

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM PRACTICES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TARABA STATE

DANBURAM, IBRAHIM UMARU (Ph.D)

Department of Arts Education
Faculty of Education
Taraba State University, Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria
Tel: +2348032257537

OBADIAH, UDIFUNREH IKI

Department of Educational Foundation
Faculty of Education
Taraba State University, Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria
Tel: +2348142225868

&

ELUJEKWUTE, EDWIN CHUKWUAGUZIE (Ph.D)

Department of Business Technology and Entrepreneurship Education
Faculty of Technology and Industrial Studies
Benue State University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria
E-mail: elujekwuteddy@gmail.com TEL: +2348037530328

Abstract

This study investigated teachers' perceptions and implementation of inclusive curriculum practices in public secondary schools in Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, it examined how teachers perceive and apply differentiated instruction and collaborative learning strategies in the classroom. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were collected from a stratified random sample of 314 teachers using a validated questionnaire titled Inclusive Curriculum Practices Questionnaire (ICPQ). The instrument demonstrated high internal consistency with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.89. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics using Chi-square tests at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction significantly influenced its implementation ($\chi^2 = 25.78, p < 0.05$). Similarly, collaborative learning had a statistically significant impact on classroom instruction ($\chi^2 = 28.07, p < 0.05$). These results underscore the importance of teacher beliefs and attitudes in shaping inclusive educational practices. The study recommends regular professional development, improved teacher support, and curriculum reforms to promote effective implementation of inclusive strategies in public schools.

Keywords: Inclusive Curriculum, Differentiated Instruction, Collaborative Learning, Teacher Perceptions, Public Secondary Schools, Instructional Practices.

Introduction

Curriculum implementation is a critical phase in the educational process, representing the point at which planned curriculum content and pedagogical strategies are translated into

practical classroom experiences. It involves not only the delivery of subject matter but also the interaction of various stakeholders' teachers, students, school leaders and the broader community in achieving intended learning outcomes. Effective curriculum implementation is essential for the success of educational reforms and innovations, as it bridges the gap between curriculum policy and classroom practice (Okeke & Eze, 2023). Teachers, as primary implementers of the curriculum, play a central role in interpreting, adapting, and delivering content based on the unique needs of their students. Okeke and Eze (2020) further assert that effective curriculum implementation extends beyond the use of textbooks or teaching materials; it demands the active engagement and professional judgment of teachers to tailor instruction in ways that are meaningful and inclusive. Teacher capacity, professional development, and contextual factors such as classroom size, leadership support, and availability of teaching resources all significantly influence how well the curriculum is enacted (Ibrahim & Mohammed, 2020; Nwachukwu & Etuk, 2023).

In recent years, educational systems worldwide including those in Nigeria have embraced the principles of inclusive education. Inclusive curriculum practices aim to ensure that all students, regardless of their abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, or learning needs, are provided equitable access to learning opportunities. Booth and Ainscow (2021) explain that these practices include differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, culturally responsive teaching, and the use of adapted resources. Such approaches promote not only academic achievement but also social integration by creating learning environments that value diversity and foster a sense of belonging for every learner (UNESCO, 2020).

Differentiated instruction (DI), in particular, has gained traction as a key inclusive strategy. It involves modifying teaching methods, materials, and assessments to address the varying abilities and interests of students within the same classroom. Tomlinson (2020) posits that, when effectively implemented, DI can lead to increased student engagement, personalized learning experiences, and improved academic outcomes. Tomlinson & Allan (2021) stresses that despite its potential, many teachers perceive differentiated instruction as time-consuming and resource-intensive. Inadequate training, large class sizes, and limited access to instructional materials further complicate its practical application in many Nigerian public schools, including those in Taraba State (Baker, 2019; Vega, 2022; Baum, 2024).

