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## CHAPTER 16

### PLANNING AND BUDGETING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN OYO STATE.

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#### **Introduction**

Planning is the act of forecasting or projecting an action to be carried out in the future. It is therefore a dream of an individual of what an individual or system intends to achieve within a period of time in the future. As pointed out by Aluko (2004) planning is an activity by which managers analyze present conditions so as to determine the various ways of reaching the desired goal. This implies that planning is intended to solve an identified problem of an individual or system.

Peretomode and Peretomode, (2008) sees, planning is a deliberate systematic, organized, rational and continuous process of determining in advance what is to be done or what the goals are as well as establishing policies, programmes and procedures regarding the use of resources to achieve the predetermined objectives and goals. In education, Planning is the holistic approach to mapping out all the processes and procedures necessary for ensuring a successful educational system at all levels in the state or nations .

National Open University of Nigeria, (2006) viewed Planning in education as involving the process of identifying educational needs, the direction which education should take and how to implement the decision taken. This implies that planning for implementation of the decision taken is the final stage in educational planning.

William Hartman, author of School District Budgeting (1999) defines education budgeting as a “working tool” for the successful operation of states and local school districts, and as a “significant opportunity to plan the mission, improve their education objectives.” As such, the budgeting process allows various levels of Government to “make better financial and program decisions, improve operations, and enhance relations with citizens and other stakeholders” In more technical terms, a budget is a statement of the total educational program for a given unit, as well as an estimate of resources necessary to carry out the program and the revenues needed to cover those expenditures



Education has been generally recognized as an instrument of excellence for national development. The national development here includes the physical, social and mental development as well as human development, of children with special needs (National Policy on Education, 2004). This gave rise to the inclusion of Special needs education in the national policy on education to ensure that this non-traditional population has access to free and quality education to enhance effective personal and national development.

Ademokoya (2003) opines that, until the era of education and legislation, many countries, including the developed ones such as the United States of America and Europe vetoed inclusion of children with special needs in any form of educational plans. During the pre-educational eras, all states were backed up by laws which permitted them to exclude all children with disabilities from enrollment into public schools. Inclusive education can be seen as a process of enhancing the capacity of the education system in any country to reach out to diverse learners. The basis of inclusion is that pupils with special needs have a right to the benefits of a full school experience with needed modification and support alongside their peers without disabilities who receive general education. The school has a kind of environment that should encourage instead of discourage the learners. School builds the learner's confidence as he tackle's one task after another. (Onukwufor& Martins, 2017)

Eni-Olorunda (2009) observes that individuals with disabilities have been a group of unfortunate individuals in the society because of their disabilities and as such they are denied every right that should be accorded to any citizen of the country, especially education. Individuals with visual impairment are not left out in this act.

Inclusive Education is an approach to schooling in which students with many different kinds of disabilities and learning needs are educated in classes with non-disabled and typically developing students, the term inclusive education is mostly often used to mean the inclusion of persons with physical and mental impairment such as sensory or mobility limitations, intellectual disability, learning disability language disorder, behaviour disorder and autism spectrum disorder.

The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation viewed Inclusive Education as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning ,cultures and communities and reducing exclusion from education and from within education.

The goal is that the whole education system will facilitate learning environments where teachers and learners embrace and welcome the challenges and benefits of diversity, within an inclusive education approach ,learning environment are fostered where individual needs are meet and every student has an opportunity to succeed

The visually impaired are the group of people characterized by inefficiency in the organ of sight which hinders individual capability in performing various functions that require the use of sight(Abodunrin & Abodunrin, 2020).

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Visual impairment is a condition of reduced visual performance that cannot be remedied by refractive correction (spectacles or contact lenses), surgery or medical methods (DeCarlo, Woo and Woo, 2006). Consequently, it results in functional limitations of the visual system that may be characterized by irreversible vision loss, restricted visual field and decreased contrast sensitivity, increased sensitivity to glare as well as decreased ability to perform activities of daily living, such as reading or writing (Kavitha, Manumali, Praveen & Heralgi, 2015). Corn and Lusk (2010) affirm that individuals with Visually Impairment have measurable vision, yet experience difficulties accomplishing visual tasks even with the use of refractive correction. Furthermore, these individuals are sometimes capable of enhancing their abilities to accomplish visual tasks with the use of compensatory low vision aids and/or environmental adjustments.

In the time past, the visually impaired were not given the opportunity to have a taste of education until the 20th century when the education for the disabled including the visually impaired crept into the Nigeria educational system through the effort of the missionaries. The visually impaired were given the opportunity to have access to education like their sighted counterpart under a special classroom situation or at the regular classroom with adapted methods and instructional modifications those that were not fit for the special or regular classroom situation were later integrated into the vocational training centre so as to be able to acquire certain jobs or vocations which guarantee their self-reliance later in life (Abodunrin, 2009).

