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**EFFECTS OF DISABILITY ON EDUCATION
(A CASE OF PERSONS WITH IMPAIRMENT IN UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS)**

OMOJUWA AYODELE
Department of Art Education,
University of Lagos
aomjuwa@unilag.edu.ng

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EFFECTS OF DISABILITY ON EDUCATION (A CASE OF PERSONS WITH IMPAIRMENT IN UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS)

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Abstract

Disability has been observed to have effect on the general live of persons especially those 8th admitted in schools. But this research dwells on effect it has on the academic performance of students. In this 21st Century, the rate of disability has increased 20% over the years, even those that were given birth to without disability, developed one as they grow up; and this has great effect on their academic performance.

Introduction

Disability is a contested concept with shifting meanings in different communities, it has been referred to as “embodied differences”, but the term may also refer to physical or mental attributes that some institutions particularly education can hardly reckon with. It may also refer to limit actions imposed on people by the constraints of an ablest society (the social model); or the term may serve to refer to the identity of disabled people.

Physiological functional capacity being a measure of an individual's performance level that gauges one's ability to perform the physical tasks of daily life, and the ease with which these tasks are performed declines with advancing age to result in frailty, cognitive disorders, or physical disorder, all of which may lead to labeling individuals as 'disabled'. According to the world's report on disability, 15% of the world's population or 1 billion people are affected by disability. A disability may be readily visible, or invisible in nature. These conditions, or impairments, may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime, and hence may or may not have a great impact on education of the individual. However, the question of how is the educational involvement of person with disability have consistently been raised considerable interest in the field of educational research, as there are some people with impairments that have dropped out of school because they feel they are not equal to the educational requirements. But the society having great potential to influence persons with disability will enable them achieve more academically and the statement of 'disability is not inability' will uphold. However, the problem of open stigmatization placed on the persons with disability have resulted the poor achievement of persons with impairment academically and in higher institution in particular as there are students who did not disclose their disability to the school . This also has been a problem in the study of effect of education on persons with disability.

Effect of Disability Stigma on Students with Disability

In order to understand the negative effect stigma may have on university students with disabilities, in this research, we will consider how they are perceived by their non-disabled peers. Disability stigma is frequently negative in the life of students with disabilities. According to the disability hierarchy, there are people with visible disability and people with non-disability. People with non-visible disabilities such as psychiatric and cognitive disability generally may be perceived more negatively than people with visible disabilities possibly due to uncertainty surrounding interactions with these people. Research shows that students with psychiatric disabilities are typically seen as dangerous and unpredictable, and individuals with individuals with cognitive disabilities are typically seen as having difficulty interacting with non-disabled peers in group activities such as sports (Hayward & Bright, 1997). In addition, students with cognitive disabilities are believed to struggle academically. Second, it was predicted that students with psychiatric and cognitive disabilities would be expected to display more disruptive classroom behaviors and to perform worse on academic tasks because individuals with psychiatric disabilities are typically seen as being unstable, and because individuals with cognitive disabilities are typically seen as being less capable of completing complex tasks (Hayward & Bright, 1997).

In addition Upton and Harper (2002) states in their research that, it was expected of non-disabled students to perceive students with non-visible disabilities as being less deserving of academic accommodation than students with visible disabilities. This is because non-visible disabilities students typically are not evident to the casual observer; hence they can appear to be non-disabled and therefore can be perceived as not needing any academic

accommodation. Similarly, non-disabled students expect that students with non-visible disabilities would be better able to deal with their disabilities compared to students with visible disabilities. Also, they feel less warmly towards students with non-visible disabilities because they tend to feel more sympathetic to students with visible disabilities (Cahill & Eggleston, 1995).

