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The Role of Physical Facility Management in the Education of Learners with Disabilities in the University of Bamenda

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to assess the extent to which the management of physical facilities influences the education of learners with disabilities in the University of Bamenda. The design adopted for the study was the mixed-method design. The rationale for using this design was to create many sources for data collection so as to understand the problem under investigation from many foci. Also, qualitative data complemented quantitative data. The sampling technique adopted was the purposive sampling technique, and 163 lecturers and 15 students with disabilities were selected from five schools of the institution. The instruments for data collection were the questionnaire and the interview guide. The qualitative data were analysed using content analysis, while the quantitative data were analysed using Spearman's rho. The following findings were obtained: accessibility for the disabled, safety and security for the disabled and inclusive infrastructure significantly influence the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, with correlation coefficients of 0.874, 0.566 and 0.599, respectively. These results permit us to conclude that physical facility management plays a significant role in the education of learners with disabilities. Based on this, we propose that the institutional authorities should conduct a safety audit to identify areas of risk and develop strategies to mitigate them in order to render the teaching and learning environment inclusive.

Key words: Education, learners with disabilities, physical facility management, University of Bamenda.



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INTRODUCTION

School Facilities Management is defined as the practice of managing and maintaining all aspects of school buildings and grounds to create a safe, efficient, and functional space for learning. It involves tasks such as maintenance, repairs, space allocation, and ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations (CAFM, 2025). According to OECD (2007), Students with disabilities can be defined as students with impairments viewed in medical terms as organic disorders attributable to organic pathologies; Students with behavioural or emotional disorders, or specific difficulties in Learning; and Students with disadvantages arising primarily from socio-economic, cultural, and/or linguistic factors.

A report by UNICEF (2021) noted that in most African countries, children with disabilities are significantly more likely to be out of school compared to their peers without disabilities. Even when enrolled, they often attend schools that are not physically accessible. For instance, a study in Kenya and Ghana indicated that fewer than 20 per cent of the schools surveyed had wheelchair-accessible classrooms and sanitation facilities (Zickafoose et al., 2024).

The marginalisation of students with physical disabilities is worsened by lapses in teacher training programs, inefficient data collection and management, and poor implementation of inclusive policies in matters related to disabilities. Besides, emergency situations such as armed conflict and pandemics are likely to affect learners with disabilities more severely, thus putting pressure on already fragile support systems.

Lack of resources, combined with low prioritisation of disability within national education policies and widespread stigma, contributes to challenges in managing students' physical facilities in sub-Saharan Africa. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child from 1990, and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025, recognise the importance of inclusive education, but the practical implementation varies across the continent.

Some efforts have indeed been made by Cameroon to realise inclusive education as far as policy formulation is concerned. Law No. 2010/002 of

April 13, 2010, on the protection and promotion of Persons with disabilities stipulates that there shall be provisions allowing persons with disabilities access to education. The Cameroon Growth and Economic Strategic Paper (2013–2020) also recognises the importance of accessibility and equity in education. However, the implementation has been slow and uneven.

A majority of the public and private schools in Cameroon lack the basic infrastructure that would accommodate students with physical disabilities. Few schools have ramps, elevators, modified desks, or accessible toilets, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. Teachers are often ill-equipped through training in special needs education, and little budget is allocated for the development of inclusive infrastructure. Besides, accessibility laws have poor enforcement, with very weak monitoring mechanisms.

In Cameroon, there exist huge disparities as far as access to physical facilities for students with disabilities is concerned. While the Cameroon Education Policy highlights the call for inclusive education, its implementation is at an embryonic stage. Many schools are still lacking ramps, access to toilets, adapted classrooms, and other mobility aids. In addition, educators and administrators remain largely unprepared to manage the needs of persons with disabilities, which marginalises students with disability even further.

Echu (2019) and Fonjong and Nyuylime (2020), addressing the gap between policy and practice in inclusive education in Cameroon, indicated several systemic issues in infrastructure development, budget allocation, and stakeholder involvement. In the context of higher education, physical facilities refer to buildings, equipment, and infrastructural amenities that support the delivery of academic programs and services, including classrooms, libraries, laboratories, recreational spaces, administrative blocks, and sanitary facilities, most of which directly influence the learning environment and academic experiences of students. For learners with disabilities, the availability, quality, and accessibility of these physical facilities are of particular importance, as they significantly affect their ability to fully participate in educational

activities, navigate around campus, and achieve academic success (UNESCO, 2017).

The protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities have been addressed in various national policies and legislative instruments in Cameroon. The 1990 Law No. 90/053 relating to the Protection of Persons with Disabilities in Cameroon put into place a legal framework that assures access to education, employment, healthcare, and public services by persons with disabilities. Particularly, Article 28 of the law demands that public buildings, which include educational facilities, be constructed or adapted in such a way that they are accessible to persons with disabilities (Cameroon Ministry of Social Affairs, 2010). In addition, the National Policy Document on Disability of 2010, and subsequent strategic plans have reemphasised the commitment of the government towards promoting inclusive education through infrastructural adaptations and facility management practices.

These inadequacies in the infrastructure have profound implications for the academic performance, psychological well-being, and social integration of learners with disabilities at the University of Bamenda. Inaccessible physical environments have been found to occasion lower academic participation, higher dropout rates, and diminished self-esteem among students with disabilities in universities (Chireshe, 2013).

This study is, therefore, necessitated by the urgent need to investigate how the management of physical facilities in the University of Bamenda affects the academic participation, mobility, and well-being of learners with disabilities. This study will contribute toward closing the existing knowledge gap by providing evidence-based insights into infrastructural conditions, facility management practices, and their consequences on disability inclusion within the university setting. Its findings are likely to inform institutional policy reforms, infrastructural development priorities, and advocacy efforts at promoting an increasingly inclusive and equitable higher education environment in Cameroon.

While there are inclusive education policies in Cameroon, the implementation of such policies at the university infrastructure levels is particularly deficient at the University of Bamenda. Poor

management of physical facilities hinders the education experiences of learners with disabilities, hence the need for empirical investigation and intervention. It is against this pressing challenge that this present study seeks to examine the management of physical facilities and their impacts on the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda.

Despite the growing global emphasis on inclusive education and supporting legislative frameworks in Cameroon, there still exists a wide gulf between policy intent and actual practice at the institutional level. While the University of Bamenda has enrolled students with disabilities in various faculties and schools, the environment in which these learners are expected to function is, in many ways, poorly equipped to accommodate them. Studies conducted by Abosi and Koay (2008) and Ametepee and Anastasiou (2015), among others, have established that the learning environment, especially physical infrastructure, is a core determinant of the learning outcomes and social experiences of learners with disabilities. Lapses in Physical facilities for the disabled create feelings of exclusion, hamper mobility, limit participation in class and other activities, and prevent learners' access to important places on campus. The result of these limitations may be reflected directly in the academic performance, self-esteem, and overall quality of life of learners with disabilities. If learners with disabilities fail to learn appropriately, the objectives of the higher institution will not be attained, as learners would not acquire useful skills that would enable them to participate in nation-building. When learners lack adequate physical, digital, and communication accessibility, learning will be hampered. When the learning environment is not safe, students will learn out of fear. Lapses in inclusive infrastructure for persons with disability would certainly hamper their integration in the learning environment. This raises severe questions on educational inclusivity, equity and equality in the system. It is against these backdrops that this study intends to study the management of physical facilities as a determinant of the education of students with disabilities.

The main objective of the study is to determine the influence of the management of physical facilities on the education of students with disabilities within the

University of Bamenda. The Specific objectives to the study are: To examine how accessibility for disabled persons influence the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, to study the relationship between safety and security for the disabled persons and the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, to investigate the state of inclusive infrastructure for disabled persons and how it influences the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda.

Main Hypothesis

The management of physical facilities affects the education of students with disabilities within the University of Bamenda.

Specific Hypotheses

Ha1: There is a significant relationship between accessibility for disabled persons and the education of students with disabilities at the University of Bamenda.

Ha2: Safety and security for disabled persons influences the education of students with disabilities at the University of Bamenda.

Ha3: The quality of inclusive infrastructure for disabled persons influences the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda.

In the African context, inclusive education policies have gained increasing attention in recent years, with governments and universities committing to disability rights and educational equity (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). Nevertheless, implementation has been hindered by limited resources, competing development priorities, and deeply entrenched cultural attitudes towards disability (Adebayo & Uduimoh, 2018). African universities, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa, often struggle with ageing infrastructure, inadequate maintenance systems, and a lack of strategic planning for disability inclusion within campus environments. As a result, learners with disabilities continue to experience marginalisation, educational exclusion, and unequal academic outcomes compared to their able-bodied peers (Chireshe, 2013).

