



EVALUATION OF CHALLENGES FACING PLANNING OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN F.C.T, ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: February 28th 2021 Accepted: March 11th 2021 Published: March 30th 2021</p>	<p>The study evaluated the challenges facing the planning of special education in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nigeria. The study used survey design method. The study was carried out in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Researchers employed the use of random sampling technique to select the sixty respondents from the entire population of educational planners working in different planning units in all the six area councils in FCT for the study. The simple random sampling (lottery) method was used to select 60 respondents on the basis of proportional representation. Six-item questions Questionnaire was adopted for data collection. The questionnaire was tagged; "An Investigation into Challenges Facing Planning of Special Education in FCT Questionnaire" [AICFPSEQ] was formulated by the researchers to collect data for the study. AICFPSEQ had two sections. Section A solicited for bio-data information of the respondents while the section B collected information on the subject matter. Six research questions were used for the study. A four point rating scale was adopted and is shown as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = (4 points) Agree (A) = (3 points) Disagree (D) = (2 points) Strongly Disagree (SD) = (1 point). The researchers used test, retest method to determine the reliability of the instrument. SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences) software for data analysis and percentage, mean and standard deviation was used for data analysis. The cut-off point for decision was 2.50 based on a four point rating scale. The decision rule therefore was that any item with mean score of 2.50 and above were considered high responses while items whose mean score were below 2.50 were regarded as having attracted low responses. The result collected, analyzed and interpreted led to the conclusion that inadequate funding, inadequate data/information, political instability, changes of educational policies, poor capacity development of planners, and inadequate professional educational planners are problems facing planning of special education in FCT. Based on this finding, the researchers hereby recommended that the government should increase the funding of planning special education in FCT, ensure adequate planning tools are provided, credible and up to date data are made available, conducive working environment is provided among other things.</p>

Keywords: Evaluation, Problems, Undergraduate, University, Students Challenges, Planning, Educational planning, Special Education

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria the giant of Africa located in West Africa. Nigeria is the most populated Africa country. Nigeria is located in West Africa. One in four Sub-Saharan people reside in Nigeria, making it Africa's most populous country. It's also the seventh most populous country in the world, one with ongoing growth (Peter, 2016). In 2021 as at February, Nigeria population is estimated to stand at 209 Million. The United Nations anticipates that Nigeria will become the third largest country in the world by 2050 with 399 million people. In 2020, the international monetary fund submitted it is the largest Economy in Africa and 26 largest economy in the World. Nigeria has a federal system of government with 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Within the states, there are 774 local governments in total. The Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is the Capital of Nigeria. It is the seat of power and administration. The territory is

located just north of the confluence of the Niger River and Benue River. It is bordered by the states of Niger to the West and North, Kaduna to the northeast, Nasarawa to the east and south and Kogi to the southwest. Lying between latitude 8.25 and 9.20 north of the equator and longitude 6.45 and 7.39 east of Greenwich Meridian, Abuja is geographically located in the center of the country. The Federal Capital Territory has a landmass of approximately 7,315 km², and it is situated within the Savannah region with moderate climatic conditions (Wikipedia, 2020).

Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is the Capital of Nigeria. Federal Capital Territory Administration administers the whole of the Federal Capital Territory, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) specifically manages the construction and infrastructure development of the region. The capital city Abuja is located inside the wider Abuja Municipal Area Council. The territory is currently made up of six area councils, namely: Abaji, Abuja municipal, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali. At the 2006 census, the city of Abuja had a population of 776,298 making it one of the ten most populous cities in Nigeria (placing eighth as of 2006). According to the United Nations, Abuja grew by 139.7% between 2000 and 2010, making it the fastest growing city in the world. As at 2015, the city is experiencing an annual growth of at least 35%, retaining its position as the fastest-growing city on the African continent and one of the fastest-growing in the world (Wikipedia, 2020). As of 2016, the metropolitan area of Abuja is estimated at six million persons, placing it behind only Lagos as the most populous metro area in Nigeria. Abuja is Nigeria's administrative and political centre. It is also a key capital on the African continent due to Nigeria's geo-political influence in regional affairs. A Federal Minister is appointed by the Presidents to oversee the political administration of the Territory (Wikipedia, 2020).

