



INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND QUALIFICATION ON THE ATTITUDE OF REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Abstract:

The study investigated the influence of gender and qualification on the attitude of regular secondary school teachers towards students with special needs. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study comprised of all the regular secondary school teachers. A sample of 400 regular secondary school teachers was used for the study. The sample of the study was drawn with stratified sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled Attitude of Regular Secondary School Teachers towards Students with Special Needs Questionnaire (ARTTSWSNQ). The research questions were answered with simple percentage while Chi-square (χ^2) was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the research questions revealed that the qualification of regular secondary school teachers does significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs. In light of the discoveries of the investigation, the researchers made a few proposals among which is that: all regular secondary school teachers ought to go for proficient preparing pieces of training to keep them educated on ongoing procedures, aptitudes and techniques in teaching students with special needs.

Keywords: regular teachers, attitude, gender, qualification, special needs students

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1. Introduction

Instructive projects for students with special needs have generally been based upon the presumption that an assortment of administration conveyance alternatives should be accessible. Specialized curriculum law, for instance, stipulates that students with special needs ought to be set in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The idea of LRE expects that there are options along a continuum of limitation, with private foundations toward one side of the continuum and ordinary classes on the opposite end (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1998). Individuals with Special Needs Education Act (1997) necessitates that a continuum of arrangement alternatives be made accessible to address the issues of students with special needs. The law additionally expects that to the greatest degree fitting, students with special needs are instructed with students who are not debilitated, and that special classes, separate tutoring, or evacuation of students with special needs from the regular class only happens when the nature or seriousness of the special needs is to such an extent that training in regular classes with the utilization of valuable guides and administrations can't be accomplished sufficiently.

Olukotun (2004) stated that mainstreaming instruction in Nigeria confronted numerous difficulties, for example, adverse negative attitude of teachers and regular students to students with special needs; insufficient guides and administrations; unsupportive jobs of guardians; absence of headteachers to give significant administrations that would help regular teachers in dealing with the students with special needs; deficient faculty preparing programs; absence of satisfactory and applicable instructive materials; and hostile learning condition for students with special needs.

Ajuwon (2008) opined that for the students with special needs to profit ideally from a regular classroom, it is basic for regular teachers to have the option to show a more extensive cluster of students, incorporating those with fluctuating special needs and to team up and plan adequately with specialized curriculum teachers. Attitude as an idea is concerned about a person's perspective and actions. It has intense ramifications for the students, the teacher, the prompt social gathering with which the individual student relates and the whole educational system. Our assessments of attitude towards students can be ideal, unbiased or negative. Dispositions are said to have a positive, nonpartisan or negative heading. Students with special needs experienced trouble in social collaborations with regular class companions and teachers. Numerous individuals had little data about students with special needs and this absence of information could lead to misconception and partiality. Students with special needs were frequently giggled at, or degraded from numerous points of view during cooperation. One attitude that affected teachers' attitude was marking, when students were distinguished by an adversely seen name, for models; rationally hindered, Campbell, Dodson and Bost (1985) opined that teachers were less ready to objectively watch, rate and plan fitting intercession for their practices.

By and by in Nigeria, incorporation still stays in the domain of hypothesis and a long way from training. Special needs training in Nigeria is as yet pondering issues of strategy execution, a domain that isn't helpful for training and absence of qualified regular teachers with sympathy and persistence for students with special needs. Executing incorporation in a situation where all the essential boxes have not been checked might be ridiculous and counterproductive. Furthermore, The Salamanca report said as much in the accompanying articulation - we can call upon governments and urge them to adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise. There should be restraints, lest one ends up assisting the special needs children and they finally learn nothing.

2. Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to investigate the attitude of regular secondary school teachers towards students with special needs in Port Harcourt.

In specific terms, the study intends to do the following:

- 1) Determine the attitude of male and female secondary school teachers towards students with special needs.
- 2) Examine the attitude of secondary school teachers with NCE, B.Ed., M.Ed. and PhD toward students with special needs.

2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the conduct of this study:

- 1) To what extent does gender of teachers influence their attitude towards students with special needs?
- 2) To what extent does qualification of teachers influence their attitude towards students with special needs?

2.2 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of the study;

H₀₁: Gender of regular secondary school teachers does not significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs.