Like many countries in Africa, Cameroon has embraced the cause of implementing inclusive education through legislative and institutional reforms. In fact, under Law No. 90/053 of 1990

Relating to the Protection of Persons with Disabilities in Cameroon, public infrastructure, including educational facilities, must be designed and adapted to suit persons with disabilities (Cameroon Ministry of Social Affairs, 2010). The National Policy Document on Disability, 2010, further affirms that a barrier-free educational environment plays a foundational role in the academic success and social participation of persons with disabilities. These policy frameworks notwithstanding, physical barriers continue to be widespread in most educational institutions, while the implementation often remains shallow or partial (Nkengbeza & Ngwa, 2022).

The management has often cited budgetary constraints and a lack of policy direction. Opoku et al. (2016) found that inclusive school infrastructure requires not only physical modifications but ongoing maintenance and training of stakeholders. Teboh (2015), Ejiogu (2016), and Mordi and Oke (2018) noted that many schools had ramps, and most lacked accessible toilets, and teachers equally reported that students with disabilities often missed classes due to inaccessible environments. They equally highlighted that well-managed physical facilities play a role in ensuring access and equal opportunity for students with disabilities and that poorly maintained infrastructure, lack of ramps, inaccessible toilets, and inadequate signage significantly hindered students with physical disabilities from fully participating in academic activities.

One of the most persistent barriers to inclusive higher education involves poor management of physical facilities within university settings. Earthman (2004), Chireshe (2013) and Salmen (2012) noted that poorly maintained, inaccessible, and inadequately equipped physical facilities compromise the academic participation, social inclusion, and personal safety of learners with disabilities in University campuses and that specific infrastructural barriers include the absence of ramps, elevators, and accessible sanitary facilities, along with the lack of tactile signage, adjustable furniture, and disability-friendly transportation services. Beyond the limitations of their physical movements, these barriers also reduce the academic confidence, social integration, and overall well-being of students with disabilities. School facilities are supposed to be managed by experts and should be managed

holistically to benefit everyone. This could equally ensure sustainability in facility management because some of the structures which are non-existent in the

school have deteriorated badly since there was little or no maintenance and innovation.

Table 1: School Facility Management from a Holistic Perspective

Functions Stages	Planning	Organising	Coordinating	Staffing	Leading	Controlling	Budgeting
Provision	Provision Planning	Organising Provision	For coordinating provision	Staffing Provision activities	Leading in Provision	Controlling provision	Budgeting Provision
Utilisation	Planning for Utilisation	Organising Utilisation	Coordinating Utilisation	Staffing Utilisation	Leading in Utilisation	Control Utilisation	Budgeting Utilisation
Maintenance	Planning for maintenance	Organising Maintenance	Coordinating Maintenance	Staffing maintenance	Leading in maintenance	Controlling maintenance	Budgeting Maintenance
Improvement/innovation	Planning for Improvement/innovation	Organising Improvement/innovation	Coordinating Improvement/innovation	Staffing Improvement/innovation Activities	Leading in Improvement/innovation Activities	Controlling Improvement/innovation activities	Budgeting Improvement/innovation

Source: Adapted from Nji (2018)

The role of management in creating an inclusive learning environment has been extensively studied. Smith and Thomas (2019) indicated that both the attitudes and preparedness of educators significantly affect the educational outcomes of students with disabilities. Educators who received specialised training in inclusive pedagogies were more effective in adapting their teaching methods and providing necessary support. On the contrary, educators with limited knowledge or negative attitudes have often contributed to the marginalisation of such students.

Similarly, Ncube and Sibanda (2021) noted that while some managers are willing to support students with disabilities, institutional barriers such as large class sizes, inadequate resources, and a lack of administrative support hamper their efforts. These findings resonate with the current study's aim to explore educators' roles in the University of Bamenda by linking educator's roles with the management of physical facilities and Instructional materials.

METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in the University of Bamenda. The research design used was a mixed-method design, whereby the quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in data collection, analysis and interpretation. Here, the sequential explanatory design was adopted, whereby quantitative data collection and analysis were followed by qualitative data collection and analysis. The rationale of using the two approaches was to provide a basis which would not only be complementary but would enable us to understand the problem under investigation from various foci. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select a representative sample of 163 lecturers and 15 disabled students. Purposive sampling is a suitable form for the study because it allows for the selection of participants who possess specific characteristics and experiences relevant to the research objectives. The study's sample size ensures representativeness across the various subgroups within the university population. The data collection instruments were a

questionnaire and an interview guide. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 was obtained, and a content validity index of 0.8 was obtained. Based on this, the instrument was considered reliable and valid for the study. Within the context of qualitative data collection and analysis, the interview guide was used to conduct face-to-face interviews on the problem

under investigation. The qualitative data analysis technique employed was thematic analysis. The Spearman's rho correlation was used for data analysis, given the nonparametric nature of the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Respondents' Background Information