Education in Federal Capital Territory is administered by Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. Federal Capital Territory Abuja is home to many educational institutions both public and private schools. The educational system in Federal Capital Territory of Abuja include: basic education (nine years), post-basic/senior secondary education (three years), and tertiary education (four to six years, depending on the program of study). The other forms of education include mass education and special education. According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2013), basic education covers nine years of formal (compulsory) schooling consisting of six years of elementary and three years of junior secondary education. Post-basic education includes three years of senior secondary education.

In Federal Capital Territory, planning of education is handle by the Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. The Education Secretariat have the following departments: department of Admin and finance, department of policy, planning, Research and Statistics, department of Quality Assurance, department of higher education, department of special needs education and special units. The Department of Policy, Planning, Research and Statistics in FCT education Secretariat handles planning of education in the territory is mandated with the following functions:

- i. It is the think-tank of the Secretariat in terms of providing information required for daily decision making, policy planning and general management of education in the FCT.
- ii. Serves as the desk for the Secretariat's participation in national education policy meetings such as the Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE), and the National Council on Education (NCE). It also coordinates the development and domestication of FCT specific education policies
It is responsible for collating Education Secretariat's input to all ministerial platform presentations and reports on yearly education Score Card.
- iii. Responsible for coordination of Sector Level Strategic and Operational plans.
- iv. v. Ensure that education data & information from all subsectors of education, for public & private sectors, in respect of pupils, students, learners, institutions, facilities & resources are collected by the Department, analyzed & reported.
- v. Co-ordinates activities of EFA, SDG as well as Partnership in Education, including International Development partners (FCTES, 2020). Planning of education is done by the department of education in the federal capital authority development in collaboration with other agencies in federal capital territory jointly carry out the planning of education. The FCT is host to many educational institutions which include the early child education, basic education, junior secondary school, senior secondary school, higher institutions and other forms of education like the special education, adult education and gender education and nomadic education.

Special Need Education is among the educational system in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Obani (2004) defined Special Education as the education that is concerned with children who have been adversely affected to a greater extent, by one or more of these factors. Special Education deals with children with special learning problems, difficulties and needs. It applies special methods and uses special equipment that takes the special problem of the children into consideration. Obani (2004) observed that Special Education looks beyond the ordinary methods and provision of the conventional school system in order to tackle the problems affecting the handicapped child's ability to learn effectively. Special education is "Child Centred and not Subject Centred". According to Mark (2015) the objectives of special education includes:

- To protect each student's condition from further aggravation by arranging a programme of activities within his limitations.
- To correct or alleviate the student's remediable weaknesses or misalignments.
- To assist the student in understanding and accepting his own limitations.
- To develop the best possible organic vigor or condition in view of the individual's limitations.
- To develop skill and knowledge of recreational sports and games suitable or adaptable to the individual's limitation.

- To develop the student's knowledge of and appreciation of good body mechanics and efficiency.
- To help students make satisfactory social and emotional adjustments to problems imposed by their disabilities,
- To help students gain securities through improved function and increased ability to meet the physical demands of daily living.

National policy on special needs education in Nigeria (2015) outlined the following as the objectives of special education:

- i. To take care of total service delivery of the physical, mental and emotional disabilities of the Nigerian child, irrespective of setting (school, home and hospital).
- ii. To provide adequate and qualitative education for all Persons with Special Needs in all aspects of national developmental endeavours.
- iii. To ensure that all Persons with Special Needs develop at a pace commensurate with their abilities and to contribute to the nation's socioeconomic and technological development.

The special need education in Federal Capital Territory is faced with many challenges. The challenges include; shortage of trained teachers, inadequate facilities, overcrowdness, underfunding and insufficient instructional materials. There are many challenges facing the planning of education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria especially the planning of special education. John (2017) identified shortage of teachers, inadequate instructional materials, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate funding and poor quality of education as the problems facing the special education across the country. According to (Ogunode,2020) the educational system of Nigeria lacks sound educational planning. It is obvious that all the forms of education in Nigeria are characterized for one issue and the other. The problem of inadequate manpower in the Nigerian educational sector is a result of a lack of effective manpower planning. The inadequate infrastructural facilities in the primary, secondary and higher education in Nigeria is due to lack of comprehensive infrastructural facilities planning while the problem of inadequate funding can also be traced to the lack of financial educational planning for the entire educational sector. This study is aimed to investigate the challenges facing the planning of special education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

1.1 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to evaluate the challenges facing the planning of special education in F.C.T, Abuja, Nigeria. Specific objectives are to:

