

Organizational Policy and the Physically Challenged at the Rivers State University, 2015-2025

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ABSTRACT: This study examined policy of the Rivers State University in accommodating the peculiar situations of the physically challenged in the work environment. It is anchored on three fundamental research questions as follows: What are the organizational policies of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged? To what extent has the organizational policies of the Rivers State University (if any) been implemented? What is the perception of staff of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged? The theoretical framework of the study is anchored on the Social Model of Disability Theory formalized in a 1976 statement of the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation. The study is quantitative and derived primary data from oral interview of three key management staff of the University and questionnaires were administered on 345 staff of the University determined through the Taro Yamene Statistical formula, out of which 312 were retrieved giving 90% response rate. Findings from the study indicate that there are no deliberate policies in the Rivers State University to accommodate the plight of the physically challenged. Based on the findings, the study, amongst others, recommended that authorities of the Institution should develop a framework and policy to accommodate the plight of the physically challenged in the environment.

KEYWORDS: Organization; Policy; Physically Challenged; Rivers State University; Work Environment.

INTRODUCTION

The last Olympics sports in Japan was quickly followed by the Paralympics. Whilst at the main Olympic, Nigeria was only able to manage a paltry one Silver and Bronze medals, the Nigerian contingent to the Paralympics festival returned with a total of ten medals comprising four gold, three silver and 3 bronze medals. As a matter of fact, they, brought more and better honour to Nigeria than the contingents at the main event. This supports the World Bank (2021) report that many businesses have discovered that hiring physically challenged individuals can surpass the normal human beings, as they are better and able to comprehend and serve the customers with disabled people. Despite the honour they brought to Nigeria, the country did not reckon with them as much as they did to the main Olympic contingents. For instance, as soon the main contingents arrived the country, the Federal Government rewarded the Gold medalist with the sum of \$10,000, while the Bronze medalist was rewarded with \$5,000. They were also received in their various home states to a rousing reception, amidst praises and encomiums by their State Governments. On the other hand, the heroic paralympians were left unnoticed without any instant reward, even though it was advocated that they be rewarded like their main counterparts. This is a clear example of discrimination and prejudice against the physically challenged.

This level of discrimination against the physically challenged is commonplace not only in the sporting circle, but every other sphere of human endeavor, be it in economic, social and political spheres, is a worrisome development as not adequate consideration is given to the myriad of challenges faced by this set of people. It is observed that in most public places, there are no deliberate policy measures implemented to take into consideration to accommodate the challenges faced by such physically challenged as visually impaired, hard to hear, albino, autistic, and even mentally deranged persons.

The cultural and traditional beliefs of the people have not helped matters as a number of factors could be attributed to situations that result to a person being physically challenged, thus resulting to certain stereotypes and prejudices. For instance, Obani in Ajobiwe (2000) collated the belief of Nigerian culture with respect to the cause of physical disability and arrived at the following causes: curse on the family or the wider community for offences committed against god or gods; anger of the ancestors for breached promises; punishment on the child for offence committed, or parents misconduct, especially mother. These notion, though irrational, have created certain stereotypes which has affected the behaviour and attitude of people towards people living with disabilities.

According to the United Nations (2000), disabled persons often suffer from discrimination as a result of prejudice or ignorance and also may lack access to essential services. Consequent upon this, it presents a silent crisis which affects not only disabled persons

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themselves and their families, but also the economic and social development of entire societies where a significant reservoir of human potential often goes untapped.

In spite of this situation, contribution of United Nations specialized agencies to advance the challenges faced by the physically challenged is noteworthy. For instance, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) by providing special education, World Health Organization (WHO) by providing technical assistance in health and prevention; United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) by supporting childhood disability programmes and providing technical assistance in collaboration with Rehabilitation International (a non-governmental organization); International Labour Organization (ILO) by improving access to the labour market and increasing economic integration through international labour standards and technical cooperation activities.

It is against this background that this study examines organizational policy on the physically challenged in Nigeria using, the Rivers State University, a Rivers State Government owned tertiary institution in Nigeria, as a paradigm of analysis.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is observed that more than half a million people are disabled as a result of mental, physical or sensory impairment and no matter which part of the world they are in, their lives are often limited by physical or social barriers. 80% of the world's disabled population live in developing countries (UN Enable, n.d.).

