

Perspective of Inclusion in the Academy Navigating the Environment:
Autoethnographic Reflections of a Disabled Graduate Student

by

Chukuka Ruemu Egbri

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ART

Department of Disability Studies

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Copyright © 2022 by Chukuka Ruemu Egbri

Abstract

This study contributes to a growing depth of literature utilizing self-reflection and disability in higher education. It discusses the dynamics of concepts including academic ableism, racism, socio-cultural barriers, and environmental factors impacting the experiences of disabled students.

The main objective of the study examines the level of social inclusion in the environment of the University of Manitoba. The methodological process uses analytic auto-ethnography for exploring the experience of a disabled graduate student in the academy.

Findings of the study highlight several barriers which are obstructing the development of an inclusive environment for disabled students. These include the apparent lack of thoughtful physical planning for the inclusion of disabled students, presence of discriminatory socio-cultural assumptions, and over reliance on an accessibility team lacking in representation for inclusive procedures.

Because centers like universities are made up of people and part of the larger society, the study proposes the model of inclusive consciousness for everyone as a way of promoting inclusion at all levels. Consequently, the study recommends that the way forward for the inclusion of disabled students is to create a framework that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion for disabled people, promotes the participation of disabled people in all aspect of the academy, ensures inclusion of disabled people in all forms of communication and makes accessibility issues a matter of general interest in the academy among others.

Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Nancy Hansen for her guidance, supervision, encouragement, patience and above all, for providing more insight into disability and cultural issues.

You provided me with a great knowledge on how to go about my research and I think following your guidance, is the best thing that has happened to me in life. I believe there is a purpose for everything in life and that my enrollment in the Department of Disability Studies, was not just for the program, but to meet with and learn from someone I will call my Academic mom. Even when I was frustrated and helpless as an international student, your advice and encouragement brought me back on track to get to this stage.

I also want to say a big and sincere thanks to Professor Diane Driedger who is also a member of my Thesis Committee. I learnt so much from you in your classes and will forever remain grateful for your openness on the problems facing disabled people in Canada as well as globally. It prepared me for navigating the environment and helped in building my character as a person with disability.

I am also very grateful to Professor Michael Baffoe of the Faculty of Social Work, for being a member of my Thesis Committee. Your comments were very helpful in pointing my work in the right direction and your advice was instrumental in helping me continue my program, when I was down and at the verge of leaving my studies.

At this point, I want to acknowledge the wonderful and heavenly parents that have brought me to this level in life. Your care and support cannot be measured in any way. The two of you jointly believe that education will be a great source of independence for me, and you have

displayed this by getting me to this point. I pray that you continue to live in good health to reap the good fruits of your labour.

I am also appreciative and grateful for the care and love of my siblings of Ify, Ufuoma and her husband, Barrister Bivbere, and Ochuko and his wife Augustina. The indissoluble love we share is a great source of strength and I am grateful to God for having you guys in my life. My Thanks also goes to my nieces and nephew of Giovana and her sister Tega Egbri, who kept me entertained over the phone and reminded me of my birthdays by singing for me, as well as Runo and her darling brother Tj Bivbere, you all are lovely!! I am also grateful for the support from Ayo, Uk, Uba, Augustine Maji (who helped in the formatting of my project).

I am grateful to the accessibility team for their support and assistance throughout my program at the University of Manitoba. I appreciate the cool and wonderful personality with a listening ear of my accessibility advisor Jamie Penner and academic attendants like Faye Bauer who provided me with great academic support for two years and immensely assisted during my course work, as well as Michael who was there in the latter stage of my research. You guys were amazing!

I cannot go on here without expressing my sincere and immense gratitude to the entire family of Alaka. When I was travelling from Nigeria, I did not know that I will have the fortune to be accepted into a family in Canada. You all provided the support, encouragement and greatest assistance required in Canada. From Oyinda picking me up from the airport to Mom providing with my first home meal and being a major support person during my stay with Dad, I must say you guys are the best!!

My special thanks to the members of the Legislative and strategic Branch of the Department of Families, where I was a Step-Student for two years. I am grateful for the

understanding and accommodation shown to me by everyone, especially my supervisor Dr. Emmet Collins, who encouraged me on my education and gave me several opportunities to continue with the department. I am also thankful to my colleagues Violet Penner, my Co-supervisor Charissa McIntosh, just to say a few... for your support during my Step-program! I also want to say a big thanks to my classmate of Cade Kuehl (who provided an exquisite and professional final editing of this work); also grateful to other members like Taiwo, Ebenezer, Sanaz, Ibrahim, Onyinye, and Ben. Just to say a few. You guys were the best!!

This list cannot be complete without mentioning personalities that got me settled in Canada like Amanda and her wonderful husband Bill and son Henry, who took me to church every week. Also, my thanks must go to the family of Greg and Tammy of the converge Community Church, I am grateful for your support! Other personalities like Tanis Woodland of the Department of Disability Studies, Simon, Linda of the CNIB and Greg at the General Services of the University of Manitoba were very helpful, thank you!!

While I have a lot of names like Joshua, Kyie and Prince to acknowledge, I know the list will be too long and perhaps take up about ten pages in this research. But I believe you know I am grateful to you all!

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Environmental Context of the Study	8
1.3 Exclusion in the Academy	11
1.4 Statement of Purpose	15
1.5 Significance of the Study	16
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	18
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2 Opinions of Diversity and Inclusion of Disabled Students in Auto-Ethnographic Studies	19
2.3 Narratives on issues affecting the social environment for disabled students in higher education	22
2.4 Personal experience on navigating emotional challenges in an ableist environment of higher education	26
2.5 Framework of Social Model	28
2.6 Situating Canada Within the Framework of Diversity and Inclusion in this Study	30
2.7 Framing Nigeria within the context of socio-cultural diversity in this study	31
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 Introduction	35
3.2 Instrument	35
3.3 Advantages of the research design	36
3.4 Limitations of the Study	37
3.5 Research Questions and Objectives	38
3.6 Main Objectives of this Research	39
CHAPTER FOUR: DISABILITY AND THE PURSUIT OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA	40
4.1 Introduction	40
4.2 Understanding Special Education Environment in Nigeria	43
4.3 My Journey in the Pursuit of Education as a Child with Disability	46
4.4 Moving from Regular School to Special Education	48
4.5 Graduation and Introduction to Inclusive Education	49
4.6 Conclusion	51
CHAPTER FIVE: ABLEISM AND MY EXPERIENCE IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES	53

5.1	Introduction.....	53
5.2	Appraising the Nigerian University Environment	57
5.3	My Experience in Nigerian Universities.....	60
5.4	The Journey to Western Nigeria for More Inclusive Studies	64
5.5	Conclusion	67
CHAPTER SIX: “A JOURNEY TO SOCIAL INCLUSION, OR SO I THOUGHT”		69
6.1	Introduction.....	69
6.2	Coming to Canada and Ableism in the Canadian Immigration	73
6.3	Early Days in Winnipeg.....	76
6.4	Feeling Alone Among the Crowd.....	78
6.5	Navigating Cultural and Racial differences	82
6.6	Socio-Economic Status as a Determinant for Integration.....	86
6.7	Finding My Place at Participatory Events	88
6.8	Conclusion	90
CHAPTER SEVEN: DATA ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATION.....		92
7.1	Introduction.....	92
7.2	Main research Objective	93
7.3	Objective (a).....	95
7.4	Objective (b)	96
7.5	Intersectionality and Understanding the researcher’s experience at the University of Manitoba	98
7.6	Implication of Key Findings	103
7.6	Covid-19 and the changing dynamics in the academic environment for disabled students	107
7.7	Conclusion	112
CHAPTER EIGHT: PERSONAL OPINION ON INCLUSION, ALTERNATIVE THEORY AND AREAS FOR FUTURE STUDIES		113
8.1	Introduction.....	113
8.2	Explaining the Perspective of the World as a Marketplace and the Inclusion of Disabled People.....	113
8.3	Growing Up in a Family within the Academic Community and Seemingly Finding My Talent	117
8.4	Understanding barriers to the pursuit of a career in academia as a disabled person	119
8.5	Cross-cultural experience as a disabled person in the Canadian and Nigerian Society..	121
8.6	Promoting an Inclusive Society in Theory.....	125
8.7	Area for Future Studies	128

8.8 Process	129
8.9 Concluding Remarks.....	132
8.10 Recommendations.....	133
References.....	136

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

In recent decades, academic research and professional discourse has increasingly explored the field of inclusion and diversity for promoting social interaction and participation by individuals from various backgrounds in institutions and the society at large (Acar, 2010; Baltaru, 2019; Canadian Construction Association, 2019; Shore et al., 2011). For instance, Tan (2019) points out, “In recent years, diversity has been embraced as a core value and fundamental priority across the different fields of medicine, science, and technology” (p. 31). The presupposed benefits of the phenomenon of inclusion and diversity is to foster environments, institutions and systems that would be accepting of individuals as relevant actors within groups regardless of backgrounds or abilities and allow the preservation of their diverse identities (Baltaru, 2019). As pointed out by Brewer (1991, p. 477; in Shore et al., 2011), in order to placate the troubles in managing inclusion and diverse populations, it is necessary to meet the “human needs for validation and similarity to others (on the one hand) and a countervailing need for uniqueness and individuation (on the other)” (p. 1264). Although while managerial aspects of inclusion and diversity may thrive, it is important to note that the mode of interaction at various levels could reenforce the concept of exclusion (Acar, 2010). As discussed by Grindstaff (2022),

A working knowledge of the roots of, and barriers to, diversity, equity, and inclusion within organizations is essential to creating a more inclusive community, both in and beyond the academy. Structural inequalities arise and are reproduced at multiple levels simultaneously, each reinforcing the other: socially through interaction, culturally through ideas, values, and representations. (para. 1)

Apparently, this points to the fact that the lack of socio-cultural accommodation and negative attitudinal behavior among individuals within the power dynamics of an institution could challenge the promotion and management of inclusion and diversity in institutions and the society at large. Indeed, the presence of ‘attitudinal challenges’ among individuals, has been well documented in extant literature as an existing difficulty in the pursuit of inclusion and diversity (Acar, 2010; Oswald & Swart, 2011). Martin & Johnston (2007) explain that attitudinal challenges or stigma is “typically a social process, experienced or anticipated, characterized by exclusion, rejection, blame or devaluation that results from experience or reasonable anticipation of an adverse social judgment about a person or group” (p. 8). Consequently, this possibly creates doubts in the valuation of self-worth and acts as stressors in the lives of affected individuals (Stodolska, 2005). Fibbi et al. (2021) sum this up by stating that “Discrimination and stigmatization affect the life chances of the targeted persons and groups and are a source of stress affecting their well-being” (p. 69). While individuals adopt mechanisms to cope with occurrences of attitudinal challenges, the phenomenon manifests in several ways and as such, makes it problematic for individuals and researchers alike to find lasting solutions. According to Sue et al. (2007), some essential manifestations of attitudinal challenges or stigmatization can be “characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions” (p. 273).

In view of the fact that attitudinal challenges or stigmatization could be used to impact the existence of individuals, it therefore can be considered as a tool of oppression in the society or professional institutions. Cudd (2005) explains “oppression is a harm through which persons are systematically and unfairly or unjustly constrained, burdened, or reduced by any of several forces” (p. 21). Unfortunately, oppression itself creates the effect of social devaluation on the

part of the oppressed and oppressor, as the minds and action of both are constrained to act in a certain way (Garcia, 2017). To Freire (2005), “As the oppressors dehumanize others and violate their rights, they themselves also become dehumanized” (p. 56). Consequently, the liberation from the traps of oppression, perhaps, becomes a common goal for both the oppressed and the oppressor, though in a way that will cause the latter to come out on top. Hence, the oppressor ensures that any regime that would cause the benefits of oppression to be relinquished, is rendered ineffectual and unachievable (Freire, 2005; Garcia, 2017). On this note, Freire (2005) points out that “Once a situation of violence and oppression has been established, it engenders an entire way of life and behavior for those caught up in it—oppressors and oppressed alike” (p. 58).