ITEMS	MODALITIES	FREQUENCIES	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Male	98	60.12
Gender	Female	65	39.87
Age	30-40 years	78	47.85
Age	41-50 years	65	39.87
Age	51 years and above	20	12.26
Professional Experience	1-5 years	68	41.71
Professional Experience	6-10 years	51	31.28
Professional Experience	11 years and above	44	26.99

The table above on respondents' background data reveals that the majority of the population in the sample were males, making up more than 60 per cent; and as far as the age of the respondents was

concerned, more than 47 per cent of them were less than 40 years old. Concerning professional experience, the majority of the respondents have teaching experience of not more than 5 years.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Accessibility for Disabled Students

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Accessible entrances are available to ease free movements with Wide doors and hallways.	163	1.00	4.00	1.3620	.65567
Accessible restrooms and parking lots.	163	1.00	4.00	1.7485	.99594
Website or internet accessibility for the disabled.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5031	.73177
Closed captions and audio descriptions during lectures.	163	1.00	4.00	1.7423	.99125
Sign language interpretation services are available.	163	1.00	4.00	1.6442	.81408
Braille and large print materials are available.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5521	.88995
Assistive listening systems for hearing impaired people.	163	1.00	4.00	1.6442	.82911
Inclusive teaching is carried out to ease learning for all.	163	1.00	4.00	1.3865	.72286
The didactic materials used in the teaching sessions are inclusive.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5583	.82476
Valid N (listwise)	163				

1= Very Inadequate; 2= Somewhat Inadequate; 3=Somewhat Adequate; 4=Very Adequate

The table above presents statistics on respondents' accessibility for disabled students, and it is revealed that all the items fall in the area of very inadequate. The inadequacies of all the items reveal that students' accessibility to various salient facilities is a major

problem. All of this would affect students' learning negatively. When teaching is not inclusive, students' accessibility to the teaching and learning experience will be limited.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Safety and Security for the Disabled Persons

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
There are regular drills and training for teachers and staff.	163	1.00	4.00	1.6442	.95375
There is accessible emergency communication systems.	163	1.00	4.00	1.6564	1.00848
There are Evacuation plans with accommodations for students with disabilities put in place.	163	1.00	4.00	1.6380	.85939
There is enough trained staff in disability awareness and support.	163	1.00	4.00	1.4847	.65126
The university provides availability of assistive devices and technology.	163	1.00	4.00	1.4908	.87748
There is Support for students with cognitive or intellectual disabilities.	163	1.00	3.00	3.4847	.67910
There is disability awareness training for students and staff.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5399	.77177
There is zero tolerance for bullying and harassment of students with disabilities.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5706	.82379
School leaders Promote accessibility and inclusion in school activities.	163	1.00	4.00	1.8221	.92242
There is continuous improvement of safety and security measures for students with disabilities.	163	1.00	4.00	1.7607	.90836
Valid N (listwise)	163				

1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly Agree

Safety and security for students with disabilities are fundamental in creating an adequate environment for teaching and learning. Insecurity causes students to learn out of fear. All the items above fall in the area

of disagreement, except for item six, where most of the respondents agreed that they sometimes receive support from school authorities.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Inclusive Infrastructure for Disabled Persons

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
There are available Ramps and wheelchairs to supplement inclusive materials.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5399	.93125
There are adaptable classrooms and furniture.	163	1.00	4.00	1.4233	.55440
There are accessible restrooms and facilities.	163	1.00	4.00	1.3129	.71597
There are accessible playgrounds and recreational areas	163	1.00	4.00	1.6748	.82315
Accessible libraries and resource centers exist for the disabled	163	1.00	4.00	1.6564	.86339
There are quiet rooms or sensory spaces	163	1.00	4.00	1.2577	.43870
There are assistive technology (e.g., text-to-speech software, braille displays)	163	1.00	4.00	1.5276	.79592
Accessible digital resources are made available by the school authorities (e.g., e-books, audio materials)	163	1.00	4.00	1.6933	.90493
Communication systems are made inclusive	163	1.00	4.00	1.8957	1.00991
Visual alarms and emergency lighting are installed and maintained.	163	1.00	4.00	1.5399	.79540
Accessible emergency exits and evacuation routes are available.	163	1.00	4.00	1.8037	.98669
Valid N (listwise)	163				

1=Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly Agree

The table on inclusive infrastructure indicates that most of the respondents disagreed with the items. However, the majority of them agree that there are assistive technologies and Accessible libraries and resource centres exist for the disabled. From here, it

becomes clear that the infrastructure that exists is, to a very large extent, non-inclusive. This goes a long way to exhibit the disconnection and the chasm that exist between policy formulation and implementation in the area of inclusive education in Cameroon.

