

## **SOCIETAL PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN NIGERIA**

By

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined societal perceptions of people with special needs in Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Participants made up of 135 members of the society and 35 people with special needs were randomly selected from Ilorin and Akure. Two research instruments namely ‘Societal Perceptions of People with Special Needs for Special People (SPPSNSPQ)’ and Societal Perceptions of People with Special Needs for Members of the Society (SPPSNMSQ)’ were used for data collection. Data collected were analysed using percentage and frequency counts. The results revealed that: the society pitied and assisted the disabled financially; their parents did not neglect them because of their disability; people with special needs are always brutal when offended, they loved recognition and do not like being pitied. Also, job opportunity has not been convenient for them, while they are effective in their sources of income and are efficient at skilled work. Based on these findings, it was recommended that people with special needs should see themselves as being loved and would be cared for by the society while members of the society should stop pitying them but assist by equipping people with special needs financially in their different areas of specialisations.*

**Keywords:** Society, perceptions, special needs, attitudes, Nigeria

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### **Introduction**

Disability in individual could be identified right from birth when a child finds it difficult to cry clearly, one knows there is problem with the throat or the tongue. A child may be identified to be having problem with eye sight if the parents discover the child finds it difficult to blink the eyes or not moving the eye balls to follow objects. A child could be identified to be having ear problem when it is difficult for him/her to respond to sounds. As the child develops, if he finds it difficult to sit or crawl and could not walk at the expected time, then the parent will realise there is problem somewhere. A child, right from the beginning may have problem in speaking or the development is retarded compared with the other normal children. If parents are able to realise these abnormalities early and approach appropriate health places for quick and adequate treatment, all these abnormalities could be corrected and may not become permanent.

Deformities in individual could be inborn, some happen due to different forms of accidents while others occur as a result of carelessness on the part of an individual or being caused by their parents. It could be a situation where people become deformed after taking on injection from hospital or as a result of not receiving all the expected immunizations when the child was young, while any form of sickness could result in physical deformity.

There are different forms of disabilities in the society. Some disabilities are hidden that until someone moves very close or relate with the affected person you may not recognise the form of disability, while some people’s disabilities are pronounced. The moment you see or hear the disabled speak, what

they say, or the way they move, one will easily identify their areas of disability or where they require special needs. There are different ways by which members of the society perceive these people as some take them as special gifts from God that should be handled differently from other children in the family or in the society. This is the more reason why the society do not call them disabled people again, which they too have rejected but instead it is now people with special needs, because everything about them is specially handled in terms of their education, movement from place to place, entrance at banks, the way they eat, sit or sleep, even their sources of income and many others.

During the Association of Indigenous People with Disabilities (AIPD) meeting, the National Coordinator, lamented there are over 25 million Nigerians who suffer from one physical deformity to the other, with over 3.5 million of those people having challenges of moving around because they are physically challenged. People with special needs constitute over 30 percent of Nigeria population. Joseph (2017) suggested these people must be trained and be involved in courses that will improve their conditions instead of being beggars on the streets of the country. Stressing that the greatest challenge is their impediment to move around and people with special needs could be trained along the line that will suit their deformity.

Despite the large number of people with special needs in Nigeria, little support is being given to individuals living with disabilities. The disabled are being neglected and excluded from social, economic, and political affairs in the society. The avenues of social aid for people with disabilities are usually through non-governmental, religious organisations and family members. Disabilities arise from a combination of impairments and barriers that hinders full and effective participation in the society on an equal basis with others. Disability is viewed as an unequal social relationship that arises through negative perceptions towards a person's functional impairment (Connors & Stalker, 2007).

People with special needs have been changing along with changes in the attitude of members of the society towards them in the terminologies used to describe these people. The disabled are now being referred to as "mentally retarded" or 'special needs people' instead of the old terms of "idiot, imbecile, and moron." The disabled preferred the society emphasising or recognising individual instead of the person's area of disability. For example, it is better to say individual with mental retardation than saying "mentally retarded people" or somebody that is blind or crippled but can sing very well would not want people to recognise his disability but his ability to sing. Therefore, this paper will look into different literature of some scholars relating to the objectives of this study, methods employed to collect facts from respondents, results of the research, discussion of findings, policy implications, conclusion, recommendations and references used in the paper.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Identifying different development in individual to know the status of health and stages of disability occurs throughout one's life, thus identifying disability in individual is an ongoing process, it is not limited to a particular stage in life (Brown, 2004). According to Groce, Kett, Lang, Trani (2011), disabilities indicate impairment, activity limitations and participation restrictions. Impairment is seen as limitation in physical or intellectual friction. An activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in relation to the surrounding physical, social or cultural environment. Disability is reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives, classifying people with special needs to six different categories: namely; physical conditions, mental conditions, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, neurological conditions and addictive disorder. Shakespeare, (2001) further stressed persons are disabled when the physical, cultural, political and economic structure of the society in which they live does not accommodate their impairment.

