Employment challenges experienced by persons with disabilities: A case study of Southwest Nigeria

By

Adebanke Oketola

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Department of Disability Studies
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Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT

**Background:** Existing literature on employment for people with disabilities in Nigeria indicates that there is poor rate of employment of this group, and the few that are employed do not enjoy job satisfaction, neither do they get sufficient support from the state.

**Purpose:** This thesis seeks to investigate how the history of Nigeria, and the culture of the southwest Nigeria, enhance disabling conditions around employment of citizens with disabilities.

**Method:** This study utilized a mixed methods design involving a combination of qualitative descriptive approach and a review of existing literature on the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria. Seven participants with mobility impairments, employed in both private and government institutions in Southwest Nigeria participated in this study. Data analysis was performed using NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis software.

**Findings:** The results of this study show that history of Nigeria and culture of southwest Nigeria have major influences on the parameters of employment for people with disabilities. This group experience disablement in employment as a result of physical and attitudinal barriers, discrimination and lack of protection in un-implemented legislation. Employment was found to be a protective factor for both physical and psychological health of persons with disabilities.

**Conclusions:** By combating disabling cultural beliefs, ableist attitudes, discrimination and lack of accessibility within the society, people with disabilities may be opportuned to contribute significantly to the society through their employment.
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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Few aspects of the lives of disabled people have received as much attention as the relationship between disability and employment, thus studies on employment opportunities for disabled men and women are many and various (De Veirman, 2015). Unfortunately, there has been little research on the subject in middle- to low-income countries. There is, especially, a dearth of qualitative information regarding employment and persons with disabilities in Nigeria. However, the existing literature on employment for people with impairments in Nigeria indicates that there is poor rate of employment of this group (Juillard, Labinjo, Kobusingye, & Hyder, 2010; Peters, Buni, Oyeyemi & Hamzat, 2013; Smith, 2011) and the few that are employed do not enjoy job satisfaction (Ademokoya & Akhigbe, 2006; Hamzat & Dada, 2005; Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2011), neither do they get sufficient support from the state (Eleweke, 2013; Peters et al., 2013).

Nigeria has legal structures in place to protect persons with disabilities and to ensure their inclusion in the society, especially in the workplace (Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, 2016). This study thus attempts to explain how the history of Nigeria and the culture of Southwest region of the country create attitudinal and discriminatory barriers which influence employment conditions for persons with disabilities.

Nigeria is a country that is categorised as both a developing country and a lower-middle income country (United Nations, 2014). The country has a history of slave trade and colonialization; and since gaining independence from Britain in 1960, has been dealing with incessant religious and ethnic conflicts, corruption, and poverty (Jauhari, 2011; Odeyemi, 2014; Sampson, 2014). These conflicts have undoubtedly created a situation of political and economic unrest within the country.
Despite the vast wealth the country gains from petroleum (Falola & Heaton, 2008), it is still one of the poor countries of the world (UN, 2014).

Improved rehabilitative and educational services for people with disabilities in recent times have resulted in higher aspirations and greater academic achievements (Ademokoya & Akhigbe, 2006), but these do not appear to have improved their employment opportunities (Adekile, 2014; Ademokoya & Akhigbe, 2006; Smith, 2011). Findings of Ademokoya and Akhigbe (2006) show that workers with impairments in Oyo State (Southwest Nigeria) are often not placed in cadres or job levels appropriate to their academic qualifications, neither are they assigned to perform duties that are at par with their qualifications. In their study on rates of return to work after stroke, Peters et al. (2013) suggested that lack of country specific data, which can assist in development of effective policies and programs, might be responsible for the lack of effective policies that will enhance return to work following a disability. Unfortunately, disabled people are often the most affected by lower incomes, reduced access to the labour market, and lesser access to education in developing countries (Echevin, 2013). Existing research show that employment for persons with disabilities is fraught with challenges that results in severe negative consequences, not just for them, but also for their families, communities and societies. This study identifies some of the cultural, historical and discriminatory practices that might be responsible for employment challenges experienced by persons with impairments, specifically in the Southwest region of the country.

Employment is identified as one of the social determinants of health by WHO; and population health is in turn strongly influenced by the social determinants (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Social factors shape how much a given population is exposed to risks and protective factors for
physical and mental health throughout the life course (Puig-Barrachina, Malmusi, Martínez and Benach, 2011). Unemployment is a social factor that puts health at risk; and unemployed people and their families suffer a substantially increased risk of premature death, anxiety about job security (which impacts heavily on mental health and self-report ill health), as well as increased risk for chronic diseases (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Unfortunately, disabled adults are twice as likely to be in households with lower incomes, largely because disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to live in workless households (Thornton, 2005). In addition to income inequality, lack of employment is one of the risk factors associated with experiences of lifetime violence (Puri, Misra & Hawkes, 2015) as poverty increases vulnerability. Employment for all citizens is a human rights issue that impacts on not just individual health but population health as well. Therefore, exploring the cultural, historical and discriminatory factors that create and maintain employment challenges for Nigerians with impairments is crucial for overall population health.

Some authors (Eleweke, 2013; Vincent-Onabajo & Blasu, 2016), assert that findings from the studies about employment of disabled persons from developed countries may not be representative of the situation in Nigeria and hence, may not suffice in understanding the factors that create and maintain disablement in Nigeria. This is because the health needs, self-esteem and community participation of people with disabilities living in Nigeria may be different from those in other societies due to the influence of socio-cultural, religious and environmental factors (Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008). Apart from the negative connotations about disabled persons in various traditional myths (Abang, 1988; Etieyibo & Omiegbe, 2016; Ikuomola, 2015; Olaiya, 2013; Sanya, Salami, Goodman, Buhari, & Araoye, 2005), different cultures also present stereotypical views about the specific activities suitable for disabled persons; many of which limit the life-choices
available to them (Aiyeleso, 2016; Bukoye & Ogidan, 2013; Deepak, 2001). And as pointed out by Wilkinson and Marmot (2003), having little control over one’s employment is strongly related to an increased risk of overall poor health. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to find out how the relationship between history and culture of Southwest Nigeria, as well as the discriminatory practices in the Nigerian society create the barriers in employment for citizens with disabilities.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Nigeria is comprised of three major ethnic groups; the Hausa, the Yoruba and Ibo (Crowder, 1966). For this study, the Yoruba ethnic group that make up the Southwest region of the country was chosen because I am of the Yoruba ethnic group and it is the region I am most familiar with. In order to examine and understand the employment challenges of people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria, intersectionality has been utilised as a theoretical approach. Intersectionality has been described as a methodology of studying the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations (McCall, 2005). As a female who acquired a disability during my internship in Southwest Nigeria, I have experienced being disabled and employed as well as being non-disabled and employed (my job was for a 12-month period, and I was not dependent on mobility aids permanently). Thus, I find myself located in the doorway on this subject, neither inside nor outside. My location gives me a glimpse of the realities of employment challenges for disabled people, and this location brings more questions than answers. From this location, intersectionality makes us question the factors that determine how different disablement is for diverse individuals by virtue of their differing characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, and level of education. Intersectionality makes us ask the question of what factors brings about these attitudes and effects? Questions like this make us seek to find out why certain opportunities are denied some people and not others, why denial of opportunities is easier on some
people but not on others, and what characteristics of this region of the country create this disablement.

Intersectionality has been widely successful in feminist scholarship (Davies, 2008). I use it in this study to examine the interactions between historical, cultural and social factors that create the challenges experienced by people with disabilities in employment. As explained by Davies (2008, pp. 68) “‘Intersectionality’ refers to the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power”. Crenshaw (1989) who first used Intersectionality in Black Feminist scholarship explained how dominant conceptions of discrimination condition us to think about subordination as a disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis. She clarified that this single-axis framework limits inquiry to the experiences of otherwise-privileged members of the group, and this focus marginalises those who are multiply burdened (pp. 23). I attempt to follow her steps in this study by placing southwest Nigerians with disability at the centre of the inquiry; to tease out the categories of difference that puts this group at a disadvantage, and to understand how the discrimination experienced by this group, as found in literature, has come to be.

Intersectionality in this study raises the question of how the historical and cultural attributes of Nigeria generally, and Southwest Nigeria specifically, interact with the characteristics of citizens with impairments to create and maintain employment challenges. This theory provides a platform to examine the current outcomes observed in the realities of this group as a result of the relationship between power and powerlessness in the country. This theory also provides a platform from which these systems that create and maintain disablement can be combated to reduce the marginalization
experienced by Nigerians with disabilities in the Southwest region of the country. As opined by Garland-Thomson (2013) the body becomes disabled when it is incongruent both in space and time, with the set-up of the society, creating a mismatch between individuals and the environment they function and work in. Individuals living with disabilities in a middle- to low- income country like Nigeria, can face a myriad of challenges including poor health services, architectural barriers, low income, stigmatization and castigation, with resultant effects on their self-esteem, health and activity participation (Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008). The theory of intersectionality is utilized in this study to understand how history, culture and discriminatory practices interact to influence the conditions of work environment in creating systems of oppression that shape the experiences of employment among disabled individuals in Southwest Nigeria. After all, as Crenshaw (1993) points out, ignoring difference within groups contributes to tension among groups.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aims of this study were to:

1. Find out how the prevalent cultural beliefs and practices exclude people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria, preventing them from enjoying full participation in employment.

2. Elicit the attitudes and practices that create barriers or employment challenges for people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria.

3. Find out the specific aspects people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria consider the most problematic areas in employment.

4. Find out how the various systems of oppression impact conditions of work environment for people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this review of literature, I start by discussing the issues around disability globally. I followed this with the history of Nigeria in order to provide a background for some of the circumstances surrounding employment for persons with disabilities. I then go on to discuss prevalence of disability in Nigeria, the cost of disability, and the health impact of unemployment among citizens with disabilities. I finish this review by exploring how history of Nigeria has led to the current circumstances that influence the conditions of employment of Nigerians with disabilities.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of People with disabilities (2006), people with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments. About 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability; this global estimate for disability is on the rise due to population ageing and the rapid spread of chronic diseases, as well as improvements in the methodologies used to measure disability (WHO & World Bank, 2011). Around the world, people with disabilities face significant obstacles when it comes to participation in the workforce and they experience consistently lower employment rates than individuals without disabilities (Benshoff, Barrera, & Heymann, 2014).

The social model, which emerged from the intellectual and political arguments of the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) in the United Kingdom, was aimed at replacing segregated facilities with opportunities for people with impairments to participate fully in society, to live independently, to undertake productive work and to have full control over their own lives (Shakespeare, 2013). With the social model, activists sought to clarify that contrary to the medical
model, disability is not found within the body, but it exists as a construct within the society; in the lack of wheelchair accessibility of schools or workplaces, lack of accessible reading materials, poor access to education, lack of employment, inappropriate remuneration for disabled people, social stigma and discrimination of people with disabilities. The intense legislative efforts to combat employment inequalities by international institutions appear to be effective in high-income countries but not so much for middle- to low-income countries such as Nigeria (Adekile, 2014).

Developed countries have programs in place to ensure that people with disabilities who are unable to work are financially catered for (Thornton, 2005). But it would be wrong to assume that the operations of out-of-work benefits for disabled people are similar across countries (Grover & Piggott, 2013). Despite disability rights existing on paper, disabled individuals in developing countries face significant challenges in claiming those rights in practice (Grischow, 2015). In middle- and low-income countries, 80% to 90% of people with disabilities of working age are unemployed, whereas in high-income countries the figure is between 50% and 70% (UN-Enable, 2007).

In addition to the challenges faced by people with disabilities globally, those in middle- to low-income countries face specific issues that are unique to their countries, such as poverty, politicisation of disability rights groups, movement restrictions (in conflict zones), the absence of a state to fully satisfy demands for more comprehensive services and limited knowledge of other forms and models of disability (Burton, Sayrafi, & Srour, 2013; Grischow, 2015). For example, community based rehabilitation programs in Palestine have concentrated on the conflict-related and physical forms of disability as opposed to non-conflict related forms of disability, and those with mental disabilities are completely sidelined (Burton et al., 2013). Also, what takes place in
Ghana suggests that legal empowerment is not sufficient in itself to guarantee disability rights in such developing countries (Grischow, 2015).

Miralles, Marin-Garcia, Ferrus, and Costa (2010) have suggested that the solution to bridging the unemployment gap has to come not only from legal regulations via governmental measures, but also by overcoming the prejudices about the capabilities of disabled people, and by the genuine commitment of companies to include integration programmes in their operation strategies and models. In Nigeria however, disability is still extremely stigmatized, with many people with disabilities seen as a curse from the gods, punishment for past sins or proof of presence of evil (Abang, 1988; Edewor, Abimbola, & Adekeye, 2010; Etieyibo & Omiegbe, 2016; Ikuomola, 2015). The following section seeks to explain how Nigeria has come to be one of the countries still struggling to bridge the unemployment gap between disabled and non-disabled citizens.

2.1 NIGERIA

Nigeria is a Western African country, covering 923,733 square kilometres (Ayua & Dakas, 2005). In comparison, it is more than three times the size of United Kingdom, and the size of France and Italy put together (Ekundare, 1973). Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa (Falola & Heaton, 2008; History World, n.d.); with a current population of 182 million, according to the National Population Commission (2017). Nigeria is a tropical country, with two main seasons in the year, rainy season (or wet season) and harmattan (or dry season) season (Ekundare, 1973). Nigeria exhibits diverse geographical characteristics ranging from mangrove swamps in the Niger Delta, heavy forest in the southern region, mountains in the east, hills and plateaus in the North; and further north, we have the semi-desert area known as the Sahel savannah (Falola & Heaton, 2008). The third longest river in Africa, River Niger, from which the country derives its name,
runs for 730 miles through Nigeria, and it is historically a main artery of commerce and communication for this region (Ekundare, 1973).


2.1.1 HISTORY OF NIGERIA

The story of Nigeria as it is known today goes back more than 2000 years (Crowder, 1966). The first inhabitants of what is now Nigeria were thought to have been the Nok people (500 BC – AD 200) (Shaw, 1978; The Met, 2000). These people made Nok terracottas that are generally of high technical standard; subsequently the name of Nok was given to the widespread culture that seemed to have flourished in the Plateau area of the country (Crowder, 1966). Archeological findings indicate that nearly all carvings show life built around the sovereign as most of the archeological discoveries depict the figures of the sovereign rulers (Ekundare, 1973).

Before the borders of Nigeria were formed by the British, the geographical area comprised of the Hausa-Fulani Empire of the north, the city states of Niger Delta in the east, the kingdoms of Ife and Benin in the south, the Ibo people of the east, and the small tribes of the Plateau in the centre (Crowder, 1966). Nigeria has at least 250 ethnic groups within its borders (Ekundare, 1973; Jauhari, 2011) which were unified by the British in 1914 to form a single unified colonial state (Crowder, 1966; Falola & Heaton, 2008; Klieman, 2012). Hence, Nigeria, as we know it today, is a conflation of several ethnic nationalities that have had to coexist as one nation (Jauhari, 2011; Odeyemi, 2014).
Prior to British colonial incursion into the territories that now make up Nigeria, the various ethnic nationalities within these territories had their respective systems of social organization and religious beliefs (Sampson, 2014). Religion is life and life is religion (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010); religion was a critical element of pre-colonial politics; in fact, political activities derived their source and legitimacy from religion (Sampson, 2014). African traditionalists affirm the existence of super-sensory personalities; for them, there is a world of the mind, a spiritual world that is hidden under this physical world (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010).

Between the diverse groups that made up Nigeria, there was much commercial and cultural contact pre-colonization (Crowder, 2009). Nigerian communities have had inter- and intra-national commercial networks, not only from the river systems but also major road networks connecting villages, towns and regions dating back many centuries (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Though mistrustful and conflictual on occasions, however trade and commerce created some forms of cordial interdependence (Odeyemi, 2014).

Nigeria started experiencing an introduction of other religions well before the start of the 15th century, when Moslem missionaries were known to have arrived in Northern parts of Nigeria (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010). Until the Jihad of Usman dan Fodio, and the establishment of Sokoto caliphate, Islam had been primarily a religion of the elite; mostly to foster strong commercial and diplomatic ties with Islamic states in North Africa and the Middle East (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Sampson, 2014). In the 15th century, the Portuguese missionaries of the Roman Catholic church tried to introduce Christianity to Nigeria, albeit unsuccessfully, until the British missionaries re-introduced Christianity in the 19th century (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010).
The Portuguese, the first Western contact with Nigeria, were situated only on the coasts based on treaties with local kings; however, this association signaled the start of the international slave trade in the 1480s (Crowder, 1966). The first shipment of slaves to Portugal took place in 1441, and by the beginning of the 16th century, the Spaniards had joined the trade; it was not until 1663 that regular English slave trade began (Ekundare, 1973). The slave trade lasted for 350 years, at the end of which about 24 million Nigerians had been shipped off, with an estimated 15 million surviving the notorious Middle Passage across the Atlantic (Crowder, 1966).

Britain moved to abolish the slave trade by the beginning of 18th century (Ekundare, 1973). According to Crowder (1966), the movement in Britain for the abolition of slave trade was accompanied by the desire to find markets for the materials for Britain’s new industries. Thus, the country transitioned from era of slavery to era of colonization, as the British colonization began officially in 1861 with the establishment of the Colony of Lagos (Ayua & Dakas, 2005). The colonial administration allowed the Islamic caliphatorial system of governance in northern Nigeria to continue uninterrupted; this was however, not the case in the south as the Western secular system was imposed; stripping away the religion and culture of the south (Sampson, 2014). Colonization went on till 1960 when a group of elites led by people like Nnamdi Azikiwe from the east, Obafemi Awolowo from the South and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa from the north, fought for independence from the British rule in 1960 (Falola & Heaton, 2008).

