



## LACK OF HUMAN RESOURCES AS BARRIERS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BAMENDA, CAMEROON

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### **Abstract:**

This paper seeks human resources for students with special needs in the University of Bamenda compromises the implementation of inclusive education in the higher education setting. In order to answer to this objective, this study used as sample population of 315 respondents conveniently selected from 3 Departments in some schools in the University of Bamenda to answer questionnaires. For interviews, five students with visual and physical impairments were purposively selected. This study used a cross sectional survey design to assess different cohorts of the same respondent population such as sex, age, and educational levels. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the area of study and the schools while the convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample of 315 respondents for the quantitative approach. From data collected and analyzed using the chi square to measure the association between variables and testing of hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance, the findings revealed 73.4% (231) of the participants agreed that inadequate personnel is a challenge to the implementation of inclusive education while 26.6% (84) disagreed to this fact. Following the findings, it was recommended that training forums are organised to raise the awareness of staff, public officials, school administrators and teachers, to promote positive attitudes to the education of children with disabilities. This will increase sensitivity to the rights of children with disabilities thus enhancing the teaching-learning experiences of these students in the University of Bamenda.

**Keywords:** human resources; inclusive education; University of Bamenda

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## 1. Introduction

The United Nation's Declaration on human rights of 1948 emphasized the right to the education of all children irrespective of aptitude, diversity of abilities, culture, race, region religion and practices (Akerberg, 2001; McDonnel, 2003). The government of Cameroon has domesticated several international declarations and has formulated relevant policies that support inclusive education. For instance, the 1998 Forum on Education which lay down guidelines for education in Cameroon emphasizes the provision of equal learning opportunities and privileges to all persons irrespective of tribe, sex, status and region (Fonkeng, 2007). This forum gave provisions for education that is directed towards building Cameroonian citizens worthy of the name. The 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010 Law on the protection and welfare of persons with disabilities in Cameroon seemed to have set the pace for the practice of inclusive education in Cameroon.

More efforts to enhance inclusive education have been exhibited by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Religious bodies. The Ministry has created schools such as Rehabilitation Institute for blind (RIB), and the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) has also created the integrated school for the blind in Kumbo. The Catholic church has also created Saint Joseph's children and Adult home at Mambu Bafut (SAJOCAH) and a school for children with hearing impairment in Akum, Bamenda, that is, the Bamenda coordinating centre for studies in disabilities and Rehabilitation (BCCSDR). These centres are meant to enhance the development of the potential of young Cameroonians irrespective of status, sex, religion, ability, culture, tribe and political affiliation.

Morseso, the education of children with diverse abilities in regular schools has taken precedence in the world today. The Salamanca statement and framework proposed education for every individual irrespective of individual differences (UNESCO, 1994). The International focus through Education for All, the 1989 United Nation (U.N) Convention on the rights of children, the 1990 Jomtien Declaration, and the World Summit on children require countries to commit themselves in providing education to all children including the marginalised (UNO, 1989). International developments have made a telling influence on the promotion of inclusive education in the world. The 1993 U.N. Standard Rules on the equalisation of opportunities for persons with Disabilities (1993) observed that states should put in place the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational chances and opportunities for youths and adults with disabilities in integrated settings (Arkerberg, 2001 ; Bird, Sacks & Archer, 2006 ; Albert, 2006). They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system. This is a specific support emphasizing the implementation of inclusive education.

With the above developments that present the international and national legislations governing the practice of inclusive education, there are barriers to the implementation of these legislations in Cameroon especially in the higher education. The integration of all children including persons with special needs in regular schools have raised a lot of questions regarding inclusive education in the educational system of Cameroon. This is as a result of different categories of learners found in an inclusive

