

Towards Ending Marginalization Of Persons With Disabilities In Nigerian's Tvet Ecosystem

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ABSTRACT

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) encapsulates particular facts or ideas to all forms and levels of education and training which provide knowledge and skills related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life through formal and informal learning techniques in school, out of school and work-based learning contexts. This study investigates inclusivity of Persons With Disability (PWD) in the TVET ecosystem. The focus is to build an evidence-based framework that explains the challenge of PWD in accessing knowledge and skills in TVET institutions. Specifically, the objectives are to determine PWD access to TVET institutions and Programmes, examine TVET infrastructures for PWD inclusivity, examine legislation addressing issues of PWD and determine existence of adaptive educational materials and facilities. Data was collected from lecturers across TVET institutions in Nigeria via Google forms. Results showed marginalization of PWD across TVET institutions in Nigeria. The TVET infrastructures, libraries, classrooms, hostels, sports halls, Information Communication Technology (ICT) center, classroom/hostels furniture, Entrepreneurial Education Centre (EDC), school buses had no provision for PWD. The blind, crippled and deaf and dumb had to make use of infrastructures provided for the regular students despite their limitations. Policy formulation on education should take cognizance of people with disability to ensure inclusiveness.

Key words: Disability, Education, Infrastructures, Persons, Vocational

I. INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) encapsulates particular facts or ideas to all forms and levels of education and training which provide knowledge and skills related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life through formal and informal learning techniques in school, out of school and work-based learning contexts. To acquire knowledge every learner, that is , persons with or without impairment, face one form of challenge or the other at some point in the programme. These challenges could range from unavailability of equipment, lack of physical infrastructures, lack of medical facilities, lack of transportation, to lack of technical know-how amongst several others in the TVET ecosystem. Apparently, for people with disabilities (PWD), any form of challenge could be more could be difficult and devastating. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes challenge as being more than just physical obstacles but factors in an environment whose absence or presence limit functioning and creates ability. For example, a physical environment that is not accessible; lack of relevant assistive technology (assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices); negative attitudes of people towards disability and services, systems and policies that are either non-existent or that hinder the involvement of all people with a health condition in all areas of life (WHO,2001).

Apart from the inert challenges of the PWD, there are multiple barriers that can make it extremely difficult or even impossible to function

(CDC,2022) in the TVET ecosystem. Attitudinal barriers are the most basic and contribute to other barriers for PWD. The challenge of getting into a place can limit a person with a disability from participating in everyday life and common daily activities. People sometimes stereotype those with disabilities, assuming their quality of life is poor or that they are unhealthy because of their impairments. In some cases, PWD suffer stigmatisation, prejudice and discrimination. These attitudes may come from people's ideas related to disabilities. Some people may see disability as a personal tragedy, others may see it as something that needs to be cured or prevented, certain individuals even see it as a punishment for wrongdoing and/or as an indication of the lack of ability to behave as expected in society.

Communication barriers relate to PWD who have any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function which affect hearing, speaking, reading, writing, and or understanding, and who use different ways to communicate that is different from methods used by people without impairment. Some examples of communication barriers include: written health promotion messages with barriers that prevent people with vision impairments from receiving the message e.g. use of small print or no large-print versions of material, and no Braille or versions for people who use screen readers. Also, auditory health messages may be inaccessible to people with hearing impairments some of which maybe videos that do not include captioning, and oral communications without accompanying manual interpretation (such as, American Sign Language). In addition, the use of technical language, long sentences, and words with many syllables may be significant barriers to understanding for people with cognitive impairments.

Physical barriers are structural obstacles in natural or manmade environments that prevent or block mobility (moving around in the environment) or access for PWD. Examples of physical barriers that may challenge PWD are steps and curbs that block a person with mobility impairment from entering a building or using a sidewalk; mammography equipment that requires a woman with mobility impairment to stand; and absence of a weight scale that accommodates wheelchairs or others who have difficulty stepping up. Another form of barrier is the policy barrier. There are instances where there is a lack of awareness or enforcement of existing laws and regulations that require programs and activities to be made available to PWD. Examples of policy barriers include: denying qualified PWD the opportunity to

participate in or benefit from federally funded programs, services, or other benefits; denying PWD access to programs, services, benefits, or opportunities to participate as a result of physical barriers; and denying reasonable accommodations to qualified PWD, so they can perform the essential functions of the job for which they have applied or have been hired to perform.