Table 6: Correlations

			Accessibility for disabled Students	Safety and security for Disabled Students	Inclusive Infrastructure for Disabled Students	Education of Students with Disabilities
Spearman's rho	Accessibility for disabled Students	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.673**	.617**	.874**
Spearman's rho	Accessibility for disabled Students	Sig. (2- tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
Spearman's rho	Accessibility for disabled Students	N	163	163	163	163
Spearman's rho	Safety and security for Disabled Students	Correlation Coefficient	.673**	1.000	.606**	.565**
Spearman's rho	Safety and security for Disabled Students	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
Spearman's rho	Safety and security for Disabled Students	N	163	163	163	163
Spearman's rho	Inclusive Infrastructure for Disabled Students	Correlation Coefficient	.617**	.606**	1.000	.599**
Spearman's rho	Inclusive Infrastructure for Disabled Students	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
Spearman's rho	Inclusive Infrastructure for Disabled Students	N	163	163	163	163
Spearman's rho	Education of Students with Disabilities	Correlation Coefficient	.874**	.565**	.599**	1.000
Spearman's rho	Education of Students with Disabilities	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
Spearman's rho	Education of Students with Disabilities	N	163	163	163	163
**. Correlation is	**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level	**. Correlation is	**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level	**. Correlation is	**. Correlation is significant at	**. Correlation is

<i>significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>	<i>(2-tailed).</i>	<i>significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>	<i>(2-tailed).</i>	<i>significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>	<i>the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>	<i>significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>
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The table on correlation reveals that accessibility for students' disabilities (Physical accessibility, digital accessibility, communication accessibility and inclusive design) affects the education of Students with Disabilities with a correlation coefficient of 0.874 and $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This means that the education of students can be optimised by witty manipulation of all forms of accessibility to the learning environment.

Secondly, the statistics further reveal that students' safety and security on campus influences the Education of Students with Disabilities by 56.5 per cent, with a $p\text{-value}$ less than 0.05. If students' safety and security are well harnessed, students with disabilities will learn more adequately. Also, Inclusive Infrastructure within the school system significantly influences the education of students with disabilities. Putting in place inclusive infrastructure significantly enhances students' integration in the teaching and learning processes.

Summary of Findings

The research sought to find out the experiences and challenges faced by students with disabilities at the University of Bamenda. The following are some of the key findings that emerged from the analysis:

- Accessibility for disabled persons significantly influences the education of students with disabilities at the University of Bamenda by 87.4 per cent.
- Safety and security for the disabled persons significantly affects the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda by 56.6 per cent.
- The use of inclusive infrastructure for disabled persons significantly influences the education of students with disabilities at the University of Bamenda by 59.9 per cent.

Interviews

Accessibility challenges

Interviewer: What are the various challenges regarding your access to school facilities

Interviewee: "Some of the classrooms are upstairs and will require blind people like us to climb the stairs which is very difficult without guidance".

Interviewee: "It's not easy for us to use toilet facilities because we as blind people do not see well. You realise that some classrooms do not have functional lighting systems. It becomes difficult to see in darkness. If I am not sitting, I won't be able to see the board".

Interviewee: "I am physically challenged and find it difficult to attend classes upstairs and use school toilets also. It's always difficult to enter most classrooms without help from classmates because my wheelchair cannot go through"

Interviewee: "We blind people are always exempted from doing mathematics and statistics because of our condition and nothing has been done to solve the issue"

Interviewer: What are the security challenges you face on campus as students?

Interviewee: "Our safety on campus is short-lived because when there is shooting from the armed boys, we cannot run. This makes fear for becoming victims"

Interviewee: "We always need a guide to help us move most of the time"

Interviewee: "Due to our incapacity to see, we often excluded from many pedagogic activities that require sight"

Interviewer: In your own opinion, is the infrastructure Inclusive? If yes/no, why?