classroom such as the visually impaired, hearing impaired, learning disabilities, physically challenged, gifted or talented learners, and emotional and behavioural disorders. The school system which is considered as a social milieu for interaction is likely turning into a restrictive environment because of the attitudes and perceptions some individuals have towards learners with special needs. Most students with special needs in regular schools have a variety of social deficits including limited participation in classroom activities, low level of social interaction, and limited acceptance as functioning human beings, limited friendship and low level of social recognition. These problems arise because efforts towards promoting inclusive education do not simultaneously provide the academic, non-academic and administrative staff necessary inclusive dispositions or disability awareness in University environment. The aptitude and attitude of the University staff and their communicative competencies to students with special needs fall short of expectations. For instance, trained staff for special needs are not available, the academic staff are not sensitive to the diverse learning needs of learners, the support staff lack basic values of tolerance and acceptance and most of the questions for assignments and tests are hardly transcribed. Most of these experiences frustrate persons with disabilities as they are prompted to think the University environment has not been prepared to accommodate their differences thus discriminating against them. There is also the absence of trained personnel to work with these categories of learners especially experts in sign language and Braille. With all of these, it may be difficult for students with special needs to concentrate on their education and this likely has a negative influence on their learning, adjustment, and success in general especially when perceptions towards them are unaccommodating. Owing to this preceding problem, this study sought to examine the extent at which lack of trained personnel to cater for the needs of persons with disabilities influences the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda in Cameroon. To what extent is the lack of trained personnel for students with special needs a barrier to the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda?

The papers intend to argue that the lack of trained personnel for students with special needs is responsible for the ineffective implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The present staff lack the necessary competencies to cater for the diverse abilities of students with special needs. This significantly influences the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda.

## **2. Significance of Study**

The findings of this study are meant to influence the University administration and staff to improve on the effort made towards enhancing inclusive education. These findings inform policy makers on the need of providing corresponding regulations on the training and recruitment of University staff given the shortcomings of providing equal learning opportunities to persons irrespective of aptitude, physical disposition and weaknesses. It is strengthening the argument that students with disabilities have a right

to education and the University staff is expected to meet up with the expectations of their individual differences. This is instrumental to policy makers, University administrators and staff regarding the inclusion struggle and the welfare of persons with disabilities. The findings give an insight on how to formulate policies with regard to in-service training and recruitment of University staff.

### **2.1 Justification of the Study**

The importance of this study is derived from the necessity and the argument of the democratic theory of education. By democracy in education, every educational theory or practice has the requirement to provide equal learning opportunities and privileges to all persons irrespective of their differences like status, abilities, religion, sex, culture, race, region and tribe. For any institution like the University of Bamenda to meet this democratic objective, the members of staff, both academic and non-academic require some basic competencies that cater for the diverse needs of these learners. Any limitation to these basic competencies in the staff team betrays the inability to successfully implement inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The underlying principle is that all children have the disposition to learn but the way they learn and how much knowledge they get may vary given environmental influences.

### **2.2 Delimitation of Scope**

This study was limited to one higher institution of learning which was the University of Bamenda, in Tubah sub Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. Choosing this area is more convenient and purposive because of proximity and familiarity to both researchers. There have been attempts to point out the various challenges faced in the implementation of inclusive education especially in Secondary Schools. However, the present study lays emphasis on the lack of adequate facilities for persons with special needs in the case of the University of Bamenda and how this compromises the implementation of inclusive education. This research work was carried out in the University of Bamenda in Tubah Sub Division found in the North West Region of Cameroon. Its head quarter is in Bambui popularly known by its inhabitants as “abeh mbueh”. It is located at the cross roads that lead to some of the North West Regions major towns of Bamenda, Ndop, Kumbo, Fundong and Nkambe. This area is suitable because of its geographical proximity to the student researcher thus for convenience.

### **2.3 Definitions of Key Terms**

Human resource in this context refers to the people who make up the work force in the University of Bamenda. These are the University personnel, ranging from academic staff to non-academic staff. They are seen to have significant asset in terms of skills and abilities to enhance the learning potentials of all students. Lack of human resource or personnel for students with special needs therefore refer to the fact that the University is found wanting with regard to the availability of staff having skills and abilities to

cater for the learning needs of students with disabilities in the inclusive context of University studies.

Inclusive education is the process of providing formal education to normal students and disabled persons in the same environment. They participate actively in all school activities together. In this context, there is equality, fairness and mutual respect. The guiding principle here is that irrespective of their challenges, all students have access to quality education in age-proportional general education classes that are in their neighbourhood schools. Considering the fact that every child has the disposition to learn, the mainstreaming special needs students are integrated into regular schools to receive quality instruction, intervention and support that enable them to meet success in the core curriculum. The underlying principle is that students with disabilities receive lessons with their peers without disabilities to the maximum degree possible within the University milieu (Ackerman, Thormann & Huq, 2005; Ainscow, 2002; Bevan- Brown, 2006).