Based on the aforementioned benefits of inclusive educational programmes for students with visual impairment underscore the need for this work to help the stakeholders in the education of students with special needs including the visually impaired have a good and robust plan and adequate budget for inclusive education for students with visual impairment in Nigeria.

To achieve this, the chapter will be structured as follows: rationale for inclusive education, planning for inclusive education for students with visual impairment in Nigeria, budgeting for inclusive education for students with visual impairment in Nigeria.

### **Rationale for Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education in special education may be a recent concept, but it is an accepted approach in general education. In a regular classroom in Nigeria, children of different intelligence quotient (IQ) levels study together. A classroom teacher usually targets the average learner in his or her teacher, but is also exposed to situations of handling slow learners as well as academically advanced learners. Therefore, inclusive education on the bases of cognitive abilities is already in vogue in general education. Regular education teachers apply this method of teaching without labeling it as inclusive education. Only children at the extreme of cognitive abilities are classified as mentally retarded otherwise known as children with intellectual disability and gifted children. Groups of slow learners but not

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intellectually disabled and academically advanced learners but of gifted children are certainly different from average learners and they are taught by regular classroom teachers only (Iroegbu, n.d).

The Universal Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2001) argues that inclusion in mainstream education is important as a means of promoting social integration and avoiding a sense of separateness or inferiority. In Nigeria, special school services are more than six decades old. At present, the majority of children with visual impairment are served by a few special schools. The present scenario is that:

1. A student with visual impairment has to travel far places, whereas his or her sighted siblings from the same family or community can attend the local schools located in their area. This accessibility to local school is not made available to students with visual impairment.
2. In most villages or towns of the country, children with disabilities of different conditions are present. As far as the standard models are concerned, one specialized trained teacher serves 1-10 children with disabilities of the same category. But a lot of villages and towns in the country do not have an adequate number of the same category to justify the appointment of a full-time resource teacher. Therefore, the need for multi category personnel becomes inevitable.
3. The extent of disability in each category ranges from mild to severe and profound cases. The mild and moderate cases are more in number than the severe and profound cases (Mani, 1999). Due to the lack of sensitivity of general education to the needs of children with visual impairment, even the mild and moderate cases are not attending schools. This calls for the involvement of general education so that children who are currently left out can be catered for.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that special schools and integrated educational models have not been able to provide access to all. The education for All (EFA) campaign should not become education for all minus children with visual impairment. If education for all in the case of children with visual impairment is to become a reality, inclusive education needs to be nurtured. Beside the accessibility factor, the nature of distribution of children with visual impairment demands inclusive education in every school.

### **Planning For Inclusive Education for Student with Visual Impairment in Nigeria**

The following are some of the factors that must be put in place to realize and achieve effective inclusive education for student with visual impairment in Oyo state: these may include: Curriculum considerations, nature of training needed by regular classroom teacher, volunteerism in educating the visually impaired, facilities and equipments, technological development/assistive technology devices, the role of government and implementation strategies, the role of parent and the society, the student with visual impairment.



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### **Curriculum Consideration:**

In education, the curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of student experiences that occur in the educational process. It entails activities that formally or informally go on between the school and the student. Practicing inclusive education requires that what is taught to students with visual impairment is comprehensive enough to make them fit into the society after schooling. Educating students with visual impairment involves two broad curriculum issues including unique and regular curriculum (Iroegbu, n.d).

Unique curriculum comprising subjects such as orientation and mobility, Braille, sensory training and daily living skills while subjects normally offered in schools such as mathematics, English, integrated sciences, social studies, elementary sciences, agricultural science etc. constitute the regular curriculum. Apart from this curriculum differentiations, information and communication technology, vocational counseling, transition training, life skill training and career education are newer content necessary for the visually impaired to live successfully in the contemporary world. This implies that life after school is a challenging one, and only those with additional skills may secure a sustainable means of livelihood (Ozaji, 2006a).