Yueng, Passmore, & Packer (2008) observed people with special needs in their relationship with other able bodied persons in the society have tried to remove or clarify many misconceptions about themselves which gave them sense of agency and reason to be involved in the community. They did this in order to advocate for other people with special needs and serve as role models for them to participate in their society in the future. At the same time, some people with special needs have capitalised on areas of their minor deformities to make themselves dependent on members of the society.

Attitudes of members of the society to people with special needs could be viewed in different ways:

- i. Family attitudes- some wanted to accept the condition for which their special people are, and always have a vision for their future children.
- ii. Community attitudes- efforts being made at educating the general community and changing the negative attitudes and prejudices against disability, this has become a barrier to their participation in favoured activities, (Johnson 2000). Members of the society think these people are stupid and are not intelligent.
- iii. Attitudes in schools- schools being the most influential social system outside the family. Lewis, Davison, Ellins, Niblett, Parsons, Robertson, & Sharpe (2007) revealed helpful and unhelpful attitudes among students in schools. Unhelpful attitudes are defined to be lack of ability to be helpful to students with special needs in terms of honesty, respect, kindness and being sensitive to their conditions.
- iv. Attitudes in work place: people with disability have to prove themselves as competent in their different work place especially those cerebral palsy, mild, intellectual or physical disability. Employees with mental health, complex disability or emotional issues experience little positive attitude from their employers or other co-workers (Winn & Hay 2009).

The perceptions and attitudes of members of the society to needs are barriers to the social inclusion of people with special needs in the society. Burtner (2014) examined some of the issues that offends the daily lives of people with special needs in the areas of their existence in the community. The issues are, whether housing is available that accommodates their disabilities, if transportation is available and convenient, whether special education is available which will result in marketable job skills. On employment, Will employers hire a person with a disability? Are employers willing to make necessary accommodation? Is reliable and affordable transportation available to convey the disabled to their places of work? Health wise, is medical treatment available in the community, does the public health department provide care? On finance, is financial assistance available for their transportation, education and health care? People with special needs can experience difficulties accessing medical health care, finance for their drugs, education or skills to be empowered and getting transportation to venues for medical care, while some disables are uncooperative and resist treatment from medical experts.

An individual who is born with disability or who becomes disabled often faces social marginalisation and has significantly less chance of accessing health care education or employment leading to poverty, which in turn restricted access to safe housing, food, health, employment, care and many others. Poverty and entrenched social exclusion affects not only the individual, but also the family as a whole (WHO/ World Bank, 2011). The attitude of members of the society to people with special needs on sports is different from what operate among these special people. Due to societal negative attitude, these people in secondary schools are being faced with lots of challenges like poor provision of physical education in schools, negative school experience, lack of experience of the benefits of physical activity, inadequate sponsorship and coaching, lack of coverage of a wide range of sports in the media; poor community facilities, and lack of access to facilities and programmes and many others (National Disability Authority 2014)

Sambamoorth (2009) presented differences in wages payment for adults with special needs earning significantly less than non-disabled peers, even for similar work, with a view that people with particular ailment may not be effective like those without any challenge. Also, the United States Census Bureau (2010) affirm that people with special needs were not self-sufficient economically, their employment rate reduced, they relied more on benefits from the public. The employment rate of people with disabilities was low among Americans; it increases with years of completed education and increases with age.