Following independence in 1960, Nigeria was made a regional parliamentary democracy, with a president, and premiers leading the regions, each which had its laws and constitutions, distinct from federal laws and constitution (Sampson, 2014). The nationalist leadership that won the independence opted to retain Nigeria’s colonial borders (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Thus, the
country, organized as a loose federation of self-governing states, had to deal with the daunting task of unifying a country with 250 ethnic and linguistic groups (Jauhari, 2011). At colonial subjugation, issues of ethnicity were insignificant since the colonies were governed by non-Africans who used force of arms to hold the colonies in place as required (Odeyemi, 2014; Sampson, 2014). But after gaining independence from colonial rule, the various ethnic and religious groups feared domination by the other groups, creating religious and ethnic tensions that have resulted in various civil wars, riots, and organized attacks (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Since independence in 1960, the Nigerian political terrain has been marked by successive coups, ethnic conflicts and religious civil wars (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Jauhari, 2011; Kleiman, 2012).

Politics, economics and culture are not isolated aspects of societies; they influence each other and blend in ways that are often indiscernible (Falola & Heaton, 2008). The ethnic and religious divisions within the Nigerian society are undoubtedly a colonial legacy, but the bitter truth is that these divisions have resulted in continued violations of human rights in the post-colonial period (Jauhari, 2011). At the time of the inauguration of the civilian President in 1999, Nigerians and others hoped that Nigeria would better its human rights record, but to the dismay of its citizens, human rights have continued to be violated (Jauhari, 2011). Unfortunately, more vulnerable citizens such as persons with impairments are those more affected by human right violations within the country, as found in the prevalence of unemployment among members of this group.
Map 1: Map of Nigeria showing ethnic and linguistic diversity

![Map of Nigeria showing ethnic and linguistic diversity](http://www.mapcruzin.com/free-maps-nigeria/nigeria_linguistic_1979.jpg)

2.2 PREVALENCE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The population of Nigeria is estimated to be 182 million (National Population Commission, 2017). According to Umeh and Adeola (2013), about 3 million Nigerians have a disability. Contrarily, Smith (2011) reported that about 14 million Nigerians have disabilities. Similar to what obtains in other countries (Madans, Loeb & Altman, 2011), reliable data on the population of people with disabilities in Nigeria are lacking. However, using WHO and World Bank (2011) estimates that disabilities occur in at least 15% of the world’s population; and based on the Nigerian population according to the National Population Commission (2017), it can be estimated that there are at least 27 million people with disabilities in Nigeria.

Both men and women with impairments experience significant unemployment in both high-income countries and middle- to low-income countries. From the statistics on employment and people with disabilities, as well as the statistics on employment and women, having a disability and being a woman might further predispose to increased unemployment in a middle- to low-income country. And I believe this is important as it relates strongly to my theoretical framework on intersectionality and how it helps us to understand the specific factors that increase predisposition to unemployment. In a recent study on prevalence of unemployment of people with impairments in Northern Nigeria by Smith (2011), findings indicate that about 31% of the people had no occupation, 34% had an occupation but without formal or regular income, 16.3% begged for living and 6.4% were self-employed. In the same study, others had occupations such as farming (10.7%), petty trading (7.7%), civil service (6.5%) and lastly, housewife and others not specified (7.9%) (Smith, 2011). Of post-stroke survivors in Nigeria with jobs prior to incident, only 13.9%, with moderate to severe disability were able to return to work (Peters et al., 2013). Also, in a study
on work-related injuries in Nigeria, 29.1% of those injured at work ended up with a disability; less than 50% were able to return to work and of those who were able to return to work, 88.6% had a reduction in earnings (Juillard et al., 2010). The World Health Organization and World Bank (2011) report that while women and girls with disabilities represent two-thirds of roughly one billion people with disabilities in the world, they have been excluded from equal opportunities to education, health care, employment, and community participation. In Nigeria, there is a higher percentage of women (66%) than men (48%) who had never worked in paid employment (Smith, 2011).

Similar challenges involving employment among disabled individuals have also been reported in other parts of the world. Benshoff et al. (2014) reported a reduction in the rate of employment of disabled people from 42.7% in 1991 to 37.6% in 2002, after the Indian economy opened up in 1991, a decrease that put the percentage of employees with disabilities in the public sector at 0.44%, in the private sector at 0.3%. Also, in a comparison of the deaf and non-deaf cohorts in Belgium, the deaf cohort had uniformly higher rates of unemployment (De Veirman, 2015). This Belgian study showed that while unemployment generally increased in the course of the nineteenth century, a much higher percentage of unemployed deaf individuals is striking – an initial indication of economic discrimination. Furthermore, deaf individuals were not only unemployed more often, but also at an increasingly earlier age – well below the average age of retirement (De Veirman, 2015). In addition, a Palestinian survey revealed that few organisations employed people with disabilities, citing lack of accessibility and transportation as reasons why (Burton et al., 2013). Thornton (2005) reported that estimates from surveys of employment rates in the UK, among disabled people and people with health problems, aged 16 to retirement age, range from 38% to 48%, compared with 81% among non-disabled people. These findings on conditions of
employment for people with disabilities around the globe are similar across developed and middle-to low-income countries and found in Nigeria as well.

2.3 BARRIERS AND SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA

Various barriers to employment for people with disabilities have been identified in literature. These include scarcity of funding, vocational rehabilitation programmes, ableism, discrimination and lack of disability benefits. As noted earlier, many developed countries have programs in place to ensure that people with disabilities who are unable to work are financially catered for by the government (Thornton, 2005). But data available on the structure of funding services for individuals with disabilities, who are unable to gain employment in Nigeria are at best scanty (Eleweke, 2013). There is a scarcity of vocational rehabilitation programmes, sickness and disability insurance benefits in Nigeria which may impact standard of living of those who have a disability (Peters et al., 2013). This is similar to what was found in Ghana where disability benefits following work injury are not readily available and accessible, and only those that have access to funds which can be used to lobby and are able to wait for years, might get some form of disability benefit (Grischow, 2015). In Nigeria, functional ability is a major determinant of rates of return to work among stroke survivors, and those requiring accommodations are not able to return to work at all (Peters et al., 2013). This is in agreement, with Hamzat and Seyi-Adeyemo (2011), who asserted that Nigerian employers are usually not willing to make adjustments in their organization or make provision for employment opportunities for those with physical disabilities.

There are challenges unique to middle- to low-income countries that reduce quality of life for people with disabilities aside from the actual lack of employment. Peters et al. (2013) suggested that generalizations and findings on return to work across different countries or settings may be
impossible or inappropriate due to differences in culture, rehabilitation and programs. Peters et al. (2013) compared their study to a Japanese study where 23% of the severely disabled patients in that study were able to return to work. This was however not the case in their own Nigerian study as none of the severely disabled participants returned to work. They suggest that this contrast could be due to social and infrastructural differences between a developed country like Japan and a developing country like Nigeria, where architectural barriers for the severely disabled abound (p. 458). This agrees with the findings of Hamzat and Dada (2005) who suggest that much of public buildings such as schools, places of employment, libraries, health and recreation centres are not accessible to wheelchair users in Nigeria.

Thornton (2005) identified discrimination as a major reason for inequalities in employment between disabled and non-disabled people. Disabled people of working age are more than twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications; yet unqualified non-disabled people are nearly three times as likely to be in employment than disabled people (Thornton, 2005). In De Veirman’s study on employment rates among deaf people in the industrial era (2015), economic discrimination is not only reflected by the higher rate of unemployment, but also in the extent to which deaf individuals were employed in different sectors. Kidd et al. (2000) in their econometric British study found substantial unexplained differences in wage and employment participation rates between disabled and non-disabled men where only half of the difference in employment rates could be explained by observed differences in productivity-related characteristics. Social exclusion often results from racism, discrimination, stigmatization, hostility and unemployment (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Similarly, in Nigeria, 43% of unemployed people with disabilities cited disability as the reason for lack of employment (Smith, 2011) not their lack of qualifications.
2.4 LEGISLATION AND EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Nigerians with Disabilities Decree was put into law in 1993 and makes very clear provisions for people with disabilities in terms of education and employment. According to Section 6(1) of the Decree:

“Government shall take measures to promote the employment of the disabled”.

And per Section 6(2):

“All employers of labour shall reserve for the disabled not less than 10% of the work force” (Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, 2016).

This was the legislation that directly protected people with disabilities in the country in the sphere of employment. The Amended 1999 Constitution of Nigeria contains some provisions that indirectly addresses disability (Umeh & Adeola, 2013). It includes: Section 42(2) which prohibits discrimination based on the circumstances of a person’s birth; and Sections 14, 16(1) and 17 which guarantees the equality and fundamental rights for all (Umeh & Adeola, 2013). In addition, Nigeria signed the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) on 30th March 2007 and ratified it on 24th September 2010 (UN, 2006). Despite these considerable legislative efforts made by national and international institutions, total social-employment integration of people with disabilities has not been achieved (Grischow, 2015; Grover & Piggott, 2013).

Successful implementation of international laws protecting people with disabilities has been hampered in Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Uganda, by problems of governance (inadequate national disability laws, limited political will) and weaknesses within Disabled People’s Organizations (underfunding, overwork, control by paternalistic urban elites) (Grischow 2015). Nigeria has
signed and ratified the CRPD but as at 2013, has not submitted its reports, and the delay is due to ‘lengthy national processes’ (Umeh & Adeola, 2013). The implication of this is that despite the adoption of the law by the country, people with disabilities are still marginalized and excluded, as the laws are not enforced. Eleweke (2016) reports on The Declaration of the African Decade of People with disabilities, the aims of which were to ensure full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities in Africa, and required African countries to study the situation of people with disabilities, with a view of formulating measures favouring equalisation of opportunities, full participation and their independence in society. Unfortunately, the purpose of the Decade has not been actualised in Nigeria (Eleweke, 2016). As can be seen, legislative measures alone are not sufficient to improve the reality of people with disabilities in employment, and other factors such as cultural, historical and discriminatory practices, should be examined.

2.5 COST OF DISABILITY

People with disabilities require protection in employment to enjoy financial security and to be able to live their lives on the same level as other citizens without disabilities. This is because in addition to regular cost of living, many individuals with disabilities have ongoing medical costs associated with impairment, ranging from drugs, surgeries, mobility support and continuous rehabilitation; as well as cost associated with an inaccessible environment such as transportation costs and educational needs. The financial burden of injuries far exceeds the immediate medical costs associated with the injury as most people acquire injuries between 15 to 44 years, which are the most economically productive years of life (Wesson, Boikhutso, Bachani, Hofman, & Hyder, 2014). Thus, losses due to an injury or illness are not only in terms of hospital bills, but in income/hour lost from productive work. Juillard et al. (2010) in their explorative study on the
consequences of road traffic injuries in Nigeria, found that the mean direct cost of treatment was approximately US$25 per person, which is approximately 40% of the mean monthly per capita income in Nigeria reported for 2005. This puts a major burden on household expenditures. In addition, family members often leave their normal duties and jobs to care for people with disabilities, further reducing a household income (De Veirman, 2015). Hospital costs of people with disabilities are ongoing and choosing to refuse medical treatment due to cost, can be a life-threatening choice. Therefore, they, more than people without disabilities require regular sources of income.

In Nigeria, a significant percentage of people with disabilities (38%) earn nothing in income, 56.8% earn between 1,000 naira and 20,000 naira (rough equivalent of 7CAD - $135CAD depending on exchange rate) and only 2.4% earn more than 20,000 naira per month (Smith, 2011). Disadvantage and its impact on health has been described as relative or absolute, which can include having few family assets, having a poorer education during childhood and adolescence, having insecure employment, becoming stuck in a hazardous or dead-end job, living in poor housing, trying to bring up a family in difficult circumstances and living on inadequate retirement pension (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Health status influences both the quality and quantity of life (Wister & McPherson, 2014). Unfortunately, disadvantages tend to concentrate among the same people and their effects on health accumulate during life (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003).

2.6 HEALTH EFFECTS

Most people will be injured or even suffer from diseases at some point in their lives; but few individuals foresee that they will ever be disabled and the implications of lifelong limitations are seldom anticipated, let alone understood (Kurawa, 2010). Lack of employment can create
despondency, discouragement and contribute to poor community involvement in those chronically affected and these psychosocial factors affect physical health. To understand better how these psychosocial factors impact physical health, Wilkinson and Marmot (2003) explained that in emergencies, our hormones and nervous system prepare us to deal with an immediate physical threat by triggering the fight or flight response: raising the heart rate, mobilizing stored energy, diverting blood to muscles and increasing alertness. These stress responses divert energy and resources away from many physiological processes important to long term health maintenance. They explain further that both the cardiovascular and immune systems are affected, which for brief periods, will be okay, but if the stresses extend over long periods of time or occur very often, these systems become more vulnerable to a wide range of conditions including infections, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, depression and aggression. Thus, the impact of unemployment on disabled persons goes beyond poverty; it also contributes to chronic poor health. In addition, a country that does not have healthy citizens cannot have a healthy economy.

Based on the WHO social determinants of health, people who are less well-off have significantly shorter life expectancies and are more susceptible to illnesses than those who are well off, even in the most affluent countries (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). It is then to be expected that those who do not have employment and therefore reliable income, are at higher risk of succumbing to various chronic illnesses and impairments which further create disabilities. This finds supports in the findings of Smith (2011) in Nigeria, where the majority of the respondents in the study actually cited disease and sickness as the cause of their disability with just about 10% still believed their disability had a supernatural cause.
2.7. IMPLICATION OF (UN)EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Based on the review of literature, the implications of unemployment among people with disabilities in Nigeria include stigmatization, poverty, poor education, poor self-esteem, exclusion, and poor health. As discussed earlier, employment is one of the social determinants of health (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003), as such, employment for all citizens is a human rights issue. The purpose of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), was to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (Stienstra, 2012). The disabled person, like any other individual, is a product of his or her social interaction with his environment, hence, the behaviors and expectations of others mold or influence the behaviors and expectations of self (Kurawa, 2010). Edewor et al. (2010) identify discrimination, stigmatization, and ignorance as reasons why employers of labor are reluctant to employ persons with intellectual disability in Nigeria. When employers do not give people with disabilities opportunities in employment, over time, disabled people themselves start thinking they do not deserve dignity and stability in employment. Inclusion is a crucial factor in reducing marginalization; and according to Smith (2011), the three most common areas that assisted the respondents of their study to participate in their communities were their acceptance and integration (22%), government assistance (13%), and assistive devices (12%). Unfortunately, research shows that these support systems are not readily available (Hamzat & Dada, 2005; Peters et al., 2013; Smith, 2011).

Disability has a cumulative impact on education and consequently on employment; thus, the discrimination is reinforced over the life course (Echevin, 2013). Discrimination due to disability does not just impact access to employment but influences the type of education the children in
such household will receive and the employment they will in turn receive. The Nigerian Human Rights Commission conducted a survey to support facilities in tertiary institutions aimed at assisting people with disabilities to enjoy inclusive education. It was found that few tertiary institutions in Nigeria have basic facilities like ramps, elevators with sound, and brailled floor numbering to assist people with disabilities (Umeh & Adeola, 2013). Also, when parents or caregivers enrol children with disabilities in schools, they are confronted with problems of lack of accessibility in the schools and a poor transportation system that does not cater for the special needs of this group of children (Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008).

Plausible policy on special education is in place, but commitment to its implementation is missing in Nigeria’s education landscape, which is unlike most developed economies where education policy and implementation focus not only on general education but also on special education (Edewor et al., 2010). Furthermore, rates of return to work were found to be significantly higher among stroke survivors with tertiary education than those with lower levels of education (Peters et al., 2013). However, a northern Nigeria study found that just about 2.1% of people with disabilities in the population had tertiary education with about 7.9% having secondary (Grades 7-12) education (Smith, 2011). Peters et al. (2013) suggests that perhaps being well educated may also equip an individual with coping skills and self-confidence needed to overcome the negative effects of a disability and these in turn may promote return to work. Thus, lack of education for people with disabilities inherently contributes to lack of employability among them.

The focus of most programmes in place for people with disabilities in Nigeria is rehabilitation. But rehabilitation programmes for individuals with disabling conditions can be described as successful only when such individuals are able to participate fully in family and community life activities
(Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008). Thus, there can be no successful rehabilitation if the person is not able to participate in education and employment in order to improve overall quality of life. And as opined by Smith (2011) occupational empowerment and employment are key factors that promote inclusion and participation. Therefore, addressing the discriminatory and exclusionary practices that prevent people with disabilities from full participation is crucial.

Aside from the personal implications of lack of employment on people with disabilities, non-involvement of this group has national implications. Miralles et al. (2010) opined that the incorporation of disabled people into many productive activities generates added value to a company, as well as to society. A global impact of inclusion of people with disabilities in the national workforce will mean that there will be more people in paid employment paying taxes and less people in need of benefits. This can be a big step in the attempt to eradicate poverty and combat disabilities in the country. Furthermore, with lack of employment, most people turn to crime, a concept which affects every aspect of society and business (Ukpere, 2011). Specifically, in Nigeria, majority of people with disabilities turn to street begging (Edewor et al., 2010, Smith, 2011) which leads to increase in road traffic accidents, decline in health status of these individuals as well as loss of aesthetic value of the community. Disabled people’s struggle to liberate themselves shares many of the goals of other oppressed people, both by overcoming the injustice that they face and by seeking to transform society, so that there can be equity in opportunities for everyone (Burton et al., 2013). A crucial factor to further this goal is to determine how culture, history and discriminatory practices impact the parameters of employment in Nigeria.
2.8. NIGERIA, DISABLED PEOPLE, AND EMPLOYMENT

As pointed out earlier, people with disabilities have not been protected in the sphere of employment in Nigeria despite the legal structures in place to protect them and ensure their inclusion. Some unique problems related to disability in Nigeria include the lack of coordinated efforts by government, low level of education of parents, un-disclosing nature of Nigerian families, lack of family-based care and pervasive poverty (Edewor et al., 2010). Exclusion from education affects life opportunities, access to training, employment and income generation, which consequently prevent the achievement of economic and social independence and increases vulnerability to poverty, not just for the individual but for the country (Smith, 2011). These factors contribute to the poverty level in the country. Nigeria, instead of advancing since independence in 1960, has degenerated into one of the poorest countries of the world due to gross income inequalities (Edewor et al., 2010; Ukpere, 2011; UN, 2014).

