Inclusive Assessment, Information Communication Technology for Enhanced Learners in Lower Basic Schools in Southern Nigeria. Implication on SDG 4

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ABSTRACT
This study examined inclusive assessment, and information communication technology for enhanced learners in lower basic schools in Southern Nigeria and its implication on s*ustainable development goals* four (*SDG4*). The study adopted the ex-post facto design with a population of 9,193 respondents. The study employed the stratified random sampling technique to draw 923 respondents as the sample which represents 10% of the population of learners in the study area. This study's main instrument was the Inclusive Assessment, Information Communication Technology Enhanced Learners Questionnaire (IAICTELQ). This was validated by scrutiny of experts in Educational Measurement and Evaluation of the items in the questionnaire. To ascertain the instruments' reliability, it was pilot-tested, using 40 students selected from schools that were not part of the main study, and the split-half reliability method of internal consistency was used to determine the consistency of the test instrument. The results of the analysis formed the reliability estimates for the instrument which ranged from .74 and .86. Data for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. Simple percentages and bar charts were used, and findings revealed that the different domain assessment strategies for the learners in an inclusive setting in lower basic schools are very high. Also, it was found that assistive ICT tools can assist and assess learners with special needs in lower-basic schools. In conclusion, inclusion status in the area under study is low, and genuine fear exists as to the realization of SDG4. It was recommended that southern Nigeria should adopt inclusive assessment strategies enabled by the different ICT tools as the enhancement in quality of teaching and learning among learners and schools which are associated with these strategies can facilitate the attainment of the SDG 4.
Keywords: Inclusive assessment, Information Communication Technology, Enhanced learners, S*ustainable Development Goals* four

Introduction
Nigeria adopted and adapted several education plans aimed at achieving the purpose of education. Prominent among them is the 6-3-3-4 system. This system is well articulated and considered a breakthrough in our school system. In this system, beginners and learners are expected to spend the first six years in primary schools and the first three

years in post-primary schools. From this point, the fate of the learners is known which will either direct or redirect them, also taking into consideration their strengths and weaknesses. At this stage, all learners' interests or passion, aptitude, attitude and abilities blossom to epitomize inclusion. This is another way to say everybody should be included in the sphere of things in the society. This brings to mind persons with special needs and even persons without special needs.

Society is a concentration of persons with special needs and those without special needs, and these categories of persons are found in our schools, both primary and secondary, the primary being the most basic. No doubt, there are different categories of learners identified as learners with special needs. According to Eke and Olayi (2018), there are twelve categories, prominent among them are the visually impaired, hearing impaired, speech and language impaired, behaviour disorder, intellectually disabled, learning disabled, physical and health impaired, multiple handicapped, autism, albinism, gifted and talented, as well as those from disadvantaged homes. Each of these categories has outstanding groups that play out in a classroom setting. Even in large-scale assessment, these categories require equal attention and effort to meet their respective needs; hence, the issue of inclusion.

However, there seems to be a challenge in meeting these needs to a successful end. There is a need for assessment to ascertain the extent of success and failure of learners to be able to forge ahead. The success of the above brings to mind the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) Agenda. This goal categorically states that by 2030, all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. This very goal has fantastic packages that are well articulated for the good of this generation and posterity. There is another fundamental assertion made in the goal that has gone a long way to implicate inclusion. The goal uncovers the provision of 12 years of free, publicly funded, inclusive, equitable, quality primary and secondary education of which at least 9 years should be ensured for all, without discrimination. Meyer, Bevan - Brown, Park and Savage (2010) perceive inclusion in the educational system as a programme in which exceptional children need some modification of materials and techniques or some supplementary teaching by regular teachers or special teachers assigned to the regular classroom. In an inclusive classroom setting, both categories of persons with special needs and persons without special needs are meant to be groomed or trained, without regard to the weakness of any group (Idika and Orji, 2017). In order words, there is no form of discrimination. Besides, target 4.2 of SDG ensures that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. It can be inferred that boys and girls are very available in lower basic schools. There are persons with special needs and those without special needs. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) stressed that concrete meaning be the idea of equalization of educational opportunities for all children, their physical, mental, and emotional disabilities notwithstanding. This has gone a long way to reinforce inclusion and SDG4. One can assert that growth and development go among these individuals. These goals,