To this end, the existence of oppression in social interactions, creates a struggle for finding true value in interpersonal relations, both from the position and point of view as the oppressed or the oppressor. It therefore becomes important to establish an alternative philosophy or order that neither discriminates nor oppresses but provides a pathway for humans to understand the true concept of life. Thus, one can explore the concept of the world as a market by the Igbos, as a possible content of discourse in this research.

According to the beliefs among the Igbo speaking group of Eastern Nigeria, the world is a marketplace “Uwa bu ahia” and we as individuals are here to trade (Agozino & Anyanike, 2007, p. 233). While this viewpoint suggests that humans are primarily inclined to pursue financial and economic gains, it holds a deeper meaning concerning the participation of individuals in world affairs. As discussed by Otakepor, (1996), “‘Uwa bu ahia’, ‘the world is a market-place’ is far more than an ordinary statement to be taken on its face value. It is fully loaded and tightly packed in meaning at its deeper layer” (p. 530). The viewpoint of the world as

a marketplace provides a framework to understand the importance of every individual in society and how their personality makeup and chosen profession like teachers, doctors, wise-men or philosophers, bankers, musicians and beggars on street corners affect the chain of interaction in the community (Agozino & Anyanike, 2007). According to Ezenwa (2017),

among the Igbos, the human being and his dignity are regarded as vital in interpersonal relationships. Without the human person in the Igbo setting there is no humanity and no community. In the Igbo worldview, it is the human person who gives meaning and value to community and existence. (p. 9)

However, the Igbo worldview holds that, in the process of interpersonal relations and interaction in the community, everyone must be ready to negotiate and bargain to succeed in their daily affairs (Agozino & Anyanike, 2007). The resources for such negotiation and bargaining is believed to be provided by the personal god (Chi) of an individual. Thus, if someone is provided with low resources by the personal god, it is likely that the person might suffer and have low bargaining power for pursuing dreams in life (Agu, 1990). To this end, individuals must respect their Gods in order to succeed in life. It is on this note that Agozino & Anyanike, (2007) points out that “If one’s creator dealt one a raw deal in this life, one can still bargain with his/her personal God (or Chi) and haggle for a better break” (p. 233). It is for this reason that the Igbos have names like Chika (personal god is supreme) or Chukwuka/Chukuka (God is supreme) (Achebe, 1958; Agu, 1990).

In adopting the worldview of the world as a marketplace, for the sake of this study, I will begin my story as a child born in the early 1990s. In my childhood days, I grew up, having dreams of a bright and successful future. While my dreams gradually developed and furnished me with a sense of direction in the journey of life to become an academic, they were for the most

part influenced by my immediate environment and socio-cultural background. My childhood took place in a metropolis called Benin City in Edo State, South-South region of Nigeria.

The South-South region of Nigeria is comprised of an educated middle-class and is home to several disparate groups and cultures that coexist in various states like Edo, Delta and Rivers (Suberu & Osaghae, 2005). This is unlike the ethnic groups in other areas of Nigeria, such as the Eastern region, dominated by the Igbos, the Western region by the Yorubas, and the Northern region which is predominantly Hausa-Fulani (Uweru & Ubrurhe, 2000). To this end, Benin City is just like most places in the South-South region of Nigeria. Although home to the Binis, it is also open to many cultures. This includes elements from the South-South region like the Urhobos and Ijaws, as well as direct inter-group relations with the Yorubas and presence of the Igbo traders and Hausa-Fulani. The city is also influenced by European values, due to colonialization by the British (Ezuluomba, 2018).

I was born in Benin City to Mr. and Mrs. Egbri (of Urhobo and Delta Igbo origin respectively), as the last child of five. As a result, I had the opportunity to learn from others and grow up in an exciting environment. This was enhanced when my family moved from the central area of the city into the staff quarters of the academic community of the University of Benin. The central area of the city was made up of people from all walks of life like traders and teachers and included roaming individuals who engaged in jobs such as house cleaning and building sight assistance. It can be argued that it might have been difficult to form an idea of the occupation I wanted to pursue. On the other hand, the academic staff quarters of the institution where my family moved into was essentially occupied by academics and non-teaching staff that worked in the university. The discussion around me from this time onward, was centred on issues relating to academics and more practical matters in the society like the application of the law and tips on

how to stay healthy. It was within this environment that I gained a lot of interest in becoming an academic. However, I began life with a visual impairment, which practically impeded this pursuit from the start.

The presence of a visual impairment meant that I had to struggle with my academics, which I started in a school that was designed only for children without disabilities in my community. Right from the start of the primary staff school within the university, a visual impairment afforded me fewer opportunities for being educated. Teachers in my community did not have any means of including me in class activities with regular students. Suffice to say that I was perhaps the only child with a visual impairment in the university environment. At this time, I performed poorly in my education and learned next to nothing at school. The only education I got was from my immediate family. My education was mostly carried out by my immediate elder sister, who was lost to pneumonia when I was just age nine.

As a result of improper introduction to the educational system, one day while sitting with my siblings in the family room to discuss our future with my parents, I wrongly stated my wish to become an academic after everyone announced their plans of wanting to become a lawyer or an engineer. Instead of saying I wanted to become a professor, I blurted out, "I want to become a vice chancellor." At the time, I did not understand what it took to become a professor but felt I should be part of the celebrated class. My statement caused an abrupt end to the discussion as everyone went into fits of laughter and some people tried to explain to me that the vice chancellor position was not a profession. Little did they understand that, while I was interested in becoming an academic, I did not know what it took, as the environment and history of lack of role models in academia did not offer me any pathway as a person with visual impairment (Zaid & Zaid, 2017).

Indeed, the academic community has largely been organized to feature a largely elitist class of scholars with limited space for those considered outsiders (Heeren & Shichor, 1993; Mukharji, 2017). For instance, Museus et al. (2015) points out the following:

It has been argued that the rationales that typically drive policy making are designed by the elite to shape higher education policy in ways that benefit the elite. Given that the elite class in the United States is disproportionately composed of members of the White majority, it could be argued that the power elite's policy rationales can and do function to preserve power, status, and opportunity for the disproportionately White elite while limiting access to these privileges among historically marginalized and minoritized populations. (Museus et al., 2015, p. 52)

It is on this note that disabled people are affected by matters relating to higher education, as persons with disabilities are part of a minority group. Furthermore, they might be from a marginalized background or racialized group, which may further affect their ability to succeed in higher education institutions (Baker, 2019; Haber & Smith, 1971; Kabuta, 2014). To this end, Baker (2019) states that the “impact of colonialism and structural inequities within accounts of Blackness and disability continue to produce injustice in university settings” (p. 1).

Indeed, exploring the personal experience of minority groups like individuals with disabilities in the world of academics provides insight into challenging stories of various peoples within the environment (Green & Myatt, 2011; Hyland, 2018). Gibson (2012) advises that based on Research in higher education, linked to national and international policy, suggests the need for educationalists to show greater understanding and awareness of the lived experiences of undergraduate students with disabilities. These sources argue that this knowledge should then be

used to inform their understandings as tutors and facilitate inclusive and effective teaching strategies. (Gibson, 2012, p. 353)

These stories of how individuals with disabilities interact with the policies, environment and attitude of the academic community shows a great level of similarity that exists in the experience of disabled people as well as other individuals of minority status. Their stories in the academic community are often experiences laced with exclusion and under-representation (Eisenman et al., 2020). On this note, Bahadoosingh (2021) explains,

Existing literature has illuminated individualized experiences of racial minority leadership at the center of their research and looked at barriers for hindering the number of visible minority school leaders, such as color blindness, tokenism, a lack of social capital, and white sanction. (p. 2)

1.2 Environmental Context of the Study

Generally, the environment of a university is perceived as the physical attributes of the campus, organizational culture and politics surrounding the social orientation and interaction among students and faculty members (Meierdirk, 2018; Pizzuti-Ashby & Alary, 2008; Trigwell et al., 1999). Pizzuti-Ashby & Alary (2008) highlight that the campus environment covers a range of issues like “student support services, student space, venues for self-expression, the physical environment of the campus, and its physical growth” (p. 1). It determines the overall outlook of the institution, as the environment is the central area surrounding student life and the process of collaboration amongst individuals in a university (Hurst et al., 2013). It reflects the influence of socio-cultural values, as well as the provision of equitable policies by university authorities. It is through a well-organized environment that students can be part of activities in the university community and as such, participate in interpersonal interaction and improve

cultural diversity (Hurst et al., 2013; Pizzuti-Ashby & Alary, 2008). It is on this note that Pizzuti-Ashby & Alary (2008) state that “the social and academic integration of students within their campus environment is an instrumental component in their persistence and goal attainment” (p. 1). Thus, a well-organized campus community could create a lively and academically friendly social environment for students to thrive.

In the case of graduate students, the social environment is very important to research and development of leadership skills in the advancement of careers and academic learning (Ostrove et al., 2011). The graduate experience of students within the social environment, is likely to be a significant factor in the overall process of academic learning. Nevertheless, international graduate students and even faculty members struggle to fit into the structure of social environment in universities; cultural and economic barriers often pose personal challenges amongst students of non-western background in western countries (Green & Myatt, 2011; Newsome & Cooper, 2016). To Rienties et al. (2011), “students with a non-Western background are less integrated than Western students, have considerably lower academic and social integration scores” (p. 121). In a similar consideration, Rodriguez et al., (2019) explain, “International graduate students in the United States face many challenges, not only those limited to cultural adjustments and transition challenges, but also academic and social isolation during graduate school” (p. 50). Consequently, graduate students are usually tasked with more independent studies and research. This makes acclimatization a rather difficult process. In most cases, the course of conducting research and studies may be time consuming, and as such, deprive the students from taking every opportunity for social interaction (Rodriguez et al., 2019; Madjett & Belanger, 2008; Mckinlay et al., 1996). In the same vein, international graduate students could fall victim of racial discrimination and cultural segregation. Although, racial

discrimination and cultural segregation could be subtle and hidden in the academic community, it nevertheless constitutes a major problem for international graduate students (Grayson, 2014).

This is made worse by the fact that international students in a country like Canada for instance are faced with socio-cultural hurdles that makes the process of integration very tricky (Madgett & Belanger, 2008). In other words, the social-cultural environment is often a difficult aspect in the experiences of international students, owing to multiple factors relating to their background and exposure to western values (Netierman et al., 2021; Xiao, 2021).

Additionally, international students in Canada are susceptible to encountering housing and financial difficulties during their study, resulting from the fact that many struggle with the economic transition from their home country to Canada (Calder et al., 2016). This could create a position of low self-esteem due to a disadvantaged socio-economic status, especially in race relations with Canadians of European descent who are often better off. This could possibly dampen the ability of international students to feel comfortable in the social environment (Poteet & Gomez, 2015). Consequently, the challenges for graduate students or any student at all is made more difficult when living with a disability or a chronic ailment, as personal challenges are amplified by barriers in the overall environment. Indeed, physical barriers and misconceptions about disability often create extraneous challenges for disabled students and lead to invisibility in the environment. This largely has to do with the attitude and depiction of disabled people in the history of academic community and cultures that have influenced it (Moola, 2015; Pfeiffer, 2002). To Moola (2015), “The invisibility of disabled students on university campuses is not surprising when we consider that the academy - as an institution that is centuries’ years old - has an elite history” (p. 47).

