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EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF LAFIA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study investigated the educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia, focusing on their counseling requirements to enhance academic performance.

Purpose: The primary purpose was to identify counselling needs and assess the accessibility and awareness of counselling services available to these students.

Methodology: A survey research design was employed, conducted in the Department of Special Needs Education. The study involved a population of 20 students with various disabilities, including 12 hearing impaired, 5 visually impaired, 1 with a learning disability, 1 amputee and 1 with cerebral palsy. A self-designed instrument titled Educational Counselling Needs and Students with Disabilities (ECNSD) was utilized for data collection. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 26.0, applying percentage and frequency for demographic information and descriptive statistics (mean) for research questions.

Results: The findings revealed that students required counselling on tailored learning strategies and accommodations. There was a lack of awareness regarding available counselling services and the physical structures for these services were often inaccessible. Communication barriers were noted, particularly for students with hearing impairment when services were not provided in their preferred language.

Conclusion: The study highlighted the urgent need for improved educational counseling services for students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia, emphasizing that current services are inadequate and must overcome significant barriers to support student success effectively.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the government improve the accessibility of physical structures and resources for counselling services. University counsellors should receive training to better understand and address the unique needs of students with disabilities effectively.

Keywords: Educational Counselling, Guidance, Inclusive education and Students with disabilities



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This study on educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia benefits students with disabilities, educational counsellors, and University management. It provides insights into counselling needs, improving support services and enhancing academic success and personal growth for students with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

In particular, in an inclusive setting utilizing psychological theories and practices, societies that seek to provide education for everyone must focus on addressing challenges linked to learner diversity, learning disparities, and children and teenagers who are at risk. This is because education produces people who are equipped with the right knowledge and abilities to assist society in both ordinary and extraordinary ways. Therefore, in order to educate people in an environment that is equal to one another and free from discrimination, inclusive education is necessary. Chia, Suwa, and Bakhalpup (2023) see inclusive education as a novel way to educate children with disabilities with other students under one roof. It aims to maximize each student's potential by bringing all children together into a single classroom and community, regardless of their skills and shortcomings in any given area. Stated differently, inclusive education is the process of recognizing and meeting the diversity of needs of all students by promoting their involvement in learning, communities, and cultures while decreasing their marginalization within the educational system (Oluka & Egbo, 2014). It also means integrating a child unconditionally, regardless of the type and degree of their impairment, into the mainstream school system. According to Nwamuo and Ekwe (2015), students with special needs should be accommodated in regular classes in an inclusive setting, with counsellors offering support to help them develop their social skills and advocate for themselves, in order for the Education for All project to flourish.

Services for educational counseling have traditionally been associated with assistance provided to a person or group of individuals. In this environment, a person with professional training helps individuals with decision-

making, coping mechanisms, and learning adjustment (Adeyemo & Akinlabi, 2021). It also involves helping individuals or groups develop a sense of self and a set of present- and future-oriented objectives and values. John (2015) defines educational counseling services as a collection of formalized educational programs created by the school to help students develop the self-awareness or self-understanding that is essential to achieving their maximum potential for self-actualization and self-knowledge. These technical services are used to address issues that students have in the areas of academics, careers, relationships, and society at large. Activities designed to assist kids in discovering their interests and skills are called guidance services. These services provide programmes in school with the maximum growth and development of each student which can facilitate psycho-emotional development, academic and career adjustment, promoting social skills, leadership competencies, and generating data, relevant to instruction and learning.

Academic achievement is improved and a good attitude toward schoolwork and learning is fostered via guidance services. Oluka and Okorie (2014) define counseling as a one-on-one, private conversation or interview between a person who needs help with emotional, social, mental, physical, or career issues and a licensed counselor. It can also be viewed as a service that aids people in finding solutions to their difficulties and developing coping mechanisms for difficult circumstances. Counseling, in the opinion of Akinbode and Odedije (2023), is a supportive relationship between the counselor and the counselee. Helping the counselee appropriately acclimate to family, school, peer relationships, and society at large is the main goal. Thus, in order to address the issues and difficulties that students

with disabilities confront, special education schools all over the world need to provide counseling services.