especially one and two hinges on the learners that are found in lower basic schools. It is very germane to find out the extent of success or rather the hope of success of the SDG 4. One is wont to recall that the year 2030 is a few years away. Yet, there are still a good number of Nigerian children in school who are yet to be brought into the progrmme of inclusiveness. These learners are in primary schools and junior secondary schools. The emphasis is on carrying every learner along. This again brings inclusion to mind.

Every school has learners that are very eager to learn. The learning cuts across all where there shall be no discrimination. Above all, success is the target which has been spelt out in SDG 4 specifically in one and two of the goals in question. The issue now is the realization and if it is not realized, the goodness of sustainable development is submerged. It is in a bid to achieve this, that we have inclusion. It is germane to make that happen through a comprehensive and proper assessment which also engages the technology that facilitates the process of education at its best.

The success of the SDG 4 could be traceable to an assessment of the learners in the lower basic pupils schools. Assessment is perceived as a process of gathering data, from the process of measurement and fashioning them into interpretable form (Asim, 2022). It is a process of collecting, collating and organising information about objects, and analyzing into order to provide basics for making decisions about the objects (Adewale, 2021). The assessment utilizes test and measurement to achieve its role of generating data to help the learner. Therefore, a major function of assessment, particularly the formative or feedback type, is to use the results emanating from it(the process) to improve subsequent learning and the learner. The summative assessment is very crucial in obtaining learners' grades and certification, often engaged at the end of a course, programme or year as the case may be. The test is a useful instrument that yields the score(s) along with the measurement (which is the process of determining the characteristic(s) of the object of measure according to rules). The assessment that will balance all learning domains-cognitive, psychomotor and affective is germane. This should give the learner the opportunity of being considered comprehensively during assessment- interest, ability, attitude, aptitude, and altitude. In the cognitive domain, areas to be addressed cover high scores in tests and examinations, easy to recall, critical thinking, being analytical, and ability to evaluate. For Psychomotor, games, sports, handling tools, and drawing and painting. For the affective domain, the areas to look at are politeness, honesty, empathy, cooperation and adaptiveness. These will yield a broad perspective of the learner (total assessment) which has hardly been covered in one study previously (Idika, 2021). This might go a long way to come by academic and non-academic areas especially now the emphasis is on skill acquisition. There are individual differences among the learners and intra-individual differences. There is what is referred to as differential assessment. This is covered in learners that are having special needs and those without special needs. It is perceived that with differential assessment objectively done, one can hope to attain the educational quality that could hasten the realization of the SDG 4 agenda. This is what is thought of with learners with special needs and learners without special needs.

It is worth knowing that the advent of ICT has come to save learners, especially those with special needs. ICT can be used for learners of lower basic schools. In as much as the in thing is inclusion while advocates the inclusion of the excluded. There are basic ICT that go a long way to assist learners with special needs; they are assistive technology and adaptive tools and these include audio players and recorders, timers, reading guides, seat cushions, FM listening systems, talking calculators, bluetooth, writing supports and graphic organizers, among others. Each of them plays various and varied roles for learners with special needs. These complement and supplement roles or needs or handicapping conditions that the learners could be subjected to. It is worthy of note that inclusion is all about taking care of the needs of the learners with special needs in any regular setting (Idika and Orji, 2017).