1.3 Exclusion in the Academy

The environment of older universities in Europe and later America only represented elite groups or rich white minorities, which created an exclusive culture (Castellia et al., 2012; Goldin & Katz, 1998). This cultural value of exclusion among academic scholars in the not-too-distant past often created a hostile social environment and dissuaded or sometimes impeded the progress of individuals of marginalized groups like persons with disabilities and racially disadvantaged groups into the university community (Conner & Rabovsky, 2011). Consequently, persons with disabilities have been historically viewed as unworthy educational material and unfit for navigating the academic environment (Leake & Stodden, 2014). According to Dolmage (2017), “disability has always been constructed as the inverse or opposite of higher education. Or, let me put it differently: higher education has needed to create a series of versions of lower education” (p. 3). Thus, persons with disabilities in academic culture are depicted as inferior, meant to be in therapeutic centers like schools of special education, or confined to residential institutions (Gibson, 2012).

The social devaluation of persons with disabilities within the academic community essentially creates an environment with additional barriers for disabled people in institutions. These institutional barriers are not restricted to the student population, but also includes faculty members with disabilities and is known as academic ableism (Brown & Leigh, 2020; Dolmage, 2017). To understand the concept of academic ableism, it is important to have a grasp of the phenomenon in a general sense. The concept of ableism is the celebration of able-bodiedness by individuals in popular cultures and institutions (Bogart & Dunn, 2019). The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2016) states, “Ableism may be conscious or unconscious, and may be embedded in institutions, systems or the broader culture of a society” (p. 3).

In Western-oriented societies, the celebration of able-bodied individuals or strong capabilities, is largely based on historic perception of the ideal features of human beings and has been amplified by some core fundamentals of the neoliberal ideology. The neoliberal ideology is deeply rooted in the values of human capital and the promotion of transactional relationship based on image representation (Fritsch, 2015; Stienstra, 2018). Hence, creating a lens in the social order of things, by which individuals are accepted or rejected in the ever-increasing commercialized institutions and cultures (Racho, 2017).

Apparently, the Neo-liberal ideology creates a social environment of ableism, as disabled people have struggled to find a decent place in popular cultures and institutions. While disabled people in the past experienced overt discrimination and marginalization in society, ableism fosters an environment of subordination to other individuals and social inequality (Gappmayer, 2020; Stienstra, 2018). For disability scholars and commentators alike, the attitude of ableism presents disabled people with the problem of constructing positive identity and finding inclusive rhythm in institutions like colleges and work environments. In analyzing the dilemma of disabled people in creating a positive identity within an ableist work environment, Jammaers et al. (2016) succinctly points out

disabled employees inhabit a contradictory discursive position: as disabled individuals, they are discursively constructed for what they are unable to do, whereas as employees they are constituted as human resources and expected to be able to produce and create value. (p. 1366)

The situation of disabled people in the workplace environment, is not in any way different from that of students with disabilities in colleges and universities. The morale for the pursuit of knowledge and self-determination of disabled students can be impeded by existing

institutional barriers and ableist treatment from colleagues and members of staff alike. Francis et al. (2019) clearly captures the impact of this trend when they state that “despite the increase in students with disabilities attending college, the graduation rates of these students consistently lag behind their peers without disabilities” (p. 247). In emphasizing the growing level of disinclination or disinterest for disabled students in colleges and universities to attain a degree, Getzel & Thoma (2008) reveal that from 1986 to 2001 national data in the United States shows a sharp decline for persons with disabilities completing their education. Similarly, in a study conducted in Canada around the same time period, Duquette (2000) found that disabled students in Canadian universities were more likely to drop out of their degree due to lack of social and academic integration and fair practices.

While the above studies depict the situation in the late 20th century, contemporary discourse on the lack of integration in universities or the practice of ableism in academia shows that perhaps little has changed in terms of eroding the barriers for disabled students (Francis et al., 2019; Leake & Stodden, 2014; Mullins & Preyde, 2013). Dolmage (2017) explains that, while the academic community has grudgingly shown some initiative to alter the physical space for improved accessibility, persons with disabilities still exist in a social environment plagued with old institutional values inundated in ableism and eugenics-arrogance. This exacerbates a negative rhetoric among students and educational staff alike while sustaining the hiddenness of disabled people in academia (Brown & Leigh, 2018). According to a research participant in a study carried out in a Canadian university,

“A Prof said to me, yeah you at the university and you have special things done to you, but when you get out into the work life, how are you going to deal with it? That really

scared me... when the Prof said if we were arguing and he hit the desk and screamed”
(Bruce & Aylward, 2021, p. 20).

Indeed, the elements of ableism within the environment create barriers in the inclusion of disabled students in Canadian colleges and universities (Pearson & Boskvich, 2019). The level of inclusion in the environment could determine the participation of disabled students in colleges and universities as it contributes to the development of their overall confidence and sense of belonging in a diverse and unfamiliar community. Regarding this, Michalski et al. (2017) point out that Canadian universities should create environments for supporting and integrating minority groups like persons with disabilities in the academic community. According to them, “while institutions of higher learning can facilitate improved access, they must commit to developing support services and a more welcoming and inclusive environment in order to ensure student retention and success” (p. 66).

In any case, recent trends among Canadian universities to establish a more formal and general framework for inclusiveness and diversity in the academic community provide new opportunities for an equitable platform for the integration of disabled students and other minorities. This was reinforced in 2017 when members of Universities Canada assented to the commitment of a strategic framework on equity diversity and inclusion (EDI), established for the promotion of an unbiased sociological order within various institutions (Tamtik & Guenter, 2019). The Universities Canada is a platform that helps advocate and plan strategies for higher education in the country, with members from the echelon of various Canadian institutions like McGill University, University of Toronto, and University of Manitoba (Tamtik & Guenter, 2019). Based on the awareness of this framework in Canadian institutions, Tamtik & Guenter (2019):

Suggest that equity, diversity and inclusion activities have become a policy priority attached to a variety of institutional action plans and performance reports. As a result, there has been an increase in institutional strategic activities including institutional political commitment (e.g., new equity offices, new senior administration positions, mandatory training), student and faculty recruitment with programmatic and research support. (p. 41)

The University of Manitoba, being a member of the Universities Canada and subscribing to initiatives of equity and diversity, has reinforced an inclusive framework in the school's affairs (Tamtik & Guenter, 2019). This has led to the creation of the EDI task force and advisory groups for improving respect, fairness and diversity within the working and learning community of the University of Manitoba.

This research project seeks to provide a personal reflection and analysis of the level of inclusion for a disabled student in Graduate Studies at the University of Manitoba. It is a self-exploration of experience and policies of equity and inclusion for disabled students in the social environment of the University of Manitoba.

1.4 Statement of Purpose

Literature has extensively documented the level and impact of exclusion of disabled students in Canadian universities (Duquette, 2000; Michalski et al., 2017; Mullins & Preyde, 2013). The extent of exclusion of disabled people in Canadian universities is caused by numerous issues ranging from individual actions and barriers to the physical and social environment, as well as formal policies by institutions.

In the social environment, it has been well documented that disabled people face issues like discrimination and attitudinal challenges due to misrepresentation of disability in the socio-

cultural domain (Pfeiffer, 2002). This largely manifests as the culture of ableism in higher education, which downgrades the social status and academic capabilities of persons with disabilities. As such, affecting the level of integration and participation of disabled students in the environment of higher education. Consequently, disabled people often find great difficulties in partaking in the environment due to lack of inclusive frameworks and inaccessible platforms (Scott, 2019).

To this end, it can be expected that the inclusive framework of the equity, diversity, and inclusion principles assented to by members of Universities Canada could be a step in the right direction for disabled people in institutions of higher education. Although, the EDI principles are not specifically made for disability-oriented issues alone, its all-encompassing status as an inclusive framework could act as a basis for the integration and fair representation of disabled people in the academic community.

It is on this note that this research hopes to cross-examine the environment of an institution in Canada, through the self-reflection and analysis of a graduate student with a disability at the University of Manitoba. It is an attempt to raise questions on the level of diversity and inclusive frameworks in the environment for students at the University of Manitoba. Consequently, the research hopes to incorporate in its analysis the implication of the background of the researcher as an international disabled student in graduate studies at the University of Manitoba.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Flowing from the analysis in the introductory part of this work, It can be argued that the opinions of personal experience in academics provides a great way of understanding the level of diversity and equity among individuals. This is because, the process of self-reflection or self-

narrative provides an avenue by which an individual can explore major issues through a personal account. To this end, the personal account of a disabled graduate student at the University of Manitoba would be useful in understanding the current state of diversity and inclusion. It could be helpful in explaining some of the difficulties disabled students face, amid vague systems of inclusive frameworks.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The review of existing literature in academic research is a practical guide that helps to show the basis and direction of a study or an investigative process. Though not all existing works in a subject area can be reviewed, the process aims to provide thematic constituencies in the body of available literature. It establishes a framework by which a continuum of diverse perspectives in extant literature can be well appreciated and contributed upon (Boote & Beile, 2005). In likening the process to a conversation metaphor, Lingard (2015) explains:

Imagine yourself joining a conversation at a social event. After you hang about eavesdropping to get the drift of what's being said (the conversational equivalent of the literature review), you join the conversation with a contribution that signals your shared interest in the topic, your knowledge of what's already been said, and your intention to add something new that will matter to those participating. (p. 252)

The literature review is an 'academic interaction' that highlights contextual elements for presenting analytical findings. It is a process that recounts the assessments of related studies and discusses their outcome. Thus, the literature review is an important aspect of the research or analysis that promotes clarity and lends credence to the procedure of a study (Green et al., 2006). Snyder (2019) explains that:

a literature review is an excellent way of synthesizing research findings to show evidence on a meta-level and to uncover areas in which more research is needed, which is a critical component of creating theoretical frameworks and building conceptual models. (p. 333)

While it can be agreed that the importance of the literature review is in its ability to synthesize information for the creation of an analytical framework, it is worthy to note that

individual study may require varying style or method. This is quite an important fact to note in a dissertation due to the centrality of the literature review to the overall process. Thus, an inappropriate method of literature review may lead to a disorganized research methodology or irrelevant analytical framework (Boote & Beile, 2005). On this note, it is important to select a method of literature review that would be of immense contribution to this study. The study aims to make use of a narrative in the analytical framework. Hence, it will be helpful to connect with the theoretical frameworks and contextual ideas from works that have made use of narrative methods for self-reflection in their analysis. The essence of narrative studies based on self-reflection to the literature review process is to create a framework of analysis that would be related to this research. Green et al. (2006) have recommended a credible tool in the form of a narrative overview for conducting a literature review. According to them, “narrative overview, also known as an unsystematic narrative review, are comprehensive narrative syntheses of previously published information... this type of literature review reports the author’s findings in a condensed format, that typically summarizes the contents of each article” (p. 103).

2.2 Opinions of Diversity and Inclusion of Disabled Students in Auto-Ethnographic Studies

In a bid to understand the opinions of disabled people on the issue of diversity and inclusion in Universities, Halder & Assif (2017) explains that a broad framework of analysis must be adopted. This framework should include, among other things, issues like experiences of various abilities, a multicultural environment, emotional geography, human rights, equity and the level of organizational inclusiveness. On this note, this section will review literature on the diversity and inclusion of disabled students in universities across several countries.

In an analysis from the perspective of a teaching staff, Svendby (2021) discusses the problem of cultural exclusion and disability awareness with an auto-ethnographic study. The author explains that the experience of teaching a class with a disabled student was somewhat difficult at first due to lack of knowledge on how to do so, as well as personal discomfort on not wanting to make mistakes. In the view of Svendby (2021), a lot of lecturers are unaware on how to be inclusive, and this goes a long way in affecting the experience of disabled students.