Prejudice and discrimination of the physically challenged in the society has continued to pose great challenges to the development of the society. Though physically challenged, most disabled persons are not mentally challenged and thus have the capacity to contribute their quota to the development of their society. They, however, have not been taken into consideration in national and organizational plans and programmes. This neglect indicates that a significant segment of the population of the society is alienated and disadvantaged compared with their counterparts. In 2020, some physically challenged persons protested over the neglect by the Niger Delta Development omission (NDDC) in allocation of resources and over their neglect. They decried that during the distribution of palliatives over the COVID -19 pandemic, they were not put into consideration, as they were expected to struggle with the physically fit to gain access to the palliatives. This appalling situation poses a problem to the nation.

Most organizations do not reckon with the physically challenged and so do not make provisions for them, while considering people for employment, even if such persons were to be eminently qualified for such jobs. In the midst of this situation, there have been advocacy for equal opportunities for all citizens. It is imperative to note here that most public buildings in Nigeria such as schools. Hospitals, banks and even shops, where people make economic transactions are still inaccessible to persons with disabilities, yet the physically challenged constitute a segment of the population of the country.

Considering that issues which have to do with physical challenges and disabilities, most often, are caused by human factors, it is imperative that neglect, lack of care and assistance from the society present the challenges faced by the physically challenged as a silent emergency that needs to be addressed and solved through deliberate policies and implementation, such that would accommodate and give consideration to the plight of these segment of members of the society. It is, therefore, the problem posed by this situation that this study attempts to investigate. The study shall achieve the objectives through interviews with key officers of the University who are saddled with the responsibility of designing policies and implementing them as well as some staff of the University on their perception of working relationship with the physically challenged.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are, to:

- i. identify organizational policies of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged;
- ii. examine to what extent the organizational policies on the physically challenged (if any) at the Rivers State University are implemented;
- iii. ascertain the perception of staff of Rivers State University towards the physically challenged.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The study is guided by the understated research questions:

- i. What are the organizational policies of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged?
- ii. To what extent has the organizational policy of the Rivers State University on the physically challenge been implemented?
- iii. What is the perception of staff of the Rivers state University on the physically challenged?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY: A review on the literature on organizational policy would be clearer when the concepts of organization and policy are looked at distinctly. This would present a better understanding of the concept, organizational policy. To start with, Henry (1995) is of the opinion that organizations are different entities to different people and that this phenomenon is

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unavoidable. Thus, organizations are defined according to the contexts and perspectives peculiar to the person defining it. In this regard, Sharma *et al* (2012) aver that the concept organization is used in at least three different meanings namely:

- i. The act of designing the administrative structure,
- ii. Both designing and building the structure, i.e planning the scheme of the structure and appointing suitable personnel to it, the resulting administrative structure itself.

For Scott (1965), a formal organization is a system of coordinated activities of a group of people working cooperatively towards a common goal under authority and leadership. Organizations are created and maintained by their members as a means of satisfying their personal objectives. But organizations also have their objectives, distinct from the objectives of individual members, but derived from them. Adilje (2008) in his opinion asserts that organizations are consciously created to accomplish certain objectives and in order to accomplish these objectives, organizations formulate appropriate strategies for achieving these set(s) of goals. For Simon (1976), organization is important because organizational environments provide much of the force that moulds and develops personal qualities and habits. It provides those in positions the means of exercising authority and influence over others. Organization is important because by structuring communications, it determines the environment of information in which decisions are taken. It is a complex pattern of communication and relationship in a group of human beings.

On the other hand, Eminue in Dode (2012) defines policy as a statement of the goals and objectives of an organization in relation to a particular subject and the description of the strategies by which the goals and objectives are to be achieved. Friedrich (1997) in Allen (2011) defines policy as a proposed course of action of a person or group of persons or government within a given environment, providing the platform and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilize and overcome, in an effort to reach a goal or realize an objective or purpose. For Anderson (2003), a policy is a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. On his part Nwokocha (2007, p. 193) posits that a policy is the decision that defines goals, set precedents and lay down courses of action to implement the decision (sic). Policy is the official guideline(s) for intentions, goals and actions of an organization in carrying out known and defined objectives. It is a well-defined course or method of action chosen among many alternatives to guide future action. Torjman (2005) on his part identifies steps in the policy making process as follows: selecting the desired objective, identifying the target of the objective, determining the pathway to reach the objective, as well as designing the specific programme or measure in respect of that goal, implementing the measure and assessing the impact.

