Impacts of Societal Prejudice on Attainment of Life/Personal Goals of Physically Challenged Persons in Nigeria.

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Abstract

Physically challenged persons seems not to have found enough help from the society in underdeveloped countries. Hence, they are confronted with social constraints, which have not been given adequate attention in the literature. This study is a reaction to this problem in Nigeria. It examines reasons why the society stigmatizes physically challenged individuals, instead of helping them. Drawing on the opinions of respondents from Lagos Island and Friends of Ours Disabled Institute (FODI), Lagos, this paper reported ten reasons why the government fails to implement the UN decisions on disabled persons, in spite of the fact that Nigeria was one of the original eighty signatories to the adoption of these decisions. Relying on the data from a survey of 825 respondents, the study attempted to discover if any significant relationship exists between the societal perception of physically challenged persons and their attainment of life/personal goals. Our findings have sociological, psychological, emotional and economical implications for physically challenged persons in underdeveloped societies.

Keywords: Impacts; Societal Prejudice; Attainment of life/Personal Goals; Physically Challenged

1.0 Introduction

Prejudice is described as negative attitudes toward the members of a specific social group (New World Encyclopedia 2011). Prejudice in any form, be it racial or social, could be very destructive and costly to humanity. It could be detrimental to the enthusiastic pursuit for an improved living by the concerned persons. Braithwaite (1990) specifically asserts that it compels students, as a point of reference, to drop out of school with a failure label and prevents them from discovering their natural talents. Physically challenged individuals are not spared from this problem. They seem to be a special group of people badly affected by the menace of prejudice in underdeveloped countries. In these societies, most people believe they are useless and good for nothing, which results in their rejection, discrimination and ill-treatment (Johnstone 2004). Although the social problem of disability and ill-treatments meted out to individuals involved may not be restricted to underdeveloped countries of the world, because the level of development of countries across the globe seems not to be an antidote to disability. Cases of physically impaired persons pervade literature worldwide (Oroge 1998). Nevertheless, just 20% of them are found in the advanced industrialized societies while 80% of them reside in underdeveloped societies (Oroge 1998). Moreover, the rate or level of ill-treatment meted out to them may be different in these societies. It seems to be minimal in the former and alarming in the latter. As scholars of development, however, our focus and concern in this paper is how physically challenged persons-lame, blind, deaf etc are perceived and treated in both societies, but with more emphases on Nigeria as an underdeveloped country.

In developed countries, physically challenged persons seem to be perceived as normal human beings, who should not be excluded from the affairs of the society. Therefore, it could be very easy for them to identify their areas of potential and be fulfilled at the same time. This is because special programmes are designed to make them fulfil in life. The United States of America is a clear case in point; physical challenged persons are placed under a special consideration. Children most especially are often treated, not as children who are members of general education and whose special instructional needs can be met with scientifically based approaches, they are considered separately with unique costs-creating incentives for misidentification and academic isolation (Report of the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education 2002). Moreover, the country makes provision for adjusting financial incentives, encouraging early intervention in their predicaments, and enhancing teacher training for all of them without any disparity (Falobi and Akanbi 2009).

In underdeveloped societies of the world, the reverse is the case. Physically challenged persons are perceived as useless human beings, who are not entitled to life or reside with human race (Oroge 1998). In Nigeria, the level of ill-treatment mete out to them by the society is alarming, annoying and highly disturbing (Uzochukwu, Akpala & Onwujekwe 2004). Attitudes of the public toward them are negative and hostile (Azuatalam 2010). Most of them, more often than not, are rejected in marriage and work settings, snubbed and disgraced in the public (Falobi & Akanbi 2009). Consequently, they live in isolation from public life. They are often sighted in streets of towns and cities, as well as major express roads across the country asking for alms in order to survive. Living in such situations people with disability are prone to regret, suicide, termination of productivity and life/personal goals (Oyadongha 2011). Several cases have been recorded in Nigeria in the recent past (Enwereji & Enwereji 2008). The seriousness of these cases prompted the convergence of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 13, 2006 in New York (Ito 2010). During the summit, a great deal of work concerning the deplorable conditions of disabled persons was suggested. This includes their accessibility to education, self-empowerment and self-supporting employment etc (Picton-Howell 2010). Countries that ratified the convention are required to adopt national laws to enable persons with disabilities have equal rights to education, employment and cultural life, and also to have right to own and inherit property; not to be discriminated against in marriage etc (Ito 2010).

