contributing stakeholders to accomplish their objectives on the development and implementation of inclusive early childhood education programme.
3. Crèche/daycare centers should be established to take care of the babies and introduce some forms of education while their mothers are at work.

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