H₀₂: Qualification of regular secondary school teachers does not significantly influence their attitude toward students with special needs.

3. Literature Review

In a study carried out by Mba (1991) on the attitude of teachers toward the consideration of deaf students by regular teachers in large classrooms; it was revealed that the attitude of regular teachers indicated hesitancy of the teachers to accept the hard of hearing unless the communication barrier was obviated. Nwazuo, (2000), and Mittler (2000) saw that

numerous teachers who were in mainstreamed schools seemed to know pretty much nothing or nothing about students with special needs. Bevan-Brown (2000) announced that she had "an entire truckload" of anecdotes about poor disposition and desires for teachers towards students with special needs. She found that numerous teachers exhibited a negative attitude toward students with special needs in mainstreamed schools. Tragically, this circumstance adversely influenced the instruction and execution of students with special needs. This was additionally found to influence these students' confidence.

Elliot (2008) inspected the connection between teachers' attitude toward mainstreaming of students with gentle to direct special needs in regular school settings, and the measure of training endeavours performed, and the degrees of achievement accomplished by these students contrasted with their companions without special needs. The discoveries recommended a connection among incorporation and teacher adequacy, Teachers with an uplifting disposition towards students with special needs furnished their students with essentially more practice endeavours, at a more significant level of progress. While reconciliation might be forced by restricting laws, the way where the regular classroom teacher reacts to the necessities of the special students might be a definitely progressively intense variable in deciding the achievement of mainstreaming than is any regulatory or curricular plan (Larrivee and Cook, 1979).

4. Gender of Teachers and Attitude Towards Students with Special Needs

Despite the fact that on a lower level, the attitude of female teachers towards students with special needs are increasingly positive contrasted with male teachers. Inside the extent of this investigation, it very well may be expressed that female teachers show progressively uplifting dispositions contrasted with male teachers and the possibility that the encouraging calling is increasingly proper for females can be powerful in such a circumstance. Other than finding that the training calling is viewed as a proper calling for females, it very well may be assessed as one reason for their higher inspirational attitude. In a report by TEDMEM named "Showing Profession from the Eyes of Teachers," it is expressed that the attitude of female teachers toward their occupation is increasingly positive contrasted with male teachers.

This outcome exhibits that attitudes of female secondary teachers are subjectively superior to anything when they start to play out their calling. As indicated by the TEDMEM report, the instructing calling being a fulfilling and legitimate occupation; the possibility that being a teacher offers importance to the character and occupations; and being among the regarded occupations in the public arena, add to the inspirational attitude of female teachers. The thoughts that teachers are seen as people, who direct society, and the possibility that the instructing calling is a perfect occupation, are among the reasons that urge female teachers to enter the calling. The attitude of female teachers towards their occupation is believed to be decidedly impacted by their being viewed as significant by students and guardians of students; and that their working hours are

proper. It is incredible to take note of that ongoing perceptions are expressing that there is no critical distinction between the attitude of female and male teachers.

Jenkinson (1997) noticed no critical distinction in the disposition of male and female regular teachers towards students with special needs, however in opposition to the discoveries by Fakolade, Adeniyi and Tella (2009), who revealed that female teachers indicated increasingly inspirational attitude towards students with special needs than their male partners. As observed above, much research has been finished in regards to regular secondary teachers' attitude and their connection to preparing, experience, and contact with students with special needs. Little research has been done, notwithstanding, with respect to general training teachers' attitude in connection to sex.

Nonetheless, one investigation, directed by Lesyer and Tappendorf (2001) on teachers' attitude towards consideration, revealed female teachers had essentially higher scores than males on what was alluded to as "The Social Growth Factor", showing an increasingly inspirational attitude toward the social parts of incorporation. Female teachers who partook in Lesyer and Tappendorf's study additionally seemed to make more adjustments and housing for students with special needs than the male teachers who took an interest in the investigation. Due to these outcomes, *"there is some circuitous help accessible for this discovering recommending that female teachers are steadier of mainstreaming than male teachers"*. Once more, while there is certifiably not a lot of writing around there, in light of Lesyer and Tappendorf's investigation, one could speculate regular secondary school teachers who are male would have a progressively negative attitude about having students with special needs in their classroom.