Ukpere (2011) pointed out that several decades after the end of colonialism, most parts of Africa are still fighting problems such as high poverty rate, lack of basic infrastructural facilities in all sectors of the economy, unemployment, high mortality rate, political instability and insecurity of life and property. Ukpere further asserted that transnational corporations seek out societies with low production costs, poor working conditions, and abundant and easily exploitable resources where profit can be maximised and repatriated without legal constraints. With a weak political leadership that is corrupt, and ready to cut the deals, many African countries fit the bill (Ukpere, 2011). Furthermore, Nigeria has been riddled with non-stop violence for decades which impacts economic development (Jauhari, 2011; Odeyemi, 2014; Sampson, 2014). Due to Boko Haram’s insurgency, violent clashes between government forces and armed groups in the north of Nigeria
have triggered large waves of displacement causing a huge wave of internal displacement of civilians up to about 1,385,298 people (The UNHCR, 2016). Conflict, poverty and displacement undoubtedly increase the rate of disabilities among citizens.

In summary, the existing literature on employment challenges faced by people with disabilities in Nigeria indicate that there is poor rate of employment among them (Juillard et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2013; Smith, 2011) and the few that are employed do not enjoy job satisfaction (Ademokoya & Akhigbe, 2006; Hamzat & Dada, 2005; Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2011) neither do they get sufficient support from the state (Eleweke, 2013; Peters et al., 2013). All these factors have disabling effects on the already-marginalised population (Odeyemi, 2014; Sampson, 2014; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Unfortunately, the legal structures in place in the country have not been effective in improving the employment conditions of people with disabilities (Eleweke, 2016; Umeh & Adeola, 2013).

2.9. GAPS IN LITERATURE

There are gaps in existing literature regarding the influence of history, culture and discriminatory practices on the parameters of employment for disabled individuals, that create the current challenges for this group. Literature discusses the marginalization experienced by persons with impairments in accessing their basic human rights in Nigeria, but mostly neglects to marry the influence of history of Nigeria as well as the Southwest region of the country in creating and maintaining these disabling conditions. The most significant gap is the lack of qualitative data on Nigerians with impairments, their place in history and the intersections between these two concepts. Furthermore, I observed that most recommendations in published studies are directed at government policies in order to facilitate changes. Not that I do not agree with these
recommendations; however, as an ally, I believe that the time has come to move away from the era of expecting things from government, and instead channel energies on how a ground-up approach can be utilized to effect required positive changes in the lived experiences of Nigerian citizens with impairments.

As a State Party to the CRPD, the Nigerian government is supposed to ensure that disabled persons are not discriminated against in employment; sadly, the government has failed in its responsibility to disabled persons in this area (Chinaedu, 2012). This study sought to bridge gaps in literature by using the theory of intersectionality to examine the relationships between the history, culture and discriminatory practices in Nigeria on the employment situation of people with disabilities. This study also attempt to contribute to putting an end to the silence on experiences of disabled people, and give voice to their challenges, triumphs and vision. Lastly, the study aims to provide a ground-up approach to putting an end to the injustices experienced by disabled citizens of the country.
CHAPTER THREE

3.1 METHODOLOGY

This study undertook mixed methods design. It utilized a combination of qualitative descriptive approach and a review of existing literature on the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria. The Southwest region of the country was chosen because it is the region the researcher is from, worked in, and most knowledgeable about. The review of literature was aimed at getting a better understanding of the culture of this region of the country, which has influenced the ways the citizens react to issues around employment of people with disabilities. The review focused on history and culture of the Southwest region of Nigeria, pre- and post-colonial era, and how disability was managed in history. This review determined how history might explain the current cultural trends and practices involving issues around disability.

This study undertook a qualitative descriptive approach, which is the method of choice when straight descriptions of phenomena are desired (Sandelowski, 2000). Qualitative methods in research are advantageous in that they utilize open-ended questions which give participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses (Stuckey, 2013). Qualitative research methodologies can be applied in a variety of settings to assess the human behavior and thus help policy makers to plan and implement appropriate measures to combat public concerns (Shrivastava, Shrivastava, & Ramasamy, 2014). This study was aimed at finding out how the relationship between history and culture of Southwest Nigeria, as well as the discriminatory practices in the Nigerian society create the characteristics of employment for citizens with disabilities. Utilizing the theoretical questions pointed out by intersectionality as a guide, this study explored how interlocking systems of oppression maintain
the challenges experienced by disabled individuals in the workplace. This research project sought
the opinions of employed people with disabilities, because they are considered experts on this
subject, via in-depth semi-structured interviews, to determine where agreement with current
literature exists and to contribute to existing knowledge on the subject. The aim of in-depth
interviews is to obtain the perspectives, feelings and perceptions from the participants who possess
expert information on the subject of inquiry (Shrivastava et al., 2014).

Semi-structured interviews are the most common type of interview method used in qualitative
research because even though the researcher sets the outline for the topics covered, it is the
interviewee's responses that determine the way in which the interview is directed (Stuckey, 2013).
This is important for this study in that it will assist in production of rich information regarding the
subject of inquiry, especially to bring out facts that are not in literature or to shed more light on
existing literature. Furthermore, this method allows the researcher the flexibility to probe initial
participant responses - that is, to ask why or how (Stuckey, 2013). Thus, the findings from the
review of literature combined with the qualitative analysis were aimed at providing a rich, in-depth
understanding of the issues under review.

3.2 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

The participants for this study were initially recruited by purposeful sampling; followed by
snowball sampling. Key features of qualitative research samples distilled from existing literature
shows that samples are small, are studied intensively, and each one typically generates a large
amount of information (Curtis, Gesler, Smith, & Washburn, 2000). The researcher initially made
a purposeful selection of two participants, one who is employed in a government institution and
another who is employed in a private establishment in Nigeria. The aim of this was to obtain cases
that will provide rich information on the specific issue under inquiry, as opined by Sandelowski (2000). Two different entrances into the population (that is government and private employment settings) were utilized to increase heterogeneity within the sample and generalizability of findings.

The two participants that were purposefully selected both have mobility impairments and have been in employment for over three years. The researcher initially approached them via email, to explain the research purpose, as well as explain what will be required of them. They were also informed that the interview will be about 45 minutes to 1 hour, via telephone; and that the telephone interview will be recorded. They both agreed to participate in the study, and informed consent forms, as well as demographic information forms were emailed to them for signature (Appendix 1). They were both asked to sign and fill the forms, and email them back to the researcher. The interviews were then scheduled, both on Saturdays of their choice, and at the time that was most convenient for them. At the end of the interview, the researcher requested that the two participants refer people they know who have impairments and are in employment. Both participants referred other participants and when the study had seven participants, recruitment stopped because at that point data saturation had been reached. Moreso, this number is deemed sufficient to provide rich information on the subject of inquiry, as their lived experiences is what is needed to shed light on this issue at hand. As Curtis et al. (2000) pointed out, sample size for a qualitative research is typically small and each one generates a wealth of information.

3.3 INCLUSION & EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The participants that were recruited for this study were Nigerians residing and employed in the Southwest region of the country. They identified as having a disability, were currently employed in either a government institution or a private establishment, and can receive international phone
calls. No specific type of impairment was sought in selecting participants. Those with auditory impairment were excluded because the researcher could not provide required supports to participants in order to carry out interviews. Those who are self-employed were also excluded from the study, as there is a chance they might have never experienced the challenges of seeking and keeping employment. But it is also possible that these individuals were forced to be self-employed because they were unable to gain employment any other way. A limitation of this study is that the insights and experiences of this group on the subject of inquiry were missed.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected via individual in-depth telephone interviews. In much of literature, there is a tendency to view telephone mode as inferior to face-to-face interviews for qualitative research (Novick, 2008). Utilizing telephone interviews as a primary data collection mode challenges conventional notions of the function and purpose of qualitative interviews and the extent to which qualitative research can be conducted at a distance (Lechuga, 2012). Novick (2008) details three areas of bias present in the literature, against the use of telephone interviews in qualitative research: (1) loss of nonverbal data, (2) loss of contextual data, and (3) data distortion. During a telephone interview, nonverbal gestures, actions, and visual cues undeniably are lost and these types of data can provide richness and depth to verbal data (Lechuga, 2012). However, there is no evidence that these problems arise; besides, face-to-face interviewing can create interpersonal stressors (such as reluctance to disclose), and interviewers may need specific tactics to gauge changes in mode of interviewees and respond appropriately in order to overcome these challenges (Novick, 2008). Furthermore, these non-verbal data, can be misinterpreted if the researcher fails to probe the interviewee about specific actions or gestures; and unless conscious attempts are made to
incorporate nonverbal data into transcripts, researchers that rely heavily on verbal transcripts during data analysis are likely to overlook these data (Lechuga, 2012).

Most of the non-verbal data that I encountered during the interviews for this study included short pauses, ‘erms’ and ‘ums’, laughter, and raising the voice to show emphasis. These non-verbal data were included in the transcripts to ensure their value and implications were not lost. Furthermore, with telephone interviews, respondents have been described as relaxed on the phone, willing to talk freely and to disclose intimate information; as participants still remain on ‘their own turf’, permits more anonymity and privacy, decreases social pressure, and increases rapport (Novick, 2008). Moreover, Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) found no significant differences in interviews conducted via face-to-face interviews and those conducted via telephone interviews, even though prior literature suggested that the interview modes might yield different results.

For this study, telephone calls were chosen over skype calls. This is because the international phone calls are at the expense of the researcher only, and at no cost to the participants. With skype calls, both researcher and participants would need to have an internet connection. Internet connection, even though widely available in Nigeria, can be expensive for some people. The researcher strove for participation in the study to be at no financial cost to the participants, hence the choice of telephone calls. However, the participants were given the option of choosing between skype calls and telephone calls. None opted for skype calls, and all interviews were conducted via telephone calls.

Interviews were scheduled as soon as I obtained the consent of each participant. The researcher asked the participant to provide the most convenient time they could receive a 45 minute – 1-hour phone call anytime over the weekend. All the referred participants chose a Saturday except one
person who chose a Sunday. For each participant, I made the phone call to them at their preferred time to conduct the interview. At the start of the interview, I informed them again that the conversation will be recorded; and if any question was asked that they do not want to answer, they were free to let me know, and the question would be skipped. Before the actual interview started, I spent some time to speak further about the basis of the research; and what the eventual purpose was, both for the academic community and people with disabilities. This encouraged the interviewees to share their thoughts on this as well. This aim of this was to develop rapport and build trust with the interviewees (Cope, 2014).

The participants were then asked the questions on the interview schedule (Appendix 2), which was designed to get their opinions, experiences and perceptions on employment. The interview schedule was used to loosely structure the interview in order to ensure homogeneity across responses. The semi-structured interview guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data (Stuckey, 2013). The questions on the interview guide were put together based on the information available in literature on the challenges experienced by people with disabilities in employment. I encouraged the participants to provide answers with examples to enable me to understand the context of their responses. Some of their responses prompted me to ask further questions, thus generating information that was unexpected. As such, there were slight deviations in responses across participants.

Right after each interview, I recorded pertinent points in the conversation on a personal notepad; things that stuck out, the attitude of the participant (carefree, assertive, or unsatisfied) as well as time and date. I utilized journal notes so as to add to the comprehensiveness and depth of the phenomenon under study. The journal served reflexive purposes for me; to reflect and take note of
thoughts and feelings, in order to avoid a researcher bias and maintain objectivity (Cope, 2014). The aim of reflexivity here was to bracket myself from the phenomenon under inquiry. I found that the responses of the participants deviated from my own preconceptions. I thus needed to keep my opinions and perceptions out of the way, and not let it influence the truth being elicited. The major purpose of this study is to report the realities of this group, and it will be an injustice to allow my presumptions to bias my report of findings.

After the interviews were concluded, participants were sent emails to thank them for their time and contribution. I transferred the recorded phone conversations to my personal computer; and I performed transcription within a week of conducting each interview. Access to the computer was via a password that only I know, and names were not used to identify the saved phone conversations or transcribed interviews. Data of each participant was saved and identified by unique digits assigned to them. They were assigned the unique digits as they were recruited into the study. The first participant to return the consent form and demographic information form was assigned ‘1’ and ‘a’ respectively, the second person was assigned ‘2’ and ‘b’ respectively, and so on. I assigned two unique digits to each participant because their forms were saved in a location separate from where their recorded telephone interviews and transcripts were saved. Thus, for each participant, their forms were saved with the alphabet, while their recorded telephone interviews and transcripts were saved with the digit.

Once transcription was completed, I sent transcripts to the participants via email, to verify that all that was recorded was accurate and nothing was misunderstood. I also sent reminder emails to ensure they returned the verified transcripts back to me. For the participants that made changes, the changes were effected and then final data was stored. The data collection phase of the study
was completed within three months (December – February). This is because participant referral happened at a faster rate than was anticipated. Most of the participants were quite supportive, and were willing to refer more participants for the study.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

I personally performed data analysis; using key theme analysis via NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software by QSR International. The thematic analysis was driven, first by the research questions and then by the findings within the data. I also identified patterns and themes that helped answer the research questions. For each question on the interview schedule, patterns and themes that are similar or contradictory across the responses of the interviewees were noted and recorded. In addition, I noted and recorded themes that corroborated existing literature as well as those that contradicted existing literature. Once the themes and patterns had been identified, they were grouped into broad themes, in alignment with the research questions of the study. Intersections across and within themes were also identified and recorded. After this, the findings were organized and conclusions were drawn.

3.6 DATA CLEANING

I transcribed recorded interviews verbatim into word document. This enabled me to go through the data more thoroughly as well as familiarize myself with each participant’s perception, tone and perspectives. This served the purpose of ensuring credibility of findings. Credibility is related to presenting true picture of participants’ experiences without any assumption. Subtle differences were noted as I listened again to the interviews, all which were recorded in my memo. The process of editing the transcripts before mailing them to participants for verification gave me another opportunity to get familiar with the data and the individuals that provided the data. The repeated
reading allowed me to gain insight into the context and patterns present within the data. Performing interviews concurrently with transcription also helped guide the interview process for subsequent participants. To ensure trustworthiness of study findings, transcribed interviews were sent to participants immediately after transcription was completed, for verification. Participants returned corrected transcripts back within three weeks of mailing them to participants.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research was reviewed and approved by the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board. Signed consent was obtained from each participant before the start of the study. During the interview, participants were reminded their consent was ongoing and they are free to withdraw at any time if they wished. Guidelines for conducting research with vulnerable populations as stipulated by the University of Manitoba Fort Garry Campus Research Ethics Boards were followed accurately in directing the study; so as to ensure the research was ethical. Additionally, the methods of ensuring confidentiality and anonymity as a means to protect the safety and integrity of study participants, as well as to improve the quality of data, were adhered to. These methods include conducting interviews outside of office hours (i.e. only on weekends); deleting recorded interviews immediately they were transferred to the computer and deleting them from the computer immediately they were transcribed; saving demographic information separately from transcribed interviews and anonymizing all stored data.

In addition, email conversations between researcher and participants were deleted and participants were encouraged to do the same as well. Moreover, interview transcripts and demographic information of participants were securely stored in a password-protected computer. Furthermore, all personal and identifying information were removed from transcripts; and transcripts were sent
to participants to confirm that all personal and potentially identifying information were removed from their transcripts. And in reporting study findings, names were not used to identify participants.

In summary, this study undertook a mixed methods design, involving a literature review of the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria, and qualitative descriptive approach on the issue under inquiry. Participants were recruited by an initial purposeful sampling which was followed by snowball sampling. Seven participants participated in this study; they all reside in urban centers of southwest Nigeria, and they all had mobility impairments. Data was collected via in-depth telephone interviews, which were all conducted on weekends to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. I transcribed recorded telephone interviews and sent transcribed interviews to participants to ensure accuracy of data and to further ensure confidentiality. I performed data analysis using NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software; and themes that helped achieve the research objectives were identified, organized and presented in the Results chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF SOUTHWEST NIGERIA IN RELATION TO DISABILITY

This chapter explores the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria, and how history and culture informs the experiences of people with disabilities reported in literature. I start by discussing the culture of Nigeria and tapered the discussion to the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria. Following this, I tease out the factors in history and culture that lead to the treatment received by citizens with disabilities. In this discussion, I present an explanation of the factors that inform the current cultural, economic and discriminatory practices around employment of persons with disabilities. This exploration gives an understanding of the behaviour of the citizens towards people with disabilities, both nationally and regionally. I conclude this chapter by discussing the various experiences of people with disabilities as reported in literature in relation to the influence of culture and history of Nigeria and southwest Nigeria.

4.1 CULTURE OF NIGERIA

Religion is the expression of the total culture of the people and constitutes their overall cultural identity (Ogunleye, 2015). Alana (1993, pp. 207) asserted that “before colonialism and its related religions emerged in Africa, every African, and indeed every Nigerian, was an ardent traditionalist; atheism was unknown, and every Nigerian practised religious worship from childhood, grew up with it into adulthood, and practised it daily at every stage of his life”. These practices however were described by Europeans as “practices of heresies and great idolatries and fetishes by the negroes”, and therefore felt the need to send “holy and most Catholic advisers to rescue the people” (Crowder, 1966). The aim of the British expedition in the 1841 Niger expedition, was not only to put an end to slave trade and establish commerce; it was also to spread Christianity among the people (Nwadialor, 2013).

With the imposition of the Islam and Christianity on Nigerian traditional religions, culture and identity were inadvertently stripped. Jauhari (2011) has suggested that Nigeria is facing an “identity crisis”, which is a result of the religious, ethnic and regional diversities. Nigerians first identify themselves by their religion, and then by their ethnicity and last comes the identification with the nation. Jauhari asserted that this has resulted in the lack of national identity. The review of literature indicates that there is no one culture of Nigeria; in the same way, there is no one religion of Nigeria. This is because the country itself is the product of the coalescing of various religious and ethnic groups.