The term disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) includes persons who satisfy any one of these three criteria: (1) has an impairment that substantially affects major life activities; (2) has a past or current record that labels a person as having a disability; or (3) is perceived as disabled (e.g., has an abnormality or disfigurement, even if it does not affect functional ability). According to Olusola (2013) students with disabilities are those who have difficulties in realizing their full potential; their emotional, physical, social or intellectual performance falls below or rises above that of others, the difference may be related to physical, cognitive, emotional psycho-social factor. He also stated that, persons with disabilities includes those with hearing impairment, gifted/talented, visual, speech and language impairment. Adeyemo and Akinlabi (2021) asserts that persons with disabilities refer to those with visual auditory, physical impairment the mentally challenged and the learning disabled.

In inclusive environments, students with disabilities exhibit a number of unique traits that frequently mark them apart from their peers without impairments. Features including anxiousness, internalized wrath, externalized hostility, emotions of inadequacy, and shock are listed by Adeyemo and Akinlabi (2021). Because of this, individuals may frequently exhibit signs of frustration, withdrawal, isolation, hyperactivity, and insulting behaviour toward others, particularly when they do not get their way. For them to fit in and lead happy lives, counseling is necessary. Olaniyan and Suleiman (2022) state that a variety of challenges and impediments, such as prejudice, non-acceptance, and stereotypical thinking, are commonly faced by children with impairments. Sometimes these kids feel more than their fair share of frustration and struggle when trying to figure out the problems that arise with day-to-day life activities. Children with impairments frequently

suffer from persistent hopelessness brought on by anxiety and depression. They occasionally experience issues at school with performance and access, which may or may not be connected to their handicap. Furthermore, they demonstrate a delayed development of a self-concept that might impact an individual's self-worth and perception of oneself as unintelligent, flawed, feeble, and susceptible.

The major issue of concern is that, students with disabilities are facing challenges in their life involving academic/vocational, persona-social and psychological. Students with disabilities need counselling to resolve their problems. According to Akinbode and Odedije (2023), this can be done through the provision of appropriate school guidance services in special educational schools. People with disabilities have been isolated from mainstream school practices as well as economic and social activities. Likewise, several people with sensory impairments as well as physical disabilities or challenges have been excluded from the society because of their perceived lack of performance, at times, segregation of exceptional children or people with special needs had led to harsh social practices like unfairly treatment and generally ridiculed (Olaniyan & Suleiman, 2022).

Access to sufficient educational counseling services remains a major barrier for Nigerian students with disabilities, even in the face of notable advancements in the promotion of inclusive education. The underperformance of students with disabilities in the classroom, their low self-esteem, and their restricted social integration are all consequences of these inadequate services, which worsen their marginalization. There is frequently a disconnect between policy objectives and actual implementation because the counselling frameworks now in place in Nigerian educational institutions are often inadequate to handle the needs of these students.

The Federal University of Lafia, established in 2010, has made efforts to create an inclusive environment for all students, including those with disabilities.

However, a significant gap exists in the educational counselling services provided to students with disabilities. Despite the university's best efforts, students with disabilities face numerous challenges in accessing counselling services that cater to their specific needs. One of the major concerns is the inadequacy of educational counselling services. Students with disabilities require specialized learning strategies and accommodations, which are not being adequately addressed. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of qualified counsellors who are equipped to support students with diverse disabilities. The physical spaces designated for counselling are also a concern. They are often inaccessible, discouraging students with disabilities from seeking help. Many students are not even aware of the existence of counselling services, exacerbating their struggles. Communication barriers are another significant issue. Students with hearing impairment, for instance, frequently encounter difficulties interacting with people who do not use sign language or total communication methods. Moreover, the limited number of sign language interpreters on campus cannot cater to all students with hearing impairment.