Learners with special needs/disabilities are people with impairments, which could be physical like visual, hearing or speech impairments, or psychological like giftedness or slow learners which require alternative strategies to meet up with their differences. Disabilities refer to the restrictions or lack of abilities to perform activities in a manner or within the range considered normal for human beings. It results from an impairment. Impairment refers to any loss or abnormality of the psychological or anatomical structure or function. It refers to a physical defect or deviation, or the actual damage done to the tissue of the body. Impairment can either be corrected or managed (Biklen, 2005).

Implementation of inclusive education primarily entails the acceptance, understanding and attendance to the differences and diversity of students. These may include: physical, cognitive, academic, social and emotional. What has to be retained here is that students have to feel welcomed, appropriately challenged and supported in their efforts. This could be achieved through the provision of special education teachers, capacity building of academic and non-academic staff to meet the needs of students with special needs (Bunch, 1999; Booth, 2005; Kearney, 2009).

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

This sub section of the article employs two principal theories to explain the two variables indicated in the study. These theories include; Dewey's democratic theory of education and Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. First, Dewey's notion of democratic education is very important to educational development especially within the context of inclusive education. This is precisely because this theory advocates equal rights, privileges and participation in the teaching-learning transaction. Dewey conceives interest as the preferences, aptitude, needs, desires, aims and means of learners. The importance of democratic education is that it leads the educators to consider the individual differences of learners in their specific capabilities, needs and

preferences. Students with disabilities are taught within the means of their aptitude, preferences and capabilities. In this context, the educator gets to know that all minds do not work in the same way even if they are taught by the same teacher or using the same text book.

By virtue of some physical impairments, some learners require particular and alternative strategies in the teaching-learning transaction (Dewey, 1966; Buckley, 2008). Thus, Dewey's democratic education requests alternative and diverse strategies of teaching in order to present knowledge in appealing ways to also capture the attention and concentration of students with special needs. Also, the organisation of the school and its activities has to enable educators employ experiences and practices that foster the intellectual and moral growth of students with special needs. This is the only reason for which one can testify that all learners have equal learning opportunities and privileges in order to get full integration in the life of the community (Dewey, 1966; Black-Hawkins, 2001; Alliance for Inclusive Education, 2004). In a democratic school environment, the values that are fostered include; tolerance, open-mindedness acceptance and respect of the other. The differences exhibited in students with special needs are not described as disabilities or deficiencies but they are conceived and regarded as diversity thus the need to accept them as they are. It is within the framework of the democratic values of acceptance, dialogue and respect of the other the University administration and policy makers understand the need to provide both teaching and domestic staff that meet the challenges of persons with special needs (Manga & Phachaka, 1993; Ainscow, 1999; Karangwa, 2006).

The second important theory to sustain the argument of human resources that meet the needs of persons with special needs in the University is Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943, 1954) presents a pyramid of needs that are applicable to the diversity experienced in persons with special needs. This imposes a necessity for the provision of human resources to meet with the challenges of these needs.



**Figure 1:** Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

When one applies Maslow's hierarchy of needs to school conditions, one gives a greater responsibility to teachers, lecturers and professors to make sure the deficiency needs are met. This refers to a safe environment in broad terms. Also, creating an enabling climate in which learners develop their potentials for full integration into the

society is of capital importance to democratic values of education (McQuarrie, 2009). Failing to ensure these privileges and rights for students with special needs result in poor academic performance and possibility for high drop-out rate from school.

For Maslow, safety needs in the hierarchy emphasize a safe and secure learning environment, which reduces the threat of injury. When students with special needs believe that the level of risk has been minimized and that good practices are judiciously enforced and monitored by the school management, they feel more comfortable, confident and accepted to interact with others. This perspective of security extends to psychological and emotional well-being in the school environment. This is only guaranteed by the good attitude of both the academic and non-academic staff to persons with disabilities (Stainback & Stainback, 1990; Miles, 2000). Therefore, the attitude and aptitude of lecturers in the University require necessary skills to manage students with special needs.

With regard to social needs in this hierarchy, persons with disabilities need companionship, acceptance and inclusion from what is taught and how it is taught. Maslow identifies social needs as friendships, peer support and the ability to give and receive love. The school environment offers an opportunity to be part of a team in which members share their respective knowledge, skills and unique experiences to solve problems in which they have a vested interest. Competitions, focus groups, mentoring, brainstorming sessions, after-school get-togethers make learners feel accepted, respected and tolerated (O'Toole, 1994). This aspect reiterates the African spirit of Ubuntu, where the attitude of the staff towards students enhance the values of compassion, dialogue and companionship irrespective of one's physiological or emotional differences (Ngalim, 2016).