1. to find out if the inadequate funding is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT
2. to find out if inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT
3. to find out if political instability is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT
4. to find out if changes of educational policies is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT
5. to find out if poor capacity development of planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT
6. to find out if professional educational planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were generated to guide this study:

1. Is inadequate funding a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?
2. Is inadequate data/information a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?
3. Is political instability a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?
4. Is changes of educational policies a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?
5. Is poor capacity development of planners a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?
6. Is inadequate professional educational planners a problem facing planning of special education in FCT?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers have carried out investigation on educational planning. Among them is Ololube (2013) who observed in Nigeria that educational system is encountering many significant impediments in terms of implementation and the educational system quality assurance in the last decades due to lack of effective planning. He identified shortage of accurate data, finances, qualified planners, poor national economic performance, unsuitable governing structure, interference and instability as responsible for low quality in educational planning.

Victoria & Owuama (2016) did a study that looked the constraints to planning and implementation of higher education programmes which was carried out with emphasis on the six higher institutions in Rivers State. The result of the study revealed among others that inadequacy of funds, planning without accurate statistical data, political influence, and misappropriation of funds and shortage of qualified manpower were major constraints. The findings also revealed that there were significant difference between male and female unit heads on the perception of constraints to planning and implementation of higher education programmes. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that both state and federal government should disburse enough money to education sector as to enable educational planners and other professionals in planning to carry out their job effectively. Generally, planning of education has not been given the needed attention by the different political parties that have come to power in Nigeria from 1960 till date.

Abaidoo (2017) in his thesis that investigated Ghana's decentralized educational planning policy by looking at the meaning of decentralization and decentralized educational planning. The result revealed that stakeholders have diverse understandings about the meaning of decentralization, and decentralized educational planning. In general, it

was found that decentralization entails empowering the districts/locals to make decision and being accountable for the decisions made. Educational decentralization refers to devolution of educational delivery from Ghana Education Headquarters to the districts with the regional directorate gradually taking the role of the Ghana Education Service headquarters and the district directorates, where final authority will reside at the District Assembly. Decentralized educational planning means empowerment to plan and take decision at the local or district level of educational delivery. The study also found that School Management Council/Parent Teachers Association members participate in the decentralized educational planning process but that their level of involvement is very low. The study also notes that there is weak capacity development for planners and other stakeholders in a system of decentralized education planning. The study suggests that a number of challenges should be addressed to ensure effective decentralized education planning.

Ogunode (2018) investigated the challenges facing the planning of Basic Education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. This study used the descriptive method. The population consists of the educational planning officers in all the six area councils of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Result collected and analyzed in the study showed that: 100% of the respondent agreed that there are challenges facing the planning of basic Education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria and the challenges facing the planning of basic education in FCT includes; inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, inadequate educational planners, poor capacity of educational planners, political influences, political instability and lack of reliable data/information. Based on this finding, the study recommends that the government should increase the funding of education and specifically the funding of educational planning in the country.

Ogunode (2020a) did a study that investigated the challenges facing the planning of Early Childhood Care, Development and Education [ECCDE] in Gwagwalada area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The result collected established that there is significant relationship between challenges and planning of early child education programme in Gwagwalada area council. The result also revealed that the following are the challenges facing the planning of early child education programme in Gwagwalada area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria; inadequate data/information, inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, political influence, political instability, administrative bottleneck and poor capacity development programme for educational planners. The result also showed that the implications of challenges facing the planning of early child education programme in Gwagwalada are responsible for poor implementation of early child education programme in Nigeria.

Ogunode, Gregory & Musa, (2020) did a study that assess the political officeholders' attitudes towards planning of education in FCT. The survey design was used for the study. Random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents while questionnaire was adopted for data collection, test re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The finding revealed that majority of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders have positive attitude toward educational planning, majority of the respondents disagreed that adequate funding are provided for educational planning. It was also discovered that majority of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders are supporting the capacity development of educational planners and 100% of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders are providing necessary planning tools for educational planners to plan education. The government should appoint people with passion for educational development and political officeholders should develop positive attitude toward educational planning in FCT by allocating adequate funds for educational planning.