In so far as SDG4 is concerned, it is necessary to be realized. It is not out of place to link inclusion to the goal; hence, it stresses nondiscrimination. There is a dire need to look at the success of inclusion in this all-important goal. That is to say that when there is success in inclusion, one is wont to place SDG 4 side by side. And if both are a thing to reckon with, then the issue of ICT should not be left out. This very important area has not been addressed to the best knowledge of the researchers. The foregoing inspired the researchers to this very work on Differential Assessment, ICT and Status of Inclusion in SDG4 for learners in Lower Basic Schools in Southern Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem
Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) is billed to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and it promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. The first and second subsets of the agenda captured the interest of the researchers as they hinge on boys and girls that opt for completely free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. The second one stresses "boys and girls'" access to quality childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. No doubt inclusion is all about consideration of all learners and giving due consideration to the strengths and weaknesses of all, and making provision for them. By implication, the learners with special needs and learners without special needs are considered alike in activities, particularly those that promote their learning; this no doubt shall go a long way to bring to fruition the goals of SDG 4.

However, it is appalling to note that genuine fear abounds for the success of both SDG 4 and "the well-timed" inclusion. There are a few years away from the much talked 2030 agenda. A critical look at events as they unfold is that the well-crafted and articulated SDG 4 that Nigeria remains part of, seems elusive. This remains a snag to a good idea and which goes a long way to affect the boys and girls that will eventually grow to be men and women. The issue of inclusion seems elusive for fear of activation and actualization of the articulated concept. The above development shall affect the present and future of the indigenes, especially the learners with special needs. This shall become worse when there is a shortage of ICT devices that encompass assistive technology.

It is worthy of note that no study known to the researchers has addressed the foregoing, regardless of the importance. That could amount to the nonrealization of SDG4 which'swell proposed to move the world to the next level in which Nigeria is a part. Nigeria seems to be backward in the dream, especially Southern Nigeria. This is as well true for inclusion where discrimination is the rule rather than an exception.

It is therefore germane to look at assessment, especially differential assessment to unravel the foregoing. This goes to fact check, fact finds and find fault of all activities attached to making SDG 4 a success. There are also ICT devices that can take care of learners with special needs; assistive technology devices. This is hoped to make up for all learners, especially learners with special needs. It is in cognizance of the foregoing that the researchers became inspired to carry out the present study.

Research questions

Two research questions guided the study. They are:
1. What are the assessment strategies in the different domains for the learners in an inclusive setting in Lower basic schools?
2. What are the ICT tools used to (i) assist and (ii) assess learners with special needs in Lower basic schools?

Methododology

The descriptive survey design was chosen for this study as that could help researchers identify the characteristics in the population sample, observe and measure them to guide decisions. Multi-stage sampling procedures were used because of the nature of the participants in the study. In that vein, cluster sampling technique, purposive sampling technique, stratified random sampling, and simple random technique were used to arrive at the sample (919) which was ten percent of the study population, 9,193 lower basic pupils in the study area. Descriptive statistics was used to establish different domain assessment techniques usable for learners in lower basic schools.

Instrument

The instrument for data collection was developed by the researchers and titled "Inclusive Assessment, ICT Questionnaire" (IAICTQ). The instrument has section A which constituted the biodata of the respondents; section B which was divided into two main parts- the part measuring the affective, cognitive and psychomotor items, numbering 33, and the other part with 10 items, which measures the ICT tools for assisting and assessing students. The instrument was both face and content validated through vetting by the experts in Special Education, Measurements and Evaluation of the Faculty of Education, Universiy of Calabar. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through Cronbach alpha method with coeficients which ranged between 0.72 and 0.79. These were used for both learners in primary schools and learners in secondary schools. The instrument for measuring the items in Section B was a 4-point modified Likert scale with response options of Very Much (VM), Much (M), Much Less (ML) and Not At All (NAA),

representing the fractional responses in the various categorical options. In a bid to complement the data gathered from the foregoing, focused group discussion, observation and checklist were other methods used to generate exploratory data for the items used in the study.

Procedure for data collection.
Upon reaching the respective schools, a letter of introduction was given to the administrators by the researchers and or the research assistants. The learners that formed part of the sample were assembled where they were addressed in both English language and the most popular dialects of the area where the schools are located. The research assistants were among those from the locality. The instructions on how to fill in the items on the questionnaire were read to the hearing of all and the items, as well as response options were made known to them. Questions were entertained to ease the exercise. The exercise lasted for two weeks.