The self-esteem needs refer to the need for learners to feel good about themselves and the need to be recognized for their achievements. When teachers in the school environment encourage class participation in their various classes and use praise and awards it will make the learners to achieve their self-esteem which will also help the learners to behave and function properly within their school environment. Students with special needs require an attitude that gives them a sense of belonging and recognition (Kim & Rosenberg, 1980; Miller, 2008). The attitude of the staff, lecturers or professors towards these students either discourages or encourages them from learning. Lecturers in an inclusive learning environment have to set up strategies and alternative measures to cater for the needs of persons with disabilities.

For Maslow, once the quarter of the above examined needs are met, learners are capable of achieving their true potential and embodying truth, meaning, wisdom and justice in their words and actions. Self-actualization moves them to a higher plateau of understanding as well as a greater empathy for the needs of others. Those who achieve this ultimate state and Maslow himself speculated that it was only 2 percent of the population enjoy a greater autonomy, have a deeper sense of humility and respect for others and a better sense of distinguishing between real and fake. Maslow also tied this to the belief that the journey in whatever form it takes can be more rewarding than the

actual destination. Teachers can apply this to a practice of appreciating the worth of each of the learners traveling with them rather than focusing so intently on the end-game that they lose all sight of human emotions. The attitude of lecturers and professors permit them to either give attention to persons with special needs to encourage them or to be negligent to the needs and preferences of these learners.

#### 4. Research Methodology

This study used a survey method to solicit information about specific aspects of the availability of human resources to cater for the needs of students with special needs in the University of Bamenda. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using several modes of data collection including face-to-face interviews and questionnaires (Amin, 2005). However, this study was conducted with the help of a Likert scale level of measurement to get the opinions of the respondents for the study.

The survey allowed for the collection of data from a cross section of students who involved different segments such as age, sex, different level of studies (classes) in the University of Bamenda. With this, a cross section of the entire student population of the University of Bamenda was taken into consideration. With the use of information that was obtained from these segments, an attempt was made to describe the phenomenon of lack of personnel to cater for students with special needs in the aforementioned institution.

This study also used a cross-sectional research design. It is usually used to investigate a phenomenon across a wide section of the population at the same point in time. This study therefore entailed collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from University students of different age groups, different levels of study, and different schools and faculties. The population of this study was made up of some students who happened to have enrolled in the selected University in Tubah Sub Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. Under population, we have the total population, target and accessible population. The total population of the study was the entire population of Tubah Sub Division. The target population of the study was students in the University of Bamenda, including those with special needs. This is because these students interact with the staff on a daily basis. They are also considered to be matured enough to provide valid responses to the questionnaire. Also, these students accepted to take part in the research. For the target population, we considered the table below.

**Table 1:** Summary of target population

Schools	Number of Departments	Population
H.T.T.C	13	3311
H.T.T.T.C	8	3413
Faculty of Arts	6	1230
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7954</b>

**Source:** Beginning of Year Enrolment Report Students' Affairs Offices, (2015).



**Table 2:** Summary of accessible population

Schools	Department	Sample
H.T.T.C	Sciences of Education	60
H.T.T.T.C	Law	135
Faculty of Arts	Geography	120
<b>Total</b>	3	315

**Source:** Beginning of Year Enrolment Report Students' Affairs Offices, (2015).

Since one could not work with all students in the University of Bamenda, one sampled to 315 respondents. We used a convenient sampling technique to select schools and faculties in the University of Bamenda. The rate of attrition was 3.7. The total number of questionnaires administered were 325 and 315 returned. Therefore, attrition rate was  $10/325 \times 100 = 3.07\%$ .

The sampling technique used for this paper was the purposive and convenient techniques. The purposive sampling technique helped in the selection different schools and faculties. This is justified in that we chose Departments that had students with special needs in order to ensure representation and proper generalization of findings. The convenient technique was used to select a sample of 315 participants in the selected schools. In addition, the research instrument used for this study was tested to ensure consistency of the results. For effective reliability, the test-retest was used. This was done through a pilot test conducted. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 20 students who were later excluded at the time of administering the instrument for data collection.