4.2 SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

The people of the South West region of Nigeria are referred to as the Yoruba people (Ajala, 2009); having a population of approximately 30 million people (Ogundele, 2007). The Southwest zone of
Nigeria is comprised of six states which are Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti, and Ogun States (National Population Commission, 2015). Yoruba people can however be found in Kwara and Kogi States (Kolawole & Adepoju, 2007) as well as in other countries such as the Republics of Benin and Togo (Ajala, 2009; Ogundele, 2007). The Yoruba peoples have been one of Nigeria’s three dominant ethnic groups (Ajala, 2009). Lagos is the largest city in Southwest Nigeria, as well as in Africa, with a population of about 21 million people; while Ibadan, capital city of Oyo State, is the second largest city in the southwest of Nigeria with a population of over 3 million people (World Atlas, 2017). The city of Ilorin in Kwara state brings up a far third place with a population of 908,490 people (World Atlas, 2017).

The Yoruba nation has several sub-groups, and all these sub-groups speak a variety of dialects of the Yoruba language (Ogundele, 2007). Group consciousness among the Yoruba is mainly created by invoking historical links, although in the pre-colonial era, each sub-group claimed a distinct identity (Ajala, 2009). Oyo is regarded as the political cradle of the Yoruba people, while Ile-Ife is considered the spiritual centre (Ajala, 2009; Ogundele, 2007; Shaw, 1978). The traditional Yoruba religion has no founder, and no written literature, yet its essence is the ‘heritage from the past and that, which connects the past with the present, and the present with eternity’ (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010). Religion was a critical element of pre-colonial Yoruba politics; in fact, political activities derived their source and legitimacy from religion (Sampson, 2014). Attributed to this is the fact that the traditional authority in Yorubaland, the Oba (king), is perceived as divinely ordained; not because of his temporal standing but due to spiritual endowment which put him beyond ordinary mortals, therefore, was revered by his subjects (Sampson, 2014).
4.2.1 HISTORY OF SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

Historically, the current Southwest region of Nigeria is made up of the kingdoms of Ife, Oyo and Benin, which made up the Yorubaland (Crowder, 1966). The history of Yoruba people has been passed down from one generation to the other in un-written form; a method that has made the history obscure (Nolte, 2013). As it has been pointed out about this way of recording history, memory may fail, political exigencies may force on the historian the necessity for hiding the truth.
or remoulding the whole story (Crowder, 1966; Ayinde, 2011). While older and respected people tended to have more historical knowledge, the fact is that individuals of different backgrounds, genders, and capabilities have access to different aspects of historical knowledge; and this is reflected in aesthetics of diversity (Nolte, 2013).

Pre-colonial Yorubaland during the Atlantic slave trade was marked by fundamental socio-economic, ecological, and political changes which affected how people identified themselves; as the identity question was essential in formulating an ideology of slavery (Ojo, 2013). During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Yorubaland experienced major sociopolitical changes caused by a combination of the collapse of Oyo, the spread of radical Islam, and the effects of the rise and later cessation of the Atlantic slave trade (Alanamu, 2016; Ojo, 2008). Moreso, the traditional political institutions that worked for the empire for centuries, ceased to be effective to the large and prosperous kingdom Oyo had become by the turn of the 18th century (Crowder, 1966).

The collapse of Oyo led to the breakdown of Yorubaland into smaller, often antagonistic groups; urban complexity at Lagos and Ibadan led to incessant civil uprisings, which pitched ambitious chiefs and their wards against one another (Ojo, 2013). These ethnic wars led to the displacement of millions of people, including about a million Yoruba-speakers deported as slaves to the Americas, Sierra Leone, and the central Sudan (Ojo, 2008). In addition, as has been mentioned earlier, colonial administration allowed the Islamic religion as well as the Islamic caliphatatorial system of governance in northern Nigeria to continue uninterrupted; but the Western secular system and religion was imposed in the southern part of the country (Sampson, 2014).
4.2.2 CULTURE OF SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

The Yoruba people were predominantly traditional worshippers of divinities before the advent of both Islam and Christianity in the land (Alana, 1993; Ogunleye, 2015). They believe that there is a power that dominates and controls the unseen world in which they feel themselves enveloped (Ogunleye, 2015; Olajubu, 2004). Religion among the Yoruba people was a social phenomenon which was closely tied to societal values, experiences and expressions (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010). The Yoruba people, as with many Africans, despite their contact with foreign religions, still anchor their communities on the belief in divinities and feel it is important that, as a people, they live in this way (Ogunleye, 2015).

In Yorubaland, playtime was an effective and important medium of transferring these cultural ideals; in the relaxed environment of play, adults wove cultural messages into enjoyable stories and games that children were less likely to question or reject (Alanamu, 2016). Yoruba worship of divinities serves as one of the social sanctions used in the enforcement of morality and ethics; as such in Yoruba culture, enforcement of ethical duties is tied to religious practices (Ogunleye, 2015). It is thus obvious that the real keynote of the lives of the Yoruba people is not only in their noble ancestry or in the past deeds of their heroes but also in their religion (Ogunleye, 2015).

The monarchy in Yoruba land was believed to be divinely ordained, as such their authority was absolute (Ekundare, 1973). In its simplest form the Yoruba kingdom comprise of towns ruled by a king (oba) with his council of chiefs, and is surrounded by lineage-held lands (Apter, 1987). Each village complex was made up of smaller village units, and each village unit was in turn an amalgamation of extended family units (houses) that served as the unit of biological reproduction and economic/food production (Ogundiran, 2003). In the Yoruba culture, a person with a
disability, no matter their position in the society, is not allowed to be king nor even allowed to enter the chief’s palace, because they were deemed unworthy (Abang, 1988).

The traditional religion allowed polygamy, in fact, encouraged it and in some tribes, enforced it; because the number of wives and children a man has signifies his wealth (Onibere & Adogbo, 2010). This is because since the economy of the land largely depended on agriculture and the bulk of population were engaged in farming, the more the wives and consequently children a man has, the more agricultural wealth he accrues (Ekundare, 1973).

In Yoruba land, a family usually consists of a man, his wife (or wives), his children, and many relatives claiming blood or kinship affinity with him (Ekundare, 1973). In precolonial Yorubaland, marriages and esthetics (facial scarification) served the purpose of ethnic incorporation (Ojo, 2008). However, this excluded people with impairments; as before any marriage was contracted, the families of both parties perform a kind of mutual feasibility study to make sure that the other party has no cases of impairments, any hereditary abnormality or infectious incurable disease among the members of the family (Abang, 1988).

4.3 SOUTHWEST NIGERIA AND DISABILITIES

The Yoruba saw the child’s measure of independence as a sign that s/he had developed appropriate cognitive abilities and could begin learning the skills needed to survive in society (Alanamu, 2016). Nigerians believed in traditional education; which means that there were cardinal goals (respect for elders, physical skills, intellectual skills, and vocational training) the citizens needed to pursue to develop fully and thereby join the societal mainstream in contributing to the smooth running of the society (Eskay, Onu, Igbo, Obiyo, & Ugwuanyi, 2012). For the Yorubas, since
economic independence was crucial to adulthood, socialization largely consisted of teaching children labour (Alanamu, 2016). Thus, health and physical well-being were of utmost importance to a Yoruba person; and this is encapsulated in the popular Yoruba adage "good health is the guarantee of wealth" (Olajubu, 2004). Essentially, the person was molded to suit the society; the society is not molded to suit the citizens, as such, people with impairments were perceived as unable to contribute their quota to the society (Eskay et al., 2012). It is for such reasons that if a child was born deformed, the midwife disposed of the baby and announced to the family that the child was stillborn (Abang, 1988). But if the deformed child was allowed to live, he or she never got the same treatment as the other members of the community (Abang, 1988).

However, based on the extended family system, it was customary for the poor members of the family to look for help from any rich member and such help was regarded as obligatory; the aim of the system was to ensure that the helpless members of the family, (the old, sick and unemployed) were not neglected to suffer (Ekundare, 1973). Furthermore, according to the Yoruba folklore, Obatala (a divinity) takes full responsibility for all his creatures even the deformed ones, thus the traditional society demands that families take care of the impaired members of the family (Abang, 1988). Therefore, despite their negative perceptions and treatment in the society, the haves are expected take care of the have-nots simply because of the societal beliefs and expectation that every person within the community must contribute to raising the children within that community, after all, ‘it takes a village’ (Eskay et al., 2012).

In modern times, society has turned to media for information and culture, and this is the same in Yoruba land. Television and home videos represent the main source of knowledge on disability (Dogra et al., 2011). Olaiya, in his 2013 essay, talks about the sense in which Nollywood movies
(the Nigerian film industry) have exploited the creative possibilities provided by video technology to reinforce, rather than reduce, the myth that disability is a by-product of personal or familial sins, that to be disabled is to be abnormal, and that the disabled person is the enigmatic other. An increasing number of popular locally produced films mostly present mentally ill people in psychotic states, talking and laughing to self, acting erratically, looking unkempt and dishevelled (Dayo-Aiyetan, 2002). As suggested by Dogra et al. (2011), media as a main source of knowledge on disability is why children show negative attitudes towards disability. This agrees with the findings of Aina, Suleiman, Yew, and Olorunshola, (2010) where majority of subjects and controls expressed preferences for people with mental illness to remain unmarried and to be kept away from the community for institutional care so as not to harm others.

It is important to note however, that some of the discovered Nok terracotta were found to depict human representations with disease or deformities; the systematic study of which tells us a great deal about the people who portrayed themselves and objects in the world around them by means of these figurines (Shaw, 1978). These representations might have created the idea that the disabled people are important, and have spiritual insights that makes many see them as spiritual conduits that can help carry their supplications to God; an idea which unfortunately puts them at a disadvantage, making them victims of spiritual rituals and sacrifices (Ikuomola, 2015; Olaiya, 2013). On the other hand, the society views the presence of deformities as evil, a curse, some form of punishment from the gods or the ancestors for something wrong done by the parents, and the individuals with deformities must be isolated by the society (Abang, 1988; Etieyibo & Omiegbe, 2016; Ikuomola, 2015; Olaiya, 2013; Sanya et al. 2005). This paradox creates a situation where people generally do not want to be associated with them, yet people believe that showing kindness
and giving alms to the disabled guarantees good fortune. Thus, we both want them and we also do not want them in our society.

4.4 IMPACT OF CULTURE ON EMPLOYMENT

In the Nigerian society, persons with disabilities are often regarded as unwell, incapable of working, in need of help and pity (Bukoye & Ogidan, 2013). Under-expectation and stereotypical attitudes about the limitations imposed on the person with an impairment make it difficult for them to get jobs (Aiyeleso, 2016). Invariably, people with disabilities in the country are not treated as full citizens with fundamental human rights (Eleweke & Ebenso, 2016). The common attitude is such that given the economic situation of the country, individuals who are unimpaired will bring better returns on investments than those who are impaired, as such fewer opportunities are made available for those with impairments (Aiyeleso, 2016). They are often unable to access services due to the absence of enabling policies and laws; and despite over a decade of lobbying by people with disabilities in Nigeria, no mandatory legislation at national level exists to protect their rights to access services (Eleweke & Ebenso, 2016). Furthermore, persons with disabilities cannot gain access into buildings not because they are forbidden to do so, but situations have been created which make it impossible for them to gain access as buildings, transportation systems and other public facilities are rarely constructed with any concern for their accessibility (Abang, 1988).

From this review of literature, it can be gleaned that the Yorubas place high value on hard work for both male and female members of the community. The males are responsible for providing guidance and leadership, trained in warfare and they are primary breadwinners of the family. Women are responsible for child birth, raising children and they are the secondary breadwinners of the family. The Yorubas equate lack of impairment to ability perform one’s duties in the family
and in the community. Inability to fulfill one’s duties is seen as an aberration. Furthermore, Yorubas are historically devotedly religious people. The interpretation of the presence of impairment in religious connotations thus has a lot of influence on the beliefs, and consequently, cultural practices of the Yoruba people regarding those impaired.

Based the extent of discrimination imposed on persons with disabilities on one hand, and the beliefs that contact with an individual with an impairment such as epilepsy or albinism can bring wealth, points to the confusion inherent in the Yoruba culture regarding disabled people. This is a phenomenon explicitly described by Lambo (as cited in Ogunleye, 2015, p. 65), “I think many things were wrong with Nigerians in that the value system has collapsed and we’ve got no other substitute. We’ve been dangling between the traditional and the so-called sophisticated western mores and value system and we had not even got to the other end before the traditional one collapsed, so we are in a total vacuum”. However, irrespective of causality, the literature shows that people with disabilities in Nigeria have been marginalised throughout time, and continue to be marginalised.
CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS

Results from the study were analysed using a theme-based analysis approach to derive the experiences of employed persons with physical disabilities in Southwest Nigeria. Data was obtained by coding the information obtained via semi-structured telephone interviews of key informants. The thematic analysis was driven, first by the research objectives and then by the findings within the data. Themes that helped achieve the research objectives were identified and intersections across and within themes were also identified and recorded. Broad topic coding was performed to elucidate themes that help achieve the research objectives, and I am presenting them in this chapter as broad headings. The broad themes that emerged are cultural beliefs, attitudes, barriers, discrimination, health, interactions with disabled people’s organizations, and interaction with legislation.

In addition, I performed fine coding on data to tease out issues that were not originally part of the research questions, but which were issues raised by all participants across the board. Themes obtained from fine coding were condensed and organised based on similarity. Some of these themes were parallel to broad themes and were thus organized as sub-headings under the broad themes they shared similarities with. Lastly, I presented other themes obtained from fine coding that did not fit under any broad theme separately as broad themes and this include ‘personal strengths’ and ‘important points’.

PARTICIPANTS’ CHARACTERISTICS

Based on the responses to the demographic questionnaire, all participants of this study identified themselves as having mobility impairments. They are between the ages of 31 - 40 years, and
employed in both government (five) and private (two) establishments. Three females and four males participated in this study. All participants reside in urban centres in the southwest region of the country, and participants were obtained from Oyo state, Lagos state, Osun state and Kwara state.

I performed a cross-referencing of all themes with gender, because gender ended up being the only relevant differentiating characteristic among participants. Subtle differences that were elicited across gender were identified and reported under the themes. Following this presentation, I answered the research questions based on the findings of this study. I teased out my answers from the already identified themes in the data. Participants’ direct quotes were included in presentation of findings, in order to add to the dependability of the study. This also served the purpose of ensuring there is consistency with raw data and the themes identified from it. I end this chapter with the clarification of the fact that presence of impairments in individual bodies was not the major disabling factors, however, structural barriers, such as the lack of access to buildings and discrimination were core disabling factors.

5.1 CULTURAL BELIEFS

In this section, I discuss the cultural beliefs that participants of this study believe inform the treatment they receive both in and out of their workplaces. The participants suggested that people with disabilities in Nigeria are believed to be poor, and always in need. It is also believed that anyone that helps them will be getting the favour of divine spirits/forces.

“Well, you know you can’t take a man out of his culture. Some people believe that the way you handle the weakest among you shows how strong you are. Some of them believe that
if they give me some helping hand, things will be easier for them” – Male, government establishment.

“They just think automatically this is what I have to do, so let’s just step up and do it. Particularly when you look nice. It’s like ‘this pretty girl that’s on a wheelchair, aaawww, let’s help her’.” – Female, private establishment.

Findings indicate that these cultural beliefs are the reason people with disabilities are not expected to seek employment or try to make it on their own; but instead wait to be helped, because the public will be available to give them charity. This belief works for and against this group, putting them in a space where they easily get favours, at the same time in a position where they are denied opportunities. Furthermore, disabled people have been made to occupy low statuses within the society, ‘othered’ in spaces where they ought to enjoy full citizenship.

“Yes, yes, yes. I think part of what’s affecting them is the cultural belief because even up to today, some people do not believe that being disabled is not the end of everything. In fact, in some parts of the country, they see it as a taboo… Like an outcast, like someone that you shouldn’t touch.” – Female, government establishment.

The majority of the participants of this study attested to the fact that cultural beliefs are the key reasons why they experience discriminatory attitudes, with one participant expressing the fact that it is only when they are with “enlightened people” that they get some respite. A cross-referencing of the perception of cultural beliefs between male and female participants shows that there is no difference in cultural attitudes towards people with disabilities. This suggests that cultural beliefs about disabled people do not differ based on gender.
5.2 ATTITUDES

In this section, I discuss the different attitudes experienced by employed persons with impairments in Nigeria; both in and out of their workplaces. As subsections, I will be discussing the influence of gender, treatment at work and supports received from work.

Participants generally experienced positive attitudes in their places of employment. Participants reported that majority of their colleagues showed them positive attitudes, were helpful and were willing to make adjustments for them.

“…what I hear people say in the office is you don’t know tomorrow. It might be someone having a challenge today and tomorrow it might be someone else…” - Female, government establishment.

“I think I get a lot of positive attitude from people; because I exude positive attitude too.” - Male participant, private establishment.

“They (colleagues) are very helpful.” - Male participant, government establishment.

Two of the seven interviewees reported that they did not get positive attitudes initially when they started working at their places of employment, but over time, the attitudes became positive and supportive. As an interviewee describes it,

“People generally think just because you are in a wheelchair, you can’t be smart. When they see you do something or say something, it’s like they don’t honestly believe you can do something’…’You get respect for the job. Like ‘I hear you can do this, can you handle this for me?’…’But before that, they could look like ‘you are just stressing’ until they realise you can actually do the job, then you get respect.” – Female, private establishment.
This change was attributed to interaction with the person with disability in the work environment which changed the negative perspectives people initially held. People that had interacted with individuals with impairments in the past, either as friend, family member or classmate, tend to have positive attitude about disabled people, compared to those who have never had any interaction with disabled people. The latter group based their perceptions on “word in the grapevine” about people with disabilities, and this informs their attitudes.