Students with cerebral palsy also face challenges in communicating their educational needs, as they are often unaware of the availability of educational counsellors. The limited funding for disability services further restricts the resources necessary for effective service delivery. As a result, students with disabilities often feel frustrated, isolated and marginalized. Discriminatory attitudes and stigma surrounding disabilities perpetuate a hostile environment, hindering academic achievement and personal growth. This study aims to investigate and address these pressing concerns, ensuring that students with disabilities receive the necessary support to succeed in their educational pursuits in Federal University of Lafia.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria officially joined the international inclusive education movement in 1981, the year of the

disabled. Unfortunately, we observe that many students in inclusive environments, such as Federal University of Lafia, have various challenges in the classroom, living quarters, and community at large. The government's failure to provide an inclusive atmosphere that is enabling for disabled has resulted in stigma, compassion, and rejection for students with disabilities attending inclusive schools. As a result, despite the institution's having trained instructors, counselors, and other staff members, students usually display symptoms of passivity, disengagement, and isolation during class activities. Their academic performance is usually affected by these behaviors in comparison to their classmates in the same classroom.

In addition, students with disabilities do not yet recognize the need for educational counseling services in relation to meeting their counseling needs. The researchers noted that Federal University of Lafia does not have a formal guidance and counseling center established for the purpose of meeting the counseling needs of students with disabilities (where they are established, they exist only in name). The researchers also discovered that a number of the institution's physically fit instructors and other staff members frequently approach students with special needs as though they don't have any unique difficulties. Some of them typically feel sorry for them, which irritates them. It could be that the counselors lack the necessary skills to meet the needs of this group and have a limited understanding of approaches (i.e., attitudes, values, and beliefs), which prevents them from creating suitable intervention programs for kids with disabilities.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine the educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify the specific educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia

2. Assess the current state of counselling services available to students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia
3. Determine the barriers faced by students with disabilities in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are posed to guide this study: -

1. What are the specific educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia?
2. What is the current state of counselling services available to students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia?
3. What barriers do students with disabilities face in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia?

METHODOLOGY

Design

The study employed a survey research design. The descriptive survey design was the most appropriate choice for this study, enabling the researchers to gather valuable information about the educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in the Department of Special Needs Education, Federal University of Lafia.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of twenty (20) students with disabilities from levels 100 to 400 of the Department of Special Needs Education. This number included 12 students with hearing impairment, 5 with visual impairment, 1 with learning disability, amputee and cerebral palsy each in the Department. The total population of the study was used as the sample size is typically small. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents. This sampling technique was used because, the department fit into the sampling criteria of being a "Special department" that educates both students with disabilities and those without disabilities. This sampling

approach was deemed right because the nature of the students' condition is such that they need educational counselling to excel like their normal counterparts.

Instrument for Data Collection

Self-designed questionnaire titled "Educational Counselling Needs of Students with Disabilities (ECNSD)" was used as instrument of the study. Items on the instrument were derived from literature and based on the research questions. The questionnaire was a four-point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly agree (4 points), agree (3 points), disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 point). The instrument was pilot-tested in Special School, Lafia. For face validity, the instrument was given to two experts in the area of study to establish if they captured what the study was intended to do. The instrument was then corrected by incorporating the views of these experts. In the pilot-testing, 20 staff of students with disabilities were engaged for the questionnaire. The pilot testing was done purposely to fine-tune the instrument in order to improve its reliability. After the pilot study it was possible to determine which researchers' made items students with disabilities answered with ease and which one they found confusing. The items found confusing were restructured to reduce the ambiguity and therefore enhanced the suitability and reliability of the study. Split-half approach was then employed in order to establish the level of reliability which was computed using Cronbach Alpha. A coefficient of 0.67 was found for the questionnaire making it reliable for use.

Procedure for Data Collection

On the day of actual collection after data, the researcher self-administered the questionnaires to the students and collected them after a period of one week.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected using the instrument (ECNSD) was analysed using the SPSS 26.0 version. The demographic information of the respondents were analyzed using percentage and frequency

while research questions were answered using descriptive statistics (mean). For the interpretation of the results in Tables 2, 3 and 4, a mean of 2.50 and above is an indication that an item was accepted while a mean score of less than 2.50 is an indication that an item was rejected by the respondents.