Method of Data Analysis
The data were analysed using descriptive analysis, as shown below:

Results
Research Question One: What are the assessment strategies in the different domains for the learners in an inclusive setting in Lower basic schools?
The different domains are the affective, cognitive and psychomotor skills.
Research question 1: What are the assessment strategies in the different domains for the learners in an inclusive setting in Lower basic schools? To answer this research question, three levels were employed, namely affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains and the results are presented in tables 1,2,3 respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics with affective skills in terms of politeness. honesty, empathy, cooperating with others, and adjustment

S/N	ITEMS	Very much	Much	Much less	Not at all
	Affective Skills				
1.	I do exercise self-control in the face of provocation.	345	365	80	129
2.	I derive joy in sacrificing for others	154	435	164	166
3.	I do not find it easy to endure when I am offended.	216	309	109	285
4.	I take pleasure in telling the truth at all times.	356	324	132	107
5.	I hate to see my classmate telling lies.	489	356	52	22
6.	Telling the truth at all times makes one a good citizen.	445	242	123	109
7.	I cannot withstand my friend's failure.	324	540	33	22

8.	I do not mind the worries of my classmates	445	233	145	96
9.	I take pleasure in working alone.	324	343	218	34
10.	Working with others can lead to the greater accomplishment of tasks in class.	545	233	108	33
11.	I enjoy working together with my classmates.	325	418	97	79
12.	I can easily get used to any new environment I find myself.	324	378	144	73
13.	I do not feel comfortable in any setting.	345	255	144	175
14.	I feel free mixing with new friends	346	322	154	97

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics with affective skills in terms of politeness. honesty, empathy, cooperating with others, and adjustment, with 919 respondents. From this study majority of the respondents revealed that working with others can lead to the greater accomplishment of tasks in class (545) followed by those 'who hate to see my classmate telling lies' (489). This implies that majority of the respondent agrees that affective skills in terms of politeness. honesty, empathy, cooperating with others, and adjustment are essential in enhancing learning.

Table 2: Descriptive statistical analysis with cognitive skills (high assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical evaluation)

S/N	COGNITIVE SKILLS (high assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical evaluation)	Very much	Much	Much less	Not at all
15	I am among the first ten students in class	234	323	123	239
16	I am one of the best students in the class.	212	323	212	112
17	I am rated as below average student in the class.	267	334	132	186
18	I engage in very relevant activities in class	333	366	143	77
19	I am identified as a high IQ among my classmates	343	374	122	80
20	I can hardly contribute to any meaningful discussion in my class	213	465	123	118
21	I can easily explain difficult topics to my classmate	376	285	123	135
22	I can interpret the situation in class with ease	322	324	123	150
23	I do not like to ponder issues	454	234	112	119
24	My classmates can do anything they like but I hate to judge.	356	345	132	86

25	I can give my time to do what is worth doing in class.				
		343	367	122	87

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics with cognitive skills (high assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical, evaluation using 919 respondents. The highest responses are those who said they can interpret the situation in class with ease(454), this was followed by those in the category of "I can give my time to anything worth doing in class" (367), with \ results, majority of the respondents are of the view that they develop high cognitive skills in terms of assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical and evaluation.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics with psychomotor Skills(Games, sports, handling tools,drawing and painting)

S/N	PSYCHOMOTOR SKILLS:(Games, sports, handling tools, drawing and painting)	Very much	Much	Much less	Not at all
26	I do not have the energy for any physical exercise	343	410	123	43
27	Engaging in games keeps my body healthy.	620	222	23	54
28	I have a flay for track events.	584	214	56	65
29	I can hardly participate in track events.	345	443	76	55
30	I always feel I am not a potential runner	543	243	88	45
31	My classmates and I enjoy playing school drums.	333	410	54	122
32	I am scared of playing with tools in the class	454	243	122	100
33	Having tools around me makes me eager to build	435	248	212	24