Implication of University Perception on Academic Performance of Students with Impairments

Understanding the perception of students with disabilities is important because, from the basis of disability stereotypes which in turn can undermine academic performance. For instance, students with disabilities are more dependent, incompetent, unstable, vulnerable, emotionally unstable, less outgoing and intelligent than non-disabled students (Hayward & Bright, 1997; Siperstein et al., 2003). Although faculty generally tend to have to have positive attitudes towards students with disability, some have less positive attitude and doubts about the disability of students with disabilities to succeed at university (Belch, 2011; Lyman et al., 2016). Similarly, peers without disability may be doubtful of the legitimacy and fairness of academic accommodations for students with disability. Research by Lyman et al (2010), showed that students with disabilities in fact are likely aware of these negative attitudes; hence they themselves at times question the legitimacy of their own disability and accommodation use, and fear being seen by peers as receiving unfairly-advantageous treatment. If students with disabilities are aware of the negative stereotype their peers and instructors have towards them, they may experience stereotype threat (that is the fear of confirming the negative stereotype about a group to which one belongs. This fear can hinder achievement and lead to under performance in the domain in which the group is stereotyped to perform poorly (Steel & Aronson 1995). For instance, girls may perform worse than boys in math task because they are aware of the stereotype that boys are better than girls in math. Similarly, if students with cognitive disabilities are aware of the stereotype that people with cognitive disabilities are less intelligent, they might consequently perform more poorly on exams or avoid academic leadership opportunities such as heading a class group project for fear of potentially confirming the stereotype. Also, students believed that students with physical disabilities are more disruptive in class than non-disabled students. If students with physical disabilities are aware of this belief, they may be less likely to ask questions in class for fear of appearing disruptive and this can also be extended beyond classroom activities, that they might start feeling less self integrity, experience more life stress and participate less frequently in challenge-seeking activities.

Additionally, disability stereotype also have important implications for inter personal interactions with teachers and students. For instance, if a lecturer thinks that students with disabilities are less academically capable than non-disabled students, the lecturer/teacher may be less attentive to those students and as a result, such students become less capable because they are given less opportunity to improve which may affect their academic

performance. These also affect the teacher's behavior as there are also some factors that make teaching students with disability a challenge to lecturers.

Challenges of Teaching Students with Impairments

Lecturers face some challenges when trying to teach in an inclusive class. For instance, a visual impaired student may need to record the lectures of a lecturer during lectures, and some lecturers frowns it when their lectures are being recorded. Hence they feel uncomfortable. The other challenge faced by university lecturers is lack of system to identify students with impairment, especially, those with invisible impairment as they are students with non-visible disability. The lack of system to detect such students, make it difficult to determine the prevalence of impairments, the categories of the impairment and to identify appropriate interventions. This is a problem in Nigerian education in general, lack of funding, educational philosophy, and might be a factor that contributes to the problem of lack of resources for students with impairments.

In addition, it has been discovered that class size is also one of the challenges that impact to the problems of teaching students with impairments. A research conducted shows that 51% of lecturers thought the numbers of students in their class are too large to help student with disabilities. Also, the research shows that there was a significant difference in the perception of the challenges of teaching students with impairment between male and female lecturers. Male lecturers find it very challenging working with students with impairment rather than female lecturers. Female lecturers have more positive attitude towards including students with impairment in a general education classroom.

Furthermore, another factor that contributed to the challenges is the teaching experience. According to research, lecturers with 11 or more teaching experience had significantly more positive perception towards including student with impairments in the class than a lecturer who had 0-5 years teaching experience. This is because the teachers with more experience may have better way of working with all students. (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000).

Conclusion

Sequel to the findings of this study, there are great effects of disability on education of persons in the academic performance of such students. The study also shows that impairment mars the total behaviour of such impaired including; inattentive in the classroom, boycotting lesson, and getting discouraged a times. Again, it equally increases their low self-esteem of the carrier a well lead to stigmatize and affect the academic performance, some have drop out of school because of this impairment. Although, some ablest (students with impairment perform more excellently well more than student without disability, but majority of students with disability has been sent into pessimism as a result of it effect.

Recommendation

In accordance with the discussion and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are given;

1. Government should finance the education of persons with disability.
2. There should be no exclusion in the education system for students with impairment.
3. There should be provision of materials to aid students with impairment and these materials should be transcribed to different format to fit all important types.
4. Lecturers should get trainings on how to teach students with impairment.
5. Building in school environment should be inclusive and accessible

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