### **Nature of training needed by regular classroom teacher:**

When planning for inclusive education for students with visual impairment, regular classroom teachers need to be trained and retrained in understanding special needs of students with visual impairment. The work of the regular classroom teachers may be occasionally assisted by the special educator. Existing teacher who has no exposure to the education of students with special need could be giving service training in the following areas:

- ✓ Definition of visual impairment
- ✓ Psychological implications of visual impairment
- ✓ Severity of impairment
- ✓ Learning behaviours of students with visual impairment
- ✓ Braille and typewriting
- ✓ Assistive technology devices
- ✓ Preparation of teaching aids
- ✓ Use of low vision devices
- ✓ Teaching methods
- ✓ Evaluation procedure

### **Volunteerism in educating the visually impaired:**

Another thing to be considered when planning for an inclusive education for students with visual impairment is that, the concerned stakeholders must realize that the education of the visually impaired involves a lot of work loads that regular special teachers as well as other support staff cannot cope with. This makes

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it invariably impossible for them to provide all the needed school services for their children. If inclusive education is to be made feasible for these children, volunteer services must be readily available to supplement those service areas that are seemingly left out. Volunteer services such as print reading for the visually impaired, Braille transcription, provision of recreational services and advocacy have been essentially important and are still needed even more, in the education of the students with visual impairment in the inclusive settings.

### **Facilities and equipments:**

The environment where learning is to be taking place by students with visual impairment including the existing special schools should have good facilities to enhance free and easy accessibility by the student. The buildings should pose minimal hazards to the child, while architectural adaptations of the existing structures must have been taken care of. In specific terms, the learning environment of the students with visual impairment in an inclusive educational system should be customized to promote access to all significant facilities and equipment.

No area of special education is equipment intensive as the education of the visually impaired is concerned. This equipment includes Braille machines, low vision aids, slate and stylus, thermoforming machine, Braille embosser, typewriter, talking calculator, computer machines that are JAWS enabled. Irrespective of the fact that this equipment is usually expensive and normally imported, they are indispensable tools in the educational inclusion for students with visual impairment.

### **Technological Development/Assistive Technology Devices:**

Technology is also utilized in educational programmes and practices to assist students with visual impairment in schools. Computer-based technologies for example help children with speech, hearing impairments, visual impairment and physical disabilities (Hasselbring and Glasser, 2000). However, teachers think technology provides unique educational benefits; many continue to use it only for limited purposes (Kurt and Ciftci, 2012). The lack of training of by teachers is seen as an obstacle to the effective use of technology while teaching in the class; for this reason, technology is more distracting than a vehicle in the class (Postman, 1994, Sutton, 2011). With the approach called 'full inclusion' students with special needs should be offered new technological services to help them improve in regular classrooms (Hasselbring and Glasser, 2000). Schools now offer technology-enabled curricula for individuals with learning and sensory or motor disabilities that cover multimedia design principles that reduce extraneous processing, support essential processing of key facts and concepts and foster generative processing to build knowledge (O'Connel, Freed, Carl, 2010).

Nworgu (1999) reported that technology in special medical education aims at helping the overachievers and underachievers and those with physical problems attain an optimal level of functioning. Ozoji (2003) added that technology should

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allow the child to be what he or she wants to be, to get where he or she wants to go and to actualize his or her potential. Therefore, planning inclusive education for the visually impaired requires that assistive and adaptive technologies are extensively employed in special education to enable this category of children with special needs equalize their educational aspirations in the society.

### **The role of government and implementation strategies**

All tiers of government should legislate and direct effort towards educational provision in their various areas of jurisdiction. The National Policy on Education (2004) stated that, federal, state and local governments shall fund educational programmes within their areas of jurisdiction. That should therefore be federal special educational programmes, state special educational programmes and local government special educational programmes. Besides, government in general should expand its services to cover:

1. Pre- school counseling
2. Parent education
3. Grants in aid to special schools
4. Budget for children with special needs should be per capita and channeled to wherever these children are being educated.
5. Review the employment of special teachers in the regular schools to collaborate with regular teachers.
6. Legislations that facilitate education of the children in the regular schools.
7. Provide adequate funding for the education.
8. Attitude change towards policy formulation and implementation

Implementation of inclusive education requires adequate preparation and adoption of procedures

(a) Adequate preparation needed may include:

- Government policy and backup that is., policies favoring inclusive education should be backed up with actions for effective implementation
- Research to point up to ways forward, problems, solutions etc.
- Adequate funding.
- Effective public information.
- Extensive training and retaining of staff/support personnel.
- Provision of continued support services.
- Individualized educational plans, that is, education tailored towards special individual needs.

(b) Procedures for establishing inclusive schools:

Step 1: Carry out a feasibility study of what is and should be if inclusive schools is to be provided.

Step 2: Development training manual for the major stakeholders in inclusive education.

Step 3: Establish pilot schools for pilot testing.



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Step 4: Create disability awareness.

Step 5: develop awareness of the new policy for instance, putting in place administrative machinery to coordinate the programme.