Interviewee: "The infrastructures on campus are not inclusive because in most areas where we are supposed to survive, we have to ask for help"

Interviewee: "if as a physically challenged person, you can use the toilet comfortably, you cannot say there is inclusiveness"

Discussion

The findings of the study in the first hypothesis highlight that accessibility for disabled persons has a significant influence on the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, as it accounts for 87.4 per cent of the variations in their educational outcomes. This indicates that accessibility is an important factor in the university

as it plays a crucial role in determining the academic success of students with disabilities. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research of Holloway (2001) and Fuller et al. (2004), who buttressed that accessibility is a critical factor in promoting the inclusion and success of students with disabilities in higher education. The findings also tally with those of Opoku et al. (2016), who found that inclusive school infrastructure requires not only physical modifications but ongoing maintenance and training of stakeholders. This is true because on the ground, a lot more has to be done in order to render the teaching environment inclusive. It is based on this that Teboh (2015) noted that in Bamenda, less than 15 per cent of the educational institutions are lacking in ramps, and equally lack accessible toilets; and teachers equally reported that students with disabilities often missed lectures due to inaccessible environments. Based on the social model of inclusive education, disabilities are created by the barriers created by the educational system. If these barriers are removed, inclusive education will be possible.

Physical accessibility can be enhanced with the availability and adequacy of accessible infrastructure, such as ramps, elevators, and adapted classrooms, that ease the participation of students with disabilities in different academic activities.

Providing accommodations and support, such as sign language interpreters, Braille materials, and assistive technology, could help students with disabilities feel integrated in mainstream classrooms and consequently learn appropriately. The prioritisation of accessibility and promotion of inclusive practices would help the university remove all fabricated barriers to create a more equitable and supportive learning environment for all.

The findings of the study in the second hypothesis ascertained that the safety and security of disabled persons is a critical determinant of education for students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda by 56.6 per cent. It therefore means that the safety and security level on campus determines the academic performance of students with disabilities.

These findings are in line with prior research, demonstrating that safety and security are critical for enhancing inclusion and student success for students

with disabilities (Astin, 1993; National Centre for Education Statistics, 2019). Students with a disability often encounter specific campus safety and security concerns regarding inaccessible emergency evacuation procedures, lack of accessible transportation options, and an increased vulnerability to harassment and violence (American Council on Education, 2019).

The 56.6 per cent influence of safety and security on education demonstrates that there is a need for improving the current state of safety and security at the university, as far as students with disabilities are concerned. This may be because of a lack of awareness, resources, or policies and procedures (UNESCO, 2019). The study's findings highlight the critical importance of safety and security in promoting the education of students with disabilities in the University of Bamenda, and by prioritising safety and security, the university can help to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

The results of this study reveal that there is a significant relationship between inclusive infrastructure regarding disabled students' education and the education of students with disabilities. This means that available inclusive infrastructure, such as buildings, classrooms, and facilities, may be highly contributory to guarantee the academic success of students with disabilities.

The findings from this study corroborate earlier research that inclusive infrastructure is key in making the learning environment conducive and supportive for students with disabilities. This has also been confirmed by UNESCO (2019) and the National Centre for Education Statistics (2019), who indicated that improved accessibility to buildings, classrooms, and facilities can enable students with disabilities to fully participate in academic activities and use resources and services. The study's findings highlight the critical importance of inclusive infrastructure in promoting the education of students with disabilities. If inclusive infrastructures are rendered more adequate in the university, an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students will be harnessed, as it will not break down social barriers and allow students with and without disability to interact socially, but will also help them to equitably engage in active academic activities. For

this to be possible, the university has to nurture the practice of universal design as suggested by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The findings of the study suggest that accessibility, safety, security, and inclusive infrastructure significantly influence the education of learners with disabilities in the University of Bamenda. These factors are critical components of an inclusive learning environment that can promote academic success and social inclusion for students with disabilities.

Recommendations: Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The university should conduct a safety audit to identify areas of risk and develop strategies to mitigate them. The university should conduct an audit of its infrastructure to identify areas that need improvement.
2. The university should prioritise the safety and security of students with disabilities, recognising that it is a critical factor in their academic success.
3. The university should develop policies and procedures that address the unique safety and security needs of students with disabilities.
4. The university should develop a plan to improve inclusive infrastructure, including accessible buildings, classrooms, and facilities. The university should prioritise the development of accessible infrastructure, including physical facilities and academic accommodations. Faculty and staff should be trained to promote inclusive practices, including the use of accessible materials and technologies.
5. The university should provide support services, such as counselling and academic advising, to help students with disabilities succeed academically.

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