Unfortunately, these laws have never been enacted in Nigeria, not to talk of being implemented Falobi and Akanbi (2009), despite the fact that the country is one of the eighty original signatories to the adoption of these decisions (United Nations 2007). The inability of government to observe UN decisions has been condemned by The Nigeria National Association of the Deaf(NNAD) and other independent groups in the country (Azuatalam 2010). In-spite of the denunciation from these groups and other well-meaning Nigerians, however, nothing has been done to improve on the plights of physically challenged individuals, which keep on aggravating on advancing basis. Hence, this study examines reasons why the government fails to implement the UN decisions, considering the plight of persons involved. Moreover, the paper explored fourteen reasons why the society stigmatizes physically challenged persons and relegates them to the background. Equally very germane but yet to be sorted out is the probability of a significant relationship between social perception of physically challenged persons and attainment of life/personal goals, which has never been addressed in the literature. Therefore, the need to make up for these gaps in knowledge in area of disability in Nigeria makes this study very significant. Findings of the study would reveal specific strategies to be employed in empowering physically challenged individuals to better their lots and to ensure their contributions to national development in Nigeria.

1.2 State of knowledge on Disability

Dunlop, Shields & Silcock (1996), medical model scholars of disability view it as the restriction or lack of ability to perform activities in a manner which may be considered normal for a human being and that this could be measured in terms of capability due to impairments. This is an indication that disabled persons are medically unfit and the

major solution to their predicaments lies in experts in the field of medicine. Professional model authors such as Clapton & Fitzgerald (2007) also view disability in similar way. They claimed that disabled persons are ill and should be treated by experts, with medical prescriptions. In order words, disability is the problem of the victim and it is directly caused by disease, trauma, or other health conditions which demand professional's attention (Clapton and Fitzgerald 2007). Intense individual functional incompetency to carry out an assignment is brought to the fore in this view. This includes mental illness and physical strength. Individuals involved are not capable of engaging their brains and energy to work effectively either in work settings or personal businesses. Thus, disability can be defined as a loss or reduction of opportunities to take part in everyday life of the community on an equal level. However, there are persons with physical challenges, yet their capability to contribute to national development is not jeopardized but chances for such opportunities are often overruled due to the social belief ascribed to disability in our society. In other words, medical and professional models overlooked the role of social barriers in accounting for disability. This gap in knowledge is filled by the social model approach, which perceives disability as the social consequence of having impairments (Shakespeare & Watson 2002). The consequence arises from social construction of disability by attributing negative meanings to physically challenged individuals (Blumer 1969). The society is therefore held responsible for this problem and lives of physically impaired persons can only improve if attitudinal, physical and institutional barriers are removed (Boredelon 2007). Boredelon (2007) stated that: society is a strong factor in the problem of disability, which could be real but, scholars who subscribed to social model ignored another cogent factor in disability, which is rooted in the fundamental human rights of physically impaired people as entrenched in the constitution that are often denied by the government, in their explanation of disability. Radical Democratic Model addresses this flaw. It sees the "problem" of disability as the lack of Civil Rights and unequal opportunity that consigns an individual with a disability to a life of reduced opportunity, inferiority and marginalization (McCarthy 2003). In that regard, there is nothing in disability or individuals affected other than inability of the public to open this class of people to equal opportunity with other human beings (Dembo, Leviton, & Wright, 1975). Therefore, the "solution" to disability is to operate all laws governing human conduct, without any reservation. Since the society creates the difficulties of disability Anspach (1979), the onus for change is on society (Gill et al., 2003)

