

SUPERVISION OF TEACHERS, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, AND SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined the supervision of teachers, inclusive education, and secondary school system effectiveness in Cross River State, Nigeria. Two research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Census technique was adopted in selecting the entire population of 271 principals in the area of study. Two instruments were used for data collection tagged: "Supervision of Teachers, and Inclusive Education Questionnaire (STIEQ)" designed by the - researcher with a Cronbach reliability of .795, and "School System Effectiveness Scale developed by Bassey, Owan, and Eze (2019) with a Cronbach reliability of



.930 (Bassey, et al, 2019). Data collected were analysed using path analysis and the results showed among others that that supervision of teachers has a significant effect on school system effectiveness with 'teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables; inclusive education has a significant effect on school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables. Based on these findings, it was recommended, amongst others that students with different learning needs should be adequately catered for through proper inclusion following Individualized Educational Programmes (IEPs) paradigm for effective service delivery of teachers, and improved students' academic performance.

Keywords: Supervision, Inclusive education, School system, Teachers' effectiveness, Students' effectiveness, System effectiveness.

Introduction

The attainment of predetermined goals is one of the indices for measuring an effective secondary school system. The attainment of these goals which includes among other things, providing students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for personal development, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning relies heavily on teachers, who serve as the cornerstone of the secondary education system (Amagboruju et al., 2025; Nwannunu et al., 2024). Also, no organization can achieve set targets without the effective mobilization, utilization, and management of human and materials resources. The activities which take place within a school is what determines whether the school is effective or not (Okonkwo, 2021; Taiwo & Ade-ajayi, 2015; Owan, 2019). It follows, therefore, from the assertion above, that there is a clear disparity between effective and ineffective schools with the difference arising from the traits.

Similarly, Owan, Arop, and Agunwa (2019) posited that an effective secondary school system "is characterized by highly motivated teachers, good students' academic performance in standardized examinations, adequate leadership orientation, effective staff disposition, high school enrolment figures, good quality of leadership, high secondary school graduates' enrolment into tertiary institutions, low extent of truancy, low drop-out rates and low class-repeating figures, amongst others" (p. 59). Scheerens (2016) added that, achievement orientation, high expectations, teacher expectations, educational leadership, consensus and cohesion among staff, curriculum quality, opportunity to learn, school 'climate, evaluative potential, classroom climate, effective learning time (classroom management), structured instruction, feedback/reinforcement and parental involvement, are all indicators of an effective «school system. In summary, the effectiveness of schools is measured through the effectiveness of both staff and students (Bassey, Owan, & Eze, 2019)



Within the context of Cross River State, the quality of secondary schools has been a subject of much interest and debate among scholars and researchers. Keen observations and experience have shown that many secondary schools are ineffective. This is explained in apart due to the ineffective attitudes of staff towards duties and students' poor academic performance. In an ideal situation, secondary school principals are expected to provide effective leadership by serving as role models to both staff and students. This implies that an effective principal should be punctual to work, communicate effectively using appropriate channels, supervise and discipline erring teachers, and ensure that the school is managed towards goal attainment. The reverse appears to be the case where many principals are not bothered about the activities of the school and are often observe paying more attention to their private businesses than those of the school. Owan (2019) reported also that most secondary school principals especially those in public are naive and less concerned about the activities of the school especially when such school routines clash with their own other personal interest.

Teachers on the other hand, who should be effective in teaching and shaping the behaviour of students is also inconsistent in doing so, due to their persistent poor attitudes towards punctuality, records keeping, instructional delivery, classroom management, and learners' guidance. As a consequence, this has affected the quality of schools, the level of students' academic performance, and the enrolment figures of public secondary schools in the area, aS many parents now opt to send their children to private schools where principals and teachers appear to be effective and zealous about their duties. Regrettably, Owan et al., (2019) disclosed that there is a high rate of poor students' academic performance in internal and external examinations in the state. This ineffectiveness could also be held accountable for the poor tertiary enrolment figures of most secondary schools since only a few secondary school graduates can pass the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) (Owan et al., 2019; Ekaette et al., 2019; Okonkwo, 2021).