In the author's case, becoming aware of inclusive measures was a gradual process and only began just before a class. In the class, people had to make known the presence of a student with hearing impairment and the need for an interpreter to pass on messages. Consequently, Svendby (2021) explains that "unawareness" of inclusion is due to a cultural practice that promotes ableism and the lack of anticipation of persons with disabilities in universities.

According to the author:

While the encounter with the sign interpreters was uneventful in itself, it became a significant moment in my teaching career. I was somewhat unsettled by the unforeseen situation. It did not help that the room was crowded and short of space. I felt distracted by the unfamiliar experience of having someone standing right next to me gesticulating as I spoke, and sometimes interrupting me to ask me to explain a word or repeat a sentence. The discomfort I experienced in the situation was increased by the sudden insight that I had not reflected on the possibility that some of the students in my classes might be disabled. (Svendby, 2021, p. 637)

With respect to the difficulties expressed in the above study, Wilson (2017) discusses the need for a re-imagination of the inclusion of disabled students in colleges. The author explains that the current system of education, creates an unwelcome environment for persons with

disabilities and makes inclusive learning difficult. According to Wilson (2017) after several experiences in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in higher education, there is the need to “reexamine inclusive education and to consider how university classrooms, pedagogy, and curricular materials can be improved in order to accommodate all students” (para. 1). The author explains through a narration of an experience as an ally to a disabled person in college that the system of academics is built from the start to exclude students with disabilities. This is a result of the lack of inclusive designs, especially founded in the mode of teaching, class setup and general mode of communication (Wilson, 2017).

However, Reuter (2017) in an autoethnographic study, details how a changing perspective of inclusion occurred in the university due to the negative experiences of persons with disabilities with established rules. According to Reuter (2017), “Throughout my four years at Syracuse University however, I have changed my mindset and beliefs about special education, disability and inclusive practices” (p. 3). The author provides the views from experiences that established rules could be great for some, and yet very difficult and exclusively challenging for others to be part of an inclusive space. To this end, Reuter (2017) posits that the creation of an inclusive environment for disabled students is largely based on reconstructing thoughts surrounding the philosophy of social concepts and disability. According to the author in a reactionary self-dialogue to what she learned in class:

Professor C comments that disability is socially constructed. She brings citing examples to build her argument. She starts with Down Syndrome. I think, how can this be socially constructed... Professor C continues her argument by informing us that scientists have changed the IQ number required in labeling an intellectual disability. I pause. I would not want my life to be determined based on a test score. (Reuter, 2017, p.9)

In a different approach to the issue of inclusion and diversity, Castrodale & Zingaro (2015) discuss the use of friendship as a means for integration of disabled students in universities. In using their experience as friends in higher education, the authors explain that friendship could be a tool for integration and diversity, as it promotes support and understanding between disabled and non-disabled students.

2.3 Narratives on issues affecting the social environment for disabled students in higher education

In a qualitative exploration of narrative interviews, Eisenman et al. (2020) discuss reoccurring concepts in the social environment of university campuses for disabled students. According to the authors, the concept of micro aggressions, micro affirmations and institutional acceptance are common themes in the narrative discourse of the social environment in campuses of higher education. Eisenman et al. (2020) explain how the concepts of micro aggressions and micro affirmations refers to the minor but important cues in the social environment of a university campus. On one hand, micro aggression signifies any act or attitude of discrimination towards minority students that could be subtle but effective in leading to discomfort or volatility. This is rather the opposite of micro affirmations, which use acts, tone, or gestures of kindness to boost the emotional state of vulnerable people and improve their success rate on university campuses.

In an autoethnographic study by Isaacs (2020), the social environment of university campuses is viewed with a cornucopia of signals that are political in nature and could break or promote the success of students. The author uses time as a basis for analyzing personal experience, wherein the work discusses the preference by individuals to deal with non-disabled students over those with disabilities. Isaacs (2020) further discusses how people are likely to say,

I don't have time for this, when persons with disabilities are slow to accomplish things. While this might be a simple expression, it could be damaging to the morale of disabled students in the pursuit of academics. Isaacs (2020) shares a personal story:

I arrived at the library at the university at which I was registered as a student. I had hoped to take out a book I would use in the write-up of my Master's dissertation. As I got to the counter to make an enquiry, the librarian noticed me. He then got up from his seat and came towards me. He proceeded to ask what he could assist me with. There was an uncomfortable silence. I just stared at him. I could not answer him. I just experienced a block - nothing came out of my mouth. I could hear my response being recited in my head, but I could not verbalize it. The librarian stared at me, saying nothing. As I stuttered through my response, the librarian gave me a blank stare. He then sighed and mumbled, 'I don't have time for this'. With that, he turned his back on me and started walking back to his seat. I remained standing there for about five minutes hoping the librarian would return. Instead, he looked back at me, annoyed. I then left the library feeling disabled, embarrassed and powerless. (p. 58)

In a similar study, Lourens & Swartz (2016) investigate the phenomenological experience of disabled students in the social environment of universities. The study uses a narrative method of qualitative investigation to highlight the views of a lot of disabled students. According to the authors, disabled students experience a great deal of body shaming and exclusion in the social environment of universities. This includes people avoiding them due to their disability and sometimes displaying subtle signs of antagonism. To this end, Lourens & Swartz (2016) point out,

In recent years there has been a growing international urgency to include disabled persons on university campuses. Ideally, this inclusion runs deeper than a mere increase of disabled students on tertiary grounds; it also involves the quality of the social and learning experiences of disabled students. (p. 240)

In explaining the role of teaching staff on the academic experience and social perception of disabled students in higher education, Díez et al. (2015) adopt a method of biographic narrative for their study. According to them, the attitude and practice adopted by lecturers in interacting with disabled students plays a major role in social inclusion and level of participation by students with disabilities in the classroom.

The authors explain that the use of a biographic research method in the study helps to highlight the direct opinion of disabled students. The research highlights that disabled students sometimes feel uncomfortable in classrooms due to elements of attitudinal barriers shown by lecturers. This could take the form of poor interactive response towards students with disabilities by professors or tone of doubt in discussing with disabled people (Díez et al., 2015). While this attitudinal challenge may be unintentional or invisible to others, it nevertheless causes a perception of social exclusion for disabled students and esteem issues in academics (Díez et al., 2015).

However, in the discussion of esteem issues for disabled students in the social environment of the academic community, Maconi (2016) highlights the theme of resilience. The author uses a narrative of qualitative method to investigate the opinions of disabled students on the effect of identity in the social environment of higher education.

According to Maconi (2016), “even with the social movement to recognize people with disabilities as valuable members of society with agency, the historical narrative of disability as a

victim status continues to be the dominant cultural narrative today” (p. 8). The author explains that this negative cultural foundation concerning persons with disabilities extends to colleges, wherein the social environment of higher education is usually discriminatory and disabled students must face several challenges before graduation.

Nevertheless, many disabled students would stand up tall and avoid being broken by the challenges they experience in the social environment from other students and staff alike. Maconi (2016) points out:

In order to truly include students with disabilities so that they can create identities around feeling included as students, the university, and other institutions, need to consider students with disabilities as whole people who may have questions about life outside of the university or classes. In linking students to outside resources and acknowledging them as people who are more complex than their disability or diagnosis. (p. 70)

To this end, Bobat et al., (2020) discuss issues in the normalization of the social environment for disabled students in higher education. The authors use narrative from students, academic staff and other workers in the academy. In the study, the authors point out that there is a substantial level of attitudinal difficulties in higher education, but explain that this is largely as a result of misrepresentation of disabled people as stupid and incompetent in the wider cultural space.

According to Bobat et al. (2020), the social environment is sometimes difficult for disabled students to participate in because students and academic staff alike are usually unsure of how to be inclusive. To this end, the authors suggest that more orientation and positive cultural representation is needed for students and staff in the academy, to ensure the normalization of disabled people in the social environment.

2.4 Personal experience on navigating emotional challenges in an ableist environment of higher education

The cultural foundation of higher education is practically based on ableism and elements of discriminatory attitudes (Kattari, 2015). According to Abes & Dakow (2020), “With its rigorous expectations and pace, higher education is rooted in compulsory able-bodiedness and able-mindedness... This ableist assumption is so woven into the fabric of higher education that to deviate from it requires documented proof” (p. 227). Consequently, the presence of ableism in higher education leads to cultural oppression and creates a stressful emotional environment for persons with disabilities. This stressful emotional environment could play a major role in the determination of how persons with disabilities experience higher education and struggles to graduate from the academy (Singer & Bacon, 2020).

Roberts (2019) investigates the manner at which disabled students take up or resist the positioning of disability in an ableist culture of higher education. Centering the discussion on a Canadian university, Roberts (2019) explains that at the University of British Columbia Okanagan, the culture which is shaped through discursive practices is grounded in a ubiquitous ableism that remains unnoticed and unchallenged. It is time to recognize where ableism is at work and challenge the practices it produces. In the study, the author uses a critical qualitative analysis to understand the theme of subjectivity and power dynamics involved in the way disabled students try to create a better experience for themselves.

According to Roberts (2019), disabled students are not represented in the policies and programs of the academy and as such, this creates a vulnerable position in the discursive ableist culture of higher education. The author then explains that disabled students adopt several

strategies to creating a meaningful experience for themselves, which range from dismissing ableist ideas of disability to engaging in critically discursive chat in the academy.

Similarly, Koren & Xhey Evans-El (2020) examine the effect of advocacy on ableism in the context of graduate school. Using *duo ethnography* as a research methodology for investigating disability and ableism in the general interaction among graduate students and academic staff, the authors base their analysis on a black feminist lens.

Koren & Xhey Evans-El (2020) explains that while ableism may impact the level of social interaction and academic progress in higher education, disability advocacy and stories of personal experiences could change the dynamics. The authors then provide a discussion on how the use of personal stories for advocacy in an ableist culture of graduate school is improving their experiences as doctoral students.

However, Aubrecht & La Monica (2017) discuss the difficult emotional process and embodied labour of advocacy and disability disclosure in graduate school. The authors make use of co-constructive autoethnographic narrative research in explaining the level of stigma and process of anxiety in accessing a favourable social space. The authors then provide a phenomenological experience of mediating factors to disability disclosure in an ableist culture of higher education.

Aubrecht & La Monica (2017) highlight the hard work and layered process of disability disclosure in social interaction as a major challenge in managing stigmatized perspective of identities. According to them, “socio-spatial processes of disclosure can be an embodied form of extra work (e.g., managing perceptions of stigmatized identities)” (p. 1).

2.5 Framework of Social Model

Several theoretical frameworks can be identified in the study relating to issues affecting the lives of persons with disabilities. The various theories or models provide an analytical lens for understanding the interaction of disabled people with the society. These theories, like the critical disability theory, human rights model for disabled people, the medical model and social model, often address specific areas in the study of persons with disabilities. Although, while indeed several theories exist in extant literature, the social inclusion model holds a prominent position due to its versatility (Berghs et al., 2016).

Indeed, the model of social inclusion has been a major analytical framework in the field of Disability Studies. The model, as a centerpiece of Disability Studies, arose in opposition to the medical or deficit framework model of analysis. Both the medical and deficit models place emphasis on the inability or incapacity of an individual to perform a certain task as reasons for not being able to be integrated in society (Oliver & Barnes, 2010; Pfeiffer, 2002). This analytical framework of individual deficit places the existence or survival of persons with disabilities under the domain of medicine and other related professions. The point here is that there is the general belief that constant care is needed for disabled people to maintain a sensible or healthy living (Campbell, 2009).