However, the problem of disability can arise from the problem, which people may have contacted from external forces. Religious model views disability in that direction. James (1995) most especially, views it as a punishment inflicted upon an individual or family by an external force-satanic power. African traditional religion, according to James (1995) believes that disability bothers on the manipulations of satanic powers, which includes evil spirits, marine spirits, etc. to destroy people's destinies. Evil spirits, like demons can cast spell, such as schizophrenia on people directly and render them useless forever. Also, human agents of these forces such as witches and wizards can invoke satanic power to inflict disability, such as blindness, deafness, etc. on people (James 1995). Similarly, Christianity scholars view disability from the Biblical doctrines and associated it with Satanic forces (Genesis 1:28 and Matthew 25:14-29). Therefore, disability is an oppression of the devil and his agents (Luke 13:16; Job 2:7; Acts 19: 11-12). Nevertheless, It could equally be perceived as a sign of God's displeasure, which may arise from disobedience and peoples' sins (Romans 6: 16). Misdemeanors committed by disabled persons, someone in their families or community group can equally lead to disability (Kaplan 2011). Muslim scholars present a different version of disability by viewing it as the work of Allah. It is their belief that whatever happens to mankind has been pre-ordained by Allah and nothing can be done to change it (Fatunde 2011). According to them, Disabled persons are the gifts of Allah, who should not be condemned due to their impairments, but accorded a special attention at any point in time.

By contrary, charity model sees disability as a personal disaster. Persons involved are not contributing members of the society (Albrecht, Seelman and Bury 2001). They are tragic victims to be pitied and helped by charity organizations in order to survive (Claptop & Fitzgerald 2004). This view could be seen as individualistic approach to disability and it might lead to negative perception of disability and discrimination of individuals affected in the

society. Those who give alms to the physically challenged persons could see them as beggars and treat them as such. Thus, suggesting or explaining their sustainability through charity is not commendable.

1.3 Theoretical Insights

Symbolic Interactionism theorists believe that ideas about people are socially constructed (Andersen and Taylor 2006). It emerges by imposing subjective meaning to events, objects, behaviours among mankind (Blumer 1969). Meanings attached to some people subjectively could be regarded as stigmas, which might stick to them and affect their lives and destinies forever. This is very crucial to this work as it provides a platform for explaining the plight of disabled persons in Nigeria. On the country, most people relegate disabled individuals to nothing without any consideration to the worth of their potentials. This is attributed to the backwardness of the nation in all sphere of life (Omonijo, Nndeum & Ezeokana 2011). The most crucial aspect is evident in poor education (Abubakar 2010). Nigeria is among the nine most illiterate countries in the world (Abubakar 2010). More importantly, the country is the only E-9 country in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) facing serious challenges in turning around the high rate of illiteracy among her citizens (Bokova 2010). Illiteracy affects the mindset of the people and make their perception of events, attitudes and behaviours corrugated (Edike 2008). Sound education could therefore be compared with light that illuminates darkness. It could lightens one's sense of understanding, reasoning and judgment. It seems the more educated one is, the more he gets rid of ignorance and subjectivity. A country where the level of illiteracy is high, judgment and perception of many people could be very poor as it is in the present day Nigeria.

Consequently, when a child is born with disability, he or she is not welcome to the family (Uzochukwu, Akpala & Onwujekwe 2004). Thus, he is treated like 'a keg of toxic waste'. Peoples' belief is that nothing good would ever come from such a child in life. Therefore, his/her parents would dump him /her in a dunghill and be abandoned for life. In another development, death sentence is passed on some of them immediately (Foday-Musa 2010). Disabled children who survive the death verdict at birth are isolated, discriminated and left behind in the nation's development process, when they grow up (Nualnetr 2009). Ninety percent of them do not attend school while 80% of them are unemployed (UNESCO 2011). Joblessness exposes disabled individuals to abject poverty because skills needed for well-paid job opportunities and better conditions of service are acquired in the process of education (Omonijo & Fadugba 2011). If access to education is denied, link to such jobs could be blocked erased and it makes unemployed persons vulnerable to abject poverty. Since 90% of disabled persons are illiterates, they find it intricate to obtain better appointments in work settings (Kuno 2009). Even the educated 10% do not have free access to employment, due to the unnecessary discrimination in work settings in Nigeria (Munene 2008).