A study by Ikpaye (1988) into the teachers' attitude toward students with special needs differed fundamentally. He likewise found that a few teachers had a more inspirational attitude towards special needs students than their ordinary partners. Discoveries in Nigeria and some different parts in Africa have revealed uplifting disposition of teachers towards students with special needs in mainstreamed government-funded schools.

With respect to sexual orientation, research findings seem conflicting; a few researchers noticed that female teachers had a more noteworthy resilience level for coordination and for special needs people than did male teachers (Aksamit, Morris and Leunberger, 1987; Eichinger, Rizzo and Sirotnik, 1991; Thomas, 1985) as referred to by Avramidis and Norwich, (2002). Then again, a study directed by Abate (2001) affirmed that there is no factual huge distinction in attitude among male and female regular teachers.

4.1 Qualification of Teachers and Attitude towards Students with Special Needs

Regular teachers' qualification in working with students with special needs isn't just an inconvenience to these students as in they are not allowed the chance to exhibit their maximum capacity, yet it is additionally a weakness to them as in the qualification a regular teacher has been connected to the regular teachers' general attitude towards working with students with special needs. As referenced above, regular teachers'

dispositions have been appeared to affect students with special needs accomplishment in regular study halls. In an investigation led by Van Reusen, Soho, and Barker (2001), results demonstrated that teachers' attitude about special needs were identified with their qualification and their involvement in working with students with special needs. In that review, most of the teachers overviewed got negative scores about teaching students with special needs in their classroom. In particular, the teachers with the most negative dispositions were the ones who had the least qualification and involvement in working with students with special needs. The teachers with increasingly negative attitude communicated their anxiety with the effect students with special needs would have on their classroom condition, their capacity to teach, and the general nature of learning.

Certification in special education for regular teachers is more of a recent phenomenon. Within the last twelve years, a college course on educating students with special needs has become a requirement for earning a teaching degree. This necessity leaves a portion of our present teachers new and undeveloped on the most proficient method to effectively teach students with special needs. An extra study conducted by Pernell, McIntyre, and Bader (2001) had to some degree comparable discoveries. In this specific investigation, the emphasis was on how regular teachers' attitude towards special needs advanced through the finishing of a degree in working with students with special needs. The study saw regular teachers' attitude towards consideration at different focuses all through the degree. True to some form, regular teachers' underlying disposition towards incorporation extended from negative to nonpartisan. A few teachers with negative attitude had sentiments that the specialized curriculum teachers needed them to partake in a tough situation, which is the reason they felt students with special needs were in their classrooms. As the course advanced, teachers' attitude towards involving students with special requirements for their classrooms turned out to be progressively positive. In light of the findings, one could estimate that regular teachers with qualification explicit to encouraging students with special needs would have an increasingly uplifting attitude towards having these students with special needs involved in their classroom. In particular, regular teachers battle enormously with making and executing important and intentional lodging and adjustments for students with special needs.

Research directed by Bender, Vail, and Scott (1995) demonstrated that regular secondary school teachers are not actualizing changed guidelines that would profit students with special needs in their classrooms. Another study directed by Leyser and Tappendorf (2001), concentrated basically on the sort of facilities and adjustments regular teachers were utilizing in their classrooms to address the issues of students with special needs. Like Bender, Vail, and Scott (1995), Lesyer and Tappendorf (2001) additionally found the sort of systems that would profit students with special needs, for example, adjustments to tests and assignments, helpful learning classrooms.

5. Theoretical Framework

5.1 The Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Festinger's (1957) intellectual dissonance hypothesis proposes that we have an internal drive to hold every one of our attitudes and conduct in amicability and keep away from disharmony or discord. This is known as the rule of intellectual consistency. As indicated by subjective dissonance hypothesis, there is an inclination for people to look for consistency among their discernments (i.e., convictions, suppositions). When there is an irregularity between attitude or practices (disharmony), something must change to wipe out the discord. On account of an error among attitude and conduct, all things considered, the attitude will change to oblige the conduct. Two elements influence the quality of the disharmony: The number of offensive convictions and the significance appended to every conviction.

There are three different ways to wipe out disharmony:

- 1) lessen the significance of the offensive convictions,
- 2) include increasingly consonant convictions that exceed the discordant convictions, or
- 3) change the cacophonous convictions with the goal that they are never again conflicting.