It is important to note that policy making and implementation involve decision making and decision making entails identifying a problem, analysis of alternatives and selection of a solution (action) (Sapru, 2006, p. 6). Egonwam (2000) outlined the policy process as follows:

- i. Goal formulation involving multiple groups with varying and often conflicting objectives;
- ii. Problem identification and definition as a result of potential ignorance of a problem;
- iii. Agenda setting involving attempts by individuals and group to influence policy decisions, and
- iv. Seeking policy alternatives and evaluation such policy alternatives (analysis of policy option), and
- v. Policy choice.

He went further to argue that the implementation state is the most difficult stage in the policy-making process because this stage is compounded by certain assumptions that are generally made by policy formulations. According to him, these assumptions include:

- i. That implementing agencies will faithfully adhere to the policy handed down them i.e. faithfully implement policies given to them;
- ii. That policy handed down is implementable i.e. that resources-knowledge, money, men and materials are available to implement a given policy;
- iii. That the change contemplated is technically feasible (Egonwam, 2000, p.12).

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED: The concept of physically challenged is used to describe a physical or mental condition of an individual. For instance, Kirk, Gaagher and Amastasiow (1997) define physical challenge as a condition that interferes with the individuals' ability to use his body. The World Health Organization (WHO) (1980, p 29) defines the condition of being handicapped as:

the loss of limitation of opportunities to take part in the life of a person with a disability and short coming in the environment and in many organized activities of the society, for example, which prevent persons with disabilities from participating, on equal terms. It is a disadvantage for a given individual resulting from impairment or a disability that limits the fulfillment of a role that is normal (depending on sex, social and cultural factors for that individual)

The WHO further explains that disability is a difficulty in the functioning of the body, person or societal levels in one or more life domains, as experienced by an individual with a health condition in interaction with contextual factors (WHO, 2010). We may also note at this juncture that physically challenged children include those with non-sensory physical limitations or health problems.

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The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provide a blueprint for the Year 2015 as a critical inclusive framework for advancing the human rights and the quality of life of persons with disability and their families. Despite the omission of specific reference to persons with disabilities in the 18 targets for 2015 or the 48 monitoring indicators of the MDG framework, recognition has, nonetheless, been given to their needs. An international effort is now underway for the explicit inclusion of disability dimension into the five year review of MDG achievements. However, concerns remain over the ability to translate the international goals into reality as expressed, for example, by a disability and development worker in India (UNICEF, 2009).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (the Convention) was entered into force in May 2008. It provides for the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and freedom for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind. Although the Convention does not explicitly define disability, it considers that disability arises from a health condition in interaction with the environment. The overall context, guiding principles and key features of the WHO policy on the employment of persons with disabilities are laid out in the Convention, in the General Assembly Resolutions 61/106 and 67/170 and in the policy statement on the “Employment of Persons with disabilities in the United Nations Workplace, endorsed in June 2009 by the Chief Executives Board Human resources Network for agencies across the UN Common Systems guiding the framework.

The Government of Nigeria in the revised edition of its National Policy on Education (2014) adopted mainstreaming as a replaced for segregation of the physically challenged. The policy provided for equal education opportunities for all children, irrespective of their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities in order to fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation. This implies that the physically challenged will learn or be educated in the same classroom setting with their counterparts, irrespective of their disabilities. The purpose and objectives of special education programmes as stated in the National Policy on Education, Section 7 are:

- I. Provide access to education for all persons , in an inclusive setting;
- II. Equalizing educational opportunities for all persons irrespective of their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities;
- III. Provide adequate education for all persons with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation;
- IV. Provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented persons to develop their talents, natural endowments/traits at their own pace in the interest of national development, and
- V. Design a diversified and appropriate curriculum for all the beneficiaries.