Worse still, most disabled individuals seem to be allowing this subjective meaning to stay with them, by developing inferiority complex and seeing themselves pitiable. As a result, they may find it intricate to see their disability as a challenge that should not hinder them from actualizing their destinies Thomas (1945) cited by (Andersen and Taylor 2006). Disability could be a thing of the mind. If people are disabled in their minds, they may be disabled in every aspect of life. If they allow subjective interpretation of their situation to affect them, they will not be able to make progress in life (Falobi & Akanbi 2009).

By and large, coping and living with disabled persons might be a challenge, because facilities and materials designed to make life comfortable for them are not affordable to the majority of them in underdeveloped world. Hence, most people may find it difficult to accommodate them. Nevertheless, it should be noted lucidly that disability is not by choice. Therefore, anybody could be its victim irrespective of development, wealth, intelligence and affluence. Hence, they should be loved and not being condemned (Hebrew 13: 1-3). Remarkably, many of them are endowed with extraordinary talents (Celine 2009). If the love of God could be extended to them, they might use their talents for the betterment of mankind. The most important thing in life is ones contribution to progress either physically challenged or not. That is what makes somebody to make an indelible mark to his generation.

1.4 Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between social perception of physically challenged persons and attainment of life/personal goals.

1.5 Method

1.5.1 Study designs

Two research designs are crucial to this work. The first is cross sectional design. It sought opinions of different section of the public in carrying out the study while the second aspect is ex-post design. It makes use of past information in analyzing the study's data.

1.5.2 Participants

A total of 825 participants were randomly selected for this study. 780 (94.54%) were taken from the public while 45 (5.5%) were purposely selected out of fifty disabled persons, undergoing vocational training in Friends of the disabled Vocational Centre, Lagos Island. The remaining five were not at the Centre when the study was conducted. By geographical location, 10 (20%) of them are from the South-West, 15(30%) are from the South-East and 25(50%) are from the North. By religion, 90% of them are Christians while 6% and 4% are Muslim and pagans respectively. By sex, 60% of them are females while 40% are males.

1.5.3 Instruments

Questionnaires and in-depth interview were used to collect data. The former was administered to the public and disabled persons, while the later was applied to only the disabled persons in Friends of the Disabled Vocational Centre, Lagos Island. The questionnaire contains three sections. Section A provides an open ended option on why the society stigmatizes physically challenged persons and relegates them to the background in Nigeria. Section B contains another open ended question on why the nation's government has failed to implement the UN decisions on disability. Section C equally contains open ended option on solutions to the plight of physically challenged persons in Nigeria. Respondents were asked to supply reasons best known to them on these issues. In-depth interview was used to seek opinion of physically challenged persons. The interview aspect contains four structured questions.

1.5.4 Procedure

The visional and the proprietor, Chief Mrs. Orduh gave permission to carry out the study on their centre. Visit was made to the place thrice. On each occasion, staff of the institute introduced the researcher to the inmates. Forty-five (45) of them were available out of fifty in the course of this study. They were healthy and ready to participate in the research. The researcher was assisted with an interpreter for deaf and dump inmates. Interpreters assisted in administering the questionnaires to them. At the end of the study, they were given material things by students operating project one million souls (welfare scheme) in Covenant University, both in cash and materials-food items and provisions.

1.5.5 Data validity and reliability

The questionnaire and interview items were translated into the local languages where necessary and re-translated to English language. The instruments for study were pre-tested using similar institution not included in the study. Responses were later analyzed and unclear statements were removed and replaced.

1.5.6 Statistical Analysis

Simple percentage was used to describe data collected while t-test was used to test the hypothesis. Different section of the public-workers, unemployed, students and physically challenged persons participated in the study as indicated in table 1.

