

Social Inclusion in Higher Institutions: The Plights of Students with Disabilities in Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria

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Abstract : The term social inclusion refers to a process by which those disadvantaged in society can have access to fully participate in education like others. Student with special needs are expected to learn along with their peers within the some educational institutions which provide adequate access for all. There for, the study sort to understand the typical ways in which students with disabilities (SWD) were denied from fully participating as students in Kaduna Polytechnic. In doing this, two (2) objectives and research questions were raised. Firstly, to explore the attitudes of others towards students with disabilities in the institutions and secondly, to ascertain the extent of social participation and physical accessibility for students with disabilities (SWD) while in the institutions. Based on the objectives the paper postulated the research questions: what are the attitudes of management, teachers, and students towards students with special need in Kaduna Polytechnic and to what extent did the students with disabilities experience social participation and physical accessibility within Kaduna Polytechnic school environment? The study area was Kaduna Polytechnic. The study engaged the interview for the data collected which were transcribed and analyzed by thematic coding. The findings were categorized under themes, sub-themes, and codes. The findings revealed that the perception, behavior, and association experiences of students with disabilities within Kaduna Polytechnic were not encouraging. Their experiences were characterized by negative attitudes, feelings of rejection, neglect, and bullying. Data generated on social participation indicated that 71% of the respondents believed that learning, school activities, recreations, and student politics between SWD and the other student were in the direction of low / very low. All the respondents, particularly students with blindness and physical challenges faced difficulty with environmental and physical access above all within the school environment, classroom, walkways and ramps, Also, directions were none existent in most departments with physical access to classrooms, toilets, cafeterias, and school shops absent or very low (71% and 29% of the respondents). The conclusion was that the physical barriers limited the possibilities of social participation of SWD. The paper made some recommendations such as mass public enlightenment on radio and television to change the perception of society about people with disability. Also, the federal, state, and local governments enact building acts for fresh builders and adopted measures and time frames for existing public buildings to be made accessible for people with disabilities. All stakeholders should ensure that the five (5) percent budget set aside by State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and/or Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) for the provision of specialized equipment and facilities for the student with special needs should be used prudently spent and monitored by the board.cm.

Keywords : social inclusion, students with disability, social participation, environmental/physical access

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