To this end, the Federal Government established a College of Education designated Government Advanced Teacher Training College (Special) Education Oyo, Oyo State in 1977 (now known as Federal College of Education (Special), to produce teachers or specialists for the physically challenged, as well as gifted children. A special unit at the Federal Ministry of Education was also created, while special education section was also created at the various States Ministries of Education. Some universities also run programmes in their respective Faculties of Education, for instance, University of Ibadan, University of Calabar, University of Jos, amongst others, at both under graduate and graduate level (Ogunleye, et al , 2019). However, studies have shown some perceptions on employers perspective in vulnerable worker. For instance Kersten, et al (2022) in their study of organizational policies and practices for the inclusion of vulnerable workers found out that there seven types of practices based on the perception of employers as follows: senior management commitment, recruitment and selection, other HR practices, job accommodation and redesign of work, supportive culture, external collaborations and monitory. They further argue that these factors affect the various stages of the employee journey ranging from onboarding of the employee to advancement in the organization. Again, Mousa and Samara (2022) and Eissenstat, et al (2022) in their studies focusing on limitations that affect the vulnerable in the workplace have paid attention to issues to issues such as discrimination of the physically challenged at the workplace.

HISTORY OF THE RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Rivers State University was formally known as Rivers State University of Science and Technology. It evolved from the then College of Science and Technology, Rivers State which was established by the promulgation of Rivers State Government Edict No 10 on 4th December 1970. The overarching projection was that the College would in ten years metamorphose into a University. By August 6, 1980, the projection of the founding fathers of the Institution came to reality as the Rivers State University was created from the then College of Science and Technology, as a third generation Nigerian university. Its establishment conferred on it the status of a premier University of science and technology in Nigeria. The pioneer Vice Chancellor of the University was Professor Turner Timipre Isoun. Since then, there have been seven successive leaderships/Vice-Chancellors of the Institution.

With a vision to establish a world class and uncommon University structurally and philosophically oriented to solve the practical and peculiar problems of the Niger Delta Region, the missions of the University are to offer men and women unique educational opportunity and experience for the pursuit of learning in the relevant branches of knowledge. To achieve its mission, the University, amongst others, seeks to encourage and promote excellence in original, creative and scholarly research (basic and applied) in fostering a learning process with problem solving content; support and expand in the various disciplines, responding especially to

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the contemporary scientific and technical demands and challenges of the society. In 2015, the Rivers State University of Science and Technology was renamed the Rivers State University. The Institution has grown from a small beginning to a complex conventional Nigerian university with 9 Faculties, 4 Institutes, 8 Centres and Units, 6 non-teaching service departments, as well as a College of Medical Sciences (RSU, 2020).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The development and use of theories in the academia and scholarly research helps the researcher specify which elements of a framework are relevant to particular questions and to make general working assumptions on the shape and length of these elements (Nnamdi, 2014).

This study is anchored on the Social Model of Disability Theory which was formalized in a 1976 statement of the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (Anastasiou and Rauffman, 2003). The theory argues that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Such barriers can be physical like building, not having accessible toilets. It identifies systemic barriers, derogatory attitude and social exclusion (intentional and inadvertent), which make it difficult or impossible for people with impairment to attain their valued functioning.

The social model of disability has been influential in shaping public policy on disability matters and the education of students with disabilities in the United Kingdom, many countries in Europe, and on the wider international stage, including the United States, during the last two decades (McKay, 2002, Lindsay, 2003).

In relation to this study, that the physical challenged persons are an integral part of the society makes it imperative for their conditions to be considered in policies of the larger society and organizations. To this end, whenever development issues are considered, or issues that have to do with the realization of organizational goals and objectives are taken into consideration, it is not out of place to consider the contributions of the physically challenged in the society, as their contributions are also important in the overall development of both the organization and society. The non-discrimination and discrimination of all forms of segregation of this segment of the population is vital for the general good and development of the society.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study is quantitative and thus derived data through questionnaires which were randomly administered on 345 persons who are serving teaching and non-teaching staff of the University. The questionnaires were designed to elicit information that would achieve the intended objective. A total of 312 questionnaires were retrieved making a total of 90% response rate. The information obtained were analysed using simple percentage technique from where conclusion was drawn.