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics with psychomotor skills (games, sports, handling tools, drawing and painting) with 919 respondents. "Engaging in games keeps my body healthy" (620) dominated the study followed by "I have a flay for track events" (584). The further explanation of the results in Table 3 above is presented in Figure 1 below:
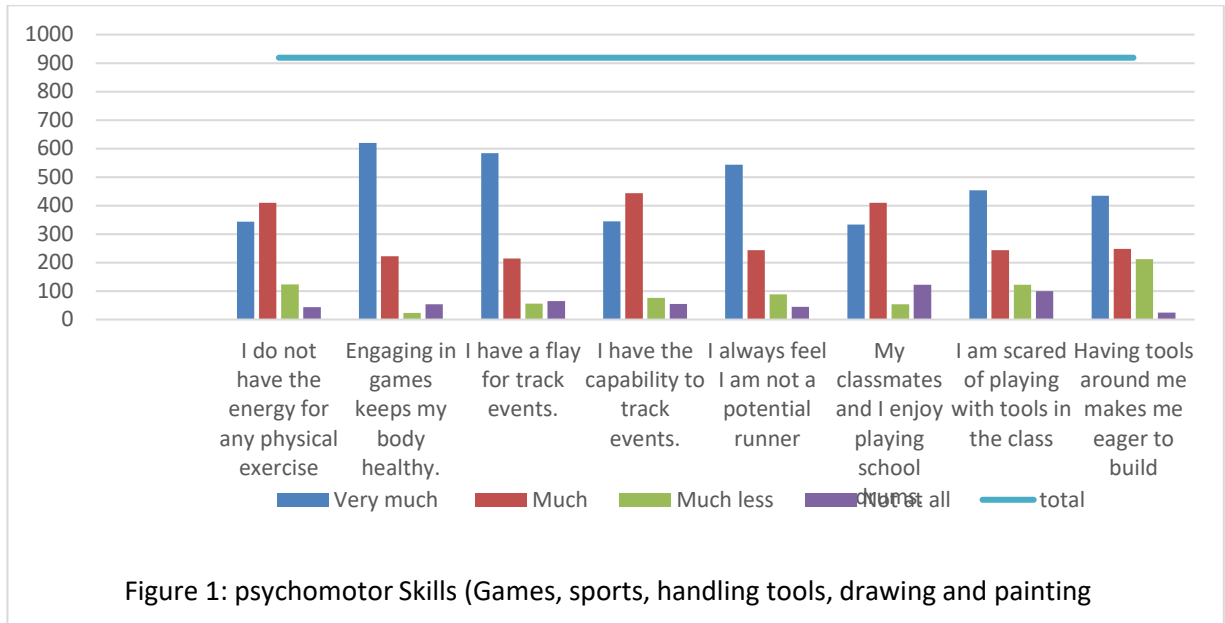
Figure 1: psychomotor Skills (Games, sports, handling tools, drawing and painting

Research Question Two: What are the ICT tools used to assist and assess learners with special needs in Lower basic schools?

Table 4: Assistive ICT tools for assisting and assessing learners with special needs in lower basic schools

This device is used to assist and/or assess learner(s)

S/N	Items	Very Much	Much	Much Less	Not at All
1	Reading Guide	498	213	121	87
2	Timer	342	399	111	67
3	Audio Player & Recorder	434	264	124	97
4	Seat Cushion	421	267	143	88
5	FM Listening system	321	431	111	56
6	Talking Calculator	608	132	121	58
7	Writing Support	324	245	123	227
8	Graphic Organizer	432	236	143	108
9	Hearing aid	421	233	175	90
10	Typewriter	531	212	88	88

In research question two shown on table 4 above, ICT tools to assist and assess learners with special needs were identified. Among them all, talking calculator (608) dominated, followed by typewriter (531) and reading guide timer (498). This can further be explained by the chart below:

Figure 2: The assistive ICT tools for assisting and assessing learners with special needs in lower basic schools
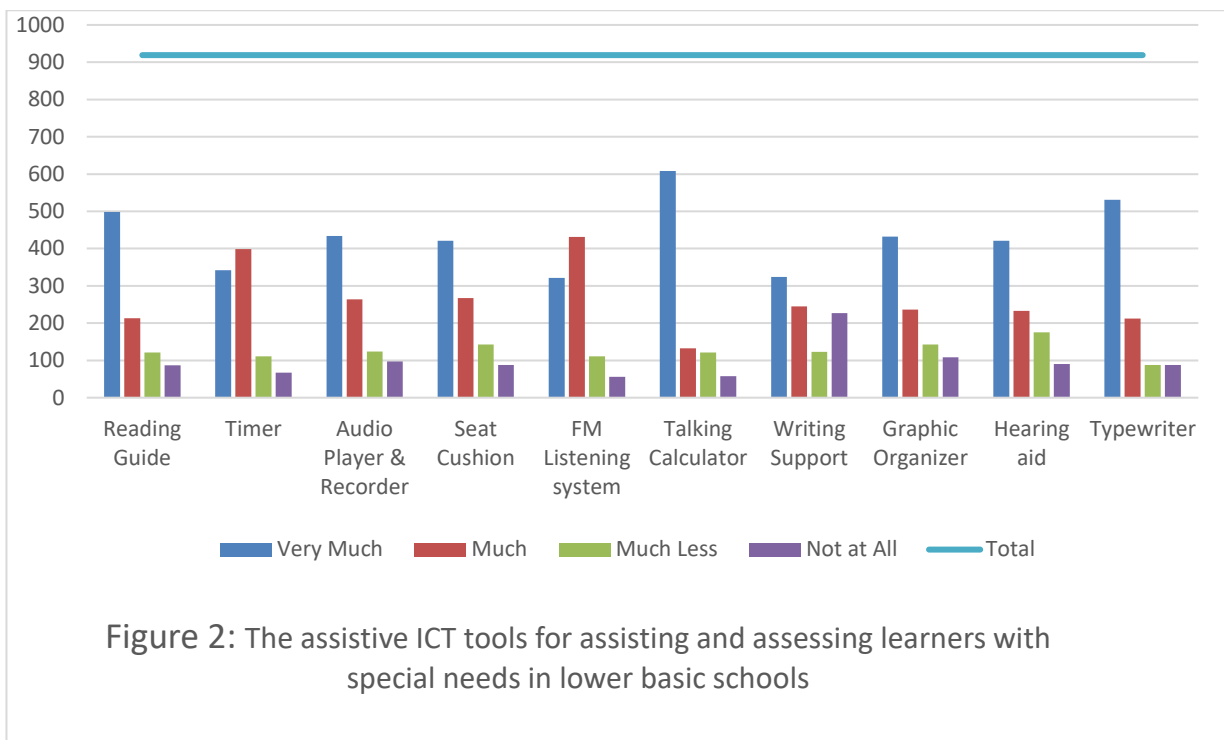
NOTE: The chart above is an explanation of the ICT tools which are used in assisting and assessing learners with special needs with the Talking calculator topping the list, followed by the Typewriter and Reading guide in that order.

Discussion of findings

The first research questions revealed that the different domain assessment strategies for the learners in an inclusive setting in Lower basic schools are very high. For the affective skills domain (politeness. honesty, empathy, cooperating with others, and adjustment) with 919 respondents, the study showed that majority of the respondents revealed that "working with others can lead to the greater accomplishment of tasks in class" (545); this was followed by "those who hate to see my classmate telling lies" (489). For the cognitive skills domain (high assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical evaluation) using 919 respondents, the highest responses are those who said "they can interpret the situation in class with ease" (454), this was followed by those in the category of "I can give my time to anything worth doing in class" (367), with these results, majority of the respondents are of the view that they develop high cognitive skills in terms of assessment scores, critical thinking, analytical and evaluation. In the psychomotor skills domain (games, sports, handling tools, drawing and painting being the strategies), with 919 respondents, the study showed that "engaging in games keeps my body healthy" i.e. (620) dominated the study; followed by "I have a flay for track events" (584). This may be attributed to the fact that most learners inspired themselves in the inclusive setting.