In view of foregoing, another vital inclusive strategy is collaborative learning, which emphasizes student interaction and group work to foster critical thinking, communication, and peer support. Johnson and Johnson (2020) aver that teachers in Taraba State have increasingly recognized the benefits of this strategy in enhancing student-centered learning. However, its implementation remains uneven due to challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, limited space, inadequate teacher training, and misalignment between curriculum expectations and assessment practices. Niemi (2021) reports that, teachers' beliefs about their students' abilities to engage in collaborative tasks, as well as their own confidence and experience in managing group dynamics, also influence the extent to which they adopt this approach (Ghaith & Yaghi, 2021). Olatunji and Lawal (2020) point out that, despite government efforts to promote inclusive education in Nigeria, a significant disconnect remains between curriculum policies and their actual execution in the classroom. Teachers often feel underprepared to adapt instruction for learners with special needs or those from

diverse cultural backgrounds, especially in underserved areas. More so, persistent challenges such as insufficient resources, lack of ongoing professional support, and socio-cultural barriers hinder the realization of inclusive education goals.

Ezeudu and Anyaegbu (2023) affirm that, it is imperative to explore how teachers perceive and implement inclusive curriculum practices in the Nigerian context, particularly in regions such as Taraba State, where educational challenges are compounded by resource constraints and socio-economic disparities. Understanding teachers' attitudes and behaviors toward differentiated instruction and collaborative learning can provide valuable insights into the current state of curriculum implementation and highlight areas for targeted intervention. This study, therefore, aims to examine teachers' perceptions and implementation of inclusive curriculum practices in public schools in Taraba State.

Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education has become a cornerstone of educational reform globally, emphasizing the need to accommodate all learners regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or challenges. In Nigeria, and specifically in Taraba State, public schools are expected to implement inclusive curriculum practices that promote equal access to quality education for all students, including those with special educational needs. However, despite policies and frameworks aimed at supporting inclusive education, there remains a significant gap between policy and actual classroom practices. One critical factor influencing the success of inclusive education is the perception and readiness of teachers, who are the primary implementers of the curriculum. Teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and understanding of inclusive education greatly impact how effectively they adopt and adapt instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners. In many cases, inadequate training, limited resources, and systemic challenges hinder teachers' ability to fully embrace and implement inclusive practices.

In Taraba State, little is known about how teachers perceive inclusive education and the extent to which they integrate inclusive strategies in their teaching. The absence of comprehensive data on these perceptions and practices creates a barrier to improving support systems, professional development programs, and policy implementation. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the teachers' perceptions and implementation of inclusive curriculum practices in public secondary schools in Taraba State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Teachers' Perceptions and Implementation of Inclusive Curriculum Practices in Public Secondary Schools in Taraba State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State.
2. Assess the extent to which teachers implement collaborative learning in classroom instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State?
2. To what extent do teachers implement collaborative learning in classroom instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. Teachers' perception of differentiated instruction has no significant influence in public schools in Taraba State.
2. Teachers' implement collaborative learning has no significant influence in classroom instruction in public secondary schools.

Review of Related Literature

This section reviewed literature which is pertinent and relevant to the study.

Concept of Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation is the process through which the planned curriculum is translated into practice within the classroom. It encompasses the roles played by teachers, students, school leadership, and the broader community in delivering curriculum content and achieving educational goals. Effective implementation is a crucial factor in determining the success of any educational reform or curriculum development initiative. Okeke and Eze (2023) affirms that curriculum implementation involves more than just the use of textbooks and teaching materials; it requires the active engagement of teachers who interpret and deliver content according to learners' needs. Teachers serve as both implementers and mediators, using their professional judgment to adapt the curriculum to suit diverse classroom contexts. Several factors influence curriculum implementation. One key factor is teacher capacity and training. Ibrahim and Mohammed (2020) note that the extent to which teachers understand the curriculum content and the pedagogical approaches required significantly determines the fidelity of implementation. Where professional development is lacking, curriculum objectives may be poorly translated into classroom instruction. The role of school leadership is also vital. Principals and administrators provide not only logistical support but also instructional leadership that shapes how teachers engage with the curriculum. Alqurashi (2022) report that schools with proactive leadership tend to have more effective curriculum implementation due to clear communication, regular supervision, and provision of necessary resource, and another critical factor is the availability of teaching and learning resources. Nwachukwu and Etuk (2021) highlight that inadequate resources such as science laboratories, textbooks, and ICT tools undermine teachers' ability to deliver curriculum content effectively, especially in technical and science-based subjects. Furthermore, the socio-economic and cultural context of schools affects how curriculum is implemented. In rural or under-resourced areas, teachers may struggle with large class sizes, limited facilities, and language barriers. Obi and Okonkwo (2023) point out, that these contextual challenges often result in a narrowed curriculum delivery, where only examinable topics are covered, sidelining the broader learning objectives.