Ogunode (2020b) carried out a study that investigated the challenges facing the planning of secondary schools education in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja, Nigeria. The research design for the study was a survey method. The result of the study showed; inadequate planning information/data, inadequate planning materials, poor educational planners training, political instability, Inadequate funding for planning activities and a shortage of professional educational planners are the challenges facing planning for secondary schools in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

The reviewed papers showed that a research gap exist on the challenges facing planning of special education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. This study is aimed to investigate the challenges facing the planning of special education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study evaluated the challenges facing planning of special education in FCT. Survey design was used for the study and the study was carried out in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. We employed the used of random sampling technique to select the sixty respondents from the entire population of educational planners working in different planning units in all the six area councils in FCT for the study. The simple random sampling (lottery) method was used to select 60 respondents on the basis of proportional representation. The process was as follows: the sampling frame of each schools was obtained from the relevant authorities. On the basis of the sampling frame, stratification of the workers was done. Six-item questions Questionnaire was adopted for data collection. The questionnaire was tagged "An Investigation into Challenges Facing Planning of Special Education in FCT Questionnaire" [AICFPSEQ] was formulated by the researchers to collect data for the study. AICFPSEQ had two sections. Section A solicited for bio-data information of the respondents while the section B collected information on the subject matter. Six research questions were used for the study. A four point rating scale was adopted and is shown as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = (4points) Agree (A) = (3 points) Disagree (D) = (2 points) Strongly Disagree (SD) = (1 point). The AICFPSEQ was checked by two research professionals from a public university who vetted it.

The Researchers went through the AICFPSEQ and confirmed the face and content validity of the research instrument with little adjustment. The adjustment advice was done as instructed before the final production. The reliability of the AICFPSEQ was determined. The researchers used test and retest method to determine the reliability of the instrument. The test and retest was done with twenty teachers in Nasarawa states and the result obtained were analysed using the Cronbach’s alpha. The reliability coefficients obtained was 0.83 for PSSTAPPEQ as a whole. 0.81 for section A, 0.81 and for section B, 0.85. These values were considered sufficiently high to confirm the reliability of the instrument. Educational Planners/Administrators were used as respondents by the researchers. The study used simple percentage, mean score and standard deviation. The cut-off point for decision was 2.50 based on a four point rating scale. The decision rule therefore was that any item with mean score of 2.50 and above was considered high responses while items whose mean score were below 2.50 were regarded as having attracted low responses.

4.0 RESULT PRESENTATION

Table One: Responses on the challenges facing planning of special education in FCT

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	DECISION
1	Inadequate funding is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.57	0-.58	High
2	Inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.52	0-.48	High
3	Political instability is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.68	0-.76	High
4	Changes of educational policies is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.57	0-.83	High
5	poor capacity development of planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.67	0-.57	High
6	Inadequate professional educational planners is a Problem facing planning of special education in FCT	2.51	0-.74	High

4.1 Result Analysis

The table 1 item one above presents the opinion of respondents with regard to inadequate funding is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The result had a mean scores of 2.57 which denote that respondents agreed to the stated problems responsible for planning of special education Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Result from table 1 item two revealed the respondents’ mean and standard deviation ratings on if the inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The composite means revealed that respondents were of the opinion that the inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The mean of 2.52 implies that respondents accepted that the inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT.

Table 1 item three indicated that respondents’ mean and standard deviation ratings on if the political instability is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. 2.68 mean score obtained revealed that respondents were of the opinion that the political instability is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT.

Table 1 Item four on if changes of educational policies is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The mean score of 2.57 was collected which indicated that respondents accepted that the changes of educational policies is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT.

Table 1 item five above presents the opinion of respondents with regard to if poor capacity development of planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The result collected had a mean scores of 2.67 which implied that respondents agreed that poor capacity development of planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT.

Table 1 item six in respect of if inadequate professional educational planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. The mean score of 2.51 was collected which is above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating that respondents accepted that the inadequate professional educational planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT.

4.2 Discussion of Finding

The result collected from table one item one revealed that respondents were of the opinion that the inadequate funding is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This finding is in line with the discovery of Ogunode (2020b) that showed that inadequate planning information/data, inadequate planning materials, poor educational planner training, political instability, inadequate funding for planning activities and a shortage of professional educational planners are the challenges facing planning for secondary schools in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Ololube, (2013) submitted the budgetary allocations that are available for educational planning in Nigeria is nothing to write home about. Funds provide for education planning is too small for proper planning to take place. The condition of the sector remains a thing of concern. Under-funding and systemic corruption makes the matter worse. The insufficient funding of the education planning sector stands as one of the major factors working against effective planning and implementation of education programmes.