Disharmony happens regularly in circumstances where an individual must pick between two incongruent convictions or activities. The best dissonance is made when the two options are similarly appealing. Moreover, attitude change is more probable toward less motivator since this resolve in lower disharmony. In this regard, the dissonance hypothesis is conflicting to most social speculations which would anticipate more prominent attitude change with expanded motivating force (i.e., reinforcement).

Disharmony hypothesis applies to all circumstances including attitude arrangement and change. It is particularly pertinent to basic leadership and critical thinking. Model; consider somebody who purchases a costly vehicle yet finds that it isn't happy on lengthy drives. Dissonance exists between their convictions that they have purchased a decent vehicle and that a decent vehicle ought to be agreeable. Dissonance could be wiped out by concluding that it doesn't make a difference since the vehicle is mostly utilized for short outings (lessening the significance of the discordant conviction) or concentrating on the autos qualities, for example, security, appearance, taking care of (along these lines including progressively consonant convictions). The discord could likewise be dispensed with by disposing of the vehicle, however, this conduct is significantly harder to accomplish than evolving convictions.

Dissonance results when an individual must choose between attitudes and behaviours that are contradictory. Dissonance can be eliminated by reducing the importance of conflicting beliefs, acquiring new beliefs that change the balance, or removing the conflicting attitude or behaviour.

5.2 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Nwankwo (2011) explained that descriptive survey is that in which the researcher collects data from a large sample drawn from a given population and describe certain features of that sample which are of interest to the researcher. The thrust here is that certain features or variables will mere be described as they are at a particular time. Also, Nworgu (2006) noted that descriptive survey design is aimed at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, feature or facts about a given population. This study on the attitude of regular teachers towards students with special needs in Port Harcourt metropolis is, therefore, a survey study that examined the attitude of the teachers towards students with special needs. In addition, there was an intensive collection of data through the use of questionnaire from regular teachers in secondary schools in the area.

5.3 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised male and female regular teachers in secondary schools in the Port Harcourt metropolis. Presently, there are 6425 teachers in secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis (Post Primary School Board, PH, 2017). The teachers consisted of regular secondary school teachers with NCE, B.Ed., M.Ed. and PhD.

5.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used was the stratified sampling technique. Taro Yemen formula was utilized in determining the sample of the study (see Appendix I). The sample consisted of 192 teachers with many years of service and 208 teachers with few years of service, 269 teachers were professionally trained, and 131 teachers were not professionally trained.

5.5 Sample Size

The sample of this study consisted of 400 regular teachers from secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis.

5.6 Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument of data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The title of the questionnaire was "Attitude of Regular Teachers toward Students with Special needs Questionnaire (ARTTSWSNQ)". The instrument for data collection was segmented into two sections A and B. Section A contained information on the personal data of the respondents while Section B contained information on the attitude of regular teachers toward students with special needs. While Section A contained information such as gender, qualification, years of service, professional training and marital status while Section B contained the information on the attitude of regular teachers towards students with special needs. Section B had 30 items and was patterned along the Likert Scale. The weights of responses to Section B was as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3,

Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 for the positively worded items and the reverse for the negatively worded items.

5.7 Validation of the Instrument

The initial draft of the instrument for data collection (Attitude of Regular Teachers toward Students with Special needs Questionnaire (ARTTSWSNQ) was submitted to five (5) experts (three special teachers and two experts in measurement and evaluation) for critical review in order to ascertain the face validity of the instrument and the appropriateness of the instrument to the study. The suggestions and correction of the experts were useful in modifying the instrument before administration.

5.8 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument for data collection was determined or ascertained using test -re-test. This method required that the instrument be administered twice after a time interval. The instrument was administered twice. The scores generated from the administrations were subjected to a correlation analysis using Pearson Product Moment Correlation method. The instrument yielded a coefficient of 0.88 indicating that the instrument was quite reliable for use in the study.

5.9 Administration of the Instrument

Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the teachers sampled for the study. The researchers adopted the direct delivery technique in administering the copies of the instrument. This means that the copies of the instrument for data collection were administered directly to the respondents by the researchers. The researchers supervised the filling of the questionnaire and ensured that all the copies of the instrument administered were retrieved on the spot to avoid loss.