In recent years, curriculum implementation has increasingly emphasized inclusive practices. With a shift toward inclusive education, teachers are expected to adapt curriculum delivery for learners with diverse needs. Olatunji and Lawal (2024) argue that many teachers feel underprepared for this task, calling for more focused training in inclusive pedagogies. Despite government policies and curriculum reforms, the gap between policy intent and classroom reality remains significant in many public schools. Ezeudu and Anyaegbu (2023) emphasize that the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that curriculum goals are being met and to provide feedback for continuous improvement. Successful curriculum implementation depends on the synergy of multiple factors: teacher competence, leadership support, resource availability, and responsiveness to learners' needs. As education systems evolve, a sustained focus on teacher professional development, stakeholder collaboration, and inclusive practices remains key to translating curriculum plans into meaningful learning experiences.

Inclusive Curriculum Practices

Inclusive curriculum practices refer to educational strategies, methods, and approaches that aim to make learning accessible, equitable, and engaging for all students, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, abilities, or learning needs. These practices are designed to ensure that every student, including those with disabilities, learning difficulties, or from diverse cultural backgrounds, can actively participate and succeed in the educational process (Booth & Ainscow, 2021). An inclusive curriculum not only addresses the academic needs of all students but also promotes social inclusion by creating a learning environment that values and respects diversity (UNESCO, 2020). According to Tomlinson, (2020), key aspects of inclusive curriculum practices include: *Differentiated Instruction*: Tailoring teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles, abilities, and interests; *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)*: Providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to ensure that all students can access the content in a way that suits their learning needs; *Culturally Responsive Teaching*: Integrating diverse cultural perspectives and materials into the curriculum to reflect the backgrounds of all students, fostering a sense of belonging; *Collaborative Learning*: Encouraging group work, peer support, and collaborative activities where students can learn from and support each other, thus promoting inclusivity; *Adapted Resources*: Using materials, tools, and technologies that are accessible to students with disabilities or other special needs. Overall, inclusive curriculum practices aim to break down barriers to learning by promoting equal opportunities for all students to achieve academic success and social integration.

Teachers' Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction in Public Secondary Schools

Differentiated instruction (DI) refers to an educational approach where teachers adapt their teaching strategies, resources, and assessments to address the diverse needs, learning styles, and abilities of students within the same classroom. It has become increasingly important in modern education, especially as classrooms continue to become more diverse. Subban (2021) reaffirms that, teachers' perceptions of DI play a pivotal role in its effective implementation. When teachers view DI as an effective strategy, it can positively impact student learning outcomes, but their attitudes toward its feasibility, as well as its challenges, can greatly influence its success in public schools (Baker, 2020). Many teachers recognize differentiated instruction as a powerful tool for catering to the wide range of academic abilities and learning

preferences within their classrooms, Tomlinson and Allan (2021) postulate that DI helps foster personalized learning experiences that can enhance students' academic achievements. Teachers who are open to using DI often report positive results, including greater student engagement and improved retention of material. By tailoring lessons to meet students' individual needs, teachers can ensure that each student receives the right level of challenge, which can lead to increased motivation and higher academic performance.

However, despite the recognition of its potential benefits, many teachers perceive significant barriers to implementing DI effectively. One of the primary challenges teachers face is the time and effort required to plan differentiated lessons. Teachers often find it difficult to create different sets of instructional materials and assessments for a diverse group of students, especially in larger or under-resourced classrooms. Vega (2022) expresses that, the extra workload associated with DI can make teachers hesitant to adopt this method fully, especially when they feel overwhelmed by other teaching responsibilities. This perception of DI as time-consuming and resource-intensive can undermine its effectiveness in some public school settings. Barriers to effective implementation are not only related to teachers' workloads but also to their training and the resources available. Teachers who feel inadequately trained in DI strategies may be reluctant to use them, fearing they won't be able to execute them properly. Baker (2020) states that, Professional development plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' perceptions of DI; research has shown that teachers who receive proper training in differentiated strategies are more confident and effective in using them. Baum (2022) points out that, limited access to necessary resources such as varied instructional materials or technological tools can hinder teachers' ability to differentiate effectively. Without these resources, DI may seem unfeasible, and teachers may be less likely to adopt it.