The data in Table 1 item two showed that the respondents were of the opinion that the inadequate data/information is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This result agreed with the result of Ogunode, Gregory & Musa, (2020) who examined the attitudes of political officeholder towards educational planning in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The finding revealed that the majority of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders have positive attitude toward educational planning, majority of the respondents disagreed that adequately funding are provided for educational planning. It was also discovered that majority of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders support the capacity development of educational planners and 100% of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders are providing necessary planning tools for educational planner to plan education. One of the most difficult challenges that educational planners face is the issues of inaccurate statistical data. The quality of technical planning is in most cases inhibited by statistical deficiencies and inaccurate data. Nigerian education systems has failed to effectively plan because of lack of accurate data, which is because of the use of mediocre to prepare data for use in the planning and forecasting processes.

From data in table 1 item three result disclosed that respondents accepted that the political instability is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This result confirmed the finding of Ogunode (2018) which showed that: 100% of the respondent agreed that there are challenges facing the planning of basic Education in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria and the challenges facing the planning of basic education in FCT includes; political instability, inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, inadequate educational planners, poor capacity of educational planners, political influences and lack of reliable data/information. Based on this finding, the study recommends that the government should increase the funding of education and specifically the funding of educational planning in the country. Ololube, (2013) observed that the existing political arrangement has influenced the control over educational planning in Nigeria. Political instability has had its toll on educational programmes. Planning process started by one administration is brutally interrupted by the next and the differences between federal and state government education policies are quite challenging. The inability of the Nigerian political structure does not allow for education planners to be accountable for their wrong doings.

The data in table 1 item four disclosed that majority of the respondents agreed that changes of educational policies is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This result is in line with Amadi (2019) in his research in which the findings of his study revealed that changes in educational policies affect the administration of secondary schools. This finding is also in line with Medinat, Florence and Laside as cited in Amadi (2019) when they said that changes imply that the existing status -quo in the Nigeria Education Sector is unsatisfactory

The data in table 1 item five revealed that the respondents were of the view that poor capacity development of planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This result collaborates the finding of Ogunode (2020a) which revealed that the following are the challenges facing the planning of early child education programme in Gwagwalada area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria; inadequate data/information, inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, political influence, political instability, administrative bottleneck and poor capacity development programme for educational planners.

Result from table 1 item six showed that the respondents agreed that the inadequate professional educational planners is a problem facing planning of special education in FCT. This result is in agreement with the result of Ogunode (2018) which showed that inadequate educational planners, political instability, inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, poor capacity of educational planners, political influences and lack of reliable data/information. Based on this finding, the study recommends that the government should increase the funding of education and specifically the funding of educational planning in the country. Ololube, (2013) submitted that most educational planners in Nigerian do not have complete competence in planning. Qualified planners are the single most significant resource that can lead to greater and efficient planning productivity and performance. In planning, what is needed is the effective utilization resources by connecting the totality of knowledge, skills and talents to achieve planning objectives. The quality of planners should not be nothing less than the basic acceptable standards worldwide.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study was designed to evaluate the challenges facing the planning of Special Need education in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The result obtained from the study led to the conclusion that the inadequate funding, inadequate data/information, political instability, changes of educational policies, poor capacity development of planners and professional educational planners are problems facing planning of special education in FCT.

5.1 RECOMMENDATION

From the research finding, the researchers hereby recommends that following:

- (1)The government should increase the funding of educational planning in FCT to enable for effective planning of special education.
- (2) The various appointees of the government head should ensure adequate planning tools are provided for planning of special education in FCT.
- (3) The FCT minister should ensure that educational planners working in FCT are provided with the opportunities of constant capacity development programme.
- (4) The political officeholders in FCT should ensure necessary support are provided for educational planners who are charged with planning of special education in FCT.
- (5) The Minister of FCT should ensure conducive working environment are provided for planning of education to take place in FCT.
- (6) The Minister of FCT should ensure that educational plan documents are implemented as planned in FCT.
- (7) The government should ensure reliable and creditable data are provided for educational planner to plan education in FCT.
- (8) More professional educational planners should be employed and deployed to office where planning of education takes place in FCT, Nigeria.

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