The model of social inclusion affirms that the institutional barriers erected by elements in society are largely responsible for the exclusion of disabled individuals (Novo-Corti, 2010). According to Goering (2015),

Disability is commonly viewed as a problem that exists in a person's body and requires medical treatment. The social model of disability, by contrast, distinguishes between

impairment and disability, identifying the latter as a disadvantage that stems from a lack of fit between a body and its social environment. (p. 134)

The model acts as both a guideline for inclusion in the society and an analytical framework in analyzing the fundamental issues in the environment for disabled people (Allman, 2013). To Samaha (2007):

The social model is a proposed definition of disability that is connected to human disadvantage. Stripped down to basics, the model moves causal responsibility for disadvantage from physically and mentally impaired individuals to their architectural, social, and economic environment. Not necessarily moral responsibility, although that might follow, but causal responsibility. Either way, the model is powerful within its domain. (p. 1255)

In a nutshell, the social inclusion model of Disability Studies concerns itself with the regular problems that hinder the full participation of disabled people in the society. It interrogates the impact of stigma and discrimination in assessing the social order and disability (Allman, 2013; Hall, 2019). Thus, the problems of disabled people are situated principally as a social question rather than a medical one. Consequently, the social model opens itself to a multiplicity of ideas that could be considered as important for its analysis. These ideas are of intersecting effects and includes areas like institutional practice, political intensions, socio-cultural values, and economic orientation.

Apparently, the multiplicity of factors in the analytical framework of social inclusion, underscores the flexibility of the theory to understanding issues affecting disabled people in the society. In other words, the social inclusion model lends credence to the analysis of intersecting factors that could be responsible for the inability of disabled people to participate in a particular

environment (Oliver, 2013). For instance, in the area of academics, disabled people often face challenges relating to accessibility, as well as socio-cultural and institutional barriers. These intersecting factors often militate against the success of disabled people in academics (Oliver & Barnes, 2010).

It is on this note that this research adopts the social model as a framework for its analysis. The model is useful to the study as it concerns itself with the interaction and inclusive process of disabled people. The work benefits from the model in many ways, including the ability to examine and proscribe actions for the improvement of social inclusion in an environment like the university campus.

2.6 Situating Canada Within the Framework of Diversity and Inclusion in this Study

According to Brosseau & Dewing, (2009):

The concept of Canada as a “multicultural society” can be interpreted in different ways: descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology) or politically (as policy). As a sociological fact, multiculturalism refers to the presence of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Ideologically, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada’s cultural diversity. At the policy level, multiculturalism refers to the management of diversity through formal initiatives in the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal domains. (p. 1)

To this end, it can be identified that Canada is a country of diverse people, and this is recognised at both the sociological level and governmental institutions. For instance, Macklem (2021) states:

Diversity and inclusion are critical to our success as a central bank in the service of Canadians. They are essential for the economics profession to attract the best talent and foster ingenuity and innovation. And they matter for the whole economy. (p. 1)

Indeed, the idea of inclusion and diversity in recent decades, has been considered as an important factor in government regulations of institutions and organizations (Garr et al., 2014). The key concept is to create an inclusive space for promoting a Canada that would be perceived as attractive to diverse talents among immigrants and overall population of the country (Nardon et al., 2019). Hence, the importance of promoting more inclusive Canadian sectors like in the area of education and health (Lei & Guo, 2022).

2.7 Framing Nigeria within the context of socio-cultural diversity in this study

Nigeria is a federal democratic state in Africa. It operates a presidential system of governance with three distinctive branches of power which are the legislative, judiciary and executive arms of government (Fagbadebo & Francis, 2016). The country operates a decentralized form of federalism with the federal government at the top of the system, followed by the state governments and the local government councils (Khemani, 2001).

Nigeria is said to have the largest population in Africa. The country is a multi-ethnic nation with hundreds of diverse cultural groups. However, the three major ethnic groups are the Yorubas, the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbos (Akobo, 2016).

The Yorubas are in the South-Western region of Nigeria. The group is largely homogenous in their identity, culture and history, though there exist a variety of dialects among the Yorubas (Forde, 2017). For instance, all members of the Yoruba ethnic group trace their ancestry to a common origin from the religious and traditional town of Ile-Ife, Southwest Nigeria (Ojo, 2007). Consequently, religion plays a major role in the daily life of the Yorubas, with

Christianity, Islam and traditional Yoruba religious values constituting the major means of worship (Ezaluomba, 2018; Forde, 2017). While the Yorubas hold a strong sense of cultural identity and adhere to common traditional values, the group is highly westernized in their ideas and educational orientation. The Yorubas are major players in general affairs and holds a significant political influence in Nigeria (Forde, 2017; Ojo, 2007). Although, it should be noted here that, while the Yorubas are significant players in Nigerian politics, the dominant political actors in Nigeria are the peoples of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group of the Northern region of the country (Adesina, 2005).

The Hausa-Fulani ethnic group is a political and religious bloc in the Nigerian society. The cultural bloc has been responsible for producing most heads of state and the only head of government at Nigeria's independence from Great Britain in 1960 (Agbiboa, 2017). In the same vein, the Hausa-Fulani represents the largest cultural group in Nigeria. Equally, it could be considered as a major religious population in Nigeria, as members of the group are predominantly Muslims (Suberu & Osaghae, 2005). Historically, the region housed the political/religious domain of the Sokoto Calafate in the northern region of precolonial Nigeria (Bergstrom, 2002). Members of the cultural bloc predominantly reside in the northern region of the country today, though they could be found in most sections of Nigeria as herdsmen and traders of farm produce (Ezaluomba, 2018). This could be identified as a point of similarity between the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbos of Eastern Nigeria who are also primarily known to conduct their trade all over Nigeria and beyond (Meagher, 2009).

However, the Igbos are culturally and socio-politically different from the Hausa-Fulani. The Igbos hold a commercial viewpoint of the world and could be found in almost every profession and works of life in Nigeria (Agozino & Anyanike, 2007). Members of the ethnic

group are predominantly Christians and practice African traditional religion (Akah, 2016). The Igbos are known to practice egalitarianism in their political life (Allen, 1972). Nevertheless, they have been largely underrepresented and marginalized at the foremost positions of leadership in Nigeria (Nsoedo, 2019). Similarly, the Igbos have regularly found themselves in direct rivalry with other ethnic groups, especially members of the northern region, which greatly contributed to igniting the Nigerian Civil war of 1967 (Meagher, 2009; Nsoedo, 2019).

In any case, the Nigerian state as a geographical entity has witnessed an unstable sociopolitical existence as identity politics and regional tribalism has affected almost every aspect of the country (Adesina, 2005). Perhaps it is on this note that Suberu & Osaghae (2005) state that “Nigeria is usually characterized as a deeply divided state in which major political issues are vigorously – some would say violently – contested along the lines of the complex ethnic, religious, and regional divisions in the country” (p. 4).

Apparently, this complex socio-cultural interaction in Nigeria has distorted the growth of most institutions in the country, especially in areas relating to the public sector and economic development (Adetiba & Rahim, 2012). The lack of a cohesive identity in the country among other things, acts as a catalyst for corruption and mismanagement of the Nigerian economy. This is because the lack of a common identity due to ethnicity for instance, promotes a cultural trend of favoritism and severely limits effort to combat corruption at the national level (Arowolo, 2022). The high level of corruption in the Nigerian economy has negatively impacted greatly on institutions like the provision of quality education and employment opportunities for a very large section of the population, especially the youth. Hence, causing a constant level of progressive brain drain in the country, as most individuals of working age escape the country to find greener

pastures and academic opportunities in continents like Europe and North America (Uma et al., 2019).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is concerned with the narrative of a personal reflection on the environment for disabled students at the University of Manitoba. The study made use of autoethnography for data presentation and analysis. Autoethnography is a qualitative system of writing that places the author at the forefront of a study (DeBerry-Spence, 2010). In an autoethnography, the main aim of the author is to recount personal stories for informing or analyzing the effect of cultures and institutions on individuals (Campbell, 2016). It is a style of writing that adopts autobiographic elements of thought processing and relies on the ethnographic research method for its analysis (Custer, 2014).

In an autoethnography, the focus is on the political and social justice experienced in a culture or institution. This allows the author to take a critical viewpoint of a culture or institution, with an objective to define the role of identity, power and social construct (Jones, 2005).

Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural patterns. This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially-just and socially conscious act. (Ellis et al., 2010, p. 1)

3.2 Instrument

The adoption of autoethnography in this research provides a qualitative method for the researcher to clearly express the reflections on the environment and inclusive framework for disabled students at the University of Manitoba. The study was based on a genre of autoethnography called the analytic process. This version of autoethnography recognizes the

researcher as a member of the group being researched and promotes the use of published information for its analysis (Anderson, 2006; Bochner, 2014). It takes into consideration the psychological and socio-cultural background of the researcher, in conducting an autoethnographic examination (Jones et al., 2013). Consequently, in order to provide guardrails for preventing a torrent of misguided assumptions in the reflective process, the analytic autoethnography depends partly on existing theories and concepts in the subject area (Anderson, 2017; Dauphinee, 2010).

The analytic autoethnography provides the opportunity to reflect on factors that influence social constructs and discuss their effect on individuals. Thus, the use of analytic autoethnography, could allow for contribution to the development of social and academic theories, since the researcher is provided with the opportunity of juxtaposing concepts and events (Dauphinee, 2010; Chang, 2008). Its usefulness to this study is that it allows the researcher to draw from extant literature on social inclusion in discussing reflections on navigating the environment of the University of Manitoba as a disabled International Graduate Student.

3.3 Advantages of the research design

According to some researchers, the advantage of analytic autoethnographic research design of study are numerous as it gives the researcher a broad platform for investigating the subject area (Anderson, 2006; Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2006). The advantages include:

- **Placing the researcher at the forefront of the research.** The research design provides a huge platform for the researcher to express opinions through a process of narrative and self-reflection on the experience as a disabled person in the environment at the University of Manitoba.

- **Providing great control of the research.** The research design provides great opportunity for the researcher to control the process and various steps involved, thereby avoiding challenges relating to logistics and participant reluctance that would usually occur in other qualitative studies.
- **Providing thick description.** The research design allows for thick description on the subject area due to the use of narrative as an agent of reflection.

3.4 Limitations of the Study

Scholars like (Mendez, 2013; Walford, 2004) point out that several limitations of autoethnography as a research design can be readily identified, irrespective of the environment or place. This includes:

- **A one-sided approach to opinions on the subject area.** The research design relies on the personal reflection of the researcher and as such, the tendency to have a one-sided analysis cannot be ruled out. However, information from extant literature and other forms of published works acts as important tools for preventing this.
- **Limited information.** The research design allows for only the reflection of the researcher, (as the amount of information on the subject area was limited to the knowledge of the researcher). Although, this cannot be a basis for disqualifying the method, as information is infinite.
- **Blurry recollection.** Based on the use of personal recollection in the research design, there is the possibility that the researcher had a blurred memory of some issues relating to the subject area. While this is a possibility, the researcher tries to organize the information properly for academic and research integrity.

3.5 Research Questions and Objectives

The major question in this study is:

- **How is the environment of the University of Manitoba inclusive of disabled students?**

This question provides a focus for the research to reflect on some basic issues that primarily affect the social inclusion of disabled students in higher education such as ableism and attitudinal challenges. It takes a socio-cultural lens in reflecting on the inclusive nature of the social environment for disabled people. Indeed, the presence of socio-cultural barriers and ableist attitudes towards persons with disabilities in the academy has been at the center of excluding disabled student from the social environment. The presence of socio-cultural barriers and ableism in a general sense, could lead to discriminatory practices and reluctance by students and members of staff to interact with disabled students. More so, socio-cultural barriers like mythical and incorrect descriptions of disability could influence the responsiveness and readiness to include disabled people in activities and participation in and outside the classroom (Brown & Leigh, 2020; Roberts, 2019; Sachs & Schreuer, 2011). It on this note that De-Los-Santus, Kupczynski & Mundy (2009) state that "students with disabilities have not been fully welcomed in higher education in spite of litigation, court cases, and positive shifts in public perceptions" (p. 16).