Attempts have been made by several studies to address the issue of schools' ineffectiveness using several independent variables. Variables such as schools-community relationship, personnel management, school characteristics, innovative management practices, management of educational support services, teachers motivation, classroom management variables, record keeping, and many others have been explored by studies (Oluwole & Dondo, 2015; Owan & Ekpe, 2018; Owan, 2018; Ekaette et al., 2019; Owan et al., 2019; Owan, 2019), yet the problem of school ineffectiveness persist. In recent times, the government of Cross River State injected life into schools through the employment of 2000 teachers and 500 secondary men to boost the effectiveness of teachers towards improving the quality of schools (Ekaette et al., 2019). This effort has not only yielded fruitless results, but it has also failed due to the poor selection procedures that led to the employment of many incompetent teachers. Globally, education has been recognized as a vital tool for socio-economic, human, and political development (Difoni et al., 2025). Anyalebechi et al. (2025) adds that education occupies a central place in national development, functioning as hubs for the advancement, and the training of skilled manpower essential for



economic growth and societal progress. It was on this note that the researcher wonders whether the supervision of teachers and inclusive education could have any contributory role to play in the effectiveness of schools. Supervision in the field of teaching means guidance offered for teachers to support their professional growth. At the moment, supervision has an established position as a well-known and widely applied method in health care and nursing internationally (Milne & James, 2002; Brunero & Stein-Parbury, 2008), but in education and teaching, it has been Jess used. For example in Cross River State, teachers' supervision has been limited, for example, due to lack of funding and scheduling (Nwakpa, 2005; Usman, 2015; Arop & Owan, 2018).

Supervision of schools have been identified as a crucial duty for the daily operation and function of the school system since it enables school leaders to assess and record the performance of teachers, in terms of their ability and consistency to carry out intellectually challenging teaching duties and the keeping of high-quality records, to achieve their set educational objectives and goals benefiting both individuals and their communities (Mortimore, 1998; Obiweluozor et al., 2013; Essien et al., 2025; Obona et al., 2020). Madukwe et al. 2024) defined supervision as the process of overseeing and managing the performance and behavior of teachers to ensure they effectively fulfill their roles within the educational institution. Supervision of teachers was considered in this study since it serves as an instrument with which the school principal determines the quality of service discharge by staff. Supervision also aids the school head to sort out ineffective teachers from the effective ones thereby enabling the principal to assisting and leading ineffective teachers in the right direction or discipline habitually truant teachers. According to Madukwe et al. (2024), supervision of instructional is an important tool for schools as it helps them in ensuring that their vision and mission are achieved by supervising, training, and empowering teachers so that they can create valuable experiences for their students. Okafor et al. (2024) add that School supervision serves as a strategic tool for shaping behavior and fostering improvement within schools.

Literature review

Empirically, several studies have shown that supervision of teachers has a significant relationship with the role performance of teachers (Ayeni, 2012; Kielekom et al., 2017; Arop et al, 2019; Madukwe et al., 2024; Obona et al., 2023). Similarly, Wokocha, Babalola, and Brown (2017) found that supervision affects the performance of business studies teachers and that effective supervision is hindered by certain challenges. Arop, Owan, & Agunwa (2019) showed that supervision has a significant effect (t= 7.171, B = .164) on teachers' attitude to work. In another study, Owan et al., (2019) showed that supervisory management practices has a significant effect on teachers' effectiveness (t = 4.065, r= 0.20, p<.05), and students' academic performance (t = 5.355, r= 0.23, p<.05). It must be noted that, in this study, teachers' and students effectiveness are held as proxies for measuring the effectiveness of schools following the model of (Bassey et al., 2019) which explained that school effectiveness is a product of the effectiveness of teachers and students. It was discovered that there is a significant direct and indirect parsimonious nexus between teachers' effectiveness and students' effectiveness on school system effectiveness (Bassey et al., 2019).



Inclusive education, on the other hand, is that aspect of education that makes provision - for learners with special needs (learning disabilities) to take active learning while associating with the so-called normal students. According to Difoni et al. (2024), inclusive education can be referred to as an approach within the field of education that aims to provide equitable and quality learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their background, abilities, disabilities, or other differences. Sambo and Gambo (2015) sees inclusive education as the full integration of learners with and without special needs into the same classrooms and schools, thereby exposing them to the same learning opportunities. Ahmad (2000) defined inclusive education as the education of all children and young people with and without disabilities or difficulties in learning together in ordinary pre-primary schools, colleges, and universities with appropriate network support. Okwudire and Okechukwu (2008) further explained that with inclusive education, all students in a school regardless of their strength or weakness in any area become part of the school community. It is a place where children are seen as equal members of the classroom without being marginalized. Haug cited in Difoni et al. (2024) said inclusive education involves the right to education for all students. Sambo and Gambo (2015) asserted that inclusive education is an approach that ensures the presence, participation, and achievement of all students in education, covering children excluded based on language, gender, ethnicity, disability, and other factors. Inclusive education also takes recognition of students who have been marginalized and excluded due to high or low intelligence quotient (IQ).