Oral interviews were also conducted on key officers of the University as follows: Registrar, Mr. Sydney Enyindah; Director of Establishments, Dr. (Mrs) Idanyegi Daminabo, as well as Director of Physical Planning of the University, Dr. Ben Woke.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study is 2554, being the total number of teaching and non-teaching staff in the Rivers State University (RSU, 2021). It is from this figure that the sample size was determined.

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for this study is 345. It was determined using the Taro Yamene statistical formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where n is the sample size

N is the population of the study

e is the margin of error in calculation

Therefore:

$$n = \frac{2554}{1 + 2554(0.005)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2554}{1 + 2554(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{2554}{1 + 6.39}$$

$$n = \frac{2554}{7.39}$$

$$n = 345$$

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The study is quantitative and therefore obtained primary data for discussion and analysis through a research instrument structured to elicit the desired information. A total of 345 questionnaires were distributed and 312 of them were retrieved from respondents. This gave 90% response rate. The questionnaire was administered using the random sampling technique.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained were analysed using the simple percentage technique.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**Table 1 Showing Demographic Statistics of Respondents**

S/N	Characteristics of Respondents	No. of Respondents	%
1	Gender Male Female	132 180	42 58
2	Academic Qualification FSLC OND/HND B.Sc./BA Higher Degree	30 66 110 106	10 21 35 34
3	Department Registry Library Bursary Works and Services Faculty College	30 33 84 42 60 63	10 11 27 13 19 20
4	Length of Service 1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years 21-25 years 26 years and above	90 54 51 42 46 27	29 17 16 13 15 10

Source: Field Work, 2023

The Table above shows the demographic statistics of respondents. It indicates that 132 consisting 42% were male, while 180 making 58% response rate were female. As regards the academic qualifications of respondents, the statistics indicate that 30 respondents, representing 10% had First School Leaving Certificate; 66 respondents making 21% had Ordinary National Diploma/ Higher National Diploma; 120 respondents making 38% had Bachelors of Science of Bachelors of Arts degree, while 110 respondents consisting 35% had either Master's or Doctorate Degrees making 34% response rate had Doctorate Degrees. It further reveals that 30 respondents consisting 10% response rate were from the Registry Department; 33 consisting 11% response rate were from the Library Department; 84 respondents representing 27% response rate were from the Bursary Department; 42 respondents consisting 13% response rate were from the Works and Services Department, 60 respondents representing 19% response rate were from the various Faculties, while 63 respondents consisting of 20% responder rate were from the College of Medical sciences. As regards the length of service of respondents, 90 respondents consisting 29% response rate had stayed between 1-5 years, 54 respondents representing 17% response rate had stayed between 6-10; 51 respondents representing 16% response rate had served between 11 – 15 years, 42 respondents, consisting 13% response rate had served between 16 and 20 years, 46 respondents making 15% response rate had served between 21 and 25 years, while 27 respondents consisting 10 response rate had served between 25 years and above.

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: What are the organizational policies of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged? Information from the oral interview with the Registrar of the University, the Director of Personnel and the Director of Physical Planning of the University indicate that there are no deliberate policy carved out by the management of the Institution on the physically challenged both as staff members, students or visitors to the Institution.

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: To what extent has the organizational policy on physically challenged (if any) at the Rivers State University been implemented.

Since there is no deliberate policy on the physically challenged in the University, it was difficult to ascertain to what extent the organizational policy has been implemented.

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RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: What is the perception of staff of Rivers State University towards the physically challenged?

Table 2 showing Perception of staff on working relationship with people with physical challenges.

S/N	QUESTION	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
1	I am comfortable working with a physically challenged person	132 42	93 30	81 25	6 2	312 100
2	Physically challenged persons can also contribute to the overall objectives of the Rivers State University.	126 40	117 36	42 13	27 9	312 100
3	I can assist a physically challenged colleague if he or she finds it difficult in carry out his duties.	150 48	135 43	45 4	36 4	312 100
4	The Rivers State University does not take into cognizance the plight of the physically challenged.	150 48	105 34	24 8	27 7	312 100
5.	Physically challenged are a burden to the smooth running of the Rivers State University.	42 13	12 4	144 46	114 37	312 100
6	I f I am in position, I will employ a physically challenged with requisite qualification and competence at the Rivers State University.	106 50	108 34	24 8	24 8	104 100

Source: Field Study, 2023.