1.6 Results

Discussion

As indicated in table 1, the critical value of t @ .20 level of significance for degree of freedom 3 is equal to 1.64 while the computed t is equal to 2.41. It is obvious that the computed t is greater than the critical value. Therefore, the hypothesis that says there is a significant relationship between social perceptions of physically challenged persons and attainment of life/personal goals is hereby accepted. This corroborates Oliver (1996), who believes that it is society that disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of their impairments by the way they are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Views of forty-five physically challenged individuals interviewed agreed with this submission. They see themselves being humiliated, depressed and embarrassed when people stigmatized them. Oyadongha (2011) claims that these attitudes kill their spirit and made them to withdraw to secluded places. Bad perception of the public towards disabled folks is therefore a major hindrance to the attainment of their life/personal goals. Nobody would be tagged worthless and still have a spirit of accomplishment because disability is of the mind. Ill- treatments and bad attitudes meted out to them are registered in their minds and it could disable their mind set. If they are disabled in their minds, their thinking and resourcefulness will be paralyzed (Falobi & Akanbi 2009). To show that physically challenged persons are not worthless, fifty of them in the Friends of Disabled Institute, Lagos Island were actively doing well in the following programmes and vocational trainings: Shoe making 10(20%), tailoring 8(16%), welding 6(12%), bead making 6(12%), computer programme 5(10%), poultry 5(10%), farming 5(10%) and fish pond 5(10%). Their products are wonderful and being patronized by well-meaning Nigerians across Lagos and environs.

Discussion

Dwelling on table 2, 14 reasons were given by the respondents why the society stigmatizes physically challenged persons. Those who believed they are eyesore constitute the majority with 14.49%. This is followed by those who claimed that physically challenged persons do not see themselves as capable human beings with 12.44%. Respondents, who believed they are below people standards, represent 7.82% while those who attributed it to the failure of government to make them relevant represent 7.30%. Other respondents, who believed that they are not important in the society, constitute 7.05% while those, who considered stigmatization of the physically challenged persons as the normal thing represent 6.92%. Those who believed that their dependence on people for survival always is responsible for that are 6.53%. Others who attributed it to their low level of intelligence are 6.28%. Those who associated it with their inability to be useful are 5.89%. Respondents who linked it with their abnormality constitute 5.64%. Those who attributed it to their lack of economic power are 5.52%. Respondents, who believed they are not presentable, are 5.26%. Those who linked it with inconveniencing people around them are 4.62% while others who hoped they don't behave well are 4.24%.

However, items 1 to 14 could be regarded as subjective meanings that the society attaches to disability. Opinions of respondents have brought to bear assumptions about physically challenged persons that have never been verified. They are attitudinal behaviours that Bordelon (2007) considered as social barriers, hindering the advancement of disabled individuals in underdeveloped societies.

Discussion

Table 3 reveals ten (10) reasons why the Nigerian government fails to implement the UN decisions on disability. Out of this figure, respondents, who believed that government does not give priority to the needs of physically challenged people, which is our focus in this paper, topped the list with 15.51%. This is followed by 13.07% respondents, who believed that government does not respect the UN decisions. Those who claimed that government does not value the worth of physically challenged persons are 11.92%, while those who claimed government does not have enough resources to implement the UN decisions are 10.76%. Respondents felt that government does not have human feeling for physically challenged persons represent 9.61%, while 8.97% others claimed that government is not responsible to the people. Those who attributed the failure to bad leadership of the country are 8.71%. Respondents who believed that high level of corruption in government is responsible for that are 7.82%. Those who linked the failure with selfishness of government functionaries constitute 7.69%. Finally, respondents who attributed the failure to the wickedness of government in power are 5.89%.

However, items 1 to 10 expressed above by the respondents bring to bear what McCarthy (2003) called denial of government protection on physically challenged persons in underdeveloped societies. And it bothers on the problem of poor leadership that is aggravating backwardness of these countries in all facet of life (Omonijo, Nnedum and Ezeokana 2011).

Discussion

Table 4 shows eight (8) solutions to the plight of physically challenged individuals in Nigeria. Full implementation of the UN decisions without any reservation topped the list with 34.18% of our respondents. This is followed by 17.09% respondents who, claimed that creation of a well funded vocational, medical, social and educational centre for all disabled persons in the country is the best approach. 12.24% respondents believed that dealing with disabled persons based on the worth of their potential rather than physical appearance will go a long way in helping them. 8.7% respondents believed that if people should stop looking at physically challenged persons with disdain, it will go a long way in making them fulfilled. 8.4% respondents claimed that general acceptance of physically challenged persons in all sphere of life will help in resolving their plight while 7.6% respondents perceived that people should see disabled persons as potentials. 6.6% respondents claimed that if people are ready to render help to physically challenged persons always, their plight will be reduced drastically. Finally, 5.1% of them believed that if physically challenged individuals are proud of themselves and what they can contribute to knowledge, most people will stop stigmatizing them.