Considering the marital lives of people with special needs, Heegeven (2005) found out that people with disabilities who headed households in Uganda were more likely to never have married or be widowed. Kian (2009) also observed that women with disabilities in Cameroon had no good future for marriage. In the findings of Dhungang (2006), women in Nepal who became disabled after marriage were often abandoned by their husbands, thus putting them at heightened risk of poverty while women with disabilities were not likely to marry. Stigma was found to be a major factor fulfilling social roles. Women disabled after marriage are also at more risk of losing their financial support of their families. All these factors place women with special needs at a significant economic disadvantage, even in comparison to men with special needs. Sambameorthi (2006) found that the employment rate among men with disabilities was higher than that of women with disabilities, although this may also reflect 'women's work being unaccepted to men. Mobarak, Khan, Munir, Zaaman and Mc Conachie (2000) emphasised mothers of children with disabilities were likely to experience poverty, that older women were more likely than older men to experience impairment. In the writings of Trani and Loeb (2011) on Afghanistan, they found that persons with disabilities often had less access to health care, but when health care was available, they encountered problem of payment for the expenses in accessing such care.

In India, Mitra and Sambamoortni (2006) found that people with mental illness or cognitive impairments had lower levels of employment than people with speech or hearing impairment. Train and Laeb (2010) report similar findings from Afghanistan and Zambia, where people with cognitive or multiple impairments or mental illness were not likely to be employed than those with sensory impairments, showing that these people experienced artificial poverty due to the challenges they had. Gureje, Ogunniyi, Kola and Afolabi (2006), found that the prevalence of functional disability in older adults in Nigeria was more among those that lives in urban settings, and very low among the rural-dwelling adults. Similarly, Mitra and Sambamoorthi (2006) using survey data published in 2002 in India, found that people with disabilities in rural areas were more likely to be employed than those living in urban areas.

According to Akinyemi (2016), many disabled are poor and are excluded from their society, societal attitudes towards them is affecting their standard of living, they face family stress, abuse and neglect, illness, some parents hide them when visitors are coming, while they see them as disgrace to their families. The society in different ways is creating psychological problems for people with special needs by complicating their conditions and through the attitudes of the disabled themselves, and the attitudes of the society to these people with the belief that they are not and cannot be useful for themselves not to talk of their immediate family or the society at large.

In Nigeria, Gureje et, al (2006), found that the prevalence of impairment was 9.2% and that 19% previously non-disabled older adults with disabilities who were in need of assistance, had no access to help. There is growing evidence that not only are older adults more vulnerable to becoming disabled, they may not be able to go out and find means of livelihood, this may result into finding it more difficult to feed themselves and other members of their family, thus poverty is both a cause and consequence of disability, with 50% of disability problems linked to poverty. At the same time some people with special

needs have distinguished themselves by contributing to the development of Nigeria. This could be found in the field of sports by winning gold and silver medals at international levels, some in artisans in different parastatals, some as lecturers, and other places of establishments. Okoli (2014) claimed a good number of persons with special needs have managed to distinguish themselves in their chosen career to develop Nigeria.

Thus, Adult Education as a discipline and Social Welfare in particular is out to develop and bring positive changes to an individual to contribute positively to the society. The research work is to change the attitudes of people with special needs and that of the society towards them so that something positive will come out of them as there is ability in disability. It is on this note that the researcher will use explorative approach to examine the objectives of the topic as the paper will help to contribute to knowledge in the area of social welfare in adult education. The research objectives of this paper are to:

- i. establish how people identify those with special needs in the society.
- ii. investigate the attitudes of people with special needs in the society.
- iii. investigate the attitudes of members of the society to people with special needs
- iv. ascertain the importance of people with special needs to the development of Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There are different ways by which people with special needs view themselves; some members of the society also perceive them as not being of any benefit to themselves and the society. This is arousing different opinions on the personalities of people with special needs, whether they have been nuisance or contributing to national development in their different countries.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to examine the attitudes of people with special needs and societal perceptions of people with special needs in Nigeria

- i. How do people identify those with special needs in the society?
- ii. What are the attitudes of people with special needs in the society?
- iii. What are the attitudes of members of the society to people with special needs?
- iv. Of what importance are the people with special needs to the development of Nigeria?

### **Method**

The study employed a descriptive research which involved the collection of data from the members of society and people with special needs. The sample comprised 135 members of the society and 35 with special needs randomly selected from Kwara (20) and Ondo (15) States irrespective of their gender. The reason for choosing 35 respondents among people with special needs was because not all the participants needed for this research could be contacted at the period of this research. The researcher made use of those who could read or talk among these respondents. The researcher was able to make use of 70 respondents from Kwara State and 65 respondents from Ondo State as members of the society, while the researcher made use of picture sample of people with special needs activities from Ipetumodu in Osun State.