From the major question in this research, two sub-areas of investigation are identified below:

- How do current attitudes toward disability affect interactions between disabled students and staff members at the University of Manitoba?
- What social barriers exist that hinder the participation of disabled students in activities at the University of Manitoba?

3.6 Main Objectives of this Research

Primary objective:

- Self-reflection on the inclusion of disabled students in the environment of the University of Manitoba.

Secondary objectives:

- (a) Examine if there is a noticeable presence of attitudinal challenges towards disabled people in interacting with students and members of staff at the University of Manitoba.
- (b) Critically reflect on the social environment of the University of Manitoba, for indications of barriers in the participation of disabled students in activities.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISABILITY AND THE PURSUIT OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

4.1 Introduction

As a child, even before I accepted myself as disabled, I often wondered why persons with disabilities were considered underprivileged. This problem was evident in movies, the news and even discussions among people very close to me. I recall how, whenever blind individuals visited our neighborhood, people always saw them as beggars even when they were not. At the time, I knew this was not right but did not understand why it was a common belief. It was only when I became fully blind and started navigating the cultural territory of disability that I finally understood the situation.

Apparently, the perception of disability in most societies arose from a negative social construct mixed with spirituality. This is as a result of the fact that the socio-cultural institutions of ancient societies often devalued persons with disabilities and hence, integration into the larger community was virtually unacceptable. In some cases, the treatment of persons with disabilities was biased, deplorable and ascribed to matters of divinity (Brooke & Smith, 2009; Irmo, 2017). It is on this note that Irmo (2017) states that “the history of treatment and attitude toward people with disabilities has often been marked by societal fears, intolerance, ambivalence, prejudice, and ignorance regarding disability” (p. 1).

To get a sense of the origin of such treatments, one can examine the creation story of humans in ancient Mesopotamia. According to the mythological records found in an ancient cuneiform of the region, the goddess Nammu learned from the minor gods that carrying out the maintenance of the world was getting too difficult for them, and they could no longer continue with that. In this regard, Nammu discussed with the more senior God, Enki, who gave the go-ahead to create humans for helping with worldly tasks. So, Nammu gave birth to the first human

with help from her assistant Goddess Ninma. However, after this achievement in the kingdom, a celebration to mark the birth of humans turned negative when Ninma and Enki drank excessive beer and got drunk. Consequently, Ninma created more humans during this period, but all the end creations were disabled. After such a time elapsed, Ninma declared that she had the power to control lives, making disabled individuals have terrible destinies. Although Enki refuted this claim and pronounced that he alone would have the power to control destinies, it nevertheless points to disabled people as the product of a drunken episode (Kagnici, 2018). Consequently, such stories were not uncommon in ancient societies as Mahran & Kamal (2016) for instance explains that “in ancient Egypt physical disabilities or body deformities were considered as divine attributes granted to humans by the gods” (p. 169).

In a similar mythical story from the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria, a situation of intoxication from palm wine led to the creation of disabled people by the God Obatala. Obatala, who was charged with the duty of molding humans from clay by the universal God Olodumare, often got drunk due to excessive consumption of palm wine during breaks. Consequently, Obatala created disabled bodies like blindness and albinos due to drunkenness. While the story explains that he regretted this act and is today recognized as the patron of disabled people by the Yorubas of Western Nigeria, it is believed that another son of Olodumare, called Oduduwa, had to continue the process of world creation (Nyangweso, 2021).

Considering such stories, one can understand why disability has been considered as an issue of spiritual matters rather than physical and biological events. It is perhaps on account of stories like this that records show that many ancient cultures sometimes mistreated or carried out infanticide on people with disabilities like among the Jukun people of the Sudanese Kingdom, wherein Irmo (2017) affirms that “Among the Jukun of the Sudanese Kingdom, children with

deformities were abandoned in caves or bushes because they were believed to be possessed by evil spirits” (p. 2). The mistreatment even extended to their families in some ancient cultures, as they were segregated from the community. This act of despair was noticeable among the Igbo-speaking group of Eastern Nigeria. Among the Igbos, disabled children were pronounced as default by the Council of Elders, as they were believed to be unable to support the socio-economic institution and lacked the ability to be educated in the age grade system. In such situations, those individuals were ex-communicated alongside their parents from the community (Eskay et al., 2012).

This was the situation of disabled individuals in several African cultures before the advent of the European colonial administration and educators in the region. In the period of colonization, the colonial educators were faced with teaching the peoples of the region imperial cultural values while maintaining essential aspects of their cultures (Zachernuk, 1998). To this end, the European approach to disability was introduced to the peoples of the African continent (Eskay et al., 2012). The European model of disability was primarily based on the Judaic/Christian concept of charity and medical care for the invalid (Byrd, 1990; Pfeiffer, 2002). Little wonder why the church symbolized hope for disabled people in some African countries like post-colonial Nigeria and Ghana.

Indeed, while growing up as a child with visual impairment in Nigeria, the church was spoken to me about as the only place where I could get help. At the time, this led me to a series of quiet and moody periods during my childhood, where I would often ask God why I was different from my peers. Though I did not consider going for what I will call “miracle shopping” from religious leaders and I am sure I would have been unhappy with any of my immediate family members who suggested that to me.

However, as I grew up, I gradually saw the church as the only place where I could get social interaction due to a segregated and very poor standard of primary/elementary education system for disabled people in my community. But this was not to be, as I did not get much comfort from the church as well, as I quickly realized that disabled people in most centres of worship were treated as uneducated, underprivileged and perhaps, persons who should be avoided. Thus, with a segregated and poor academic background and lack of acceptance in the church, I was faced with the self-doubt regarding whether I had a future beyond primary education.

4.2 Understanding Special Education Environment in Nigeria

It is important to understand the environment of special education in Nigeria in order to develop a picture of my academic background. Talking about the concept of special education itself, I never grasped the idea and did not appreciate being excluded from regular students without disabilities and taught in a segregated environment. In the school where I was educated, disabled students did not have the opportunity to interact with regular students as the system of special education during my time did not provide room for inclusive learning procedures with regular students. Although the school building was in a remote corner in a compound with children in regular classes, the management did not allow persons with disabilities to interact with the other students.

This form of special education represented an *academic apartheid* as persons with disabilities were relegated right from the primary/elementary level in the educational system. It is on this note that Obi (2007) in analyzing the academic environment for children with disabilities in special education from the early post-colonial era in Nigeria to the late 1990s, affirms that “Children with disabilities were never given the opportunity to interact with their peers who are

not disabled. In these schools, these children were isolated and educated in self-contained classes. These schools were considered discriminatory in approach” (p. 268).

Additionally, these special schools create further disablement for persons with disabilities, as not much is done to prepare them for integrating with society (Obi, 2007). Furthermore, funding of educational activities by the government is often lacking. The lack of funding affects the availability of facilities and required teachers in the special education field. Schools are often without assistive devices like Braille machines and appropriate aid for teaching deaf/speech impaired students as well as children with intellectual disability (Adima, 1992; Olubukola, 2007). Eskay et al., (2012) succinctly describes the effect of low funding on special education in Nigeria when they state,

Funding for special education in Nigeria limits the progress of special education. Funding seems to be either insufficient or not provided for the education and service delivery of learners with disabilities. There are constant unending debates and policy maneuvering among education policy makers that end up defeating any funding appropriated for special education. (p. 898)

This creates a poor learning environment and procedures for children with disabilities. In most cases, special schools fail to meet the regular curriculum of the educational system and, as such, make disabled children ill-prepared for the rigour of higher education and work-life (Eskay & Oboegbulem, 2013; Obiakor & Offor, 2011; Olubukola, 2007).

The situation of special education in Nigeria is not shocking, as government policies in the early post-colonial era paid no attention to quality education for children with disabilities (Obi, 2007; Obiakor & Afoláyan, 2012). The government depended on the educational facilities

for disabled people provided during the colonial era by acts of charity of religious organizations and Christian missionaries (Adima, 1992; Irokaba, 2019).

The Christian missionaries and religious organizations were able to develop a special education system and later established schools in the 1950s for various disabilities. Major special schools established during this period were the Gandiri School for the Blind, Plateaux state, in 1953 (by the Sudan Interior Mission); Pacelli School for the Blind and the Wesley School for the Deaf, Lagos, in 1962; and the Oji River Rehabilitation Centre Enugu in 1960 by the Anglican Church (Irokaba, 2019; Obi, 2007).

However, children with disabilities had no exposure to social development as their education was conducted in secluded classrooms and often in inadequate facilities. However, this looked like it was changing when in 1977 the Federal Government of Nigeria dedicated a section of the National Policy on Education to create an inclusive experience for children with disabilities (Obiakor & Offor, 2011). The federal government prescribed inclusive education for children with disabilities where possible and encouraged schools to promote the interaction of disabled students (Adima, 1992).

To this end, the period between 1980 and the 1990s saw an increase in the awareness of children with disabilities and special needs education in Nigeria. It also saw the creation of resource rooms for children with disabilities in secondary schools (high schools) for the integration and learning procedures (Obi, 2007; Shown, 1983). The idea of the resource room was to ensure that disabled students had a place equipped with special facilities outside the regular classrooms and special education teachers who could help in areas of difficulty (Shown, 1983). Although, trends in Nigerian educational system have not ensured that disabled students enjoy such policies in the country. According to Eskay et al. (2012), "Nigerians have not

benefited from special education programs, as outlined by Section 8 of the Nigerian NPE (National Policy on Education)” (p. 898). In the same vein, in a study conducted by Oluremi & Olubukola (2013), “results showed that essential facilities and materials like hand railings, hearing aids, Braille, instructional materials, and lower toilets were not available, although the few that were available (typewriters, resource rooms, wheelchairs) were in poor condition” (p. 159).

4.3 My Journey in the Pursuit of Education as a Child with Disability

I was told that on April 7, 1991, I began my life as a child with a disability on planet Earth. According to my mom, when she saw that my eyes had a physical deformity, she asked the medical officials what could be done. In their opinion at the time, the only solution was to fly the child abroad for medical treatment and perhaps to provide me with quality education. However, about a year into my birth, my mom attended a women’s prayer meeting with me placed at her back. While the crowd was probably shouting and waving their hands in praise in that meeting, she said I joined in the waving of hands while at her back. This act could be what many people might consider as a miracle because the general medical opinion at the time was that I would never have any significant sight.

While still having a significant vision, this empowered and enabled my parents to enroll me in the regular school when I became of age to attend. Nevertheless, this would soon prove impracticable, as I could not benefit from the regular way of teaching. While I indeed had significant sight and could move around on my own, watch the television when I got very close to the screen and even engage in sporting activities, I had a very low vision. This issue meant that I could not read printed or handwritten materials. Consequently, I could not see the

blackboard for teaching in front of the classroom. To this end, many teachers were bewildered on how to get me to understand what was being taught.

At this time, I was attending the best school in my community, so there was the general opinion that if I could not be taught there, it was impossible to learn elsewhere. Nevertheless, I had a great social life with my classmates in regular school as a child. I was treated like I was part of the class, and my classmates did not consider me different from them. This extraordinary moment was because I started with them in the same arm at the kindergarten (KG) level from a young age. So, as we graduated from KG1 through KG3 and then primary 1 (which was the level I stopped at the regular school), they did not see anything different. However, students outside my class or arm mocked my deformed eyes, and some even threatened to beat me up. While my class teachers were very supportive, some teachers from other classes will support the children when I report the issue to them. I remember one boy who often called me “Otutu Calabar” concerning my deformed eyes, which meant a masquerade with an evil spirit. He would often do this and run to his teacher, who in return would be very aggressive towards me and make fun of my eyes as well. At this point, I was not scared of getting into a fight with him because I was huge and thought about myself as powerful, but I have had great control of my temper since childhood and knew my parents would not be happy. Unfortunately for him, he called me that name in front of my classmates and to my horror, they all attacked him like a mass of bees, and I never saw him in the school after that incident.