Programmatic barriers are limitations placed on the effective delivery of public health or healthcare programs for people with different types of impairments. Examples of programmatic barriers include: inconvenient scheduling; lack of accessible equipment (such as mammography screening equipment); insufficient time set aside for medical examination and procedures; little or no communication with patients or participants; and provider's attitudes, knowledge, and understanding of people with disabilities. Another form of barrier is the social barriers. Social barriers are related to the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, learn, work and age – or social determinants of health – that can contribute to decreased functioning among PWD. Here are examples of social barriers: People with disabilities are far less likely to be employed. In 2017, 35.5% of people with disabilities, ages 18 to 64 years, were employed, while 76.5% of people without disabilities were employed, about double that of people with disabilities (Houtenville and Boege, 2019). Again, PWD are more likely to have income of less than \$15,000 compared to people without disabilities (22.3% compare to 7.3%) (CDC,2019). Also, children with disabilities are almost four times more likely to experience violence than children without disabilities (WHO,2012). Another form of barrier for PWD is transportation barrier. This form of barrier comes as result of lack of adequate transportation that interferes with a person's ability to be independent and to function in society. Some examples of transportation barriers include: lack of access to accessible or convenient transportation for people who are not able to drive because of vision or cognitive impairments; public transportation may be unavailable or at inconvenient distances or locations and when available may not contain special provisions for PWD.

The objective is to investigate inclusivity of PWD in the TVET ecosystem. The focus is to build an evidence-based framework that explains the challenge of PWD in accessing knowledge and skills in TVET institutions. Specifically, the objectives are to determine PWD access to TVET institutions and Programmes, examine TVET

infrastructures for PWD inclusivity, examine legislation addressing issues of PWD and determine existence of adaptive educational materials and facilities.

WHAT IS DISABILITY

Disability is neither purely a biological nor a social construct but the result of interactions between health conditions and environmental and personal factors (WHO, 2001b). Disability can occur at three levels: an impairment in body function or structure; a limitation in activity, such as the inability to read or move around; a restriction in participation, such as exclusion from school or work. As such, people with disabilities include those who are traditionally understood as disabled (for example wheelchair users, people who are blind or deaf or people with intellectual impairments), and people who experience difficulties in functioning due to a wide range of health conditions such as chronic diseases, severe mental disorders, multiple sclerosis and old age. (WHO,2013)

ARE THERE PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWD) IN NIGERIA?

According to the World Health Organization's 2011 World Disability Report, about 15 percent of Nigeria's population, or at least 25 million people, have a disability. Many of them face a number of human rights abuses including stigma, discrimination, violence, and lack of access to healthcare, housing, and education.

IS THERE ANY LAW TO PROTECT PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWD) IN NIGERIA?

President Muhammadu Buhari on Wednesday 23 January, 2019 signed into law a legislation that criminalise common discriminations against persons with disabilities. The Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 would see corporate entities and individuals face excruciating sanctions if found guilty of discriminating against persons with impairments. This Act prohibits all forms of discrimination on ground of disability and imposes fine of N1, 000, 000 for corporate bodies and N100, 000 for individuals or a term of six months imprisonment for violation concurrently. It provides for a five-year transitional period within which public buildings, structures or automobile are to be modified to be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, including those on wheelchairs.

Before erecting any public structure, its plan shall be scrutinised by the relevant authority to ensure that the plan conforms with the "building code".

A government or government agency, body or individual responsible for the approval of building plans shall not approve the plan of a public building if the plan does not make provision for accessibility facilities in line with the "building code".

An officer who approves or directs the approval of a building plan that contravenes the "building code", commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least N1, 000, 000 or a term of imprisonment of two years or both (see HRW, 2019; PT,2019)

HOW DOES NIGERIAN'S TVET ECOSYSTEM AFFECT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY ?