The research instrument used was close ended questionnaire distributed personally by the researcher to the respondents while the questionnaire for people with special needs were filled by the researcher through the assistance of an interpreter where there were needs for it, there were two types of questionnaire. The first contained items for people with special needs to know their perception about the



attitudes of members of the society towards them. The second questionnaire which was administered to the society contained items on how they identified people with special needs, attitudes of these people, and their contributions to national development. The participants were asked to select 'Yes' or 'No' for their answers. The data was analysed using percentage to determine the results on the attitudes of society and people with special needs and the importance of people with special needs to the development of Nigeria.

## Results

**Research Question One:** How do people identify those with special needs in the society?

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of respondents' opinion regarding how people identify with special needs in the society.**

S/N	Items	Yes	No	Total
1.	When they behave extra ordinary	58 (43.3%)	76 (56.7%)	134 (100.0%)
2.	When they cannot do what others are doing conveniently	108 (89.6%)	14 (10.4%)	134 (100.0%)
3.	When they are always assisted by people around them	108 (80.6%)	26 (19.4%)	134 (100.0%)
4.	Through their speech	96 (71.6%)	38 (28.4%)	134 (100.0%)
5.	Through their physical appearance	108 (80.6%)	26 (19.4%)	134 (100.0%)
6.	Through their dressing	90 (67.2%)	44 (32.8%)	134 (100.0%)

**Source:** Research Data, 2017

This section covers responses from members of the society involving about 135 respondents. It was indicated by majority of the respondents (89.6%) that inability to do what others are doing, (80.6%) being assisted by people around them and (80.6%) on their physical appearance were affirmed as some of the ways of identifying those with special needs in the society.

**Research question Two:** What are the dominant attitudes of people with special needs in the society?

**Table 2: Observed responses on the attitude of people with special needs.**

S/N	Items	Yes	No	Total
1.	The crippled among them are always troublesome	44 (32.8%)	90 (67.2%)	134 (100.0%)
2.	They are always aggressive	42 (31.3%)	92 (68.7%)	134(100.0%)
3.	They are always troublesome generally	32 (23.9%)	102 (76.1%)	134 (100.0%)
4.	Cripple are always hot tempered	20 (14.9%)	114(85.1%)	134 (100.0%)
5.	Cripples disturb their classmates in school	34 (25.4%)	100 (74.6%)	134 (100.0%)
6.	Cripple love playing football	36 (26.9%)	98(73.1%)	134 (100.0%)
7.	The deaf and dumb love gossiping	52 (38.8.3%)	82 (61.2%)	134 (100.0%)
8.	They love marrying each other	62 (46.3%)	72 (53.7%)	134 (100.0%)
9.	They are brutal when offended	92(68.7%)	42 (31.3%)	134 (100.0%)
10.	The physically challenged love recognition	88 (65.7%)	46 (34.3%)	134 (100.0%)
11.	They love dancing	60 (44.8%)	74 (55.2%)	134 (100.0%)
12.	They do not like being pitied	84 (62.7%)	50 (37.3%)	134 (100.0%)
13.	They are happy when people look at them	20 (14.9%)	114 (85.1%)	134 (100.0%)
14.	The look at people with focus	72 (53.7%)	62 (46.3%)	134 (100.0%)
15.	Their level of interaction with people is good	80 (59.7%)	54 (40.3%)	134 (100.0%)

**Source:** Research Data, 2017

In Table 2 above, 68.7% respondents revealed that people with special needs are brutal when offended, 65.7% respondents agreed that the physically challenged among them loved recognition and

62.7% respondents agreed they do not loved being pitied. Also, 85.1% disagreed they are always hot tempered and 85.1% also affirmed they are not happy when people look at them due to their disability.