5.10 Method of Data Analysis

The researchers answered the research questions and tested the null hypotheses using descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple percentage was used in answering the research questions while Chi-square (χ^2) was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

6. Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1

What is the attitude of male and female regular secondary school teachers towards children with special needs?

Table 1: Simple percentage responses on the attitude of male and female regular secondary school teachers towards students with special needs

S/N	Items	Male				Female			
		Agree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Disagree	%
	Gender of the teacher determines positive attitude towards students with special needs	96.8	66.3	49.2	33.7	148.6	58.5	105.4	41.5

From the table above, it shows that 58.5 percent of the female respondents agreed that female regular secondary school teachers had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 41.5 disagreed. 66.3 percent of the male respondents agreed that male regular secondary school teachers had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 33.7 disagreed.

Research Question 2: What is the attitude of regular secondary school teachers with NCE, B.Ed., M.Ed. and PhD towards students with special needs?

Table2: Simple percentage responses on the attitude of regular secondary school teachers with NCE, B.Ed., M.Ed. and PhD towards students with special needs

Items	NCE				B.ED / B.SC / BA / HND				M.ED				PhD			
	A	%	D	%	A	%	D	%	A	%	D	%	A	%	D	%
Qualification of the teachers shape their attitude toward students with special needs	25.2	54.6	20.8	45.4	151.6	50.9	146.4	49.1	27.1	51.1	25.9	48.9	1.6	52.2	1.4	47.8

From the table above, it shows that 54.6 percent of the teachers with NCE agreed that regular secondary school teachers with NCE had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 45.4 percent disagreed. 50.9 percent of the teachers with B.Ed. agreed that regular secondary school teachers with B.Ed. had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 49.1 percent disagreed. 51.1 percent of the teachers with M.Ed. agreed that regular secondary school teachers with M.Ed. had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 48.9 percent disagreed. 52.2 percent of the teachers with PhD agreed that regular secondary school teachers with PhD had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 47.8 percent disagreed.

Hypothesis One: Gender of regular secondary school teacher does not significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs.

Table 3: Chi-square (χ^2) analysis on the influence of gender on the attitude of regular secondary teachers towards students with special needs (Expected in the bracket above)

Gender	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Female	(123.2)	(18.8)	(68.2)	(17.2)	254
	118.7	29.9	78.4	27	
Male	(123.2)	(123.2)	(123.2)	(123.2)	146
	75.3	21.5	29	20.2	
Total	194	51.4	107.4	47.2	400

From the table above, the degree of freedom is calculated using the formula:

$$df = (C-1)(R-1)$$

$$\chi^2 \text{Cal.} = 55.88$$

$$(4-1)(2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3 \quad \chi^2 \text{Crit.} = 7.82$$

Since $\chi^2 \text{Cal.} > \chi^2 \text{Crit.}$ the null hypothesis is rejected which means that the gender of regular secondary school teachers does significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs. From the above table, it shows that the calculated χ^2 of 55.88 is greater than the hypothetical (critical χ^2) of 7.82 at the probability of 0.05p. The researchers, therefore, reject the null hypothesis that states that the gender of regular secondary school teachers does not significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs.

Hypothesis Two: Qualification of regular secondary school teachers does not significantly influence their attitude toward students with special needs.

Table 4: Chi-square (χ^2) analysis on the influence of qualification on the attitude of regular secondary teachers towards students with special needs (Expected in the bracket above)

Qualification	SA	A	D	SD	Total
NCE	(15.1)	(55.3)	(11.8)	(0.8)	46
	15.2	10	9	11.8	
B.ED	(15.1)	(55.3)	(11.8)	(0.8)	298
	106	45.6	65.4	81	
M.ED	(15.1)	(55.3)	(11.8)	(0.8)	53
	9.1	18	13.6	12.3	
PhD	(15.1)	(55.3)	(11.8)	(0.8)	3
	1	0.6	1.1	0.3	
Total	131.3	74.2	89.1	105.4	400

From the table above, the degree of freedom is calculated using the formula:

$$df = (C-1)(R-1)$$

$$\chi^2 \text{Cal.} = 9327.49$$

$$(4-1)(4-1) = 3 \times 3 = 9$$

$$\chi^2 \text{Crit.} = 16.92$$

Since $\chi^2_{Cal} > \chi^2_{Crit.}$, the null hypothesis is rejected which means that the qualification of regular secondary school teachers does significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs. From the above table, it shows that the calculated χ^2 of 9327.49 is greater than the hypothetical (critical χ^2) of 16.92 at the probability of 0.05p. The researchers, therefore, reject the null hypothesis that states that the qualification of regular secondary school teachers does not significantly influence their attitude towards students with special needs.