While I had excellent social support and a sense of comradeship from members of my class, my academic development was suffering. This concern worried my family members, and my immediate elder sister took it upon herself to increase her efforts to help out with academic work. Although we progressed in areas like simple arithmetic and very basic spellings, many

difficulties were encountered in complex reading and mathematics. When I failed my primary examinations, and my parents were informed that I could no longer move forward in my current school, something had to change.

That day, the entire family had a discussion, and my parents informed me that I would be going to a special school in the next academic term. The word ‘special school’ was new to me and my siblings, so my mom tried explaining it to us. I was excited to head to this new school and see how special it was.

4.4 Moving from Regular School to Special Education

The next academic term was approaching, and when it did, I was up and ready to see my new school. However, while my previous school was within the University quarters and a five-minute drive from where we lived, the new school was in the central part of town and far away. As my mom took me to my new school, I quickly realized on our way that it was surrounded by impoverished homes and bad roads. This observation did not fail to get my spirits very down, as I wondered what kind of school existed there. But when we entered the school compound, and I saw a lot of children running around, a broad smile returned to my face, only for it to quickly dissipate as I saw that the special school was in a different place. The special school was in a remote corner of the compound, and children with disabilities could not interact with students from other schools due to rules. At this time, my feelings were a mixture of despondence and sadness, and the only thing I can remember of my first day was that my mom was talking to the headmistress, and she started crying. To this point, I do not know if she was crying as a result of my disability or because I was attending a special school.

I quickly adjusted to the School for the Blind, which was the name of my primary school, and was happy about the treatment I got from the teachers and fellow students. I must point out

that I was a new kind of special student in the school because most of the students were mainly from poor and less educated homes. Added to this, most of the students could only communicate in Pidgin English. On the other hand, I could converse in perfect English due to the previous education I got from interacting with a lot of children with more advantageous background in my previous school and living within the staff quarters of a university community as well. These traits made a teacher secretly tell me that I should not go close to the students, so as not to distort my perfect English. Although on a lighter note, I agree with the teacher's views to an extent, because I went into the school with a good knowledge and command of the English language and graduated five years later struggling to communicate.

Similarly, it also came to my attention that during my graduation year, I could not point to a great area of academic importance, as I could not read or write Braille during my graduation year. This was as a result of the fact that the school for the blind was understaffed and lacked funding for facilities like Braille papers, Braille machines, tape recorders, textbooks, and mobility or sporting equipment. Though it was a government owned school, the teachers often told us how not many resources were allocated for improving the education of the students. Consequently, I remember how it was difficult to read textbooks in Braille because the school did not have them to teach us.

4.5 Graduation and Introduction to Inclusive Education

I graduated from the school for the blind five years after making the sad journey from a regular school. At this time, I was ready to see what the secondary school had for me. Secondary school was considered as inclusive since classes were held with regular students. I could not wait to be part of a larger community of students once again. Indeed, when I resumed secondary school, I found a lot of students, and it was interesting to be part of a larger community in

conjunction with disabled peers as well. Socially, this was more of a balance than what I experienced at the primary school for the blind.

I had the opportunity to make good friends and connect with people. However, just like the primary school for the blind, this one was also understaffed and lacked funding for essential facilities in the special education area. The school itself was also a substandard public-school facility that lacked funding from the government. To make up for the lack of opportunities for disabled students under this difficult environment, the special teachers encouraged regular students to help their peers with disabilities in completing academic work at the resource centre and with mobility as well.

Typically, the resource centre or resource room, as it was called, is expected to have essential facilities like Braille papers, tape recorders and Braille machines. It had none of those and did not have required facilities like bathrooms for daily activities. Under these hostile conditions, learning was virtually impossible, and the environment was not conducive for disabled students.

My situation of being unable to read and write in Braille continued. The only way I learnt anything at school was from friends who helped explain class activities. This commitment to helping me often made them miss some important activities themselves. Hence, regular teachers complained about regular students helping their disabled colleagues. I also got assistance from my cousin at home, but as she was in a different school, this became difficult for her to help with explanations.

As a result of the above issues, I transferred to one of the best schools in Nigeria, King's College in Lagos, at the middle of my secondary school years. King's College was the dream of most Nigerian parents, and my parents were very proud when I made the transfer. However, the

school had a boarding facility, and I was unprepared for that. Secondly, I discovered that the facilities for disabled students were significantly worse than the school in my local community. To that end, and to the disappointment of my parents, I moved back home. Consequently, I began my self-styled preparation for the university examinations in Nigeria and got Braille textbooks from Lagos. It is important to point out that Lagos is Nigeria's most recognized city and commercial capital. As a disabled student during my time, you had to travel to Lagos if you wanted any material or computer lessons, and my city was five hours away.

I realized that the onus was on me to get across the stage of high school. Hence, my cousin, friends and I did everything within our power to ensure that we passed the university examinations. This study plan was quite effective, as we subsequently gained admission into the university, and the King's College fiasco was soon forgotten. Nevertheless, the university became a different story for me, as I was ill-prepared academically and not ready for the attitudinal snobbery from my fellow students.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides an educational background of the researcher from elementary/primary school to the secondary or high school level. It creates a context for understanding the situation of special education in Nigeria. According to the researcher, special education was a form of segregated learning, and academic or social progress was quite slow when compared to regular schools. Added to this, the system of special education did not get required funding from the government and as such, lacked vital facilities like Braille machines and teaching staff.

In the case of the researcher, the introduction to special education was as a result of not being able to benefit from the regular educational system. This was because, although the researcher had a significant level of sight from birth, the vision was very low for reading printed

or handwritten materials and the teachers in the regular school had no way of managing this at the time.

In the final analysis, I conclude that special education in Nigeria did not do much to improve my academic development. In hindsight, I think it would have been better if I continued in my first school and maybe went for lessons on how to read braille in the special school. This perhaps would have provided me with the opportunity to grow with the regular students and allow for a more socially inclusive education in my childhood.

CHAPTER FIVE: ABLEISM AND MY EXPERIENCE IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

“We don’t have the facilities for disabled students, so we cannot admit you” (personal experience, 2015).

5.1 Introduction

According to Brown & Leigh (2020),

ableism is described as a network of beliefs, process and practices that produces a kind of self and body (corporeal standard) that is projected as perfect, species-typical and therefore essential and fully human. Disability is then cast as a diminished state of being human. (p. 5)

To understand the effect of ableism, Kattari (2015) succinctly points out:

In most societies, some social identity groups hold a disproportionate amount of social, cultural, and economic power, while other groups hold little. In contemporary U.S. society, examples of this power are evident around issues of ability/disability, with able-bodied individuals wielding social dominance and people with disabilities experiencing a lack of social, cultural, and economic power. (p. 375)

This general overview of ableism unfortunately extends to the premises of academics, wherein disabled people are considered somewhat inferior in comparison to their colleagues in areas like intellectual capacity and work output (Brown & Leigh, 2020). Consequently, ableism in the academy leaves disabled people with more challenges to overcome than their peers without disabilities; it emphasizes the inabilities of disabled persons to function in the system, which often leads to a total disregard of their aspirations and self-determination (Kattari, 2015). It is on this note that Brown (2020) states,

Although post-secondary educational institutions have been mandated by law to accommodate, the issue of students with disabilities receiving accommodation remains problematic. One factor that is relevant, but often overlooked, is how power functions in the process of seeking and receiving accommodation. (p. 5)

Thus, disabled people must confront discriminatory and attitudinal challenges that might be detrimental to their overall well-being (Singer & Bacon, 2020).

However, ableism is not just based on attitudinal issues towards disabled people, but a complex relationship that reflects fundamental philosophical thoughts combined with politics and power (Hall, 2019). This means that ableism is usually a result of perceived negative notions of disabled people as inferior and desires to dominate them (Hall, 2019). Clifton (2020) affirms very clearly that “Ableism is another reference to power and its attendant violence, the hierarchy of the abled over and against the disabled” (p. 14). Although while some events may represent mild to moderate ableist behaviour, they may not be the desired outcome of the actor. This issue is common in situations where disabled people are subjected to unsolicited or unwanted pity from others (Singer & Bacon, 2020). It is on this note that Clifton (2020) discusses the effect of paternalism on persons with disabilities as a source of oppression and promotion of ableism:

Paternalism is the assumption that people with disabilities... need to be healed, cared for, supported, or managed for their own good—despite their individual will—and even though their present plight may itself be a product of violent intervention and control.

(Clifton, 2020, p. 5)

This level of intervention (and in my opinion manipulation) in the lives of disabled people could possibly take the power away from persons with disabilities to make decisions and engage in healthy self-determination. In explaining how paternalism which could be regarded as a form of

ableism could be manipulative, Clifton (2020) points out that “‘Paternalism is often subtle in that it casts the oppressor as benign, as protector,’ and enables people in power to express sincere sympathy for people with disability while keeping them socially and economically subordinate” (p. 5).

Apparently, ableism could be intentional, systematic or directed to prevent the participation, integration and satisfaction of disabled people in mainstream activities (Kattari, 2015). It can be likened to racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination based on internalized ideas (Overboe, 2007).

While disabled people are subjected to ableist environments and activities around the world, the effect of ableism has not been extensively explored as a concept (Brown & Leigh, 2020; Singer & Bacon, 2020; Nario-Redmond, 2019). Campbell (2008) succinctly provides an insight into the impact of ableism in Australia as the author states that:

There are few opportunities to find a sanctuary for healing/shelter from the forces of ableism [explaining, for instance, that] in Australia, there is an awareness that many of our disability rights movement leaders are suffering ‘burn-out’ have had emotional collapses or just moved on to cope with the realities of living in a hostile world (p. 156)

It is clear from the above statement that ableism is affecting the disability community greatly, and disabled individuals are sometimes powerless to stop it. This is not helped by the fact that disabled people in most countries are found amongst the poorest and live on the edges of society. This diminishes their strength to fight against all ableist oppression, as disabled people are often invisible in the society and simply do not have the resources to deal with it alone (Campbell, 2019; Tarvainen, 2019). In developing countries, disabled people still experience ableist trends in public institutions due to the lack of laws and recognition of persons with disabilities by

governments (Harpur, 2013). In Nigeria, disabled people are largely unemployed, socially oppressed and face numerous unfair practices as discussed by Etieyibo & Omiegbe (2016):

Many of these practices are exclusionary in nature and unfair. They are either embedded in or sustained by religion, culture and beliefs about disability... Given the unfairness and wrongness of these practices they ought to be deplored. Moreover, the Nigerian government needs to push through legislation that targets cultural and religious practices which are discriminatory against persons with disabilities as well as undertake effective and appropriate measures aimed at protecting and advancing the interests of persons with disabilities. (p. 192)

The negative situation of disabled people in the country has prompted the government to create a national disability law. This, hopefully, will protect and enhance the living situation of disabled people in Nigeria (Oduwole, 2019).

In my experience, I discovered that even educated individuals who should act against ableism and other forms of the negative display towards disabled people instead promoted the trend in educational institutions and religious communities like churches. For example, many avoid conversation with disabled people in religious institutions. This was also noticeable in universities; wherein disabled students are often discriminated against of which I got my own share of the treatment. Muftahu & Razak (2020) states that this level of discrimination or ableism in Nigerian universities, is caused by “no clear policy in the Nigerian higher education system for inclusive education” (p. 254). Disabled people are often unrecognized and face serious challenges as a result of the disadvantaged system that promotes discrimination and ableist trends (Monday & Mogom, 2016).