According to UNESCO (2005), Inclusion is recognition of the right to education and its provision in non-discriminatory ways; it is a common vision which covers all people; it is a belief that schools and other places of learning have a responsibility to educate all children (and adults) in line with human rights principles; it is a continuous process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners regardless of factors such as disability, gender, age, ethnicity, language, HIV status, geographical location, and sexuality- recognizing that all people can learn. It fellows from the foregoing that inclusiveness in the classroom is providing equal educational opportunities to learners with different learning characteristics, impairment, and status. This variable was considered in this study because it has an association with the teachers' effectiveness and students' academic performance. Teachers who can handle students with various learning needs should be considered as highly competent, and schools, where various learners' needs are adequately catered for, will likely be effective.

From an empirical position, Bays (2001) assessed the supervision of special education instruction in rural public schools' districts. The study collected data through interviews from 34 respondents following a mixed-method design. The findings from the study revealed that the supervision of inclusive education has a significant relationship with principals and teachers job effectiveness. The study of Alila, Maattd, and Uusiautti (2015) discovered that supervision provides individual and communal support to inclusive teacherhood. At its best, supervision can enable teachers' professional, communal, and personal development in an inclusive, learning environment, but



more time, resources, and opportunities for supervision should be arranged for teachers. Easley and Rancocas (2017) analysed to see what influence placement of non-disabled students in inclusion classes has on performance while controlling for ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, time in the district, attendance, and past academic performance. Results suggested that placement in an inclusive classroom did have a slight, yet statistically significant, negative influence on non-disabled grade 11 student performance on the language arts literacy section of the 2013 New Jersey HSPA. Additionally, further analysis indicated that this effect could be exacerbated by the number of years a non-disabled student has been assigned to an inclusive language arts classroom environment and the school they attend. Okonkwo (2021) in study found that transformational leadership style positively influence teachers effectiveness

Agunloye and Smith (2015) studied the effect of inclusion, as an instructional practice, on the performance of students in a middle school in Southern, USA. Data on the performance of the students in inclusion classes, in mathematics and ELA, over two years, were collected and analysed. The study reported that inclusive education has a significant effect on the performance of "students in Mathematics and English Language respectively. Kvande, Bjorklund, Lydersen, Belsky, and Wichstrom (2019) discovered from a study that Special Education (SE) in third grade adversely affected math achievements in fifth grade, and SE had no effect on reading and writing achievements or task motivation for reading, writing, and math. The efficacy of SE services is called into question, and potential explanations and solutions are explored.

Having explored related literature, it was discovered that the area of supervision and school effectiveness have been tackled by both domestic and foreign studies. A few studies appear to have been carried out vis-a-vis inclusive education and school effectiveness. Earlier studies have focused more on inclusive education as it relates to students' academic performance in different subjects. The area of teachers' effectiveness as a proxy of school system effectiveness seems to be scanty to the best of the researcher's knowledge. This leaves behind some gaps which must be filled especially in the Nigerian context. It was an attempt to fill these gaps that spurred the researcher to carry out this study.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the supervision of teachers, inclusive education, and school system effectiveness in Cross River State. In specific terms, this study examined:

- 1. the supervision of teachers and school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables.
- 2. inclusive education and school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables.

This study was guided by the following research questions

1. What are the significant parsimonious paths linking the supervision of teachers to school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables?



2. What are the significant parsimonious paths associating inclusive education to school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered suitable for this study because the study intends to describe observed phenomena as they occur in the population using information obtained from the respondents. The study's population covered 271 secondary school principals distributed across the entire 271 public secondary schools in Cross River State. Census technique was adopted by the researcher in selecting the entire population of 271 principals for the study. This technique was considered appropriate given that there is a manageable number of secondary school principals in the area and such that can be studied in entirety. Two instruments were used for data collection including a questionnaire tagged: "Supervision of Teachers and Inclusive Education Questionnaire (STIEQ)" designed by the researcher, and "Teachers, Students, and School System Effectiveness Scale (TSSSES) developed by Bassey, Owan, & Eze (2019). The STIEQ was designed with 16 items arranged on the revised four-points Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) to measure the supervision of teachers (items 1 – 8) and inclusive education (items 9 – 16).