7. Discussion of Findings

In regard to the findings, research questions sought to determine the attitudes of regular secondary school teachers towards students with special needs in Port Harcourt metropolis of Rivers State. The analysis of Table 1 indicated that 58.5 percent of female regular secondary school teachers had a positive attitude while 41.5 had a negative attitude, 66.3 percent of male regular secondary school teachers had a positive attitude while 33.7 percent had a negative attitude towards students with special needs. This shows that the female regular secondary school teachers had a lesser positive attitude towards students with special education. The result did not conform to Fakolade, Adeniyi and Tella (2009), who reported that female teachers showed more positive attitude towards students with special needs than their male counterparts and it also disagrees with the study conducted by Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion which revealed female teachers had significantly higher scores than males. The results of the findings agree with the investigation of Chow and Winzer (1989) who investigated the relationship between teacher variable such as gender and attitude towards integration. They concluded that the gender of the teacher matters a lot in their attitude and ability to handle children with special needs. Furthermore, it is safe to opine that the tender feminine character of the female tends to boost their acceptance of integrating students with special needs.

Table 2 investigated if the qualification of regular secondary school teachers had no influence on their attitude towards students with special needs. The table indicated that 54.6 percent of the teachers with NCE had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 45.4 had a negative attitude. 50.9 percent of the teachers with B.Ed. had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 49.1 had a negative attitude. 51.1 percent of the teachers with M.Ed. had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 48.9 had a negative attitude. 52.2 percent of the teachers with PhD had a positive attitude towards students with special needs while 47.8 had a negative attitude.

The study conducted by Pernell, McIntyre, and Bader (2001) had somewhat similar findings. In their study, the focus was on how regular teachers' attitude towards special needs progressed through the completion of a course on working with students with special needs. The study looked at regular teachers' attitudes towards inclusion at various points throughout the course. Regular secondary school teachers who only have

NCE cannot comfortably brag around other regular secondary school teachers with B.Ed./M.Ed./PhD who are likely to have taken one compulsory course on special education. Indeed, regular secondary school teachers are expected to further their education in order to gain more knowledge of special needs and learn methods that are inclusive. Unfortunately, many secondary school teachers teach to students who are in the middle (Van Reusen, Soho & Barker, 2001). By teaching to the middle, regular secondary school teachers are excluding those students who are often thought of as talented and gifted, and those who are regularly classified as not having special needs and this is as a result of their qualification.

Responses and analysis of the two (2) hypotheses guiding this study indicated that there was indeed a significant difference in the attitude of female and male regular secondary school teachers' attitude towards students with special needs and regular secondary school teachers did have significant difference in their attitude towards students with special needs based on their qualification.

8. Conclusion

This study indicated there was indeed an improvement in the overall attitude of male regular secondary school teachers towards students with special needs. This finding did not agree with previous literatures reviewed which indicated female regular secondary school teachers had a more positive attitude than male regular secondary school teachers towards the social aspects of full inclusion. Both males and females slightly agreed that in their school, teachers always provide students with special needs the required accommodations and modifications needed, as indicated in the students' IEP. In response to the hypotheses tested, this study indicated there was, in fact, a statistically significant difference between regular secondary school teachers' attitudes based on gender, years of service, qualification, professional training and marital status. Overall, the regular secondary school teachers in this study had a neutral attitude towards working with students with special needs in the regular secondary school classroom.

9. Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- 1) Schools should let more male teachers be in charge of students with special needs because there is indeed an improvement in their attitude towards students with special needs.
- 2) Schools should place more relevance in the qualification of the teachers and should insist that teachers show a more positive attitude towards students with special needs.
- 3) All headteachers of inclusive schools should endeavour to have periodic feedbacks from students with special needs in their schools. This will help them provide better accommodations for these students.

- 4) The entire education authority should monitor special education programmes in schools all over Nigeria. If the National Policy on Education says children with special needs have the right to be mainstreamed, they should also provide the regular teachers with materials that will make accommodating students with special needs in their classes easier.

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