“It depends on their orientation about disability. For instance, some people think disability is infectious, some people think disability is inability, some people feel disability is a burden, while some other people feel disability is embedded potential. So, there are different opinions and different orientations about disability.” - Male participant, private establishment.

Outside of the workplace however, negative attitudes were found in this study to be more prevalent. Findings of this study show that these negative attitudes pose barriers in securing the employment and getting to places of work. Two of the interviewees pointed out that they had gone for job interviews where they were told they would not be employed because of their impairments. Furthermore, negative attitudes that are informed by lack of knowledge about disability have resulted in some individuals with disabilities electing not to seek employment.

“So when it first happened, the surgeons were like there is nothing you can do, just go home, use your lovely wheelchair and your siblings will be sending you money every month.” - Female, government establishment.
“You walk into a place, and the initial belief is that this is someone in need. They would not think you can help yourself or even think you are doing better than them.” - Male, government establishment.

Nevertheless, most of the participants of this study experience positive attitudes within their work places. In the effort to show support and positive attitude, colleagues were found to unknowingly portray ableist attitudes, until the person with impairment show that they do not need the ‘help’ thereby changing the perspective.

“They take offense. Like ‘I’m offering help and you are declining. You should accept’. And I am like ‘No, I don’t have to take your help if I don’t want it’. Like I’m not trying to be rude, I just don’t think like you should help me do everything. I already feel like I can’t do something, so the things that I can do, I am happy to do. And when I refuse their help, they get offended. You still get the pity, like it’s not voiced but I think it’s even much better now cos I have been working for a long time, and I guess I’m kinda used to it so I don’t get…it’s not as bad as it used to be.” – Female, private establishment.

“I think I brought the awareness because initially when I was working it was more of “do you need help?” “do you need help?” but over time they have realised that she really doesn’t need help.” – Female, government establishment.

To help visualise the data elicited on positive attitude, I employed the word frequency query developed in the process of data analysis. Fine coding of this theme showed that the most used words by participants include ‘people’, ‘need’, and ‘help’. This indicates that positive attitude towards the impaired employee revolves around giving help; which is their way making the job easier on their colleague with impairment.
5.2.1 Gender

The majority of the participants of this study expressed the idea that gender had no influence on the treatment they received in their workplace. However, one participant believed those of the female gender get better advantages in the workplace. Participant explained that the females are more likely to be left out of strenuous duties unlike their male counterparts. On performing a cross-referencing to determine if any difference exists between male and female participants of this study on their perception of attitudes, I found that the perception of good and bad attitudes is similar irrespective of gender. However, this cross-referencing showed that the reports among female participants indicate they got more ‘pity’, more offers of help, and were less expected to perform all their duties at work, than their male counterparts reported. In agreement with this finding, one of the male participants, when questioned about the influence of gender on the treatment he receives at work, said that:

“Gender…you know for a man, they can easily tell him, ‘do this’ but for a woman, they can say, ‘don’t let us disturb her’.” – Male, government establishment.

Additionally, nine references were coded to negative attitudes by female participants compared to two coded for male participants. This might indicate that females observe negative attitudes more
than their male counterparts. However, more references were coded for female participants for positive attitudes than male participants as well. Thus, it might simply be that female are more aware of attitudes in general than male participants.

5.2.2 Reactions towards having employment

Of the seven participants of this study, five reported that the reactions they receive when people find out they have employment include shock, surprise and appreciation. Of the other two participants, one reported that ‘he does not notice’, while the other said,

“Errrmmm, I think people my age group expect me to have a job, maybe it is the older generation that will feel ‘whoa, you have a job, that’s a big deal’, but people my age expect me to be working.” – Female, government establishment.

In sum, participants believe that the majority of the public expects people with disabilities to be without employment.

5.2.3 Supports from work

All participants of this study reported getting supports in their work place to make performing their duties easier. These supports include flexibility in getting time off work, modifications in workplace set up (rearrangement of the office to accommodate navigating wheelchair), changes in making the work environment more accessible (ramps and dedicated parking spots) and psychological support from colleagues. Participants pointed out that the supports are usually not official, they are supports they received because their bosses and/or supervisors were good to them, and based on the type of relationship they had with their superiors. They expressed the desire to
have supports that will be legal and official such that they would not have to lobby or negotiate to such supports from their places of employment.

“Like I said earlier, there is no formal thing. I can get informal support and help, but I rarely do it. If I ask for, they will probably do it as a favour.” – Male, government establishment.

“Hmmm, well I think it depends on the relationship too. Because when they see that I am not feeling well, maybe they see I’m not as active as I used to be, they will ask if I need rest, and say ‘okay, you can come late tomorrow’. Like in my place of work, even though it is not official, my boss give me every Thursday as day of rest. Sometimes I rest, and sometimes I go for my physiotherapy clinic.” – Female, government establishment.

5.2.4 Treatment at work

The type of treatment all the participants of this study reported they received at their places of employment include pity, silent admiration, assistance when required, and encouragement.

“Any where I need to go and I don’t want to stress myself, they go for me. My promotion interview was organized in my office. The boardroom is upstairs, so they came to my office.” – Male, government establishment.

In all, attitudes of colleagues are more positive than negative; and even the negative attitudes changed over time on interaction with the person with a disability.

5.3 BARRIERS

In this section, I discuss the barriers around employment as experienced by employed persons with disabilities. I break down this broad topic into sub-headings where I discuss the specific barriers
participants of this study reported; and finish off with the specific barriers they found most challenging. The barriers identified in this study are physical barriers and attitudinal barriers.

5.3.1 Physical barriers

On performing fine coding of data related to barriers, the theme ‘physical barriers’ got the most coding. It generated fourteen references in total compared to the other subheadings that generated six at the most. This points to the fact that physical barriers pose a major problem for these participants; bringing to fore the fact that the architectural set up of the country has not been inclusive of individuals with physical disabilities. It is also important to note that the extensive coding received by this theme might be attributed to the fact that all the participants of this study had mobility impairments. A participant stated that they do not experience any barrier at their place of work except for lack of accessibility. This idea was echoed by all participants; and the specific physical barriers identified include:

- Inaccessible buildings:

  “So aside from work, most times I’m at home because of accessibility. You get somewhere, and they have steps. You get somewhere and the doors are too narrow.” – Female, government establishment.

  “Where I was working before, to enter my office, everybody will know somebody is about to enter the office. Because the environment is not conducive for wheelchair. And you know, no ready person on ground to help. So, if I want to enter the office, like 3-4 people will have to carry the wheelchair.” -Male, government establishment.

- Lack of accessible bathrooms:
“That is a major problem. Like sometimes I have to carry diapers. I always carry diapers because there are some public bathrooms with doors that are not even wide enough… They are not wide enough for me to enter. And even if I enter, there isn’t enough space to close the door.” – Female, private establishment.

• Lack of functional infrastructure related to the work place; such as bad roads, non-functioning elevators, distances of one office to the other:

“Well, ‘workplace’ has ramps so, but it’s not like…okay, there is an elevator directly in front of my office but it’s not working. I have to travel, like travel, really, really travel to get to my office… It just increases my time…” – Female, government establishment.

• Inaccessible transport system:

“Of course, there are barriers. Inaccessible buildings, the bus stop system has a lot of barriers. There is a bad transport system. If I was not driving, it would not have been easy… And it is psychologically disturbing when you have to wait for people to help you before you get from one place or the other.” – Male, private establishment.

All participants reported that the lack of accessibility grossly limited their freedom of movement. Some of the participants expressed the fact that this has psychological implications for their well-being, coupled with the fact that this reduces their effectiveness. Furthermore, data shows that these barriers limited employment opportunities for these individuals with mobility impairments.

“The interview was holding like on the third floor so I had to get carried, because I use a wheelchair, so I had to get carried all the way up. And I got to thinking that even if I eventually got the job, how am I supposed to get to work everyday? It was after that
experience that I figured, oh even before I apply to any place, I need to check the place first to be sure I can actually work there.” – Female, private establishment.

The data indicates that persons with disabilities reported facing significant physical barriers in and around the workplace. These have implications for their well-being and consequently, their quality of life. A word frequency query of this coding succinctly shows how much physical barriers alienated the participants of this study. The words that came up the most in this coding include work, accessibility, office, enter, door, carried and ramps. As the pictorial depiction shows, physical barriers present in the form of lack of accessibility into buildings.

Figure 2: Word cloud for ‘physical barriers’.

5.3.2 Attitudinal barriers

The findings of this study show that some attitudes experienced by persons with disabilities lead to barriers for them. This was identified in the attitudes of transport operators who decline to let wheel-chair users get on their vehicle, which consequently affects their ability to get to their workplaces at appropriate times.

“And I have a number of friends who have told me that when they get to the bus stop and the taxi driver sees them with wheelchair or crutches, they just zoom off. They don’t want
to put the wheelchair in the boot bla bla bla, its cumbersome.” – Male, government establishment.

“Hmmm…yes. I could remember, before I got my car, getting to work was very difficult. Most time, you have to pay more. Imagine someone that has a challenge, and a place you can walk to, you have to pay more. Because they believe carrying someone like you, its like they are carrying load. So, maybe when you are supposed to spend like #100, you spend like #1000.” – Female, government establishment.

The findings also indicate that some employers decline to employ persons with disabilities specifically because of their impairments.

“But let me just say this, between 2009 and 2014, I have had job interviews that I was turned down based on disabilities. I remember one clearly, I was told based on my disability they will not be able to take me.” – Male, private establishment.

These attitudes create unique barriers for these individuals in accessing and keeping their employment.

5.3.3 Impact of barriers on goals

All the participants of this study reported that the barriers they have to deal with, even though they affected performing their duties, however, did not prevent them from achieving their goals. They reported finding ways around barriers such as delegating duties, getting to work earlier, working extra hard whenever they are at work to make up for when they are not at work, thinking outside the box, getting someone to give them assistance, etc. However, a couple of the participants reported that even though they overcome these barriers and went on to perform their duties, they
believed their effectiveness was reduced and they would have provided much better results if they didn’t have those barriers.

“Yes, definitely. Because I have to think of overcoming those barriers; getting to work, accessing the office, sorting the accommodation issues. Having overcome all that, you get to work. Of course, you will still get your duties done but you won’t be as effective as you would want to be.” – Male, government establishment.

5.3.4 Anxiety over job loss

All the participants of this study reported not having any anxiety over job loss in the future, except one. When I asked the question during the interview, the answers I received include:

“No, at all.” – Female, government establishment.

“You know, honestly, I have never thought of that.” – Male, government establishment.

“Hmmm…well, for me, I have a plan B. I am the kind of person that I always have a plan B.” – Female, government establishment.

“Eeerrrrmm…for now with everything on ground, I don’t have such worry.” – Male government establishment.

Two of the participants mentioned having personal businesses they run in addition to their employment, while others speak of the possibility of leaving current employment to better-paying employment.
5.3.5 Workplace set up

All the participants of this study, except one, reported that their personal work station was set up to accommodate their impairment. A participant reported the belief that the office was arranged specifically to suit them, even though it was never articulated by the colleagues. Another participant stated that a kitchenette was put into their office, and believes that was done specifically for their benefit since no other office has a kitchenette included in the office at their workplace. From the reports obtained from participants, no two workstations were set up the same way, even if they are all wheelchair users. What I was able to glean from the information provided is that all these individuals had their work stations set up to accommodate their specific type of physical impairment and their job duties. It is important to note that the findings show that these arrangements were effected mostly by the immediate colleagues of these employees, not by the employer.

5.3.6 Most significant barrier

All participants unanimously agreed that the most significant barrier to performing their duties was the lack of accessible buildings. A participant reported that they will often have to find out the building where a workplace is located before they even decide to apply for a job there. As can be seen from the word frequency query on this coding, the words that came up the most for this theme include ‘accessible’, ‘challenging’, ‘environment’, ‘buildings’, ‘think’ and ‘people’. Participants of this study asserted that the environment is unfriendly for users with physical impairments.
5.4 DISCRIMINATION

In this section, I discuss the discriminatory attitudes experienced by the participants of this study. ‘Discrimination’ is a broad theme here because, on performing fine coding, not many themes came up that were similar to this theme. Discriminatory attitudes were experienced by participants of this study mostly in transportation and securing housing. Of all seven participants, only one reported experiencing discriminatory attitudes in the attempt to secure employment.

“But let me just say this, between 2009 and 2014, I have had job interviews that I was turned down based on disabilities. I remember one clearly, I was told based on my disability they will not be able to take me” – Male, private establishment.

However, once the employment has been secured, participants did not experience discriminatory attitudes in employment. Their experiences of discriminatory attitudes occurred when they interacted with the public, outside of their work environment. Experience of discriminatory attitudes outside of the job environment was reported by all the participants.
“It’s as bad as, sometimes if there is a need to queue, they will tell you to your face that you too should be on the line. So, most times, for things like that I fight for such things. I have to open up and raise my voice. That you can’t allow me to be on the wheelchair in the sun. They will say if the sun is too much for you, you can go and come back. But it is not easy for me to go and come back. When you raise your voice and speak out, they will say okay, let’s allow him or her.” – Female, government establishment.

“There are times when we need to queue. People will tell us to join the queue. Even the bankers were talking to them that they see my situation, they should allow me. But they said they have been there, and they too they have places to go and all that.” – Male, government establishment.

Discriminatory attitudes were also experienced in interactions with the public transportation system.

“And I have a number of friends who have told me that when they get to the bus stop and the taxi driver sees them with wheelchair or crutches, they just zoom off. They don’t want to put the wheelchair in the boot bla bla bla, it’s cumbersome.” – Male, government establishment.

This was confirmed by other participants:

“The drivers and the conductors are the worst with discrimination. They will rather wait at the bus stop for someone that is still at his house than carry that person with a disability.” – Male, private establishment.
Participants suggested that discriminatory attitudes are borne out of lack of accurate information about disabled people; and those who do not show discriminatory attitudes do not, not because they have positive information about people with disabilities, but simply because they are kind-hearted.

“As a matter of fact, the people that do not discriminate don’t do, not because it is against the law. They do it because they have a compassionate mind. People are just like they don’t want to have anything to do with someone that has a disability.” – Male, private establishment.

Within the work environment on the other hand, participants reported having a discrimination-free environment.

“I have really been fortunate to be surrounded by good people. I have to tell you; I have never experienced such.” – Male, government establishment.

“But since I have been working there, there is nothing like maltreatment or whatever.” – Male, government establishment.

When asked about remuneration, all participants acknowledged that having an impairment has no influence on their remuneration.

“No, no at all…. They won’t review my salary downwards because I have a disability…. No, so far it has not affected my promotion.” – Female, government establishment.

A cross-reference of this theme between male and female participants indicates there is no difference in type or extent of discrimination experienced by both genders.
5.5 HEALTH

I will be discussing the health impacts of having employment in this section. I discuss health as a broad theme, and I present in subsections the relationship between employment and health as reported by persons with disabilities.

All participants of this study affirmed that having the employment has greatly improved their overall physical and psychological health.

“Ohh. It has given me a sense of purpose I think. I can basically do things, like I can achieve. I feel a sense of fulfillment being able to contribute something. It helps my self-esteem as well. Most people who haven’t met me at all on the job talk about what I do, or specifically request for me. So, it helps my ego and my self-esteem. And I feel like I am contributing positively.” – Female, private establishment.

“I’m never in pain. Well, I really don’t…I haven’t been in pain in several years.” – Female, government establishment.

Having the employment has had positive impact not only on their psychological health, but also on their physical health. They reported that being able to move around had improved their health with regards things like vascular circulation, gastrointestinal motility, prevention of muscular atrophy and pressure sores. Participants reported not requiring special vacation structure to accommodate need for more rest periods in employment, and they do not often require time off work for hospital visits. It is also important to keep in mind however, that all the participants of this study had mobility impairments, and not a degenerating condition or chronic illness; the conclusion might have been different in such a case.
5.5.1 Mental health

The coding for mental health generated more references than coding for physical health. This suggests that employment benefits, or lack of it, impacts mental health more than it impacts the physical health of an individual with impairments. Participants of this study reported that having employment has improved their self-esteem, given them a sense of purpose, and improved their outlook towards life. Participants reported that negative situations do not strongly affect their health, rather, they reported finding alternative ways to deal with negative situations, barriers and poor attitudes. This might account for why negative attitudes do not impact their health status negatively. Data indicates that situations that have impacted their mental health negatively were related to lack of accessibility of buildings. The dependency the results from the lack of accessibility leads to frustration and embarrassment that impacts their sense of well-being.

“And it is psychologically disturbing when you have to wait for people to help you before you get from one place or the other.” – Male, private establishment.

5.5.2 Physical health

Regarding the impact of employment on their physical health, the majority of the participants of this study reported that the physical exertion required to get around barriers and perform their duties has no negative impact on their health. They also alluded to the fact that negative psychological experiences did not put them in physical pain.

“Well, when I have a bad day, what I usually do is [sleep]. It barely affects me.” – Male, government establishment.
On questioning participants further on this, they explained that this is because they understand their bodies and they make sure they do not over-stretch themselves.

### 5.5.3 Health impact of negative attitudes

I was especially curious about how negative attitudes impacted the health of the participants of this study. They however reported that they do not have any negative reactions pertaining to their health due to negative attitudes.

“I am kinda like a little bit…how do I put this? My outlook to life, most of the time, I find it amusing when people go that way. ‘Cause I consider myself pretty normal.” – Female, private establishment.

“I think I have a very thick skin. I really don’t care” – Female, government establishment.

“Well, that’s a good question. I am very difficult person to offend. Other people’s actions do not matter to me. Although I get angry if I sense that you are looking down on someone with a disability.” – Male, government establishment.

Only one participant reported feeling bad on experiencing a negative attitude although that changed with time.

“Ahh, it affects me seriously. That was in the initial stage. But I am built in a different way now.” – Female, government establishment.

