

## **Management of Students with Special Needs in Niger State College of Education Minna**

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### ***Abstract***

*This study investigates the management of students with special needs in the College of Education Minna. The primary objective of this research is to assess the effectiveness of the College's strategies in accommodating and supporting students with special needs in their pursuit of higher education. The respondents for this study include students with special needs, faculty members, and administrators at the College of Education Minna. Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and document analysis to gain comprehensive insights into the experiences, challenges, and perceptions of these stakeholders. The findings of this study reveal that the College of Education, Minna has made significant strides in creating an inclusive environment for students with special needs. The institution has developed accessible infrastructure, provided Departmental training on inclusive teaching methods, and established academic and emotional support services. Students with special needs reported a sense of belonging and increased academic performance due to these initiatives. Based on the findings, this study recommends further investments in accessibility infrastructure, ongoing training for staff on inclusive teaching practices, and the expansion of support services. Additionally, the College should intensify awareness campaigns to foster a culture of inclusion among all stakeholders. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of inclusive education in higher institutions and highlights the positive efforts of the College of Education, Minna.*

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**Keywords:** *Management, Special needs, Planning, Implementation*

## Introduction

**M**anagement refers to control of persons and properties that need repositioning a wider variety of knowledge, skills and techniques, it is a technique the administrator uses to keeps students with special education needs organised, orderly, focused on task and academically productive within and outside the school community (Abagu, 2021). Management is the act of running and controlling an institution, business or similar organisation. It also means people who run and control an institution or similar organisation. Student management refers to the administration of student in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategise, and implement structures to execute and control the education system. Management of students with special needs is a very challenging one; it involves planning, organising, implementing, supervising, and evaluating the affairs of the target group. The role of school administrators in management of students with special needs is to ensure success of all learners as well as full acceptance of other members within the inclusive school setting and the community at large (Abagu, 2021)..

Inclusive education is a growing trend in today's educational pedagogy. It is the growing trend all over the world. In some part of Nigerian education, inclusive education is embodied in inclusive school settings which are one of the best practices in the world today for students with special learning needs out of special school. An inclusive school is the school that organises inclusive education system. Niger State College of Education, Minna is an example if inclusive schools, because it houses both regular students and students with special learning needs like the hearing impaired and the visual impaired. Authors give definition of inclusive education in various forms and this varies from country to country (Sambo & Sunday 2021).

Inclusive education in a general term connotes an effort to overcome the discrimination of different students both because of impairment, sociocultural and economic differences (Muhammad, Nasiru, Garba, & Iliyasu, 2021). In inclusive education system, every individual both regular students or students with disabilities learn together in the same school environment only that students with disabilities get supportive education services to help them meet up some of their challenges. Inclusive education is characterised by value for all children, acknowledges every child's right to education, embraces diversity, provides least restrictive learning opportunity, encourages student participation, addresses individual student needs within the same classroom, aims to boost self-confidence in children, promotes collaborative teaching, has a responsive approach to student needs, seating arrangements allow students to interact with one another, uses assistive technology, encourages parent involvement (Priyanka, 2022). Inclusive education system has a positive impact on several aspects of learner's life, and as well as social development, such as socialisation, optimal learning outcomes. It also has positive influence on the life of regular students. By and large, inclusive education is a social learning tool which introduces students to areas of special needs (Priyanka, 2022). Therefore, Nigerian inclusive schools must make adjustments in school management.

Most important component in the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria is student management, more especially student with special education needs. Yusuf and

Yeager (2011) lament that student management are still fundamental problems such as the limited admission for students with special needs, the agitation by special educators for early diagnosis, identification and assessment are not yet pass into law. Diagnosis and assessment allows early identification and early identification aids early intervention. Early intervention reduces the number of students with special needs. Diagnosis is the process of determining the root causes of disability with a view of knowing how intending or impending disability can be ameliorated using special education intervention (Zakariyah, 2021). Student management in inclusive schools includes and not limited to: student admission (the implementation of the identification and assessment), student placement, tutoring programmes and special services for students, and evaluation for students with special needs (Ayinde, 2021). Related to the implementation of inclusive school management of student with special education needs in Nigeria, not much relevant work so far has been done to examine student with special education needs management in inclusive schools in Nigeria, but the works of Kaplan, Lewis and Mumba (2007) Dewi, Ekadinata, Johana, Khairuddin and Gradstein (2008) discussed the management of students with special needs in inclusive school in Indonesia. In Nigeria, Ukpabio (2022) and Abagu (2021) duell on related areas which include assessment, management, and administration innovative for inclusive education in Nigeria secondary schools and management and implementation of the policy on special education respectively, but much was not discussed on management of students with special education needs which is the title of this work. That prompts the present researchers to go into this work in Niger state college of education.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The management of students with special needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna presents a multifaceted challenge that requires urgent attention. Despite legislative mandates and international conventions advocating for inclusive education, there exists a significant gap in effectively catering to the unique needs of these students. The problem encompasses several facets, including inadequate resources, limited specialised training for educators, insufficient infrastructure, and a lack of comprehensive policies and support systems. This results in suboptimal educational experiences for students with special needs, hindering their overall development and potential. Addressing these issues is essential to promote inclusivity, equity, and quality education within the institution, ultimately ensuring the holistic growth of all students.