In accordance with research ethics, permission was sought from relevant gate-keeper, before data collection commenced in the Department. Letter was sent to the Head of Department, Special Needs Education, Federal University of Lafia for approval.

RESULTS

Ethical Considerations

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	7	35
Female	13	65
Level		
100L	7	35
200L	4	20
300L	6	30
400L	3	15
Type of Disability		
Hearing impairment	12	60
Visual impairment	5	25
Learning disability	1	5
Amputee	1	5
Cerebral palsy	1	5
Total	20	100

Table 1 indicated that 7 respondents representing 35% are male while 13 respondents representing 65% are female. The information regarding the level of the respondents revealed that 7 respondents representing 35% are in 100L, 4 respondents representing 20% are in 200L, 6 respondents representing 30% are in 300L while 3 respondents representing 15% are in 400L. The table further shows that the majority (60%) respondents are hearing impaired, followed by visual impairment (25%), and smaller 5% with learning disabilities, amputation and cerebral palsy. This implies that the demographic

characteristics of students with disabilities is relevant for providing effective educational counselling services in Federal University of Lafia, allowing educational counsellors to tailor their support services and accommodations to meet the unique needs of each group, ensuring effective support and promoting academic success.

Research Question 1: What are the specific educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia?

Table 2: Educational Needs of Students with Disabilities in Federal University of Lafia

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}
1	I need counselling on tailored learning strategies and accommodations to enhance my academic performance	8	3	4	5	2.60
2	I need counselling to manage my feelings of isolation, anxiety and frustration related to my disability	9	5	3	3	3.30
3	I need guidance in interpersonal skills to improve interactions with my peers and lecturers	9	5	4	2	3.10
4	I need counselling in exploring and planning my career options suitable to my disability and interest	10	3	3	4	3.10
5	I need techniques to handle stress, build resilience and adapt to challenges related to my disabilities	4	9	3	4	2.80

The data in table 2 shows that virtually all the items (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) listed were accepted as the educational counselling needs of students with disabilities having their mean scores greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This means that students with disabilities require emotional and social support to manage their feelings of isolation, anxiety, and frustration related to their disability, with a mean score of 3.30. They also need guidance in interpersonal skills to improve interactions with their peers and lecturers, with a mean score of 3.10. Additionally, they require techniques to handle stress, build resilience, and adapt to challenges related to their disabilities, with a mean score of 2.80. In terms of academic and

career support, students with disabilities need counselling on tailored learning strategies and accommodations to enhance their academic performance, with a mean score of 2.60. They also require counselling in exploring and planning their career options suitable to their disability and interest, with a mean score of 3.10. This signified that, when the educational needs of are understood, the university has a better opportunity to provide comprehensive support services that address the emotional, social, academic, and career needs of students with disabilities.

Research Question 2: What is the current state of counselling services available to students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia?

Table 3: The current state of counselling services available to students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}
1	There is lack of awareness and understanding of available counselling services for students with disabilities	11	3	3	3	3.40
2	The physical structures and offices for counselling services are not accessible to students with disability	6	7	5	2	2.90
3	The counsellors lack appropriate knowledge and understanding of the needs and characteristics of students with disabilities	9	4	4	3	3.50
4	The counsellors are well trained to contribute to the academic, career and performance	3	3	5	9	2.45
5	The counselling centers lack sufficient resources to provide counselling supports to students with disabilities	8	6	4	2	3.00

The data in table 3 indicates that four items on the current state of counselling services in Federal University of Lafia were accepted by the

respondents while one was rejected. The four items (1, 2, 3 and 5) with mean scores (3.40; 2.90; 3.50 and 3.00) were above 2.50 which is the benchmark for

accepting any item while one item (4) with a mean (2.45) was below 2.50. The table signified that the current state of counselling services available to students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia is inadequate. The lack of awareness, inaccessible physical structures, and lack of knowledge among counsellors hinder the provision of effective counselling services. However,

counsellors are well-trained, the lack of resources further exacerbates the challenges.