The analysis of the data was done using a convenient Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean, median, and the standard deviation were used to calculate and represent data. Measurements of associations or relationships between the variables were carried out using the Chi-square test for independence given that data may be non-parametric. The hypothesis was tested at 0.5% level of significance. This study had 315 respondents who were conveniently selected students from 3 schools and Faculties in the University of Bamenda.

## 5. Presentation of Findings

The research questions set to investigate whether lack of trained personnel compromise the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The findings or answer to this research question is seen from responses students provided for to the questions. Considering the absence of human resources to cater for the needs of students with special needs we traced the cause of the University's inability to adequately implement inclusive education to the absence of human resources to care for the needs of the persons concerned.

**Table 3: Trained Personnel and the Implementation of  
Inclusive Education in the University of Bamenda**

<b>1. The University has the staff to cater for students with special needs</b>		
<b>Level of agreement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	21	6.7
Agree	63	20.0
Disagree	165	52.4
Strongly disagree	66	21.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2. Some academic staff are not sensitive to the diverse needs of students with special needs in teaching exercises</b>		
<b>Level of agreement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	66	21.0
Agree	144	45.7
Disagree	90	28.6
Strongly disagree	15	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>3. Some staff lack the basic values to show tolerance and acceptance to students with special needs in the school environment</b>		
<b>Level of agreement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	15	4.8
Agree	264	83.8
Disagree	15	4.8
Strongly disagree	21	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>4. Teachers are hardly sensitive to the needs of persons with disabilities while giving assignments and tests in class.</b>		
<b>Level of agreement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	39	12.4
Agree	201	63.8
Disagree	30	9.5
Strongly disagree	45	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In the first place, the composite frequency table above reveals how students declare their disagreement to the view that the University has the staff to cater for students with special needs. This is discerned in the relative majority of 165(52.4%) and 66(21%) students indicating that they *disagree* and *strongly disagree* respectively to that claim. These opinions are opposed to the relative minority of the respondents with cumulative percentage of 26.7 (84students) who think that the University of Bamenda has the staff to cater for students with special needs by *strongly agreeing* and *agreeing*. To buttress the point, this is what the students with visual impairments say about their learning conditions in the University of Bamenda;

*“Most often examination questions are dictated to us by a body of lecturers for us to listen and give answers. This is often done in a special room. When we have multiple choice questions this exercise is very cumbersome to both the teachers and students. The inability to braille these questions prior to examinations does not really help the students to have a good examination disposition. I will refer to this as the crude method. Listening to questions and writing answers is not the same like reading the questions yourself, comparing the options with a cold heard and taking time to answer them. Also, when we write, it takes time for our results to come out. Or Our continuous assessment marks delay because someone has to braille the answers for teachers to mark. The process may at times be slow and thus delay in our marks. Lack of personnel is a pressing issue. We do not have skilled personnel for brail transcription or sign language for example. Teachers administer continuous assessments and students are called to come and read what they wrote before the teachers attribute marks to that. This is unethical following examination standards. Our results are not published on time because we lack personnel to transcribe on time and make it available to the teachers for evaluation. The resource centre is not functional for we are forced to transcribe our own continuous assessments.”*

In the second place, the respondents observe that some academic staff in the University are not sensitive to the diverse needs of students in their teaching exercises. The majority of the students approved that they lack the values. 144(45.7%) of them say they *agree*, 66(21%) say they *strongly agree* while on the other hand, a cumulative percentage of  $28.6+4.8=33.4$  (105 students) say they *strongly disagree* or *disagree* to the claim that some academic staff in the University are not sensitive to the diverse needs of students in teaching exercises.

*“The teachers give notes and hand-outs and expect each and every student to learn effectively without considering those whose notes have to be transcribed in braille. Also, there is no service to transcribe notes. I always request the services of a friend or classmate to read for me to retype in braille or I make an audio recording of the notes. This gives me double work for each and every subject. The teachers are also hesitant to give us soft copies of their notes, handouts or text books. If the soft copies of books written by the teachers could be made available to us, then we could know how to braille them and exploit them.”*

In the third place, this question set out to inquire whether University staff lack basic values of tolerance and acceptance to enhance the well-being and welfare of students with disabilities as they interact with others. As presented on the composite frequency table above, the majority of students sampled for the study express the opinion that some staff lack the basic values of tolerance and acceptance to enhance the well-being of students with disabilities in the school environment. 264 (83.8%) of the students say they *agree*, 15 (4.8%) *strongly agree* to the claim. On the other hand, 15

(4.8%) and 21(6.7%) say they *strongly disagree* and *disagree* respectively to the claim that some staff lack the basic values to enhance the well-being and welfare of students.