### **The role of parent and the society**

Parent's involvement contributes to the overall performance of all children in schools, not just the children of those parents who are active. Four major roles played by parents contribute to children learning ability and help them to achieve academically and socially:

- Parents as teachers,
- Parents as parent,
- Parents as advocate and
- Educational decision makers (Turble, 2003)

Adeyemo, (2010) reported that the family background should be an environment in which children have the opportunity to succeed and be happy. A conducive home influences the learning and social achievement of students with visual impairment and manifests itself further in the school environment. It helps plan, execute and evaluate a child's school experiences in relation to its level of maturation and readiness for future career. Equally, both parents should help to protect and foster the mental health of their child with visual impairment in order to help him or her excel academically and socially. Some factors which are attributes present in the family contribute greatly to the academic and social life of students with visual impairment. Among these are the parental educational background, income, exposure, parental relationship with each other, strength of the family population, religion, self-differentiation and occupation among others. The interplay of this factor in the family determines to a greater extent the readiness of the child to learn. Hence, the family background being an umbrella in the initiation of the child into the world should provide favourable conditions which will improve their academic achievement of the child irrespective of the challenges encountered in their academic pursuit and social life.

### **The student with visual impairment**

Students' perception of their environment plays an indispensable role in their academic achievement and general wellbeing. Students who view their environment as friendly and reinforcing will demonstrate achievement-oriented behaviour, students who expect that they will succeed within environment will put in more effort, for example having the notion that he or she will succeed may indicate that students do not feel their learning environment friendly or that they have developed a belief that their efforts do not affect outcome (Rathron, 1996). In order to be successful within a system or organization, students irrespective of their condition must possess certain pre-requisite skills. First, a student must understand the system, second, he or she must fit into the system, and finally, he or she must master the system.



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## **Budgeting for Inclusive Education for Students with Visual Impairment in Nigeria.**

Budget is the financial statement that shows the expected revenue and the proposed expenditure of the government in a fiscal year. It is important for a government of a nation to have a proper and adequate budgeting for education because when a nation is well educated, it will help in reducing the illiteracy level of its citizens. Educational budget ensures that actions are carried out according to the budget plan. When the school uses a budget, this ensures that programmes are implemented according to set plans and objectives. When appropriating fund for education in a fiscal year, it is important for the state government to have it at the back of their mind that, money required to train a regular student is different from what will take them to train a student who his having one disability or the other so it is in the education of students with visual impairment due to the high cost of instructional materials used by this set of students.

Budgeting for an inclusive education for students with visual impairment requires a lot of capital and should be planned and prepared for, if the government wants to achieve their set goals on education for all. The following are some of the benefits of budgeting for the education of students with visual impairment:

1. Budgeting will help to ensure that there is a correct estimate of revenue and expenditure for the education of students with visual impairment.
2. It will also help the government to spend as budgeted, that is, expenditure will be per budget.
3. Moreover, when budgeting for inclusive education for students with visual impairment, it will help in coordinating different units and departments towards general goals of the education of students with visual impairment.
4. It will also help the educational institution to meet their objectives.
5. Budgeting will also help in determining the quality and quantity of services in the school
6. Proper appropriation of funds will help the government to tailor their available funds for education in meeting the needs of students with special needs in their jurisdiction.

Because of the unique characteristics of students with visual impairment, it is important for all levels of government to understand the reason why they should do the needful on the inclusive education for students with visual impairment because of their unique demands in education which will be addressed under inclusive educational programme by releasing enough capital to uplift and upgrade professionals that will be working with this set of students in their various institutions.

## **Implication of the study for Special Educator and Students with Visual Impairment**

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This study will help all concerned stakeholders including the special educators and students with visual impairment to work for the actualization of objectives and goals of inclusive education for students with special needs. Proper and good planning for inclusive education and appropriation of enough funds for the sector will aid the effectiveness of the program which will in turn place students with visual impairment in a stress-free environment that caters for all their special needs.

### **Conclusion**

Visual impairment is a condition characterised by significant limitation of visual capability which reduces a person's ability to acquire information through sense of sight. The consequential impact of a person's inability to effectively acquire information through sight cannot be overruled. It ranges from academic, social, physical, psychological, economical and a host of others. Individuals with visual impairment are confronted with many difficulties in their day-to-day exercise. This occurs as a result of their visual problem which prevented them from performing certain activities which required vision, especially in the area of academic and social life. The government at all levels including the federal, state and local must ensure that they have a good and robust plan for the education of students with visual impairment and others with special needs and funds should be appropriated to execute this plan.

### **Recommendation**

Governments at all levels must ensure that enough funds are appropriated into the education of students with special needs. this will help in meeting their educational needs as well as providing an inclusive educational environment for them  
The educational policies and programmes of governments at all levels must take into cognisance are well developed inclusive education for all student irrespective of their academic and special needs

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