However, items 1and 2 are parts of laws, which Gill et al., (2003) see as solutions to the problem of disability. Items 3 to 8 anchor on the attitudinal approaches and they are directed to the general public. Azuatalam (2010) believes that plights of physically challenged persons will change for better if the people are ready to get away with subjective meanings, which they are attributing to them.

1.7 Findings

This study has bridged the literature gaps by proving empirical evidences and new insights in an area of disability in Nigeria. Testing its hypothesis, it was discovered that a significant relationship exists between social perception of

physically challenged persons and attainment of life/personal goals. Opinions of the majority of respondents (443) and 45 of physically challenged individuals sampled attest to this. The implication of this is that physically challenged persons stigmatized as worthless people in the society may not be able to display the worth of their potentials due to the fact that stigmatization is fundamental to their psychological, and emotional state of mind, sociological relevance and economic importance in the society. A subjectively ridiculed physically challenged person may never be chance to display the worth of his or her potential because disability is a thing of the mind (Falobi & Akanbi 2009). If the mind is scattered, the whole life seems to have been destroyed.

Moreover, 14 reasons were revealed through the opinion of respondents to account for stigmatizing physically challenged persons by the society. Majority of respondents, represented by 14.49% attributed it to the fact that physically impaired individuals are eyesore. This shows high level of pride prevailing in society. If somebody is not physically attractive, he is being stigmatized as a worthless person without considering his potentials. In another development, 12.44% of respondents claimed that physically challenged persons are not helping their situations by underrating themselves. This corroborates Thomas (1945) cited by (Andersen and Taylor 2006), who believes that if you define your situation as real, it shall be real in its consequences. Most of them see their disabilities as hindrances to their accomplishments.

Furthermore, ten (10) reasons were supplied to explain why the Nigerian government fails to implement UN decisions. Respondents who believed that government does not give priority to the needs of physically challenged persons top the list with 15.51%. Actually, if government functionaries feel for the physically challenged persons, they will be concerned about their pathetic situations and give priority to their needs. McCarthy (2003) called this action, denial of government protection on physically challenged persons. This brings to the fore a problem of bad leadership that is ravaging the country Omonijo, Nnedum & Ezeokana (2011), which in turn is aggravating high level of underdevelopment in all areas of human endeavours.

Finally, eight (8) solutions were harnessed from respondents' opinions on how to improve on the plight of disabled persons in Nigeria. Full implementation of the UN decisions topped the list with 34.18%. These decisions encompass everything necessary to ensure the fulfilment of physically challenged persons in our society, if they are followed to letters. But before this could be realized, however, attitudes of the general public towards them must change.

1.8 Conclusion.

The survey concluded that there is a significant relationship between social perception of physically challenged persons and attainment of life/personal goals. Bad attitudes melted out to disabled persons are registered in their minds and it goes a long way in shaping their destiny. The study revealed that the society stigmatizes physically challenged persons because they are eyesore. Majority opinion of respondents, (14.49%) precisely, attested to this. The study equally concluded that physically challenged people underrate themselves to the background, instead of disregarding the subjective meaning attached to them and forge ahead in life. Disability notwithstanding, one has to be proud of himself. This can only be achieved by not having consideration for negative opinions of people, which is bound to happen. Also, from the study, it is concluded that the Nigerian government fails to implement UN decisions on disability is because she does not give priority to the needs of disabled individuals; an indication that the nation's government is not responsible to its obligations. Finally, the study concluded that the best solution to the problem of disability is the full implementation of the UN decisions on disability. The decision contains everything that could make them fulfilled in life.