*“Some teachers understand the plight of the students and are tolerant. The majority of the teachers are very naïve or or let me say ignorant or rather do not care about the needs of those with physical impairments. They do not cooperate with us. They think we do not deserve to be here. A lecturer once said he does not know why we are admitted into the teacher training college because we are simply going to be ineffective and spend government money. Some lecturers do their best to be sensitive to the needs of persons with physical impairments but many of them do not care. Consider the teaching of subjects requiring Mathematical and Language competences. You are expected to listen, talk and see how the calculations or the language is presented. Most teachers do not take time to explain basic things by being sensitive to the diverse needs of their classrooms. A teacher will simply say who can come to the board and identify this? He does not care about the diverse capacities in his/her class. In this case, a student leaves the class as he came. Most lecturers are just naïve, ignorant and maybe negligent to the needs of persons with disabilities. With the present socio-political crisis, studies have been affected. Lecturers give bulky notes, handouts for students to photocopy. They do not care about those whose capacities require transcription. They refuse to give us the soft copies of their books to put in braille. With all these experiences, I think that inclusion in UBa is very theoretical ranging from classroom activities, examinations and proclamation of exams irrespective of whatever dimension of impairment a student may have.”*

Highlighting the above, the last question sought to find out if teachers are not sensitive to the needs of persons with disabilities while giving assignments and class tests. The findings reveal that 201(63.8%) and 39 (12.4%) *agree* and *strongly agree* respectively. This indicates that some teachers hardly take the diverse aptitudes and abilities of students especially those with disabilities prior to administering assignments and tests. Contrarily, just some 30 (9.5%) and 45 (14.3%) do not think teachers are hardly sensitive to these diverse needs. They indicated by disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively. The hypothesis was tested with the use of descriptive statistics. The alternative hypothesis stated that there is a significant relationship between lack of human resources and the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda.

**Ha-** Lack of Human Resource for students with special needs significantly prevent inclusive education in the University of Bamenda.

**Table 4:** Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
University has enough staff to cater for persons with special needs	315	1.00	4.00	2.8762	.81423	.663
Some academic staff are not sensitive to the diverse needs of students in teaching exercises	315	1.00	4.00	2.1714	.81143	.658
Some support staff lack basic values of tolerance and acceptance to students with special needs	315	1.00	33.00	4.1143	7.74759	60.025
Teachers are hardly sensitive to the needs of students while giving assignments and class tests	315	1.00	4.00	2.2571	.85244	.727
Valid N (listwise)	315					

From the descriptive statistics above, it is evident that inadequate trained personnel significantly prevent the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The means of 2.8762, 2.1714, 4.1143 and 2.2571 for items 1 (I believe the school has enough staff to work with persons with disabilities), 2 (some workers in the university do not care about the well-being and welfare of these students as they interact with others) 3 (some students lack the basic manners to treat these students well in class and in the school environment) and 4 (teachers are too fast when dictating notes that some students cannot meet up) respectively which deals directly with personnel and human resource related factors are above the mean of 2.5 set at the minimum significant level. It indicates that inadequate trained personnel significantly challenge the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. These mean findings are vividly supported by descriptive data presented in the research question. From a general perspective, it is therefore concluded that the alternative hypothesis is accepted indicating that lack of trained personnel significantly prevent the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda.

## 6. Discussion of Findings

From the descriptive statistics on table 4.7, it is evident that inadequate trained personnel significantly challenge the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The means of 2.8762, 2.1714, 4.1143 and 2.2571 for items 1 (I believe the school has enough staff to work with persons with disabilities), 2 (some workers in the university do not care about the well-being and welfare of these students as they interact with others) 3 (some students lack the basic manners to treat these students well in class and in the school environment) and 4 (teachers are too fast when dictating notes that some students cannot meet up) respectively, which deals directly with personnel and human resource related factors are above the mean of 2.5 set at the minimum significant level. This is indicative that inadequate trained personnel

significantly challenge the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. This mean result is supported by descriptive data presented in the research question. From a general perspective, it is therefore concluded that the second hypothesis is thus accepted indicating that lack of trained personnel significantly challenge the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. The findings on this hypothesis corroborate some studies conducted in this area.