The TVET ecosystem can help to improve the labour market situation of persons with disabilities (ILO,2017).The TVET systems can enhance the productivity and earnings of disabled workers through becoming more inclusive of trainees with disabilities in their programmes. Thus, TVET programmes should become more effective in meeting their overall goal of connecting technical training to labour market needs. The TVET programmes should be made more accessible to persons with disabilities, thus enabling them to acquire skills and qualifications required in the labour market and improve their employment prospects. The inclusion of vocational education and training as explicit outcomes in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) gives TVET and skills systems an unprecedented profile on the international stage. The SDGs include a target of ensuring equal access to vocational training at all levels for persons with disabilities along with other vulnerable groups (Target 4.5).

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITY?

The United Nations Development Group's (2011) efforts on including the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations programming at country level by a team of the Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities composed of the Department for Economics and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population

Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO) is a process to ensure inclusivity of PWD.

Also, the UN Country teams play a significant, influential role in supporting States to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, through the design and implementation of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and through the work of individual agencies in their areas of mandate.

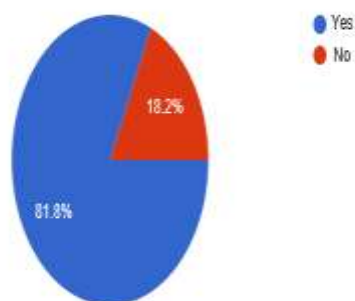
CHALLENGES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

The PWD access to TVET institutions and Programmes

An online survey was conducted across TVET institutions for trainers in Nigeria. There were seventy-seven responses.

Do you offer persons with disability the same opportunity with persons without disability for admission?

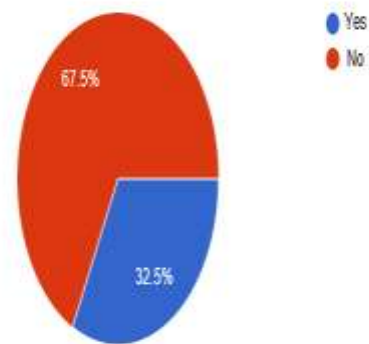
81.8 % of the respondents claim to give same opportunity to persons with disability and 18.2 % of respondents do not give same opportunity to these individuals during admission. This means PWD are subjected to the same entry requirements with regular applicants in Nigerian TVET institutions.



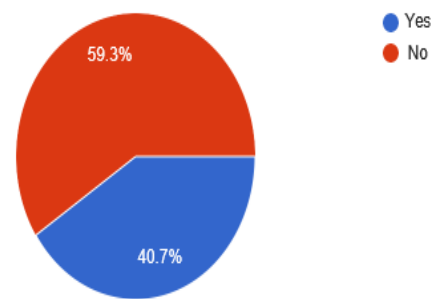
Is there any special consideration for PWD during registration, lectures, examination set considering their limitations?

67.5 % of the respondents do not give special consideration for PWD during registration, lectures,

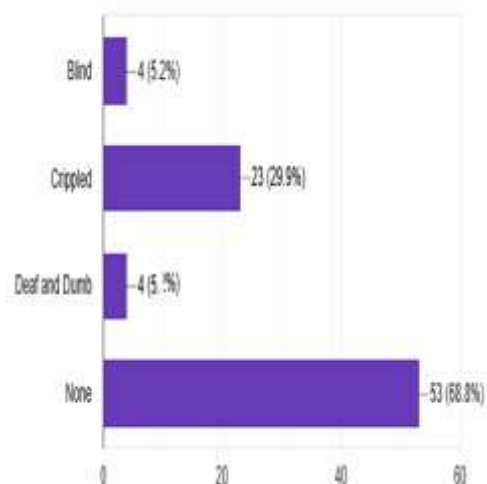
examinations despite their limitations



Unfortunately, 59.3% of the respondents do not have any plans to ensure special consideration for PWD during registration, lectures, examinations despite their limitations.