1.9 Recommendations

Bad attitudes of the society towards physically challenged persons should be changed to good ones. Moreover, attribution of subjective meaning to them should be replaced with objective ones. Also, humiliating physically challenged persons should be changed to embracement. Furthermore, rejection of them in work settings should volt face to general acceptance in all areas of life. Government should enforce fundamental human rights of the physically challenged persons as well as UN decisions on them. The money which many government functionaries have embezzled is enough to enforce these decisions. High level of literacy is needed to bail out or destroy subjective reasoning in the mind of people. There are many educated illiterates in Nigeria. Something must be done to stop its escalation by ensuring quality education at all level. Moreover, faith based organizations should do something to affect the lives of physically challenged persons. Project one Million of Covenant University, Pastor T. B. Joshua of The Synagogue Temple of Christ and other few persons have done a lot in this respect, but we need a collective effort in arresting the numerous problems of physically challenged persons in Nigeria. Finally, integrated approach, stakes (2003) should be adopted by the entire populace to the problem of disability. This is demonstrated in figure 1 below. That is the only way the condition of physically challenged persons and others can be greatly improved.

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Table 1: Testing of a Significant Relationship Between Societal Perception of Physically Challenged Persons and Attainment of Life/Personal Goals

S/n	Participants	Responses		Differences	
		Agree	Disagree	D	D²
1	Workers	107	80	27	729
2	Unemployed	116	146	50	2500
3	Students	175	156	19	361
4	Physically Challenged Persons	45	0	45	2025
	Total			**∑D141**	**∑D²5615**

Source: From the data collected by the researchers.

The computed value of	t	=	2.41
While the Critical value of	t	=	1.64

Table2: Reasons why the Society Stigmatizes Physically Challenged Persons in Nigeria.

S/n	Reasons	F	%
1	People believe that physically challenged persons are eyesore	113	14.49
2	People think disabled persons do not see themselves as capable human beings	97	12.44
3	People believe that physically impaired persons are below peoples standard	61	7.82
4	People think that it is because the government fails to make disabled persons relevant in the society.	57	7.30
5	People think physically challenged persons are not important.	55	7.05
6	People believe that stigmatization of physically challenged persons is the normal thing.	54	6.92
7	People believe that physically impaired persons always depend on people for survival	51	6.53
8	People think physically impaired individuals have low intelligence	49	6.28
9	People believe that physically impaired persons cannot be useful to the society	46	5.89
10	People believe that physically impaired persons are not normal	44	5.64
11	People believe that physically challenged persons do not have economic power	43	5.52
12	People think that physically challenged individuals are not presentable	41	5.26
13	People believe that disabled persons inconvenient a lot of people around them	36	4.62
14	People believe that physically challenged persons do not behave well	33	4.24
	Total	**780**	**100**

Source: From the data collected by the researchers.

Table 3: Reasons why the Government Fails to Implement UN Decisions on Physically Challenged Persons in Nigeria.

S/n	Reasons	F	%
1	Government does not give priority to the needs of physically challenged persons	121	15.51
2	Government does not respect UN decisions	102	13.07
3	Government does not value the worth of physically challenged individuals.	93	11.92
4	Government does not have enough resources to implement the UN decisions	84	10.76
5	Government doe not have human feeling for physically impaired persons.	75	9.61
6	Government is not responsible to the people	70	8.97
7	Bad leadership of the country	68	8.71
8	High level of corruption in government	61	7.82
9	Selfishness of government functionaries	60	7.69
10	Wickedness of government in power	46	5.89
	Total	**780**	**100**

Source: From the data collected by the researchers.

Table 4: Solutions to the Plight of the Physically Challenged Persons in Nigeria

S/n	Solutions	F	%
1	Full implementation of UN decisions without any reservation	282	34.18
2	Creation of a well funded vocational, medical, social and educational centre for all disabled persons	141	17.09
3	Dealing with disabled persons based on the worth of their potential rather than physical appearance	101	12.24
4	People should stop looking at disabled persons with disdain	72	8.7
5	General acceptance of disabled persons in all sphere of life	69	8.4
6	People should see disabled persons as potentials	63	7.6
7	People should be ready to render help to them always	55	6.6
8	Disabled people should be proud of themselves and what they can contribute to knowledge	42	5.1
	Total	**780**	**100**

Source: From the data collected by the researchers.

Figure1: Integrated Approach to the Problem of Physically Challenged Individuals