**Research Question Three:** What are the attitudes of members of the society towards people with special needs?

**Table 3: Observed responses regarding attitudes of members of the society towards people with special needs.**

S/N	Items	Response		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	People make jest of those with special needs	64. (47.8%)	70 (52.2%)	134 (100.0%)
2	People feel they are always out of their senses	50 (37.3%)	84 (62.7%)	134 (100.0%)
3.	People pity them	124 (92.5%)	10 (7.5%)	134 (100.0%)
4	People assist them financially	122 (91.0%)	12 (9.0%)	134 (100.0%)
5	Their peer group provoke them	70 (52.2%)	64 (47.8%)	134 (100.0%)
6	People easily pick up quarrel with them	42.(31.3%)	92 (68.7%)	134 (100.0%)
7	People see them inferior to members of the society	84 (62.7%)	50 (37.3%)	134 (100.0%)
8	They experience sexual abuse	44 (32.8%)	90 (67.2%)	134 (100.0%)
9	The experience child labour	86 (64.2%)	48 (35.8%)	134 (100.0%)
10	Families abandon them to danger	92 (68.7%)	42 (31.3)	134 (100.0%)
11	Their parents do not neglect them	82 (61.2%)	52 (38.8%)	134 (100.0%)
12	Government do not put them into consideration in their plans	74(55.2%)	60 (44.8%)	134 (100.0%)
13	Banks put their entrance into consideration	52(38.8%)	82 (61.2%)	134 (100.0%)
14.	Job opportunity is convenient for them	22(16.4%)	112 (83.6%)	134 (100.0%)
15	Government care for them	74 (55.2%)	60 (44.8%)	134 (100.0%)
16	People feel they are not useful to the society	86 (64.2%)	48 (35.8%)	134 (100.0%)
17	They are problem to the society	50 (37.3%)	84 (62.7%)	134 (100.0%)
18	They cannot bear children	20 (14.9%)	114 (85.1%)	134 (100.0%)

**Source:** Research Data, 2017

From the findings, it was observed that the perceived attitude of the people with special needs actually differ from the attitude and manner at which members of the society viewed them (people with special needs). Findings revealed that 92.5% agreed that people always pity them, 91.0% agreed that people assist them financially, 68.7% claimed that families abandoned them to dangers. Also, 83.6% affirmed that job opportunity is not convenient for them, 85.1% disagreed with the statement that people with special needs cannot bear children.

**Research Question Four:** What are the contributions of people with special needs to the development of Nigeria?

**Table 4: Observed response of the contributions of people with special needs to the development of Nigeria'**

S/N	Items	Yes	No	Total
1.	They are means of entertainment to the society	50 (37.3%)	84 (62.7%)	134 (100.0%)
2.	They are effective in their sources of income	84 (62.7%)	50 (37.3%)	134 (100.0%)
3.	They are good at skilled work	108 (80.6%)	26 (19.4%)	134 (100.0%)
4.	They are not good at farming	76 (56.7%)	58. (43.3%)	134 (100.0%)
5.	They are not good at poultry	76 (56.7%)	58. (43.3%)	134 (100.0%)
6.	They are good at businesses	86 (61.2%)	48 (35.8%)	134 (100.0%)
7	Efficient at office or government work	68 (50.7%)	66 (49.3%)	134 (100.0%)
9	They do not contribute to the economic	40 (29.9%)	94 (70.1%)	134 (100.0%)

	development of Nigeria			
10	They cannot vote during elections	12 (9.0%)	122 (91.0%)	134 (100.0%)
11	Spiritual leaders cherish their word	82 (61.2%)	52 (38.8%)	134 (100.0%)

Regarding the contributions of people with special needs to the society, Findings indicated that 80.6% affirmed that they were good at skilled work. In trading, 61.2% agreed that they were good in businesses. Observation showed 70.1% were against the statement that they did not contribute to economic development of Nigeria. Also, 91% affirmed that they can vote during election. Finding therefore revealed that people with special needs contributed positively to the development of Nigeria. Below are the products of students with special needs of St. Mary's Rehabilitation Centre, Ipetumodu, Osun State. The students made these stools and center tables with waste cartoons, they were made in such a way that unless you were told you would not know they were made with cartoons. In the picture we also have different pomades, soaps, and candles. They also made fabric clothes and bags with tie and dye, all are durable materials. They sell all these products to members of the society. These children with special needs in their own little ways despite their terrible condition are contributing to the development of the country, against the perceptions of the public that they are not useful.



Figure 1: Field survey, 2017



Figure 2: Field survey, 2017



Figure 3: Field survey, 2017



Figure 4: Field survey, 2017



Figure 5: Source: Guardian Newspaper, 2017





**Figure 6: Field survey, 2017**      A deaf and dumb electrician

Figure 5 above revealed the children with special needs being recognised and entertained by members of the society during one of the festive seasons in Nigeria. This is an indication that the society is realising the importance of making people with special needs have sense of belonging in the society. Figure 6 showed a deaf and dumb man working as an electrician in one of our Universities, revealing the contributions of these people to national development.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings revealed that the society identified those with special needs among them when these people were not able to do what others were doing with convenience. This finding accord perfectly with the view of Shakespeare (2001) that persons are disabled when the physical, cultural, political and economic structure of the society in which they live does not accommodate their impairment, disability indicates impairment, activity limitation and participation restrictions. This was corroborated by Groce et al (2011) that disability indicates impairment, activity limitations and participation restriction. This means activity limitation is one of the difficulties being encountered by an individual in executing a task or action of people with special needs.