Learners with special needs may require accommodations, or in other words, assistance or management in meeting their needs and they may face some barriers while interacting with content, other learners, instructors and the system and require extra support for them (Genc & Kocdar, 2020). It would not be useful to organise support services without considering the learner's characteristics (Fiege, 2010). This is what prompted the study on the management of students with special needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to ascertain the implementation of management of student with

special education needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna, thus, the study found out: The Planning of student with special education needs, supervising of student with special education needs and evaluating the progress of student with special education needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna.

### **Research Questions**

To ascertain the implementation of management of student with special education needs in Niger State College of Education, the following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. How are academic activities of students with special education needs in College of Education Minna planned?
2. How are students with special education needs in College of Education, Minna supervised?
3. How is progress of students with special education needs in College of Education, Minna evaluated?

### **Methodology**

This research used a qualitative approach, with descriptive survey type which is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing conditions, prevailing practices and ongoing process of the current happening in the college and the entire state. Unstructured interview and documents was used as an instrument to collect data from the students. Furthermore, this college has been implementing management of student with special education needs for more than seventeen years. This research was conducted for one month starting from January 13, 2023 to February 18, 2023. The study covered NCE I to NCE III of 2022/2023 academic session of Special Education department, Niger state College of Education, Minna, Nigeria.

### **Result and Discussion**

The results of the research are obtained from data analysis after validation, and also the result of data condensation from all research subjects through the three techniques of data collection that is: observation, interview, and documentation. In brief, the results of the study based on the aspect of student's management and supporting an inhibiting factor in the implementation of student's management are shown in Table 1.

**Table I:** Result of the Research

S/N	Aspects of Student Management	Results
1	Planning	Student management planning was done through forming new students reception team involving special education teacher, also prepared special forms need to be filled by parents of students with special needs.
2	Supervising	A brief, non-formal discussion with parents and special education teachers
3	Evaluating	Monthly activity reports to the Dean School of Education, evaluation with the Head of Department, and discussion with some parents at least once each semester.

*Source: Field Survey (2023)*

Based on the data in Table 1, it can be seen that planning aspect on student management was conducted by forming team for new student's registration involving special education teachers, as well as setting up a special form that contains the identity of the student, physical condition, birth history, developmental history, education history, history of treatment, as well as data of parents and family. The formation of the team for new student's registration involving special education lecturers is good enough but should be able to involve other experts such as psychologists, guidance counselors and doctors, to add the necessary information in the making of special programs for students (Eisenman, Pleet, Wandry, & McGinley, 2011). Also, special form is appropriate and meets the criteria to obtain preliminary information on students with special needs, as stated by Kurth and MasterGeorge (2010) that in general, the data that should be known about students with special education needs when registering is the developmental history and services received. The aspect of student management organisation has been executed well because the school is already holding determination for class service for each student with special needs through the process of discussion.

Meanwhile, the supervision aspect has also been good because it involves many people such as parents, resource room attendants/specialist, as well as special education teachers/lecturers. As explained by Mitiku, Alemu and Mengsit (2021) that it is important to monitor continuously the implementation of student management in the college. Aspects of evaluation of student management in the college are well enough, as evaluated by various parties ranging from the school board, provost, and parent. This is in line with the opinions of Dymond, Chun, Kim and Renzaglia (2013), which reveal the importance of individual and team evaluation by evaluating at least monthly, and collaborating with other factor supporting the implementation of student management in inclusive schools.

## **Conclusion**

The management of students with special needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna, is a topic of paramount importance in the field of education. Ensuring the inclusive education of students with special needs is not only a legal obligation but also a moral imperative that reflects the commitment of the institution to equal opportunities for all. Firstly, the college needs to establish a robust support system for students with special needs. This includes identifying their specific needs, providing necessary accommodations, and offering professional guidance and counseling. This will create an environment where students with disabilities can thrive academically and socially.

Furthermore, staff should receive regular training and workshops on inclusive teaching methods and strategies. This will enable them to adapt their teaching styles to accommodate diverse learning needs effectively. Collaboration between special education professionals and mainstream educators should be encouraged to share expertise and best practices. Additionally, physical infrastructure and facilities should be made accessible to all students. This includes ramps, elevators, and assistive technology, ensuring that students with mobility impairments or sensory disabilities can navigate the campus without hindrance.

Moreover, the college should foster an inclusive and supportive culture among students. Peer mentoring programs can be established to facilitate social integration and combat stigmatisation. In conclusion, managing students with special needs in Niger State College of Education, Minna, requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses academic, social, and physical aspects. By prioritising inclusion, the college can contribute to the development of a more equitable and empowered society while fulfilling its educational mission. Furthermore, supporting factors in the implementation of student management are optimal support from various parties and inclusive culture that has been developed well. Meanwhile, support from parents is highly paramount. The findings that need to be addressed are how the effective parent roles in the implementation of student management in the college as well as a model to improve the knowledge and skills of special education lecturers in applying student management in the class and the college at large.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Government should be encouraged towards planning adequately on the implementation of disabilities policies across the three tiers to reawaken placing due attention to students with special education needs.
2. There is need for parents to lay more emphasis on their roles to supervise in the implementation of management styles the school suggest for them.
3. Parents should put more effort on non-formal discussion with resource room specialists and special education teachers for the benefit of their wards.
4. Monthly activity reports on the evaluation with special education teachers, resource

room specialist be improved from monthly to at least twice a week or three times in two months.

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