According to Tomlinson and Allan, (2021), teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction are also influenced by their attitudes toward the diversity of their students. Teachers who believe strongly in meeting the needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities or gifted students, tend to have more positive perceptions of DI. However, those who feel less confident in their ability to manage diverse classrooms or who perceive differentiation as too complex are more likely to have negative views on its implementation (Vega, 2022). Collaboration and support from colleagues and school leadership can also impact teachers' perceptions. Teachers who work in collaborative environments where they can share strategies and ideas with their peers are more likely to feel supported and more confident in using DI (Baker, 2020).

Therefore, while differentiated instruction is widely acknowledged as an effective strategy for addressing the diverse needs of students in public schools, teachers' perceptions of its feasibility and effectiveness are shaped by various factors. These factors include the perceived challenges related to time, training, and resources, as well as teachers' attitudes toward the diversity of their students. By addressing these barriers through professional development, adequate resources, and collaborative support, schools can enhance teachers' perceptions and improve the implementation of differentiated instruction, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.

Teacher's Implementation of Collaborative Learning in Classroom Instruction in Public Secondary Schools in Taraba State

Collaborative learning is a teaching strategy that emphasizes interaction and cooperation among students in the learning process, where students work together to solve problems, complete tasks, or engage in activities that require shared knowledge and skills. It is grounded in the belief that learning is a social activity and that students benefit from learning in groups rather than individually (Obi and Okonkwo, 2023). In public schools in Taraba State, the implementation of collaborative learning in classroom instruction is increasingly recognized as a crucial method for enhancing student engagement, promoting critical thinking, and fostering cooperative skills. Teachers' perceptions and approaches to implementing this teaching strategy play a significant role in its effectiveness. Teachers in Taraba State, like those in many other regions, are increasingly aware of the benefits of collaborative learning in fostering student-centered environments that encourage active participation. This teaching strategy allows students to engage in discussions, share ideas, and challenge each other's perspectives, which can enhance their understanding of the subject matter. Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec, (2024) report that the collaborative process also promotes the development of skills, such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are essential for academic and professional success.

These skills align with the educational goals of public schools in Taraba State, where a growing emphasis is placed on producing well-rounded individuals capable of succeeding in a globalized world. However, while many teachers in Taraba State recognize the value of collaborative learning, the actual implementation of this approach is often hindered by various factors. One of the major challenges is the large class sizes typical of many public schools, which can make it difficult for teachers to manage group dynamics effectively. According to Oyeniyi, (2021) in a crowded classroom, students may struggle to engage in meaningful collaboration, and teachers may find it challenging to provide the necessary support and guidance to each group. This can lead to ineffective group work, with some students dominating the discussion while others remain passive or disengaged. Additionally, the physical classroom environment, often characterized by limited space and inadequate resources, can further complicate the successful implementation of collaborative learning activities. According to Niemi (2021), another key factor influencing teachers' implementation of collaborative learning in Taraba State is the level of professional development and training teachers receive. Collaborative learning requires specific skills from teachers, such as the ability to organize groups, provide clear instructions, facilitate discussions, and assess group work effectively. Teachers who have not received sufficient training in these areas may find it difficult to implement collaborative learning effectively (Fowler, 2020). Professional development programs that focus on enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills in collaborative teaching strategies are essential for improving the quality of implementation. In Taraba State, there is a growing need for comprehensive professional development programs that equip teachers with the tools and confidence to use collaborative learning effectively in their classrooms. Teachers' perceptions of their students' ability to work collaboratively also influence the implementation of this teaching strategy. In some cases, teachers may be hesitant to implement collaborative learning because they perceive that students lack the necessary social or academic skills to work effectively in groups (Ghaith & Yaghi, 2023). This concern is especially prevalent in schools where students may have diverse learning needs or where

there is a lack of experience with group-based activities states that students benefit from collaborative learning even when they initially struggle with it, as it provides opportunities for them to develop essential interpersonal and cognitive skills over time.