The TSSSES designed by Bassey, et al (2019) comprised a total of 41 items arranged in three sections – Teachers Effectiveness Scales (TES) with 15 items, Students Effectiveness Scale (SES) with 15 items, and School System Effectiveness Scale (SSES) with 11 items. The instrument has a total of 41 items across the three groups. However, after performing Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor analyses, the items were reduced to 39 valid as two items were dropped for having low factor loadings. These 39 valid items were adapted and used in collecting data for this study. The STIEQ was validated by three psychometric experts in test and measurement department with a Cronbach reliability of .795. While the construct validity of the TSSSES had earlier been established using Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis with a Cronbach reliability of .930 (Bassey, et al, 2019). The instruments were administered to the respondents personally by the researcher. All the completed copies of the instruments were retrieved from the respondents without any loss. Thus, representing a 100 percent rate of return on the administered instruments. Collected data were prepared on a person-by-item matrix, while the two research questions were answered using path analysis. The results of the analyses are presented in the next section below.



Results

Research question one

What are the significant parsimonious paths linking the supervision of teachers to school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables? This research question was answered using path analysis as presented in Fig 1 below.

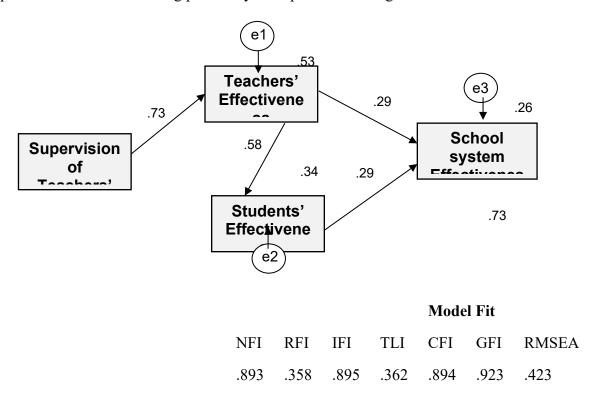


Fig. 1. Path analysis model showing the effect of supervision of teachers on school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables

The result in Fig 1 shows that the supervision of teachers has a direct effect (B=.726, t=17.342) on teachers' effectiveness; while teacher's effectiveness has a direct effect (B=.583, t=11.780) on students' effectiveness. Both teachers' effectiveness (B=.126, t=1.516) and students' effectiveness (B=.178, t=2.814) respectively, have direct effects on school system effectiveness with students' effectiveness being the highest predictor. The supervision of teachers has an indirect effect (B=.423) on students' effectiveness and school system effectiveness B=.333) with teachers' effectiveness as the moderating variable. Teachers' effectiveness also has an indirect effect (B=.167) on school system effectiveness with students' effectiveness as the moderating variable. From Fig.1 it was also shown that the supervision of teachers accounted for 53% of the variance



in teachers' effectiveness. Teachers' effectiveness explained 34% of the total variance in students' effectiveness. Jointly, teachers and students could be held accountable for 26% of the total variance in school system effectiveness. This implies that the remaining 47%, 56%, and 74% of the total variance in teachers' effectiveness, students' effectiveness, and school system: effectiveness respectively, could be explained by other independent variables. In checking for the significant parsimonious paths in the model, the result presented in Table 1 was used.

TABLE 1

Path analysis results summary showing the effect of the supervision of teachers on school system effectiveness with teachers and students as moderating variables.

