



## Relevance of Special Education in National Development

<sup>1</sup>Michael Eskay, <sup>2</sup>Grace Ogechukwu Ugwonna and <sup>2</sup>Sylvester N. Ogbueghu

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Science Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu, Nigeria

**Key words:** Special education, national development, PubMed, Google

**Corresponding Author:**

Grace Ogechukwu Ugwonna

Department of Social Science Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu, Nigeria

Page No.: 2592-2594

Volume: 15, Issue 12, 2020

ISSN: 1816-949x

Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Copy Right: Medwell Publications

**Abstract:** Special education can play a positive role in combating illiteracy and underdevelopment. The present paper discusses the relevance of special education in national development. The authors searched for relevant information in the grey literature, Jstor database, PubMed and Google scholar. Based on the reviewed literature, the authors argue that special education can present students with identified disabilities with expert instructions designed to serve their distinctive learning needs, availing them the chance to develop to their maximum possibilities in order to ultimately contribute their quota to national development.

### INTRODUCTION

Every citizen is a potential human resource for the development of any nation<sup>[1]</sup>. Special education refers to a collection of educational and social services offered mainly by the government-owned school system and other educational institutions to people with disabilities. This is to say that special education presents students with identified disabilities expert instructions designed to serve their distinctive learning needs, availing them the chance to develop to their maximum possibilities in other to ultimately contribute their quota to national development. In past decades, the idea of national development had been a matter of concern. The concept of national development has come to include poverty reduction, human rights, environmental sustainability, social justice and at times, empowerment<sup>[2]</sup>. Fagerlind and Saha<sup>[3]</sup> reported that education on a wider scope improves the individuals' capability, the ability of institutions as well as functions in catalyzing the closely interrelated cultural, social, economic and demographic variations, all

of which later came together to be defined as national development. Exactly how these variations transpire is not fully known yet. However, there is substantial evidence that schooling and other forms of education such as special education can, in a sustaining environment, contribute immensely to the complex processes of technology transfer, reduction of poverty, individual earnings, economic productivity, learning the responsibilities of citizenship, creation and sharing of values, development of healthy families and enhancement of the quality of life<sup>[1, 3-6]</sup>. It is in this respect that the present study sought to discuss the relevance of special education in national development.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, a brief discussion approach was adopted. Sources that informed the authors on issues concerning the subject matter include grey literature, Jstor database, PubMed and Google scholar. There were no exclusion or inclusion standards for searching works of

literature. Keywords used in searching for information for this review included: “special education,” “development,” “national development,” “education” and “education and national development in Nigeria”.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Almost universally, basic education is given high priority on the belief that all children, not minding whether they continue in schooling or go into the world of work, need literacy, numeracy and citizenship skills. The gradual shift of employment from agriculture to industry as well as the exodus of people from rural to the urban area, has equally powered commensurate gains in the importance of basic education<sup>[7, 8]</sup>. First, a closer look at special education for children with disabilities shows that the concept in practice falls within the zone of basic education for the most part. However, it should be noted that special education is not limited to children with disabilities rather, the concept encompasses a collection of educational and social services aimed at serving the distinctive learning needs of even gifted children<sup>[9-13]</sup>.

According to Brantlinger *et al.*<sup>[14]</sup>, special education is a very important investment for human and national development and is influenced by the environment where it subsists. Policy responses are required in variations in technology, labour market patterns and general global environment. Traditions, faith and culture all mirror upon the education system including special education predominant in an area and is also affected by them. The ingredient of change and continuity remains timeless and it is left for the society to decide its direction and pace<sup>[15-17]</sup>. We live in an inquest and innovation-oriented society and as such cannot afford to leave any stone unturned including harnessing the potentials of those who are perceived as impaired or gifted through the power of special education if we must survive. The twenty-first-century demands novelty, research, creativity, critical and analytical thoughts and integration of knowledge at the global level. Trends in invention and discovery have proven that these requirements which are no doubt indices of national development are not exclusive reserves of any particular group of persons, thereby justifying the principle and practice of special education in helping those perceived as impaired or gifted in contributing their quota to national development.