### 5.5.4 Health impact of positive attitudes

Even though participants reported being immune to negative attitudes, this is not the same with positive attitudes. On asking them how positive attitude affects their health status, most of the participants of this study reported that positive attitudes improved their psychological health.
“Psychologically, it is really encouraging.” – Male, government establishment.

“Most people who haven’t met me at all on the job talk about what I do, or specifically request for me. So, it helps my ego and my self-esteem.” – Female, private establishment.

5.5.5 Health benefits of having employment

All participants reported that not having the job would have resulted in adverse effects for them, especially psychologically. Having employment created a sense of fulfillment that non-disabled individuals take for granted.

“I think it’s going to be a major problem. ‘Cause I think everybody needs that sense of fulfillment, they need to feel like they are contributing something to the society. If I didn’t have a job, or I didn’t have somewhere to go to everyday, I’ll probably be depressed.” – Female, private establishment.

“Well, for one, I’m not depressed. If I was at home at my age, you know, I won’t have money, I will have to depend on everybody for money, I won’t be able to go out, no no no, I will be crazily depressed.” – Female, government establishment.

“That would have been really bad… Now I am self-sustained. I don’t ask anybody for any help and all that. It would have been so difficult; the environment would have been very boring.” – Male, government establishment.

“If I don’t work, that is even a burden to me. So, having something that keeps my mind alert is an advantage.” – Male, government establishment.
For this group, having a job was not just to pay bills, it offered them a sense of fulfillment, security and improved their psychological health. Also, having the job distracted them and shifted focus from disability to other facets of their lives.

A word frequency query performed on this theme showed that ‘depressed’ and ‘job’ were mentioned so much more than other words. The visual representation below shows how much ‘depression’ and its associated words came up when participants discussed this issue.

**Figure 4: Word cloud for ‘health benefits of having employment’**

![Word cloud image](image)

### 5.6 PERSONAL STRENGTHS

In this section I discuss one of the themes that emerged in data analysis, and that is on how the participants of this study have coped with barriers, attitudes and discrimination. The extent of personal strength they showed they were capable of is overwhelming. This theme generated forty-three references, which is almost as much as what a major theme such as ‘Attitude’ generated. One of the most notable findings is the extent of self-advocacy they engage in. They are aware of the way things are in the country for people with disabilities, despite, they all, in their own ways, have doggedly fought back.
They have fought back by doing things they were told they could not do, such as getting education and employment. They have also carried out political advocacy such as picketing, as well as self-advocacy. They work, both verbally and with their characters, towards changing the negative perception the public has about people with disabilities. Despite the physical inaccessibility of university structures, two of the participants reported currently working on their PhD and one reported currently working on a Master’s degree. Two of the participants have their own private businesses along with their government or private employment. All these acts of self-advocacy have contributed to changing perceptions about people with disabilities in their immediate environment.

“So, there are different opinions and different orientations about disability. What I’ve learnt over time is to accept people for who they are. If I can talk to them, and change their minds, I am always very proactive. If I can’t, I just move on.” – Male, private establishment.

“And sometimes even when they offer help and I decline, because the only thing I think I can’t do is stand up and walk; I can mostly handle everything.” – Female, private establishment.

“We have actually done a couple of things like that. We have done picketing. We picketed six bank head offices. And we did that simultaneously in three cities.” – Male, private establishment.

On how they got their employment, most of the participants of this study reported advocating for themselves to secure the employment. They reported constantly finding ways to get around all the barriers they have to face daily, and they refuse to let these barriers stop them from achieving their job goals, in that they do everything extra that they have to do to perform their duties. And most
importantly, they have refused to accept the verdict of the public about them. They work extra hard to prove that they are deserving of education, employment and deserving of rights like every other citizen of the country.

5.7 INTERACTION WITH DISABLED PERSONS’ ORGANIZATIONS (DPOs)

All participants of this study, except one, reported not being involved with disabled people’s organizations; and the reasons cited include convenience, lack of interest and politics within the organizations. The most significant reason why the participants of this study elected to not be involved in DPOs in Nigeria is because of the way the organizations are run. One participant reported that relief materials do not always end up in the hands of the disabled people who need it. Another participant says stiff competition to be at the top of the ladder in such organizations makes the people involved lose sight of the actual reasons why the DPOs exists in the first place – people with impairments; and the people they are supposed to be serving get lost in the shuffle.

However, some participants get involved in activities to assist persons with disabilities at more grassroots level. This include giving talks in the physiotherapy clinics to offer advice on how to navigate barriers, how to re-organize the home for those who recently acquired the disability and advice on mobility devices.

5.8 INTERACTION WITH LEGISLATION

In this section, I discuss the findings about the knowledge the participants possess about legislation regarding people with disabilities in Nigeria; as well as their level of engagement with any of the laws. All participants agree that legislation regarding individuals with disabilities is ineffective. However, participants were concerned mostly with legislation within their states rather than federal legislation. Even though participants report getting flexibility and supports from work, they
expressed the preference for supports and rights that are backed by legislation which protects their interest, in all facets, not just employment. However, this seems to be lacking. Participants point out that most of the benefits they enjoy at their places of employment are due to the kindness of their immediate colleagues, employers or supervisors, not because the law mandated those people to provide those benefits. For now, federal legislation to protect people with disabilities has been proposed to the federal senate, however, it is yet to be signed into law.

“They have been trying to…it has been in the National Assembly for a while…almost five years now. We are hoping the present government will pass it into law. They want to have a commission for people with disabilities, make buildings accessible to people with disabilities…I just hope they pass it into law. If they can do that…” – Male, government establishment.

Furthermore, the porous national legislation that has been passed into law to protect the rights of disabled individuals get flouted all the time without repercussion. But on a positive note, participants reported that Lagos state passed the Lagos Special People’s law in 2011; while Oyo state passed a similar bill into law February 2017. None of the participants had ever engaged with legislation to demand for their rights.

5.9 IMPORTANT POINTS

This final section discusses the issues that were raised by participants of this study in the process of data collection. Participants pointed out that some of the major barriers they experience include lack of affordable housing in close proximity to their work places. They asserted that if their living quarters were close to their places of employment, negative experiences with transportation would be eliminated.
“People with physical challenges should be housed where they work, so they won’t have to deal with transportation issues. I am aware that there are preferences in Nigeria, they will make promises…there was a time I applied for housing and I was told to just write letter and they will work on it immediately. After a time, they told me the house has been allocated and the person there has paid the rent for three years.” – Male, government establishment.

Aside from legislation on the state and federal levels, participants pointed out that there are no provisions in the civil service rules that ensure accommodations for persons with disabilities; such as flexibility in vacation structure, shifts, work hours etc.

“It would have been so, so, so difficult. Because of the number of people, and no special arrangement for people with disabilities, so they have to struggle with able-bodied. And you know the attitude of people generally, if they don’t know you one on one before, and you just met at a public place like…that at commercial transport like that, everybody will just be struggling for themselves. There is no arrangement on ground that people with disabilities…like this is where you stay, this is your own transport.” – Male, government establishment.

Participants suggested that having accommodations within the stipulations of the civil service rules will be necessary so that employees with disabilities will be spared the need to negotiate flexibility requirements when starting a new job. Such accommodations might be beneficial if it is extended to tertiary education, housing and transportation.

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that cultural beliefs influence the attitude and discrimination experienced by persons with disabilities. However, the findings show that
participants experience positive attitudes within their workplaces, although this is not the case outside their workplaces. This was found to be because work colleagues have had the opportunity to interact with the participants and their negative perceptions have been refuted, unlike those outside their workplaces who still hold negative perceptions about disability. Furthermore, this study found that persons with disabilities experience physical barriers which are found in the architectural set up of the environment; and this often makes performing their duties more difficult. They also experience attitudinal barriers noted in the reluctance of transit operators to transport them or charge them more for the service; as well as in the refusal of some employers of labour to employ them. The most significant barrier however is the architectural barrier.

The findings of this study indicate that all the above factors lead to experiences of discrimination for these individuals. This study also found that having employment has a positive impact on health, especially psychological health. In addition, the findings illustrate that having an impairment does not translate to reduced productivity in the workplace. Finally, participants of this study did not interact with DPOs, even though they perform advocacy work at grassroots level; neither has any of them interacted with any of the existing legislation.
CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

To meet the research objectives of this study, I utilized a mixed methods design. This involved a review of culture and history of Southwest Nigeria (presented in Chapter Four) and qualitative descriptive approach involving employed Nigerians with impairments. These led to the identification of some key factors that influence the conditions of employment reported among citizens with disabilities in the Southwest region of Nigeria. I was able to tease out some of the cultural, historical and discriminatory practices that might be responsible for employment challenges experienced by persons with impairments as it relates to middle- to low- income country like Nigeria. The findings obtained from this analysis indicate that participants experience positive attitudes within the workplace, but negative attitudes outside the work place; they reported experiencing physical and attitudinal barriers which were found in lack of accessible buildings, bathrooms, and transport system; and findings show that even though these barriers did not prevent them from achieving their goals, it made it a lot more difficult.

Findings also show that participants experience discrimination in employment with the majority alluding to the fact that cultural beliefs are the key reasons why they experience discrimination. Furthermore, results indicate that having an employment improve participants' health, especially their mental health. And lastly, findings show that participants do not engage with DPOs, neither do they utilize the legislation available for people with disabilities. Some of the findings of this study are well supported in literature, while some are new as identified through the analysis of collected data. Physical and attitudinal barriers, and discrimination were identified in data collected from participants as key factors that influence situation of employment, and these are
easily supported by literature. However, other factors that influence employment characteristics, such as role of history and culture, and ‘personal strengths’ of citizens with impairments have rarely been discussed in literature.

### 6.1 CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON PERCEPTION OF DISABILITY

The results of this study indicate that cultural beliefs have a crucial impact on attitudes towards disability. Culture has been described as the totality of a people’s way of life, which is expressed in their history, language, art, philosophy, religion, politics, economics, music, food and dressing (Eze, 2014). Nigerians in general and Yoruba people especially are very cultural people. As asserted by Falola and Heaton (2008), even though Nigerians have incorporated Western values and lifestyles, they are still influenced by their indigenous traditions. Based on the extended family system, it is customary for the poor members of the family to look for help from any rich member and such help is regarded as obligatory; the aim of which is to ensure that the helpless members of the family, (the old, sick and unemployed) were not neglected to suffer (Ekundare, 1973). This is supported by the findings of this study which showed that the treatment participants receive in the workplace, both to gain employment and to perform their duties as an employee, is grounded in and informed by cultural beliefs.

“Well, you know you can’t take a man out of his culture. Some people believe that the way you handle the weakest among you shows how strong you are. Some of them believe that if they give me some helping hand, things will be easier for them” – Male, government establishment.

As the findings of this study confirmed, some employers employ people with disabilities because that is their way of ‘helping’ them; rather than giving them employment because they are qualified
to perform the job. As found in the review of literature, this likely stems from the cultural requirement to help the ‘weaker’ members of the society. This cultural precept accounts for why the Yoruba society leans towards the charity model of disability. These cultural beliefs are the reason why people with disabilities are not expected to seek employment; why people are surprised to hear some of them have employment; and why they are not expected to try to make it on their own, but rather wait to be ‘helped’. After all, it is believed that the public is obligated to give them charity. This illustrates that the ableism noted in the review of literature (Abang, 1988; Alanamu, 2016; Dayo-Aiyetan, 2002; Ekundare, 1973; Eskay et al., 2012; Komolafe et al., 2013; Olaiya, 2013; Sanya et al. 2005) and this study, stems from cultural beliefs.

6.2 CULTURAL INFLUENCE AND ABLEISM

The findings of this study also show that negative attitudes resulting from certain cultural beliefs about persons with disabilities lead to ableism. Ableism has been defined as the discrimination or prejudice against people with disabilities (Merriam-Webster dictionary, n.d.). In this context, I define ableism as discrimination against persons with disabilities which has been justified and normalised over time due to the requirement by culture that they are meant to be ‘helped’ only. Because this form of ableism was informed by the culture we hold so dear, added to the construct that helping someone is never a bad thing, it has been used to justify the discriminatory attitudes meted out to citizens with disabilities. The effects of these ableist attitudes and the inclination towards the charity model, supported and defended by local cultural contexts add a social and economic burden to the individuals with disabilities, much more incapacitating than the burden of the impairment itself. Therefore, since people with disabilities are not expected to seek
employment, employers will likely see no reason to give them the employment even though they are qualified to perform the job functions.

“But let me just say this, between 2009 and 2014, I have had job interviews that I was turned down based on disabilities. I remember one clearly, I was told based on my disability they will not be able to take me” – Male, private establishment.

The findings of this study reveal that the employers are disinclined to employ people with disabilities simply because of their impairments, in agreement with the reports of several authors (Juillard et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2013; Smith, 2011). This approach can also be traced to cultural and historical causes. Deepak (2001) opined that negative connotations about disabled persons in the traditional myths and stereotypical views about the specific activities, suitable for people with disabilities; continue to influence the lives of disabled persons even today, thus creating specific expectations or limiting the life-choices available to them. These traditional myths and stereotypical attitudes are reinforced by the representations of people with impairments in media, labelling them as the ‘other’, unworthy of good jobs (Dayo-Aiyetan, 2002; Dogra et al., 2011; Olaiya, 2013). The attitude of ableism which is informed by culture might account for the poor rates of employment reported among this group by several authors (Juillard et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2013; Smith, 2011).

Nigeria is a country that is interested in equal rights for all its citizens, and attempts to ensure this in legislation. Nigeria signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 30th March 2007 and ratified it on 24th September 2010 (UN, 2006). Despite diverse challenges to the passage of a comprehensive national disability rights bill, law makers of the country have been working consistently to ensure the bill get passed into law, and in June 2016, the Senate
passed the Disability Bill (Onogu, 2016). In addition, Lagos state passed The Lagos State Special People’s Law in 2012. These efforts show that the country is not completely oblivious to the negative impact of ableism informed by cultural ideals on citizens with disabilities. It is hoped that these legislative measures will mitigate the ableism experienced by persons with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria. In addition, there are organizations of and for people with disabilities in Nigeria that advocate for equal rights for citizens with disabilities. They have been working assiduously on inclusive policies such as education, employment, electoral system, economics empowerment, information, accessibility, participation, etc., as well as the ongoing advocacy and campaign to get the Nigerian Government sign and pass the national disability rights bill into law with an independent implementation commission in line with the United Nations CRPD which Nigeria is a signatory (Moore & Shemang, 2016). These ongoing efforts are opening spaces for dialogue on the issue and it is hoped that in time, all these efforts will combat the ableism and discrimination experienced by citizens with disabilities.

6.3 CULTURAL INFLUENCE, ABLEISM AND DISCRIMINATION

In a lot of public discussions around disability, ‘discrimination’ is a word that comes up as a key part of the discourse. However, in this study, ‘discrimination’ did not generate as many references as I expected. I propose this could indicate the idea the participants do not notice discriminatory attitudes because they understand it to be ‘normal’ and hence, do not label it as such. As a very cultural people, citizens of southwest Nigeria hold firmly to their culture, and this spills over to the way citizens with disabilities are treated within the society. Ableist attitudes can be attributed to the perception that disabled individuals are liabilities, cannot help themselves and will always be dependent on charity and family; and this leads to discrimination.
“They just think automatically this is what I have to do, so let’s just step up and do it. Particularly when you look nice. It’s like ‘this pretty girl that’s on a wheelchair, aaawww, let’s help her’.” – Female, private establishment.

Ableist attitudes and the dominating charity model have created an environment of discrimination for people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria. Furthermore, the Yoruba society is historically built on work of farmers and artisans, and everyone is required to contribute to the wealth generation of the society by contributing their quota, physically. A person with an impairment was viewed as not being able to make this contribution, and therefore seen as unimportant in the grand scheme of things.

“You walk into a place, and the initial belief is that this is someone in need. They would not think you can help yourself or even think you are doing better than them.” - Male, government establishment.

The interaction between this belief system and the impairment within the individual leads to the diverse behavioural practices that create the isolation and separation of the individual with impairments from the society. This is the situation that Garland-Thomson (2013) described as creating a misfit of individuals with disabilities within environments not set up to accommodate them. Evidently, the individual is made to conform to the society, never the society to conform to the individual. Falola and Heaton (2008) pointed out that throughout history, the labor and ingenuity of Nigerians themselves have been the primary driving force of the economy. They further explained that agriculture has been complemented by local craftsmanship and artisanry in areas such as blacksmithing, leather-working, construction, textile manufacturing, building, boat-making etc., and for a long time in pre-colonial Nigeria, human labor was itself a commodity that
could be bought and sold. Therefore, even though, in current times, the society has moved from one that is completely dependent on agriculture and artisanry, and thus no longer dependent on the physical abilities of its citizens, this historical cultural expectation continues to impact employment parameters of citizens with disabilities.

This is in agreement with several authors (Abang, 1988; Aiyeleso, 2016; Etieyibo & Omiegbe, 2016) who asserted that people with disabilities are viewed as inferior to those without disabilities, and this is utilized to justify the treatment they receive. This explains the finding in this study where participants were informed by prospective employers that they will not be given employment because of their impairments, and not because they are not qualified for the job. As can be seen, ableist attitudes in the Nigerian context have ‘othered’ and are still ‘othering’ persons with disabilities in the employment scene in the Southwest region of the country. This is in agreement with several authors who have indicated that ableist attitudes in the sphere of employment are a major barrier for people with impairments in Nigeria (Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2011, Peters et al., 2013). The ideology that people with impairments are ‘not able’ is still very much within the culture, creating a society that discriminates against individuals with impairments.