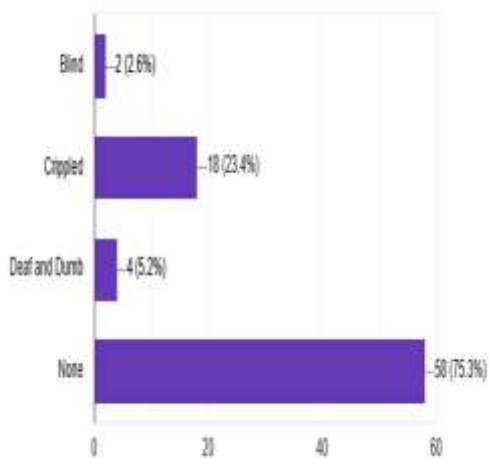


The TVET infrastructures for PWD inclusivity
Which of the following persons with disability does your School/library have provision for?



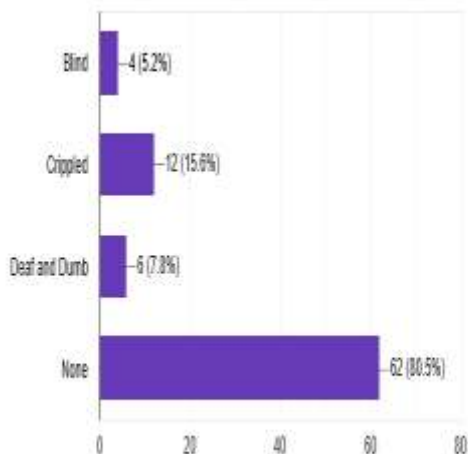
68.8% of the trainers in TVET indicate their library had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your classroom have provision for?



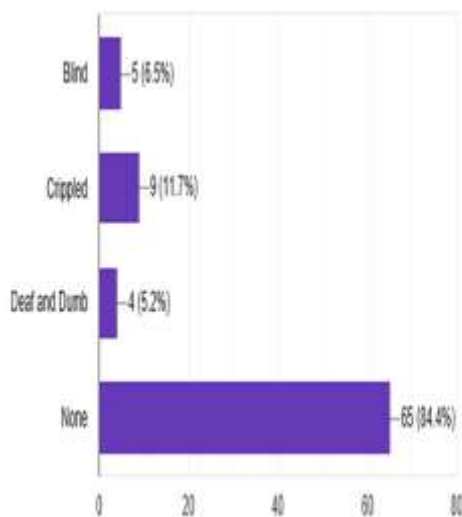
75.3% of the trainers in TVET indicate their classrooms had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your hostel have provision for?



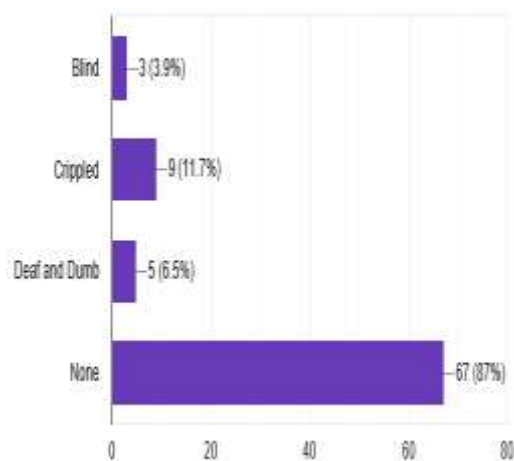
80.5% of the trainers in TVET indicate their hostels had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your school buses have provision for?



84.4% of the trainers in TVET indicate their school buses had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your sports hall have provision for?



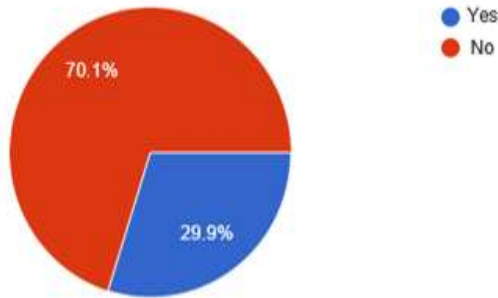
87% of the trainers in TVET indicate their sports halls had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Examination of legislation addressing issues of PWD

Is there any legislation towards welfare or employment for PWD after graduation?