Social changes are speedily creating improbability and complexity within the society<sup>[18]</sup>. To prepare the children and youths with special needs to deal with this reality, improvements in analytical and critical thinking, attitude and skill are needed through special education, to increase their aptitude, flexibility and innovativeness in handling uncertainties and crises at the national and global level. Consistent with this need, research in education has demonstrated that active learning develops

creativity and stimulates learning. To this end, the furthestmost need of the hour is the need to innovate curriculum, teaching methodology, textbooks and children’s literature, formal and non-formal educational systems in a special way to accommodate persons with special needs. UNESCO Institute for Statistics<sup>[19]</sup> and UNAIDS<sup>[20]</sup> noted that the furtherance of the philosophical ideology and framework of special education will assist in promoting the stability of national development. Special education can presents persons with identified disabilities with expert instructions designed to serve their distinctive learning needs, availing them the chance to develop to their maximum possibilities in order to ultimately contribute their quota to national development.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the relevance of special education in national development was emphasized. In conclusion, special education can play a positive role in combating illiteracy and underdevelopment. Special education can presents persons with identified disabilities with expert instructions designed to serve their distinctive learning needs, availing them the chance to develop to their maximum possibilities in order to ultimately contribute their quota to national development.

## REFERENCES

01. Rokkan, S., 2009. Citizens, Elections, Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development. ECPR Press, Colchester, England, UK., Pages: 470.
02. Adams, D.K., 2002. Education and national development: Priorities, policies and planning. Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippine.
03. Fagerlind, I. and L.J. Saha, 2016. Education and National Development: A Comparative Perspective. Pergamon Press, New York, USA., Pages: 286.
04. Cheney, K.E., 2008. Pillars of the Nation: Child Citizens and Ugandan National Development. University of Chicago Press, London, UK., Pages: 300.
05. Garcia, M.E., 2005. Making Indigenous Citizens: Identities, Education and Multicultural Development in Peru. Stanford University Press, California, USA., Pages: 175.
06. Hechter, M., 1997. Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966. Vol. 197, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, Pages: 190.
07. Barnum, H.N. and R.H. Sabot, 1997. Education, employment probabilities and rural-urban migration in Tanzania (No. 49). Publication Unit, World Bank, Washington, USA.

08. Lall, S.V., H. Selod and Z. Shalizi, 2006. Rural-urban migration in developing countries: A survey of theoretical predictions and empirical findings. The World Bank, Washington, USA.
09. Chasson, G.S., G.E. Harris and W.J. Neely, 2007. Cost comparison of early intensive behavioral intervention and special education for children with autism. *J. Child Family Stud.*, 16: 401-413.
10. Cline, S. and D. Schwartz, 1999. *Diverse Populations of Gifted Children: Meeting their Needs in the Regular Classroom and Beyond*. Merrill, New York, USA.,.
11. Gross, M.U., 2003. *Exceptionally Gifted Children*. Routledge, Abingdon, UK.,.
12. Hornby, G., 2015. Inclusive special education: development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *Br. J. Special Educ.*, 42: 234-256.
13. Witty, P., 2017. What is special about special education? The gifted child. *Exceptional Children*, 19: 255-259.
14. Brantlinger, E., R. Jimenez, J. Klingner, M. Pugach and V. Richardson, 2005. Qualitative Studies in Special Education *Exceptional Children*, 71: 195-207.
15. Boudon, R., 1991. *Theories of Social Change*. Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.,.
16. Fairclough, N., 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
17. Sztompka, P., 1994. *The Sociology of Social Change*. Blackwell, Oxford, UK.,.
18. Cohen, L.E. and M. Felson, 1979. Social change and crime rate trends: A routine activity approach. *Am. Sociol. Rev.*, 44: 588-608.
19. UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2006. *Teachers and Educational Quality: Monitoring Global Needs for 2015*. Vol. 253, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal, Canada.,.
20. UNAIDS., 2008. *UNAIDS/WHO epidemiological fact sheets on HIV and AIDS, 2008 update*. UNAIDS/WHO, UNAIDS, Geneva.