Research Question 3: What barriers do students with disabilities face in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia?

Table 4: Barriers students with disabilities face in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}
1	I fear of being judged or labeled negatively	8	4	4	4	2.80
2	I am unaware of the available counselling services and how to access them	11	3	3	3	3.40
3	I am worried about privacy and information being shared without my consent	11	5	4	-	3.60
4	I have difficulty in understanding or communication especially when the counselling services are not provided in my language (sign language)	7	5	4	4	2.50
5	I have concern that seeking help might lead to negative consequences such as academic or social repercussions	2	5	5	8	2.47

Table 4 reveals the barriers students with disabilities face in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia as four items (1, 2, 3, and 4) had mean scores (2.80; 2.40; 3.60 and 2.50) above the criterion score (2.50) which were accepted while item 5 with mean score of 2.47 below the criterion mean was rejected by the respondents. This indicates that the barriers to accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia are multifaceted and significant. Students with disabilities face concerns related to stigma, awareness, privacy, communication, and potential negative consequences. These barriers hinder them from seeking much-needed support, exacerbating their academic and personal challenges. However, seeking help cannot cause negative consequences on their academic activities and social interaction.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings determined the educational counselling needs of students with disabilities in Federal University of Lafia. It showed that these students require counselling regarding specialized learning strategies and accommodations

in order to improve their academic performance; counselling regarding the management of feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and frustration associated with their disabilities; counseling regarding guidance in interpersonal skills in order to improve interactions with peers and instructors; and counseling regarding the exploration and planning of career options that are appropriate for their disability and interests. They also need techniques to handle stress, build resilience and adapt to challenges related to their disabilities. The results are consistent with Olaniyan and Suleiman's (2022) assertion that children with impairments often face a plethora of challenges and barriers, such as discrimination, non-acceptance, and stereotypical thinking. These kids sometimes feel more than their fair share of irritation and struggle when trying to work through the problems that arise with day-to-day living, which is why they require counseling. They occasionally experience issues at school with performance and access, which may or may not be connected to their handicap. Kirk and Gallagher (2018) underlined the need of counseling for students with impairments, pointing out

that these students frequently confront particular difficulties that call for specialized assistance. Their investigation underscores the significance of addressing emotional and social demands alongside academic ones, which fits with the findings surrounding loneliness and anxiety. Heward (2013) talks about how important counseling is in assisting students with disabilities in learning coping mechanisms and social skills. He makes the case for the importance of counseling in these areas by pointing out how beneficial therapy can be in improving students' social and academic interactions.

The second finding assessed the current state of counselling services in Federal University of Lafia. The majority of respondents agreed that there is a lack of knowledge and comprehension regarding the counseling services that the institution offers to students with disabilities. They also concurred that the offices and physical structures housing these services are inaccessible to students with disabilities. Moreover, the majority of respondents disagreed with the statement that the counselors are well-trained to support students with disabilities in their academic, professional, and personal lives. The majority of respondents agreed that the counseling centers do not have enough resources to offer counseling supports to students with disabilities. The results corroborate that of John (2015), who argued that the counselling services given to persons with disabilities fall well short of the typical scope of general counselling. His research showed that there is a deficiency in many areas of the counselling profession in schools, including knowledge base, techniques, strategies, and treatments; there is also a lack of understanding and appreciation of certain concepts (such as attitudes, values, and beliefs). The findings of Oladele (2017), assessed the Accessibility of Counselling Services for Students with Disabilities in Nigerian Universities. It was found that providing students with disabilities with appropriate counselling services is hampered by physical hurdles, insufficient resources and a shortage of qualified counsellors

with little or no knowledge of special education services. This finding contradicts with Nwachukwu (2020) who affirmed that counsellors in Nigerian universities have received sufficient training to support students with disabilities and the counselling services they provide are successful in helping these students advance their academic, professional and personal goals.