Table 2 above shows the perception of staff of the Rivers State University and there working relationship with people with physical challenges. It shows that 132 respondents consisting of 42% response rate Strongly Agree that they were comfortable working with physically challenged persons, while 93 respondents, comprising 30% response rate Agree, while 81 respondents, consisting 25% Disagreed and 6 respondents consisting 2% response rate strongly disagreed. The overall implication is that majority of the respondents affirmed that they were comfortable working with physically challenged persons. As regards whether physically challenged persons can also contribute to the overall objectives of the Rivers State University, the Table indicates that 126 respondents, consisting of 40% response rate strongly agreed, 117 respondents consisting of 36% response rate agree, whereas 42 respondents consisting 13% response rate disagreed, while 27 respondents making 9% response rate strongly disagreed. The Table further reveals that 159 respondents consisting of 48% response rate Strongly agreed, 105 respondents consisting 34% response rate Agreed, whereas 24 respondents consisting 8% response rate disagreed, while 27 respondents consisting 7% response rate strongly disagreed.. As regards whether persons with physical challenges constitute a burden to the smooth running of the Rivers State University, the statistics indicate that 42 respondents constituting 13% response rate strongly agreed, 12 respondents representing 4% agreed, while 144 respondents representing 46% response rate disagreed, and 114 respondents, representing 37 % response rate strongly disagreed. It also showed that 106 respondents representing 50% response rate, and 108 respondents consisting 43% response rate strongly agreed and agreed respectively that if they were imposition of authority they would employ physically challenged persons with requisite qualification and competence at the Rivers State University, while 24 respondents, consisting 8% response rate and another 24 respondents, consisting 8% response rate disagreed and strongly disagreed to the assertion.

DISCUSSION

Data from the study indicates that whereas there is no policy framework and recognition of the challenges faced by the physically challenged in the work environment, resulting to the non-factoring in of the challenges they face in both the social and work environment. The authorities of the Rivers State University are yet to domesticate the official policy of government on accommodation of the challenges faced by the physically, thus making it difficult for the physically challenged to successfully operate within the work environment. Despite the non-availability and implementation of a policy framework on the plight of the physically challenged at the Rivers State University, members of staff have indicated a non-sensitive posture in their working relationship with the physically challenged persons in the Institution. This assertion is derived from the response from respondents indicated that majority of staff did not mind working with a physically challenged person, even as they believe that physically challenged persons can also contribute to the attainment of the overall objectives of the Rivers State University. The study is also indicative that there is a dichotomy between the organizational policy of the administration of Rivers State University on the

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physically challenged and the perception of members of staff of the Institution. While there is no deliberate effort by the authorities of the University to reckon with challenges of the physically challenged by making provisions that would assist them in carrying out their activities, members of staff are receptive and accommodating to their plight, hence do not mind working with such persons who are qualified and have the requisite competence to discharge their duties. Participant observation from the Rivers State University indicated that lack of organizational policy of the Rivers State University on the physically challenged is manifest from the fact that when constructing buildings in the Institution, there is no provision for the physically challenged who may have difficulty in assessing such building. Even the walk ways, in the Institution are not constructed in such a way as to assist the visually impaired to move around, and so on.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that despite the presence of policy framework to consider the challenges faced by the physically challenged in the society, the Institution studied did not put into consideration, their plight while providing infrastructure in the work environment. To this end, it was difficult to accommodate such group of persons within the work space. This development denied them their contribution to contributing their quota in the overall development of the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, this study recommends as follows:

- The authorities of the Rivers State University should develop a framework and policy to accommodate the plight of the physically challenged in the environment.
- When such policies are developed, they should be carefully and properly implemented in order to ensure that issues bothering about the physically challenged should be addressed.
- There should be sensitization and orientation of members of the University community on the importance of accommodating the physically challenged, particularly those with the requisite competence and qualifications to contribute to the attainment of the goals of the University.

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