Based on this definition of discrimination according to the United Nations (2006) - “Discrimination on the basis of disability” means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation” (CRPD, pp 4); it can be seen that discrimination is being experienced by persons with disabilities in southwest Nigeria not only in employment, but also in transportation, housing, and accessibility.
As explained above, discrimination is both directly and indirectly informed by culture. Directly, cultural beliefs inform these ableist attitudes; and indirectly, these attitudes have been normalised and their origins are mostly ignored or even forgotten. In addition, the same cultural beliefs influence perceptions of discrimination. This means that citizens with disabilities themselves expect discrimination as a result of prevalent cultural beliefs; and as such, might not consider it worthy of note. Perceptions of discrimination by persons with disabilities, and discrimination as a result of ableist attitudes experienced by them, leads me to the idea that of the eight guiding principles of the CRPD, citizens with disabilities in Nigeria are still struggling to actualise the first six guiding principles - Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons; Non-discrimination; Full and effective participation and inclusion in society; Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity; Equality of opportunity; Accessibility.

Several authors (Edewor et al., 2010; Eleweke, 2013; Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo; 2011; Smith, 2011) identified discrimination as a major barrier in employment for people with disabilities, contrary to the findings of this study which identified physical barriers as the major barrier in employment. The contrasting findings of this study on discrimination can be attributed to the perception of discrimination discussed earlier. In addition, it might be due to the fact that there was minimal experience of discrimination within the workplace by participants, unlike what they found outside the workplace. Findings of this study indicate that the participants did experience discrimination in transportation to work, in the lack of dedicated housing and the poor attitudes of their broader, non-work community. The influences of cultural, physical and attitudinal barriers create experiences of discriminatory practices among this group that cannot be denied. I found discriminatory practices to be associated with lack of knowledge or wrong information about
impairments. This explains why people that have interacted with this group (such as work colleagues and family members) have a better understanding of disability and thus display less discriminatory attitudes, unlike those who have not interacted with them.

**6.4 DISCRIMINATION AND LEGISLATION**

The discrimination experienced by people with disabilities as found in this study, is encompassed in the description of discrimination provided by the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The CRPD defines discrimination as:

> “any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation (UN, 2006).

The culture of the southwest region of Nigeria thus has a huge impact on the experiences of persons with disabilities in employment. The cultural stipulation was originally designed to ensure that persons with disabilities within the society are catered for, but over the decades and centuries, it has been used to isolate and relegate this group to the periphery; and this is when it became discriminatory. Findings of this study show that employees with disabilities experience discrimination in transportation, housing, accessibility and the constant need to perform self-advocacy.

> “It’s as bad as, sometimes if there is a need to queue, they will tell you to your face that you too should be on the line. So, most times, for things like that I fight for such things. I have to open up and raise my voice. That you can’t allow me to be on the wheelchair in
the sun. They will say if the sun is too much for you, you can go and come back. But it is not easy for me to go and come back. When you raise your voice and speak out, they will say okay, let’s allow him or her.” – Female, government establishment.

The culture that requires that the person is molded to suit the society instead of molding the society to suit the person (Eskay et al., 2012), creates an environment of discrimination for individuals with impairments. This cultural requirement that seeks that the citizens must adjust to the environment, rather than the other way around, might account for why employers of labour do not see the need to provide accommodations for employees with impairments, as pointed out by Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo (2011). It also stands to reason that this might be why the government is lukewarm about effecting legislation that ensures the society is more accommodating and accessible for people with impairments within the society; or enforce the legislation that ensures people with disabilities are able to get and keep employment. The legislation that somewhat protects citizens with disabilities in the Nigerian constitution states that:

“…must not be discriminated against on basis of ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion and political opinion.” - The Amended 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

The loophole in this section of the Nigerian Constitution is that it did not mention ‘disability’ (Chinaedu, 2012). According to this author, this constitutional provision has done very little in the area of safeguarding the rights of disabled persons from discrimination. Even though participants of this study report getting flexibility and supports from work, they expressed the preference for supports and rights that are stipulated by legislation such that the supports they receive will be entitlements and rights, rather than acts of kindness by their immediate colleagues. They also expressed a desire for legislation that protects their interest, in all facets, not just employment. Thus, I am inclined to agree with Chinaedu (2012) and Thornton (2005) who identified
discrimination as a major barrier and core reason for inequalities between the impaired and the unimpaired employee.

6.5 PHYSICAL BARRIERS FACING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Lack of physical accessibility was identified in this study as the core barrier experienced by employees with disabilities; and this ties back to the ableism citizens with disabilities have to deal with. The architectural set up of the country shows that the need for access for persons with disabilities were not put into consideration in designing public buildings and spaces.

“So aside from work, most times I’m at home because of accessibility. You get somewhere, and they have steps. You get somewhere and the doors are too narrow.” – Female, government establishment.

This lack of accessibility limits their life opportunities, including in employment. This agrees with various studies that very few buildings in Nigeria are built for easy accessibility of the impaired (Peters et al., 2013; Hamzat & Dada, 2005; Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008; Smith, 2011). Peters et al., (2013) compared their study to a Japanese study where 23% of the severely disabled patients in that study were able to return to work, contrary to the findings of their own Nigerian study where none of the severely disabled participants returned to work. They suggested that this contrast could be due to social and infrastructural differences between a developed country like Japan and a developing country like Nigeria, where architectural barriers for the severely disabled abound (p. 458).

Findings of this current study confirm the assertion of Peters et al. (2013) as to the reason for the differences in findings of their study and the Japan study. Hamzat and Dada (2005) also reported that the majority of public buildings such as schools, places of employment, libraries, health and
recreation centres are not accessible to wheelchair users in Nigeria. Miralles et al. (2010) suggested that the solution to bridging the unemployment gap has to come not only from legal regulations via governmental measures, but also by overcoming the prejudices about the capabilities of disabled people, and by the genuine commitment of companies to include integration programmes in their operation strategies and models. These companies have to see beyond the cultural beliefs about the limitations of persons with disabilities, and do their part in ensuring this group does not continue to experience discrimination and isolation. Based on the findings of this study as supported by literature, there is evidently the need to overcome prejudices in the architectural set up of the country. These prejudices are identified, not just in the inaccessibility of buildings, but in the absence of accessibility for all impaired citizens. The latter is evident in the absence of ‘inclusion of accessibility for persons with disabilities’ on the list of the reasons to develop a National Building Code in Nigeria (National Building Code, 2006, Preface). Furthermore, the requirement in the National Building Code of Nigeria (2006, pp 81) stipulates that “places of assembly and education shall have not less than two seating arrangements for persons in wheelchairs” and “institutions (such as hospitals) containing more than 20 bedroom units shall be made accessible to physically handicapped persons”. These stipulations are evidently not sufficient to meet the needs of the approximately 27 million citizens with disabilities; neither are they enforced.

6.6 EMPLOYMENT IMPLICATION FOR HEALTH

Employment has been found to be a protective factor that not only protects citizens with impairments, but also reduces national cost of healthcare. One of the major themes identified in this study is the positive influence of employment on both physical and psychological health.
“Well, for one, I’m not depressed. If I was at home at my age, you know, I won’t have money, I will have to depend on everybody for money, I won’t be able to go out, no no no, I will be crazily depressed.” – Female, government establishment.

Findings of this study is in agreement with Wilkinson and Marmot (2003) and Puig-Barrachina et al. (2011) that lack of employment puts health at risk as social factors, such as employment, shape how much a population is exposed to risks and protective factors for physical and mental health throughout the life course. All participants of this study affirmed that having the employment has greatly improved their overall physical and psychological health. They reported that the need to move around because of employment has greatly improved their physical health with regards improved vascular circulation, GI motility, as well as prevention of muscular atrophy and pressure sores. In addition, participants reported not requiring different vacation structure to accommodate need for more rest periods in employment, and they do not require regular time off work for hospital visits. This proves contrary to the assumption that employing disabled people will not be beneficial to the employer, based on the belief that they will not be as productive as non-disabled employees.

Employment is one of the social determinants of health (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). Having employment among this group was shown to improve not only their physical health, but also their psychological health. Impact of employment on psychological health was one of the more popular sub-themes identified in the analysis of data, alluding to the level of impact employment has had on the psychological health of people with disabilities. One of the major reasons having employment improved psychological health was attributed to ‘making a contribution’ to the society. As has been pointed out, historically, persons with impairment have been excluded from contributing to the running of the society; being deprived access to education, employment,
marriage and even childbearing (Abang, 1988; Adeniyi & Omigbodun, 2016; Aiyelos, 2016; Edewor et al., 2010; Etieyibo & Omiegbe, 2016). Thus, being able to occupy a position where they have been historically and culturally barred from, was a key source of psychological boost.

In addition, having employment put people with disabilities in a position of financial independence. As the literature notes, disability and poverty often accompany each other (Benshoff et al., 2014; De Veirman, 2015; Edewor et al., 2010; Grischow, 2015; Juillard et al., 2010; Smith, 2011; Ukpere, 2010). However, for this select few who are able to gain employment, financial independence for them is akin to breaking the glass ceiling to prove that, if ‘allowed’, disability does not have to mean poverty. This consciousness empowers them, and improves their sense of self-worth. As has been stated earlier, unemployment puts health at risk; including risk of premature death, anxiety about job security (which impacts heavily on mental health and self-report ill health), as well as increased risk for chronic diseases (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003). The financial independence not only improves their sense of self-worth, but also reduces the risks to which they are exposed.

6.7 PERSONAL STRENGTH DISPLAYED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

One of the emergent themes identified during the analysis of data relates to the personal strengths observed of participants. This theme was significant in that it generated a significant number of references similar to that generated by major themes in this study. The personal strength of people with disabilities was found in their doggedness to fight the system that continues to oppress them, in their advocacy both to gain employment and within employment. Two of the participants reported currently in PhD programs, while another one reported currently working on a Master’s degree. Two other participants also reported having their own private businesses along with their
government or private employment. This evidence contradicts the idea that people with disabilities are liabilities and ‘not-able’.

The personal strengths displayed by people with impairments have not been explored in literature, because focus has been on what they are given or should be given by the society, rather than what these people themselves give to the society. The focus has been on what the government should change or provide, instead of the value this group can add to the government. There is very little discourse in literature on the impact people with disabilities are making in their immediate environment. By this silence, I believe the academic community might have contributed to reinforcing the idea that people with disabilities are ‘not-able’ to make any contributions to the growth of the society. As the findings of this study illustrate, if accessibility, discrimination and poor cultural attitudes are eliminated in the society, the society will be able to see that people with disabilities are not liabilities, just people denied opportunities.

6.8 INTERSECTIONS ACROSS FINDINGS

Finally, in order to provide answers to the research question that seeks to find out how the various systems of oppression impact parameters of work environment for people with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria, I return to intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davies, 2008). In this study, I seek to find out the outcomes resulting from the interaction of cultural practices, discrimination, attitudes, porous legislation, inaccessibility of buildings and the peculiarities of a middle- to low- income country on the template of an impaired body; as well as how these make the difference between power and powerlessness.
Hamzat and Seyi-Adeyemo (2008) have opined that the health needs, self-esteem and community participation of people with disabilities living in Nigeria may be different from those in other societies due to the influence of socio-cultural, religious and environmental factors. One of the factors that contribute to this is national instability inherent in the fact that Nigeria is a conflation of several ethnic nationalities that have had to coexist as one nation (Jauhari, 2011; Odeyemi, 2014). As such, Nigeria has unique internal problems. Since independence in 1960, the Nigerian political terrain has been marked by successive coups, ethnic conflicts and religious civil wars (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Jauhari, 2011; Kleiman, 2012) all which have contributed to chronic poverty, displacements and poor economic conditions within the country. Ethnic dissociations, constant religious and ethnic wars have put the country in a state of disarray that has persisted for decades. Amid all these, very little thought is spared for the needs of citizens living with impairments.

The culture of the Yoruba people has inadvertently reinforced disablement for individuals with disabilities. Ableist behaviours which discriminate against persons with disabilities in favour of able-bodied individuals, inadvertently limit the life chances made available to them, thereby reinforcing disablement. In the Yoruba culture, a person with a disability is not allowed to be king nor even allowed to enter the palace, even if the person is of royal descent (Abang, 1988). The Yoruba people believe that good health is the guarantee of wealth; as such health and physical well-being are of utmost importance to a Yoruba society (Olajubu, 2004). From the review of literature on history and culture of Southwest Nigeria, it can be gleaned that the Yoruba peoples place high value on hard work for both male and female members of the community. Unfortunately, since the citizen is molded to suit the society rather than mold the society to suit the citizen, people with impairments, have been perceived negatively as unable to contribute their
quota to the society (Eskay et al., 2012). Therefore, the individual with impairment is seen as inferior to those without impairments.

All these have led to the negative connotations about disabled persons in the traditional myths; and the stereotypical views about the specific activities suitable for a disabled person, thereby creating specific expectations or limiting the life-choices available to them (Deepak, 2001). These negative connotations about the impaired person not only lead to limitations in employment but also limitations in marriage. In the Yoruba culture, before any marriage is contracted, the families of both individuals intending marriage will discretely survey the other to ensure the family their son/daughter is marrying into has no cases of impairments, any hereditary abnormality or infectious incurable disease (Abang, 1988). These behaviours only function to reinforce the ‘othering’ of the person with physical impairments thereby rendering them powerless. Thus, being in a country that is battling civil wars, chronic poverty, displacements and poor economic conditions, and existing in a society with cultural ideals that unintentionally isolate persons with disabilities complicates the layers of disablement for this group.

The representations of people with disabilities in Nigerian media have been largely negative, further perpetuating the myths and negative stereotypes about this group. There is often the portrayal of disabled people as evidence of punishment of the gods for the sins of the parents; as well as the representation of the individual with mental impairment as an object of jest and only worthy of bad jobs (Olaiya, 2013). Unfortunately, media is one of the main sources of knowledge on disability in Nigeria especially in the younger generation. (Aina et al., 2010; Dogra et al., 2011), hence why majority of the Nigerian populace hold negative opinions about individuals with impairments, as found in this study. Poor cultural perception and negative beliefs, further
perpetuated by lack of knowledge about disabilities constitute some of the reasons the public exclude them from the society in which they have to live and work in; especially in transportation, housing, employment and architectural set up of the environment. Therefore, the disablement imposed on Nigerians with impairments is complicated by a culture that renders them unimportant and a society that constantly excludes them from the public scene; mostly because it sees them as individuals rather than members of the group.

Widespread ableist attitudes towards people with disabilities lead to under-expectation, both in education and employment. Under-expectation and stereotypical attitudes about the limitations imposed on the person with an impairment make it difficult for them to get jobs (Aiyeleso, 2016). These reinforced stereotypical beliefs about people with disabilities are worsened when legislation that might defend and protect them from the society that seeks to disable them, remains unimplemented. As has been established, the constitution provides minimal coverage for people with disabilities. Eleweke and Ebenso (2016) has asserted that despite over a decade of lobbying by people with disabilities in Nigeria, no mandatory legislation at federal level exists protecting their rights to access services. The consequences of an unwilling government to provide legal protection are borne by the people who are already disabled, leading to disempowerment for them.

Ableist attitudes that have led to under-expectation towards this group might be the reason why there is less concern for their need to access their environment. As has been pointed out, architectural set up of the country in its characteristic lack of access had disabled citizens with mobility impairments (Hamzat & Seyi-Adeyemo, 2008; Umeh & Adeola, 2013). Essentially, this group are disabled by their culture and their society, and disempowered by their government.
Figure 5: Depiction of the Intersections of the systems of oppression facing Nigerians with disabilities.

Garland-Thomson (2013) has pointed out that the body becomes disabled when it is incongruent both in space and time, with the set-up of the society, creating a mismatch between individuals and the environment they function and work in. This rings true with the findings of this study in that Nigerians with disabilities have been disabled, not by their impairments but by a government preoccupied with inherited instability in all government parastatals, inaccessible buildings that keeps them out of the public sphere and by a society that seeks to keep them hidden in its discriminatory attitudes towards them. Their bodies are not congruent with the architectural set up
of the society, neither are their needs included in the priorities of the government. They are further
disenfranchised when these factors are combined with a culture and history that treats issues
around disability with the charity model and a media that perpetuates negative myths and
stereotypes about them.

It is thus no surprise that employment parameters for people with disabilities in Nigeria need urgent
attention, in order that changes that will ensure this group are no longer denied their civic and
human rights might occur. “Failure to embrace the complexities of compounded-ness is not simply
a matter of political will, but also due to the influence of a way of thinking about which structures
politics so that struggles are categorised as singular issues” (Crenshaw, 1989, pp. 31). Solving the
issues around employment of persons with disabilities should not be approached as a singular
concept, it has to be approached and tackled broadly, hence the need for the lens of
intersectionality, and for a ground up approach.

It is important to point out however, that the situation is not all gloomy. Findings of this study
indicate that there is improvement in the rates of employment of this group. The findings show
that employed persons with disabilities are placed in cadres appropriate to their level of education
and experience; and their ability to move up the professional ladder is not hampered by having an
impairment. This is contrary to the findings of Ademokoya and Akhigbe (2006) who reported that
workers with disabilities in Oyo State are often not placed in cadres or job levels appropriate to
their academic qualifications, neither are they assigned to perform duties that are in accordance to
their qualifications. They suggested however that the reasons for their conclusion is based on the
inference that some employers still consider the employment of individuals with impairments an
act of philanthropy, rather than a norm. In addition, advocacy efforts to protect persons with
disabilities and legislative efforts might have caused the difference found in the 2006 results and results of this study.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Employment for people with disabilities in southwest Nigeria is not just complicated by the ability to get the appropriate education; but encompasses the barriers involved with gaining and retaining employment in an ableist environment, in addition to the various architectural, physical, and discriminatory barriers they have to navigate in their daily lives. Existing literature discusses the limitations in employment for persons with disability peculiar to a middle- to low- income country like Nigeria, in terms of legislation, discrimination and availability of economic opportunities; which has contributed to poor rates of employment and poor job satisfaction among this group. The influence of the history and culture of the country and southwest Nigeria on parameters of employment for this group has not received as much attention. This study addresses these gaps in literature by exploring the history and culture of southwest Nigeria and its influence on conditions of employment for people with disabilities.