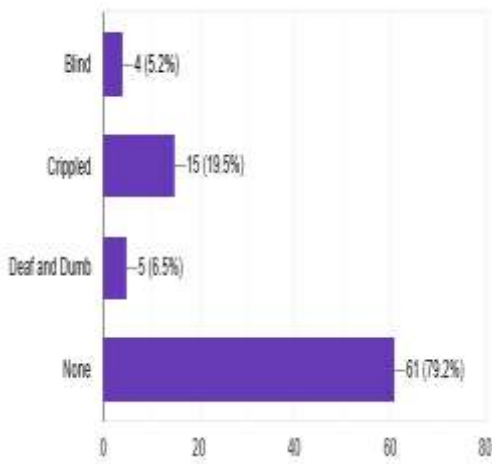
70.1% of our respondents do not have legislation towards welfare or employment for PWD after

egraduation? This could mean no provisions for jobs nor grants.



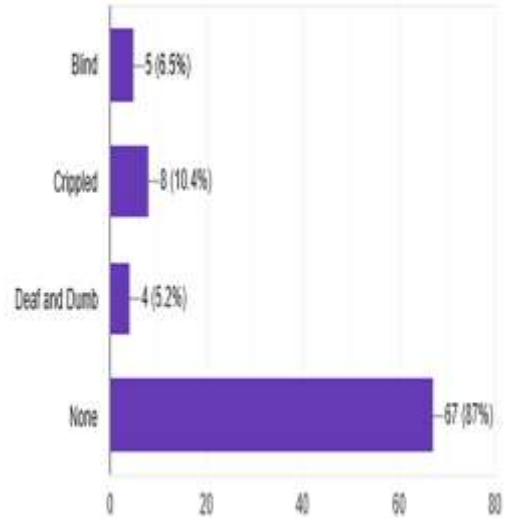
Determination of existence of adaptive educational materials and facilities

Which of the following persons with disability does your Entrepreneurial Education Centre (EDC) have provision for?



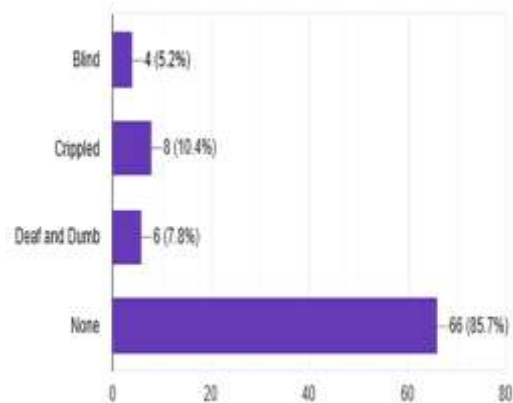
79.2% of the trainers in TVET indicate their Entrepreneurial Education Centre had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your Information Communication Technology (ICT) centre have provision for?



87% of the trainers in TVET indicate their Information Communication Technology centre had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

Which of the following persons with disability does your classroom/hostels furniture have provision for?



85.7% of the trainers in TVET indicate their classroom/hostels furniture had no provision for the blind, crippled and deaf and dumb.

II. CONCLUSION

Persons with disabilities in Nigerian TVET institutions are not free from attitudinal barriers, communication barriers, physical barriers, policy barrier, programmatic barriers, social barriers and transportation barriers. Whereas, women and men with disabilities will make a valuable contribution in workplaces and contribute meaningfully to the GDP if they have the skills required for jobs suited to their interests and

capacities. The Nigerian TVET institutions have a lot to do in terms of inclusivity for persons with disabilities. The Nigerian TVET institutions/programmes, infrastructures, legislation and adaptive educational materials and facilities should be reviewed to include persons with disabilities to enable them benefit maximally from vocational training. Ultimately, policy formulation on education should take cognizance of persons with disability to ensure inclusiveness. Let's not leave them behind !.

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