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Barriers to Effective Implementation of Inclusive Education in Nigeria

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A Book Review:

This is one of the intellectual properties of the author, he scholarly expresses his wealth of experience generally and on inclusive education. The article focuses on barriers to effective implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. Specifically, the author acknowledged inclusive education as a global trend in education and pedagogical practice in education of children with special needs. The work is segmented into four parts to give a sense of direction and coherence.

In the introduction, he painstakingly lays out the whole discourse by acknowledging need for appropriate and qualitative education for persons with exceptionality particularly those with disabilities. He traces it origin as well as the various approaches used. The work appreciates different approaches used in educating children with special needs, noting that inherent weakness in these approaches has made them unpopular especially in the 21st century hence the need to embrace a research and result oriented approach vis-à-vis, inclusion like most countries in the world. Under the concept or meaning of inclusive education, the author expressively defines and elucidates the subject matter regarding other scholarly' ideas and highlights the educational, social, cultural, and legal perspective to inclusion. To make his work unique, the author operationally defined inclusive education considering the Nigeria experience. However, he stresses the need to practice inclusion according to the global standards to get the desired results at a minimal cost.

Like in most widely read literature on inclusive education, he categorizes the practice into two, full and partial inclusion. The work firmly advocates that the master plan of inclusion, UNESCO/SALAMANCA declaration of 1994 should be used as bench mark /compass for the provision of facilities, implementation and assessment of the process, practice and product. The next part of the paper focuses on benefits of inclusive education to stakeholders such as children with special needs, teachers, the school, community, parents and the government. The author emphasizes collaboration among stakeholders to optimally maximize benefits of inclusive education like other Nations. He succinctly presents in the last part of his work; barriers to inclusive education in Nigeria to include but not limited to conceptual contradictions, attitudinal dispositions, inadequately motivated personnel, inaccessibility of learning environment (architectural /mobility barriers) and absence of support services. Conclusively, the writer recommends research based measures or strategies to overcome obstacles to effective implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. This is born out of the realization that the gain of inclusion outweighs its constraints because this will bring the nation, special education and its clients on the same leverage with other countries of the world.

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