This study attempts to bring to light the experiences of people with mobility impairments in the southwest region of Nigeria, around employment, and how these experiences have affected their health status. I found that culture and history of southwest Nigeria has had a major impact on the experiences reported by people with disabilities; and this might have created the disablement experienced by those in employment as well as those unable to gain employment. Architectural barriers undoubtedly contribute to disablement for this group. I confirmed from the findings of this study that having employment improves overall physical and psychological health of this group. In addition, contrary to popular belief, employing an individual with impairments does not necessarily reduce overall productivity of an organization.
The theoretical framework utilized in this study identifies the diverse factors that have reinforced the disabling employment parameters for people with disabilities, and how these factors have interacted to keep this group disabled and disempowered. These same factors are also the ones to pay attention to in order to mitigate the systems of oppression that disable those with impairments in the sphere of employment. To combat disablement experienced by people with disabilities in southwest Nigeria, public knowledge about disability needs to be changed. Current knowledge on disability is mostly negative and borne out of cultural beliefs, and this leads to discrimination of people with disabilities, not only in employment, but also in legislation and accessibility. Thus, if knowledge on disability can be improved both in educational institutions and media, discriminatory attitudes might consequently change. Also, those involved with the architectural design of the country needs to be educated on how their activities exclude a significant portion of the country. It is important that they are allies in order to empower citizens with disabilities. Lastly, employment as a protective factor for this group needs to be emphasized to protect against poor health, poverty, experiences of lifetime violence and despondency.

This study captures the diverse ways in which people with disabilities have fought back against disenfranchisement, and continue to fight to gain rights to full citizenship, despite presence of disabling conditions, and even though they are not involved with DPOs. The findings provide encouragement for future research on how people with disabilities have and can contribute to the growth of the nation, if disabling conditions are eliminated. This study may be useful in providing evidence to support the fact that people with disabilities in southwest Nigeria are not liabilities, as commonly believed. This study also provides evidence that points to the need to invest in enabling policies in architecture, employment, transportation and housing for people with disabilities.
7.1 CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to find out the challenges faced in employment by people with impairments in the Southwest region of Nigeria. As far as the literature review conducted showed, no study has focused on specifically finding out how cultural, historical and discriminatory practices influence the challenges experienced by people with disabilities in this region of the country. The findings of this study bring to light what people with disabilities experience in the sphere of employment in Southwest Nigeria. The outcome of this study may assist in setting the stage for further research and for the development of programs that are effective in combating employment challenges faced by Nigerians with disabilities. Furthermore, these findings provide information on educating employers and policy makers in the Southwest region of the country, in the bid to ensure the human rights of people with disabilities in this region are fully realised. Also, eliciting the specific challenges brought to light what people with disabilities, who are the experts on this subject, find challenging in employment rather than what is assumed to be challenging for them. This might assist with the development of services, workshops, and programs, which are effective in combatting unemployment, poverty and inequalities for people with disabilities.

A limitation of this study is that transferability of the study findings might be limited. This is because the process of snowball sampling provided the study with a sample that included only employees with mobility disabilities residing in urban areas of the Southwest region of Nigeria. As such, only the experiences of individuals with mobility impairments working in urban centres of the Southwest Nigeria were explored in this study. Thus, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to suit individuals with mental, cognitive or sensory impairments.
7.2 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The personal strength displayed by people with disabilities is a concept that has not been explored in literature. I believe it will be advantageous to research further into this concept. Considering the personal strength of people with disabilities revealed in this study, it might be advantageous to find out the parameters of employment for people with disabilities that are self-employed. Furthermore, based on the findings of this study, it might be beneficial to make a comparison between people with disabilities and those without disabilities on management of negative and positive attitudes. It might also be beneficial to the academic community to explore the different supports persons with disabilities are able to draw upon beyond themselves. Lastly, a longer study period, with more participants across the entire country might increase the depth of collected data and might influence the results by providing a view of the employment parameters across the various cultures within the borders of the country. It will be interesting to see what the diverse protective factors and disabling factors are across state lines and ethnicity, as informed by the diverse cultures within the borders of the country.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX I

Disability Studies
An Interdisciplinary Program

Room 128 Education Building
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7017

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Employment challenges experienced by persons with disabilities: A case study of Southwest Nigeria.

Principal Investigator and contact information: Oketola Adebanke,
oketolag@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information: Prof. Deborah Stienstra,
Deborah.Stienstra@umanitoba.ca

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Background: I am Oketola Adebanke, MSc. student in the Department of Disability Studies, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am doing a research on the challenges faced by
persons with disabilities in employment in Southwest Nigeria. I am going to give you information
and invite you to be a part of this research. You have been selected to participate in the research
because I believe you are able to give insider information on this issue and your opinions can
contribute to our understanding of the subject. You do not have to decide today whether or not you
will participate in the research, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the
research.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research is to find out the cultural, historical and discriminatory
practices experienced by people with disabilities in the sphere of employment in Southwest
Nigeria. You will be asked to answer questions related to getting your current employment, and
your experiences in your workplace.

**Methodology:** This research involves an interview, which will be conducted once, via telephone.
The interview will take about forty-five minutes to one hour. The conversation, which will be done
on speaker phone, will be recorded using a telephone voice recorder. You will be asked to provide
a date and time that is most convenient for you to have the interview and you will be called, only
at that time, to have the interview. The expert information you provide will assist in getting an
understanding of the challenges experienced by people with disabilities in employment, and to
provide a basis for policy and service provision.

**Confidentiality:** To minimise the risk to you and your job, your name, workplace and city will
not be used to identify you, and the information you provide will be saved anonymously, that is,
your name and your workplace will not be used to identify your responses. If you would prefer to
be named for your contributions to this research, please let us know and your name will be used to
store your data and will also be used to identify you in dissemination of findings. The aim of the
study is not to investigate your workplace, but to determine specific challenges in employment for
persons with disabilities in the Southwest region of the country. The recorded interview will be moved from the researcher’s phone to the researcher’s personal computer. The researcher and research supervisor are the only people that will have access to the interviews. The knowledge obtained from this research will be made available to the public and some of your comments may be presented in the publications verbatim. But your name will not be identified with your comments and contributions; unless you choose to be named.

**Benefits:** The benefits to you by participating in this research is that you will get the opportunity to have your voice heard regarding the realities of employment of individuals with disabilities in Southwest Nigeria. Participating will also afford you the opportunity to give expert advice on policy changes that will in fact benefit employed individuals with disabilities in Nigeria.

**Cost:** Participation in this research is at no monetary cost to you. As compensation, you will be sent an electronic calling card valued at 10CAD at the end of data collection.

**Consent:** Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences whatsoever. If more information comes up during the course of the study that will impact your involvement in the study, you will be informed, and your choice to continue with the study will be obtained.

**Follow-up:** You will be sent an email right after the interview to thank you for your time and effort. A copy of the transcribed conversation will also be emailed to you within two weeks of the interview, to verify for accuracy. You will also receive a brief (1-3 pages) summary of results of the research approximately six months after the interview via email, but if you would prefer to receive it via another method, you are free to inform the researcher and you will be sent the summary that way. The transcribed interview will not be saved with your name or anything that
can be used to identify you, (unless you choose to be named in the research) hence they will be kept indefinitely.

**Data Dissemination:** The findings of this study will be disseminated initially through the thesis. A factsheet will be developed afterwards for public education on the subject. Efforts will be made to also publish research findings in an academic journal, as well as to be presented at a conference and workshops.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

This research has been approved by the Fort Gary Campus Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant’s Name and Email/Mailing Address:

Participant’s Signature ________________________ Date ____________

Researcher’s Signature ________________________ Date ____________
APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Opening: “Hello, thank you so much {name} for being available to take my call. {Response} I know it is not common to have someone with a disability in the workforce in Nigeria, and the aim of this research is to get a clearer understanding of what it takes to get your job done and the challenges you might encounter in the workplace. The information we get from this research will enable us get the reality of what obtains in the workforce for disabled people and put that information out there in public. This might bring more focus on this issue and assist in developing policies and services that will be more appropriate to their needs. I also believe further research in Nigeria might be built on the findings of this study.”

Purpose of interview: “So, basically, I will be asking you questions pertaining to how you got your employment and your experiences on the job.”

Importance of interview: “I hope this information will give the academic community as well as the policy makers of the country, an insight into the actual reality of what it entails for a disabled person in Nigeria to keep their government/private jobs.”

Time Line: “This interview should take approximately forty-five minutes, at the most 1 hour. We might finish before then, but we will definitely not spend more than one hour. Hope that is okay by you?” {Response} ‘Thank you’.

Body:

“Allow me to start by asking about your experiences on getting your job.”
1. Can you tell me about how you got your job?

- Did anyone (such as patrons, godfathers, parents) assist you or speak on your behalf, to get the employment?
- What factors do you think assisted in getting your employment?
- Does your employer employ other individuals with disabilities?
- What reaction do you get from people when you inform them you have a job?

Transition to: experiences in the work place

2. How do you think your colleagues view disability?

- How do your colleagues treat you?
  - Respect
  - Pity
  - Exclude
  - Like they don’t understand why you are there?

- Do you think any particular superstition\cultural belief influence how you are treated at work?

3. Do you encounter any barriers in your work place?

- Getting to work? How?
- performing your duties? How?
- Getting breaks, lunchroom etc.? How?
- meeting your goals? How?
• Do you get any supports? What type?

• Does your gender influence any of these experiences? How?

• What is your work station like?

• Is work station set up to accommodate your impairment(s)?

4. Have you lost any job in the past?

• If yes, why did you lose the job or why do you think you lost the job?

• If no, do you often worry about losing your job due to having a disability?

**Transition to: employment on health status**

5. How has having this employment affected your health status?

• Does your employer make adjustments for you in the organization to accommodate your impairment(s)?
  
  o Flexibility in time of shifts?
  
  o Time off for hospital visits?
  
  o Flexibility with vacation structure? Etc.

6. How does the attitude of people about disability in your workplace, positive and negative, affect you?

• Do these attitudes affect your health status?
  
  o Improve your mood, give you a happier day?
  
  o Make you more productive?
  
  o Depress you?
- Does not bother you?
  - If negative attitudes worsen your day, have you ever noticed that affecting your health, for example, make you feel more tired, more in pain etc.
  - How would not having this job impact your health?
  - What do you consider most challenging in being an employee with a disability?
    - Accessible environment
    - Fair remuneration
    - Societal attitudes
    - Coping with impairments and job

**Transition to: information about disability issues in the country**

7. Do you know any disability organization in Nigeria?

  - If yes, do you engage with any of them?
  - Which ones and in what capacity?

*Researcher will provide a list of DPOS and their contact information.

8. Did you ever hear about laws in the Nigerian constitution regarding people with disabilities?

  - What of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities?
  - How have you used any of these legislation?

*Researcher will provide contact information of human rights organizations, disability organizations etc.
Closing:

“That about rounds it up. I appreciate your time and patience in this interview. I thank you very much for giving us an opportunity to know all these things about you. And I hope, in the near future, changes will begin to happen in the country that will be as a result of what you have contributed to the academic world today. Thank you again”

You will get an email from me shortly, and you will also receive a written draft of this conversation within the next two weeks. I want to be sure I did not misunderstand anything you said, so when you receive it, kindly go through it to be sure it is accurate.

Wishing you all the best and thank you again.

Bye.
EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: A CASE STUDY OF SOUTHWEST NIGERIA.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Please tick the one that applies:

1. Age Group
   - 21-30
   - 31-40
   - 41-50
   - 51-60
   - 61 and above

2. Impairment type (check all that applies)
   - Mobility
   - Vision
   - Intellectual/Learning
   - Invisible
   - Mental/psychiatric
   - Episodic
   - Other

3. Gender
   - Male
   - Female
   - Other

4. Geographical location
   - Rural
   - Urban
APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Title: Employment challenges experienced by persons with disabilities: A case study of Southwest Nigeria.

1. Summary of project

Purpose: Existing literature has shown that there is a poor rate of employment among people with disabilities, and the few that are employed do not enjoy job satisfaction. This is a condition that is worse for citizens with disabilities in developing countries. The aim of this study is to determine how history, culture and discriminatory practices in Southwest Nigeria influence parameters of employment among Nigerians with disabilities in the Southwest region of the country.

Methodology: This study will be a mixed methods research. This will involve a combination of qualitative descriptive study and a review of existing literature on the history and culture of Southwest Nigeria. The review of literature will assist in providing a better understanding of the history and culture of this region of the country, that has influenced the ways the citizens react to issues around people with disabilities and their employment. Search for existing literature will be done using African Journals OnLine (AJOL), African Journal of Disability, Black Studies Centre, MLA International Bibliography, CLA Journal, JSTOR, Project MUSE, ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, Journal of Black Studies, Open Journals Nigeria, and Google Scholar. Search terms utilized will be a combination of words and phrases including ‘disability’, ‘handicap’, ‘blind’, ‘deaf’, ‘queer’, ‘culture’, ‘Yoruba people’, ‘Nigerian tribes’, ‘disability practices’, ‘employing the disabled’, ‘disability and colonial era’, ‘disability and pre-post-colonial era’, etc. The reference
sections of the relevant articles will be searched for more articles of note. This review will focus on history and culture of the major tribes in Nigeria, pre- and post-colonial era and how disability was managed in history. This review will enable us to determine how history might explain the current cultural trend and practices involving issues around disability. The qualitative aspect of the research project will seek the opinions of the experts on this subject, i.e. employed people with disabilities, via in-depth semi-structured interviews. The participants for this study will be recruited by Snowball sampling. The researcher will initially make a purposeful selection of two participants who both have physical disabilities, one who is employed in a government institution and another who is employed in a corporate establishment in Nigeria. Researcher will initially approach them via email, to explain the research purpose, as well as explain what will be required of them. They will also be informed that the interview will be about 45 minutes to 1 hour, via phone call (telephone or skype call, depending on the preference of the participant), and that the telephone interview will be recorded. If they agree to participate in the study, informed consent forms will be emailed to them for signature. They will be required to scan the signed forms and email them to the researcher. The researcher will then request that the two participants refer people who have disabilities and are also in employment. Once the study has up to six participants willing to participate in the study, recruitment will stop. Interviews will be scheduled as soon as the consent of each participant is obtained. The researcher will get the most convenient time the participant can receive a 45 minute – 1 hour phone call. The researcher makes phone call to the participant at agreed time, to conduct the interview which will be recorded and transcribed. Once transcription is done, a copy of each participant’s interview will be sent to them via email to verify that all that was recorded was accurate. If participant makes changes, the changes will be effected before the final data is saved.
2. **Research instruments**

This study will obtain data via semi-structured interviews. The instrument to be used is an interview schedule. The items on the interview schedule pose no physical or emotional risk to the participants and there are no risks to their employment by participating in the study. The aim of the items on the interview schedule is to elicit their experiences with getting and keeping employment, and not to investigate their workplace. The participants will also be informed they do not have to share painful memories in their experiences if they do not feel comfortable doing so. Interview Schedule is appended.

3. **Participants**

The participants for this study will be Nigerians residing and employed in the southwest region of the country, who have disabilities, and are currently employed in private or government organizations. No specific disability will be sought in participants but those with auditory impairments will be excluded. This is because researcher is not able to provide TTY lines to the participants. Six participants will be recruited for this study, a number that is deemed sufficient for such qualitative studies. The first two participants will be purposefully selected, the aim of which is to obtain cases deemed information-rich for the purposes of study. The two participants will then be required to refer potential participants who also have disabilities and are in employment. No characteristic of the participants will make them extra vulnerable. If there will be participants with mental disabilities, so long as they are able to gain employment in Nigeria, they will be able to give consent without being vulnerable.
4. Informed consent

Consent for participating in the research will be obtained from each participant by an informed consent form. They will initially be approached via email. The purpose of the study will be explained to them, they will be told if they decide to participate in the study, they will be interviewed via telephone. They will also be informed the interview will take about 45 minutes to 1 hour and the telephone interview will be recorded. If they consent to participate in the study, an informed consent form will be sent to them via email. They will be asked to sign and send the signed forms back to researcher via email as well. Consent form is appended.

5. Deception

There will be no deception involved in the consent process. Participating in the study is at no risk to them and they are under no obligation to consent or dissent.

6. Feedback

Participants will be sent a brief summary (1-3 pages) of results of the research approximately six months after the interview. They will be informed about getting the summary in their consent forms. Before the summaries are sent out, participants will be told they will receive the summaries via email and if they will prefer a different method, they are able to choose the method they prefer. The summary will be provided in simple English; researcher will ensure to avoid use of technical terms.

7. Risks and benefits

There are no risks to any of the participants. The research is not aimed at investigating any workplace neither will it be conducted within the work environment. The research is just to get
insider information on the reality of employment for people with disabilities in the southwest region of the country. Furthermore, their personal information will not be used to identify or store their data, neither will their names or workplace be utilized in data dissemination, except for the participants that choose to be named for their contribution to the research. The participants benefit from participating in this study by having their voices heard and contribute to improving the parameters of work experience for people with disabilities.

8. Anonymity/confidentiality
The data collected will be interview transcripts of participants. The telephone conversations will be recorded and saved on the researcher’s personal computer. The recorded conversations will be transcribed by researcher. Both telephone and transcribed interviews will be saved on researcher’s personal computer and only the researcher and the Research Supervisor will have access to the stored data. The data will not be saved with any identifier that links any of the participants to their stored data, and all data will be stored anonymously, except for the participants that chose to be named for their contribution to the research. The stored information will be kept indefinitely.

9. Compensation
Participants will be compensated for their time and effort. They will be sent a calling card valued at 10CAD once interviews are concluded. Researcher will inform them of this prior to data collection, but the compensation is not so significant as to sway their decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

10. Dissemination
Data will be disseminated initially through a factsheet. Factsheet will be designed as soon as research is concluded, aimed at targeting policy makers and employers of labour in Southwest
Nigeria. Efforts will be made to publish the findings of this research in a conference and in an academic journal. Workshop materials will be designed as well, and if opportunities come up, findings will also be disseminated through workshops in Nigeria.