The present result accepts the view of Anyiam, Eke and Ojiaka, (2018) who note that education empowers an individual all round, and enables one to realize oneself and live fully as a human being. This in essence is a pointer to the fact that education is a process of acquiring knowledge to live well and to one's full potential in the society. This also aligns with the SDG 4 that emphasizes fairness, equity and inclusion (Ugodulunwa, 2005; UNESCO, 2017). This popular goal makes utilization of differential assessment imperative to bring to fruition the foregoing. It is worth doing; hence, limited time abounds for the goal to be made realistic. This can be made indispensable through the use of formal education which can only be accessed in lower basic schools. Idika (2021) disclosed that the first nine years in formal education capture both boys and girls billed for the lower basic education, which remains the focus of this work. Asim (2022) reiterated assessment and the need which should be consistent and all embracing: cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Each of these domains are implicated in raising the status of inclusion and making realistic the SDG 4.

It was found that amongst the ICT tools used for learners with special needs, hearing aid, typewriters and talking calculators were rated high. No wonder Meyer et al (2010) identify these tools among others for assisting and assessing learners with special needs. Eke and Olayi (2018) enumerate many categories of persons with special needs. Prominent among these people are the blind and the deaf. It is therefore, that hearing aids, typewriters and talking calculator were rated highest due to categories of persons with special needs most found in schools, especially lower basic. It was found in the study that the least among them all is 'graphic organizers;. This is evidential in others such as players, recorders , timers , reading guide, among others. This implies the realization of SDG 4 and the status of inclusion. There is a genuine fear that the target year of 2030 is fast approaching. It is a fact that ICT tools can assist and assess learners with special needs in Lower basic schools. This could be traced to the fact that assistive ICT tools help students with disabilities even in the face of obvious special needs and teacher shortages.There is a need for persons with special needs to fend for themselves, which is realizable in educational settings. This is in furtherance of the 17 Sustainable goals (SDGs) of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development adopted by the world leaders in September 2015 at UN summit.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings of the study, assistive technology and inclusive assessments in all the domains are essential for enhanced learning. Assistive listening systems have been helpful too for students who are deaf or hard at hearing, as well as those with other auditory and learning problems. This is because they are useful in enhancing the reach and effectiveness of hearing aids and cochlear implants, or children who may not need those tools per ser but still desire to be helped to hear better. Assistive listening systems use a microphone, a type of transmission technology, and a device for capturing and bringing the sound to the ear. The specific transmission technology used in the system is typically what contrasts one type of assistive listening system from another. In

conclusion, sustaining Development Goal (SDG) 4, which is geared towards "ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all", is a critical goal that is needed to be achieved, for improved quality of life and the developmental advancement of any nation for quality education which provides everyone the knowledge to be a better person, to become a global citizen, to express oneself freely without psychological complexes, and to take informed risks. This can maximally be achieved if ICT tools are inculcated in assessment in SDG4 for enhancement in learners in lower basic schools in southern Nigeria. Based on the study findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made.

1. The government should train and retrain teachers and all other stakeholders for the realization of inclusive assessment (in affective, cognitive and psychomotor) in education in lower-basic schools for enhancement of learning.
2. The Non-governmental organizations should be appealed to, and to add to governement's effort in the provision of ICT tools (particularly the talking calculator, typewriter and reading guide timer) for the learners with special needs in lower basic schools
3. The Ministry of Education should constitute an awareness committee to keep all stakeholders, including teachers and learners to spread the message of inclusiveness and ICT (assistive) deployment in assessment.
4. There is a need to impact on attitudes of the citizenry by the local, state and federal governments to ensure success of SDG 4 and inclusion.
5. Public and private schools across the country should adopt inclusive assessment strategies as they enhance quality teaching and learning in schools.

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