Johnson, Johnson, and Holubee (2024) affirm that teachers who believe in the potential of collaborative learning to improve student outcomes are more likely to take the initiative to implement it, even in the face of initial challenges. More so, the curriculum and assessment systems in public schools in Taraba State can also affect the implementation of collaborative learning. Traditional assessments that focus on individual performance may not fully align with the collaborative approach, making it difficult for teachers to assess group work in a meaningful way. The emphasis on standardized testing and individual academic achievement may discourage teachers from adopting more student-centered, collaborative approaches to instruction (Niemi, 2021). Teachers may feel pressured to prioritize individual performance and traditional teaching methods that align more closely with standardized assessments, thereby limiting the use of collaborative learning in their classrooms. Therefore, the implementation of collaborative learning in public schools in Taraba State is influenced by a range of factors, including class size, professional development, teacher perceptions, and the broader educational context. While teachers recognize the value of this teaching strategy in promoting student engagement and developing critical skills, the challenges associated with its implementation require thoughtful attention and support. To improve the effectiveness of collaborative learning in Taraba State, there is a need for continued investment in teacher training, resource allocation, and a shift toward more inclusive and flexible educational practices that support group-based learning.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of three thousand teachers in public secondary schools across the sixteen local government areas in Taraba State. A sample of Two thousand eight hundred (2,800) teachers from sixteen public secondary schools was used for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size because the population was heterogeneous. A 10 items was used to select the sample size because the structured questionnaire titled "Inclusive Curriculum Practices Questionnaire (ICPQ)". The questionnaire was validated by experts in the department of Arts Education and Test and measurement from the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Taraba. The data collected was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making, where any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as being significant, while any mean score below 2.50 was rejected as not being significant. The study also used Chi-square test of goodness of fit to test hypotheses related to teachers' perceptions and implementation of inclusive curriculum practices at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Findings

Research Question One

What are teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State?

Table 1:
Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction in Public Secondary Schools in Taraba State?

Item No.	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Decision
1	Teachers believe that differentiated instruction helps meet the diverse learning needs of students.	94	126	63	31	2.90	0.94	Agreed
2	Teachers feel that differentiated instruction is time-consuming and difficult to implement.	75	137	56	44	2.78	0.97	Agreed
3	Teachers think that differentiated instruction enhances student engagement and participation.	88	132	63	31	2.88	0.93	Agreed
4	Teachers are well-equipped with the necessary skills to implement differentiated instruction effectively.	109	91	61	53	2.81	1.09	Agreed
5	Teachers feel that differentiated instruction improves overall student performance in public schools.	212	61	18	12	3.56	0.78	Agreed
Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation						3.05	0.90	Agreed

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 1 presents the mean ratings for teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in public schools in Taraba State, with all items scoring above the 2.50 cut-off, indicating general agreement. The highest mean of 3.56 is for item 5, which suggests that differentiated instruction improves overall student performance, reflecting strong agreement among teachers. Item 2, which mentions the time-consuming and challenging nature of implementing differentiated instruction, had the lowest mean of 2.78, but it still indicates that teachers recognize its value despite the challenges. The overall cluster mean of 3.05, with a standard deviation of 0.90, indicates that teachers in Taraba State generally perceive differentiated instruction positively, acknowledging both its benefits and the difficulties associated with its implementation.

Research Question Two:

To what extent do teachers implement collaborative learning in classroom instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State?

Table 2:

Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Teachers on the influence of implementing Collaborative learning in Classroom Instruction in Public Secondary Schools

Item No.	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Decision
6	Teachers implement collaborative learning to foster student cooperation and teamwork.	100	119	57	38	2.89	0.87	Agreed
7	Teachers encourage students to work together in pairs or groups to solve problems.	82	131	63	38	2.82	0.90	Agreed
8	Teachers use collaborative learning strategies to improve student understanding of lessons.	94	125	57	38	2.87	0.89	Agreed
9	Teachers frequently engage students in group discussions to	107	88	69	50	2.80	0.82	Agreed
10	Teachers believe collaborative learning contributes to improved student learning outcomes.	213	69	19	13	3.53	1.00	Agreed
Cluster Mean/Standard Deviation						3.05	2.98	Agreed

Source: Field Work, 2025

The findings in Table 2 suggest that teachers in public schools in Taraba State implement collaborative learning in their classroom instruction to a significant extent. The cluster mean rating of 3.05 indicates that teachers agree that they use collaborative learning strategies to foster student cooperation, improve understanding of lessons, and promote shared learning. Specifically, the item with the highest means rating (3.53) shows that teachers strongly believe that collaborative learning contributes to improved student learning outcomes. These findings contradict the idea presented in Question Two that teachers' perceptions may not significantly influence implementation, as the positive perceptions of collaborative learning's benefits seem to translate to its implementation in the classroom.