The study also examined the barriers students with disabilities face in accessing counselling services in Federal University of Lafia. The majority of respondents, according to the research, fear being negatively assessed or tagged. They don't know where to find counselling services or how to use them. The majority of respondents, according to the data, are concerned about their privacy and information being shared without their permission. Additionally, individuals struggle with comprehension and communication, particularly when counselling services are not offered in sign language. Additionally, the results showed that the respondents disagreed with the notion that asking for assistance could have unfavourable effects like consequences in school or in social situations. When it comes to receiving counselling services in higher education institutions in Nigeria, students with impairments have considerable obstacles. According to a study by Oladipo (2018), these students frequently don't know about counselling options that are available to them and fear being stigmatized. According to this research, Nigerian educational institutions must remove these obstacles in order to guarantee that students with disabilities get the assistance they need. However, Bam, Kriger and Cottle's (2017) study in South Africa discovered that there aren't many substantial obstacles for students with disabilities attending postsecondary educational institutions to obtain counselling services. Furthermore, these students did not find privacy issues to be very problematic. This research raises the possibility that South African educational institutions might be supporting students with disabilities in a different way to provide their unique educational needs. On the other hand,

the findings of Jones and Johnson (2019) Australia revealed that students with impairments are typically satisfied with the counselling services they get and do not face major obstacles when trying to access them. According to this study, Australian educational institutions might be helping students with impairments more successfully.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the study determined Federal University of Lafia students with impairments' needs for educational counseling. These students have a great need for counseling, which is essential to their successful education and growth. The current state of counselling services in Federal University of Lafia was also emphasized in the research. Regretfully, the institution's counselling services are currently in appalling condition and require immediate attention. The study's final section looked at the obstacles that students with disabilities must overcome in order to receive counselling services. Many students with disabilities encounter various obstacles when attempting to receive counselling services, such as unprofessionalism on the part of the counsellors to the needs of these students, unfavourable attitudes, and institutional constraints. To succeed, educational counselling services are necessary for students with disabilities. Therefore, the university must raise awareness among students with disabilities, address institutional barriers, ensure that counsellors are competent and professional and provide ongoing training for both university staff and counsellors in order to enhance the existing status of counselling services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Government should make available and accessible physical structures, facilities and working materials for counselling services accommodate students with disabilities in the University.
2. Counsellors in the University should be trained with the

appropriate knowledge and understanding of the needs and characteristics of students with disabilities so as to serve them effectively.

3. Students with disabilities should not look down on themselves, but rather explore their environment and potentials and make effective use of the opportunities around them.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

This research reflects the authors' opinions, not those of Federal University of Lafia. The conclusions are based on collected data and may not represent all students with impairments. The authors assume responsibility for errors and limitations and cautions against generalizing the results.

AUTHOR'S BIONOTE

Dr Adaka T Ahon holds BA(Ed), MEd and PhD all in Special Needs Education. Adaka worked with Federal College of Education (Tech), Gombe and later University of Maiduguri and presently lectures with Federal University of Lafia (FULafia) and serves as an adjunct staff of Baze University, Abuja. Adaka has attended numerous conferences and has over 80 articles published in both national and international journals to his credit. In FULafia, Adaka is HoD, Special Needs Education Dept and Deputy Director, Center for Disability Studies. Adaka is a Fellow Chartered Institute of Leadership and Educational Development.

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Chia, J.T. holds B.Ed and M.Ed, all in Special Education (Hearing Impairment) from University of Jos and Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. As a research assistant, he is passionate about promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, interpreting for the deaf community and advocating for inclusive education. His publication history includes research papers presented at high-quality local and national conferences and published in reputable journals. His research interests are disability studies, sign language interpretation, employment and inclusive education.

Authorship and Level of Contribution

The authorship of this research work is solely attributed to the researchers. The researchers take full responsibility for the entire research process, from conceptualization to writing and editing the final report. The researchers' level of contribution is 100%, encompassing all aspects of the research work. If any other individuals contributed to the research process, their contributions are not acknowledged in this statement.

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