	Paths		Est.	S. E.	C.R.	P
Teachers' effectiveness	<	Supervision of teachers	.726	.043	17.342	***
Students' effectiveness	<	Teachers' effectiveness	.583	.049	11.780	***
School system effectiveness	<	Students' effectiveness	.178	.054	2.814	.005
School system effectiveness	<	Teachers' effectiveness	.126	.071	1.516	.030
Standardized Indirect effects						
Variables		Supervision of teachers	Teachers' effectiveness			
Students' effectiveness		.423	.000			
School system effectiveness		.333	.167			

As presented in Table 1, the result of the analysis indicated that the path linking supervision of teachers to teachers' effectiveness is statistically significant (p<.01). The path between teachers' effectiveness and students' effectiveness is also significant (p<.01). The path linking students' effectiveness to school system effectiveness is significant (p<.05). The path linking teachers' effectiveness to school system effectiveness is also significant (p<.05). This implies that other things being equal, a unit increase in the standard deviation of the supervision teachers, will Cause teachers' effectiveness to increase by a standard deviation of .726 (72.6%); a unit increase in the standard deviation of .583 (58.3%); and a unit increase students' effectiveness will lead to a .178 (17.8%) increase in the standard deviation of school system effectiveness,



Research question two

What are the significant parsimonious paths associating inclusive education to school system effectiveness with teachers and students' effectiveness as moderating variables? This research question was answered using the results of the paths analysis presented in Figure 2. Fig. 2 shows that inclusive education has a direct effect on teachers' effectiveness (β = .392, t= 7.095) and students' effectiveness (β = .389, t=8.050) respectively; teachers' effectiveness has a direct effect on school system effectiveness (β = .290, t=4.486) and students' effectiveness (β = .428, t=8.851) respectively; and students' effectiveness has a direct effect (β = .276, t=3.855) on school system effectiveness. Fig. 2 also showed that inclusive education has an indirect effect on students' effectiveness (β = .177) with teachers' effectiveness as the moderating variable. Inclusive education also has an indirect effect on school system effectiveness (β = .250) with students' effectiveness as the moderating variable. It was also shown that teachers effectiveness has an indirect effect on school system effectiveness (β = .105) with students' effectiveness as the moderating variable.

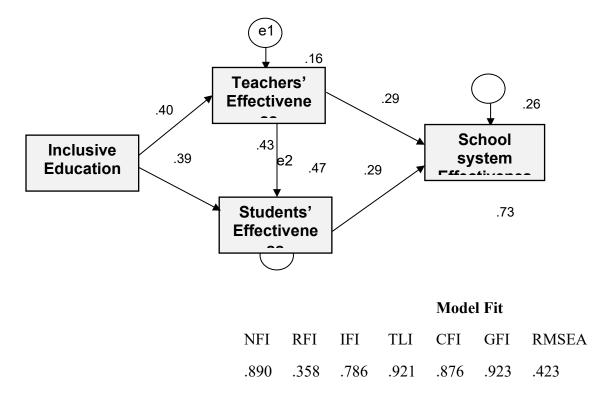


Fig. 2. Path model showing the effect of inclusive education on school system effectiveness

Fig. 2 also showed that inclusive education contributed 16% and 47% to the total variance in teachers' effectiveness and students' effectiveness respectively. While teachers and students'



effectiveness jointly accounted for 26% of the total variance in school system effectiveness (the same as Fig.1). This result implies that 84%, 53% and 74% of the total variance in teachers' effectiveness, students' effectiveness, and school system effectiveness respectively, are explained by other independent variables. In identifying the significant parsimonious paths of the association in the model, the results in Table 2 were used.

TABLE 2Path analysis results summary showing the effect of inclusive education on school system effectiveness with teachers and students as moderating variables.

	Path		Est.	S. E.	C.R.	P
	S					
Teachers' effectiveness	<	Inclusive Education	.396	.059	7.095	***
Students' effectiveness	<	Inclusive Education	.389	.051	8.050	***
Students' effectiveness	<	Teachers' effectiveness	.428	.048	8.851	***
School system effectiveness	<	Students' effectiveness	.276	.062	3.855	***
School system effectiveness	<	Teachers' effectiveness	.290	.056	4.486	***
Standardized Indirect effects						
Variables		Inclusive Education	Teachers' effectiveness			
Students' effectiveness		.177	.000			
School system effectiveness		.250	.105			

The results in Table 2 showed that all the parsimonious paths in Fig 2 are statistically significant at the .01 alpha level. A cursory look at the estimates shows that other things being equal, a unit increase in inclusive education will cause teachers and students' effectiveness to improve by a standard deviation of .396 (39.6%) and .389 (38.9%) respectively; a unit increase in teachers effectiveness will improve students' and school system effectiveness by a standard deviation' of .428 (42.8%) and .290 (29%) respectively; while a unit increase in students' effectiveness will lead to a .276 (27.6%) improvement in the standard deviation of school system effectiveness.