Testing Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis One:

Teachers' perception of differentiated instruction has no significant influence on its implementation in public secondary schools in Taraba State.

Table 3:

Chi-square (χ^2) Analysis of Teachers on the Influence of Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction on its Implementation in Public Secondary Schools

Opinion	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Df	Level of Sign	Chi- Square	P. Valve	Decision
Strongly Agree	100	78.5	21.5	3	0.05	25.78	0.0000	Significant
Agree	119	78.5	40.5					
Disagree	57	78.5	-21.5					
Strongly Disagree	38	78.5	-40.5					

The Chi-square analysis in Table 3 reveals that teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction have a significant influence on its implementation in public schools in Taraba State. The p-value of 0.0000 is less than the level of significance (0.05), indicating that the null hypothesis can be rejected. This suggests that teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction play a crucial role in determining its implementation, contrary to the initial hypothesis that perceptions would not have a significant influence. The significant Chi-square value (25.78) further supports this conclusion.

Hypothesis Two:

Teachers implementing Collaborative learning has no significant influence on classroom instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State.

Table 4

Chi-Square (χ^2) Analysis of Teachers on the Influence of Implementing Collaborative Learning in Classroom Instruction in Public Secondary Schools

Opinion	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	D f	Level of Sign	Chi- Square	P. Valve	Decision
Strongly Agree	82	78.5	3.5	3	0.05	28.07	0.0000	Significant
Agree	137	78.5	58.5					
Disagree	57	78.5	-21.5					
Strongly Disagree	38	78.5	-40.5					

The Chi-square analysis in Table 4 indicates that collaborative learning has a significant influence on classroom instruction in public schools in Taraba State. The p-value of 0.0000 is

less than the level of significance (0.05), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that collaborative learning plays a crucial role in shaping classroom instruction. The significant Chi-square value (28.07) further supports this conclusion, indicating a statistically significant relationship between collaborative learning and classroom instruction.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis of research questions and testing the hypotheses, the following findings were organized and discussed here for ease of understanding.

The first finding of the study revealed that teachers' perceptions significantly influence differentiated instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State. This finding is in line with the views of Subban (2021) who reaffirms that, teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction play a pivotal role in its effective implementation. When teachers view differentiated instruction as an effective strategy, it can positively impact student learning outcomes, but their attitudes toward its feasibility, as well as its challenges, can greatly influence its success in public schools. Baker (2020) who maintains that many teachers recognize differentiated instruction as a powerful tool for catering to the wide range of academic abilities and learning preferences within their classrooms.

The second finding of this study revealed that teachers implements collaborative learning significantly influence in classroom instruction in public secondary schools in Taraba State. This finding corroborate with the opinion of Johnson, Johnson, and Holubee (2024) who affirm that teachers who believe in the potential of collaborative learning to improve student outcomes are more likely to take the initiative to implement it, even in the face of initial challenges. Similar in support to the finding, Oyeniyi, (2021) who asserts that in a crowded classroom, students may struggle to engage in meaningful collaboration, and teachers may find it challenging to provide the necessary support and guidance to each group. This can lead to ineffective group work, with some students dominating the discussion while others remain passive or disengaged.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that teachers perceptions on the differentiated instruction and teachers implementing collaborative learning has significant influence on the teachers perceptions and implementations of inclusive curriculum practices in public secondary schools in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Educational administrators and policymakers should provide regular training and support for teachers to enhance their understanding and implementation of differentiated instruction and collaborative learning. This can include workshops, coaching, and mentoring programs that focus on developing teachers' skills and confidence in using these practices.
2. Educational Managers should ensure that curriculum be reviewed and developed to incorporate more practical, relevant, and meaningful content that aligns with the needs and interests of students. This can involve stakeholder engagement, including

teachers, students, and community members, to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to the needs of the local context

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