Finding from the study revealed that people with special needs are always brutal when offended, and do not like being pitied by members of the society. Result revealed that the dominant attitude of people with special needs was that they were not being happy when people were looking at them; the physically challenged among them loved recognition and did not love being pitied. This has been in agreement with the observation of Yueng et al (2008) that persons with special needs in their relationship with other able bodied people in the society have tried to clarify many misconceptions the society is having towards people with special needs, and this had given them the sense of initiatives to be involved in their community. The reasons for this result could be attributed to the facts that people with special needs in the society today wants everybody to realise they are also important and useful like any other person, and that there is ability in their disability. This is the more reason they are agitating to be given some slots in political appointment and other recognised positions in the society, while instead of being pitied, the society should assist them in all ramifications to make life bearable for them.

The study also revealed the attitudes of members of the society towards people with special needs that people pitied and supported them financially, which were also mentioned by people with special needs. This showed the gravity of how the society cherished the well-being of these people. Finding also revealed that job opportunity was not convenient for them. This confirmed the reports of Trani et al (2010) and Grace et al (2011) that an individual who was born with disability or who became disabled often faced social marginalisation and had significantly less chance of accessing health care, education, housing or employment leading to poverty, which in turn resulted in restricted access to safe housing and food, health care and many others. Also Mitra and Sambamoorthi (2009) presented evidence of wage differentials as adults with disabilities were earning significantly less than non- disabled peers, even for similar work. These results could be justified due to the fact that other able bodied people in

the society have come to realise that people with special needs are also useful and are capable of doing what others can do although theirs in special way with individual special assistance.

On the contributions of people with special needs to the development of Nigeria, the study revealed that people with special needs are good at skilled work, farming, poultry, businesses, spotting activities, efficient at office or government work, can vote during elections and in summary being effective in their sources of income. Okoli (2014), asserted that a good number of persons with disability have managed to distinguish themselves in their chosen career to develop their country by building a society that is accessible to all Nigerians. This finding will enable the large number of people with special needs contribute their quota to national development thereby involving them socially, politically and economically all in the name of individual and national development. The result of this research could be justified with the fact that the moment a person with special needs is able to identify himself as being gifted in a particular area, develop himself in that line and declare himself in the area where he/she is gifted to members of the society, then people will no longer worry about their area of special needs, but will focus on what the person is able to do to sustain himself and the development of his/her society or country at large.

### **Policy implications**

The following are the policy implications of this study to government and the society at large that:

- a. there is ability in their disability for people with special needs.
- b. that everybody in the society is having one form of deformity or the other, only there are differences as some are more pronounced.
- c. people with special needs should see themselves as people that should develop themselves to be recognised and respected in the society, instead of turning themselves to nuisance.
- d. philanthropists should assist people with special needs by establishing them in their areas of specialisations.
- e. people with special needs should not see themselves as second class citizens, but believe they are the same like others in the society.
- f. parents having people with special needs should take them out for formal education, schools for special people or skill acquisition centres.
- g. people with special needs should be given political appointments in order to make them have a sense of belonging
- h. social security for people with disability should be set up for them to live normal lives

### **Conclusion**

In Nigeria, the societal negative attitude has continued to affect the social care for people with disabilities in terms of free education, medical care and unemployment which some are being neglected and isolated, or become homeless, living in the streets and begging for alms. As families and charity groups take on the responsibilities of people with special needs, there is still lack of government policies that protect and promote the rights of people with special needs. The disabled are pitied and assisted financially despite the fact that some people feel they are not useful to the society. However, they were observed to be effective in their sources of income and some are good at skilled work.

### **Recommendations**

- i. It is recommended that members of the society should change their views on people with special needs but have the belief that they are useful in their own little ways depending on their capability, which could be in terms of sports, handwork, creativity and many others
- ii. Parents are to stop hiding these children with special needs at home, but bring them out to centres where they could be developed.
- iii. People with special needs should be allowed and encouraged by their parents to receive formal education.

- iv. Siblings should support people with special needs with practical activities, provision of communication support, offering encouragement; providing companionship of emotional support and keeping up social contact.

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