First, Ndame (2012) carried a study on inclusion of children with special needs in two secondary schools in the South West Region of Cameroon. Using a range of participants composing of pedagogic inspectors, head teachers, teachers, students, and parents. His findings indicated that inclusion is complex and incorporates a wide range of curriculum which supports and benefits in and out of class activities to enhance the participation of all in learning. It further goes a long way to maximize possibilities and potentials of the students' diversity and also points out that inclusion of students in an inclusive setting is more effective than those in a special education setting. This is in line with the present study even though it is preoccupied with the benefits of an inclusive system of education on the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Secondly, the findings also relate to studies carried by Knesting, Hokanson, and Waldron (2008) who interviewed students with disabilities. Some of these students participated in special education services, and some did not. These researchers found that students' perceptions differed about how frequently they were willing to seek special education services based on whether they had more positive relationships with their teachers or with their peers. Students who had positive relationships with both teachers and peers viewed special education services as a necessary part of receiving their education. However, those students who felt embarrassed by receiving special education services primarily depended on relationships with their peers for their sense of belonging in their school environment.

Also, contrary to what this study posits, about inadequate trained staff and personnel compromise the implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda, Santoli, Sachs, Romey, and McClurg (2008) conducted a research among educators in the Southeastern U.S. regarding their attitudes toward inclusion. They found that despite the fact that almost all teachers interviewed (98.2%) were willing to make necessary accommodations for students with disabilities, the majority of those teachers (76.8%) felt that students with disabilities should not be educated in general classrooms no matter what the simplicity or severity of the disability, especially students with behavioural disorders and/or mental retardation. Overwhelmingly, the teachers had a positive attitude toward inclusion, and believed that, with enough training and administrative support, the additional burden of the adaptations and the extra classroom time needed for special education students was feasible.

Concerning inadequate trained personnel to cater for the needs of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, findings revealed that a relative majority, that is, 165 (52.4%) and 66 (21%) students indicated that they *disagree* and *strongly disagree* respectively to the claim that the University has enough staff. They are opposed by a

relative minority of the respondents with cumulative percentage of 26.7 (84 students) who think that the University of Bamenda has enough staff to cater for the needs of students with disabilities by *strongly agreeing* and *agreeing*. Also, it is established that some workers in the University are not sensitive to the well-being and welfare of the students with disabilities. The majority of the students were quick to indicate their approval. 144(45.7%) *agreed*, and 66(21%) *strongly agreed*. The majority of students sampled for this study both in the normal and disability category are of the opinion that some teachers lack the basic skills to cater for both the academic and emotional needs of these students in the school milieu. That is, 264(83.8%) of the students *agreed*, and 15 (4.8%) *strongly agreed* to the claim. They are opposed by some 15(4.8%) and 21(6.7%) who *strongly disagreed* and *disagreed* respectively to the claim.

## 7. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the problem of the available human resources to cater for the needs of students with special needs. Following the findings, it was noticed that the absence of adequate trained personnel of basic skills to cater for the needs of students with disabilities, both academic and non-academic, posit a problem in the successful implementation of inclusive education in the University of Bamenda. This outcome challenges stakeholders in higher education to put in place policies and practices those accommodate students with different abilities and aptitudes in the University milieu. To attain this objective, this paper recommended that most University staff should be trained in a rights-based approach to inclusive education, using child-friendly methods, making them aware of the practical adjustments that could be made to accommodate students with different learning dispositions. Consequently, the academic staff has to embrace the pedagogy of inclusion. The Faculty of Education, the Higher Teacher Training College and The Higher Technical Teacher Training Colleges have to take the lead to reject the old paradigm of the medical/special educational needs model in favour of inclusion and a rights-based approach by opening up to the divergent exigencies to educating students in an inclusive context. In this case, there is a need to establish partnerships for capacity building, where the staff is enlightened on specific impairment supports and adjustments. Also, resource teachers need to be trained and appointed to work with the staff of the University. For more than 20 years a whole range of methods of inclusive pedagogy has been developed and tested, mainly in North America, and it has been shown to have a positive effect on the learning of all children.

Further, there is a need to provide a comprehensive pre and in-service teacher training for all University staff, with methodology and techniques for teaching children with diverse abilities, the development of flexible curriculum, teaching and assessment strategies. In addition, we have to encourage suitable candidates with disabilities to further their education and serve as members of the University academic core, like the case in the University of Buea.

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