Discussion of findings

The first finding of this study established that there is a significant effect of the supervision of teachers on teachers' and students' effectiveness. This finding comes as no surprise because the supervision of teachers enables teachers to discharge their duties effectively. It is also in the place of supervision that effective teachers are celebrated or motivated and truant teachers corrected or disciplined. This raises the consciousness of teachers and deters them from wrongdoings. As established in this study, the supervision of teachers has an indirect relationship with students' effectiveness with teachers moderating the relationship. This suggests that, as supervision drives teachers towards effectiveness, teachers' effectiveness will lead to students' effectiveness. This is because effective teachers are good classroom managers, communicators, instructors, discipline personnel, motivators, and can create an interesting learning environment. When teachers can provide these and many more, the students' will become effective in their attitudes as well as their overall academic performance.

This finding aligns with the finding of Owan et al., (2019) which showed that supervisory management practices have a significant effect on teachers' effectiveness (t = 4.065, P= 0.20, p<.05), and students' academic performance (t = 5.355, r= 0.23, p<.05). Several studies have held similar positions that supervision of teachers has a significant relationship with the role performance of teachers (Ayeni, 2012; Kielekom, Kanori, & Mugambi, 2017; Arop, Owan, & Ibor, 2019). This finding also supports the finding of Wokocha, Babelol and Brown (2017) and Arop, Owan, & Agunwa (2019) showed that supervision has a significant effect (t= 7.171, B =.164) on teachers' attitude to work.

The second finding of this study established that inclusive education has a significant effect on teachers and students' effectiveness respectively. This finding is unsurprising since inclusive education provides the opportunity for learners with special needs to be fully included in the same classroom as normal children. Such integration will require expertise and mastery from teachers to cater for learners' differences. Therefore, the provision of inclusive education will offer retraining opportunities for teachers to develop competencies to handle both special and regular students in the same classroom. This makes such teachers more effective than those with the ability to manage only normal classrooms. On the other hand, students' effectiveness will also witness improvement as teachers improve their skills and as special students relate with the normal students, Thus, inclusive education will eliminate issues of segregation and promote collaborative learning between the so-called normal students and specials learners. This finding supports the finding of Bays (2001) which revealed that the supervision of inclusive education has a significant relationship with principals and teachers job effectiveness. Agunloye and Smith (2015) which reported that inclusive education has a significant effect on the performance of students in Mathematics and English Language respectively.



The third major finding of this study also established that there is a significant composite effect of teachers and students' effectiveness on school system effectiveness. This finding suggests that schools, where both teachers and students are effective, will be able to attain goals. The attainment of such goals makes the school an effective one. The main drivers of any school are the teachers while students are the main reasons why schools are established. Thus, the effectiveness of these two groups of personnel will make any school effective as planned policies will be adequately implemented by the staff, and students' performance will be improved consequently. This finding agrees with the results of Bassey et. al (2019) which also discovered that there is a significant direct and indirect parsimonious nexus between teachers' effectiveness and students' effectiveness on school system effectiveness.

Conclusion

Based on, the findings of this study, it was concluded that the supervision of teachers and inclusive education respectively have significant effects on school system effectiveness in Cross River State. Teachers and students' effectiveness moderated the association between the supervision of teachers, inclusive education, and school system effectiveness. Thus, the supervision of teachers and inclusive education are important factors in promoting the effective teaching and learning of students, and consequently, school system effectiveness in secondary schools in Cross River State.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, it was recommended that:

- 1. The pedagogical and co-curricular activities of teachers should be regularly supervised by the secondary school principals as well as external supervisors.
- 2. Learners with special needs should no longer be mainstreamed but should be included in the normal classroom with regular students for effective teaching, social inclusion, collaboration, and effective learning.
- 3. students with different special learning needs should be adequately catered for through proper inclusion following the Individualized Educational Programmes (IEPs) paradigm for effective service delivery of teachers, and improved students' academic performance.
- 4. Traditional teachers in secondary schools should be offered retraining opportunities by the federal, state, or non-governmental organisations, to enable teachers to acquire skills that will enable them to handle lessons in inclusive classrooms and cater for the individual differences of the learners.
- 5. Special educators should also be employed and posted to secondary schools such that each school has at least three special educators.



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