5.2 Appraising the Nigerian University Environment

My folks often say that if you can survive and graduate from the Nigerian University, then you can survive anywhere. While this is not a factual statement, there is some element of encouragement to life situations in it. The major point here is that Nigerian Universities are often devoid of environmental conditions like good library facilities and a non-violent space required for an academic setting and also tend to be too harsh for comfortable learning. For instance, in a study by Ojogwu & Aluto (2009) on the University of Benin “The result of the analyses showed that the learning environment was very much below standard” (Ojogwu & Aluto, 2009, p. 69). Although, I grew up in a university environment, I got a lot of information about the university before obtaining the status of a student myself. My information that I was able to gather included the politics of the school, how to conduct yourself in lectures and interaction with lecturers. I often listened to stories of the dealings of gangs and rival gangs, which, I must say, usually caused anxiety in the school community. I got to know about the attitude of lecturers towards students, which I think was sometimes talked about like stories of Gods and their subjects. I knew about the politics in the university environment and often found the outcome very exciting. I met many people from various parts of Nigeria in my younger days. However, this did not prepare me for the crisis I was to face in my personal experience as a university student.

“Some of the crises noticeable in Nigerian universities include financial crisis, deteriorated infrastructure, brain-drain syndrome.... volatile and militant student unionism, secret cults and sexual harassment” (Ekundayo & Ajayi, 2009, p. 342). This disrupts the academic growth of students and reduces the level of social interaction in the university community. For instance, the issue of secret cults often divides the student body, as rival gangs, in most cases, are unable to interact with one another. This is more so in situations where there

are some levels of tension between the major gangs, which is almost always present.

Consequently, some prominent gangs within Nigerian campuses are the Eiyé Confraternity (Air Lords) Pirates (Sea Dogs), Neo-Black Movement of Africa (Black Axe Confraternity) and the Supreme Buccaneers (Aluede & Oniyama, 2009; Popoola & Alao, 2006). These confraternities are known to have or still cause chaos on Nigerian campuses through rivalry over territories, social conflicts and general ideological differences (Aluede & Oniyama, 2009) To this end, Aluede & Oniyama (2009) discuss the impact as they state,

Cultism has remained a problem for tertiary institutions in Nigeria and the larger Nigerian society since the first decade of the existence of university education in Nigeria. It has been worrisome to have children on campuses and several measures had been adopted to curb cultism. (p. 3)

Thus, creating a social environment that is generally toxic for non-members of rival gangs or secret cults to navigate. This is as actions of secret cults could be violent, vindictive and often lead to murder (Popoola & Alao, 2006). In the same vein, the actions of secret cults could disrupt campus activities and endanger the lives of the student population (Popoola & Alao, 2006).

Apparently, the activities of secret cults in the social environment of most Nigerian universities could present an unhealthy challenge for students to successfully interact with one another and concentrate on their academic work as well. This is coupled with the somewhat infrequent activities of militant student unionism, which could end up being violent at times (Odion-Akhaine, 2009). Oluwole & Ige (2021) provide a brief history of student unionism in Nigeria:

The pioneers of student struggle (ALUTA) at its inception were highly militant, resourceful, and committed to the struggle. The era was characterized by militance,

selflessness, diplomacy, and violent but objective action. Subsequently, the era led to the emergence of national leaders; the majority of whom were radical and were also ideological in thought perception and action. (p. 26)

The issue of militant or forceful unionism on campuses is to promote the rights of the student population and call for the development of infrastructures within universities (Odion-Akhaine, 2009). In the case of infrastructure, most Nigerian universities lack facilities like good roads, well-functioning lecture rooms and suitable hostel accommodations. The problem of accommodation is a major issue as students live in conditions that are not academically friendly. Students are faced with the problem of lack of running water in bathrooms and added to this, students learn in spaces that are without electricity or power for light and cooling systems (Subair et al., 2012). Little wonder why most Nigerian students suffer from frustration and fatigue (Subair et al., 2012).

The issue of fatigue is unfortunately caused by a lot of factors, including corrupt practices and negative mode of interaction by some professors to students (Atanda, 2019; Nwachukwu, 2021). To this end, Idaka & Joshua (2009) discuss the situation of lecturers' attitude to students in Nigerian universities and affirm that "possible ways of checkmating the educational activities of Nigerian lecturers and their impacts on the students have to be sorted for; ways of upgrading and improving on the quality" (p. 470).

It is in these hostile and harsh conditions that most students with disabilities must study in Nigerian universities. This leaves disabled students open to ableism and negligence within the academic community. In most cases, the governing body of the school may be without any information that they have disabled students on campus (Monday & Mogom, 2016). To this end, I think it is important to point out that I often faced situations whereby the authority of the

university had no recognition of my presence, and I was always scarred after being rejected by professors and students who were unaware of my enrollment.

5.3 My Experience in Nigerian Universities

I will start my narration with this personal illustration that no matter how close you live to the river, it cannot prepare you for the actual experience of swimming.

I have written this illustration to capture my experience as a disabled student at two universities in Nigeria. Prior to becoming a student, I was confident that living close to the academic community gave me the opportunity to gather vital information for my university days. However, I also had fears of attitudinal issues and problems with academic integration. Though I felt I knew a lot about the academic community, I did not consider myself capable of studying at the university. I felt my academic background was not good enough for the rigour and intensity of studying in higher education. Also, my fears stemmed from the high level of disregard shown to disabled students by some lecturers and students. I quickly realized that disabled students were not socially part of the university community, and people easily took them for beggars or visitors to the university. Unfortunately for me, this played into my psyche and made me unsure of myself throughout my university days.

I will begin my story from my first day at university. When I was admitted to university, my major problem was academic integration and anxiety over social inclusion. Consequently, when I went into the class with a Braille machine my mom got for me, people started whispering, and everyone became silent. I knew this was not a good thing as it meant surprise and questions over my presence. I tried to keep a straight face, but I was crying inside. In addition, people talked about me like I was not there and made remarks that were totally

appalling, like “What is he doing here?” “How is he going to learn?” “Perhaps lecturers will help him.”

This began my experience of ableism at university. Many students did not consider me worthy of attending lectures or even participating in in-class activities. In my undergraduate program, the general view was that I could not make it to the next level unless professors gave me a passing grade without my efforts to achieve it. This was unfortunate, as I think I worked for my grades and accepted whatever I got and not what they gave me. The idea of ableism was so deeply rooted in the minds of students that, on one occasion, when a professor asked me a question in class, a girl said, “Does the lecturer not know that he should not ask the boy any question?” The irony about this was that, when I got a very good grade in some instances, the view changed, and it became: “Disabled people don’t do anything with their time and can easily pass exams.” Consequently, I was treated like I was not a member of the class and people often avoided me. At this point, I had a friend from secondary school who was my classmate in the university. We attended classes together, but people saw him as a paid support worker who perhaps was doing the job as a way of making extra money. Thus, they did not see any reason to interact with me because they were not paid to do so. The only few that interacted with me did so out of pity or a way to satisfy their curiosity. In cases when my friend could not make it to class, no one even recognized I was there or tried to assist in any way.

I was not invited to parties in my class or even student programs within the university. No one saw any reason to talk to me, and I was practically isolated. This problem was not helped by inaccessible buildings, and I had to stay in school all day to attend lectures. To this end, I could not get refreshments and could not use the bathroom when I needed to do so.

Concerning the bathroom, it became difficult for me as I had to go without food the whole day, so I did not encounter situations whereby I might have to use the facility. I believe this has caused more damage than I ever thought, as health issues arose from this daily practice. Indeed, trying to cope with stress and other educational-related issues led me to unhealthy living and caused health concerns. For instance, I felt the only way I could be friends with people in my university was to engage in the act of drinking. Consequently, I unfortunately went into the habit of drinking with friends regularly at a young age, which only made me less prepared for other major issues. Although I did not get the desired effect, it allowed me into the social circle with the other guys in my class and maybe the university community. Nevertheless, I had significant limitations, as members of gangs would not interact with me if I talked with someone from a rival group to theirs.

This lack of communication became a major problem for me, as I felt I needed inclusion and assistance from everyone and not just a few individuals. Funnily enough, I did not understand why I had such complexities. It was after I left the university that I realized that cultism had some part to play in the level of inclusion and help I received in university.

Most students still saw me as that disabled boy in the class. This was obvious when they decided to hold class meetings and I did not get invited to attend. On the other hand, some professors were not sympathetic either, as they avoided the responsibility of providing required services to a disabled student in their class. I remember a situation when I needed to write an exam, but the professor instructed his secretary to send me away. In another situation, a professor was unsympathetic by screaming at me before exams and denying me the right to have extra minutes when I felt it was necessary. Although, it should be noted here that a lot of lecturers

were also helpful and went out of their way to provide explanations when I needed it and did not fail to assist with accessibility issues.

The issue of accessibility was very complicated as the school had no recognized form of support for disabled students. Obtaining accessible support in school activities relied on the discretion of the professor. This created a lot of challenges for me, as it was difficult to convince individual professors on my accessible needs, as some felt it was a way to get ahead of my classmates.

Similarly, it was extremely difficult to read academic materials as textbooks and articles were not accessible. To this end, friends and family members had to help out with recording academic materials. I remember how everyone engaged in a division of labour in order to make my academic materials available for an exam that looked very difficult for me. However, this improved a bit when I started using the computer, as I had access to more academic materials. But the fact that I had to scan my materials made this option quite difficult. Not everyone could help with this, as the process was rather cumbersome to create an accessible format for my JAWS screen reader.

In summary, my undergraduate studies were characterized by naivety, anxiety and depression. I only graduated because of the help I got from friends outside the classroom, family members and a few professors. Not even my strategy of social drinking could get me the required inclusion I needed in the university. Added to this, I could not talk to people as I was very shy during my early 20s, and this did not help my situation for gaining recognition in social and classroom activities.

In the quest for more knowledge and social inclusion, I headed in a different direction for my graduate studies in Nigeria. I felt it would give me a better experience and I intended to erase the memory of my undergraduate studies.

5.4 The Journey to Western Nigeria for More Inclusive Studies

After my undergraduate experience, I decided to head to the western part of Nigeria for an inclusive study in arguably one of the best universities in the country, Obafemi Awolowo University. Generally, it is a recognized fact that the Yorubas are very inclusive and pay much attention to accessibility in society (Fagunwa, 2017). In fact, I have had a lot of friends from the Yoruba community that have displayed great awareness of social inclusion, willingness to help and desire to learn about the factors affecting the lives of people with disabilities. Thus, I was excited to study in a more inclusive environment in Western Nigeria.

To this end, two years after I finished my undergraduate studies, I stood up one beautiful morning to leave for Western Nigeria on my own. I felt it was time to be independent, as I depended on the assistance of friends prior to this. When I arrived in my new environment for the first time, I was not disappointed, as it had everything I wanted. The transportation was good as they still made use of the motorcycle system. The motorcycle is a very accessible system of transportation for blind or visually impaired people in Nigeria as it is affordable and easy to get. You can easily get a motorcycle, right from your doorstep. Hence, I was extremely happy that the city of Ile-Ife allowed this system, since most Nigerian cities have abolished this mode of transportation in their jurisdiction.

However, my dreamlike state began to fade out when I started the process of admission into the university. First, I was told by a professor, “We don’t have the facilities for disabled students, so we cannot admit you.” As if that was not enough, another professor simply asked me

in another instance, “Why do you want to do a masters? Are there jobs for you [disabled] people?” At this point, the memory of my days at the undergraduate level returned to me, and I got scared.

Apparently, it became clear to me that ableism, or discrimination against persons with disabilities, was not a regional issue, but deeply rooted in the cultural values of a lot of Nigerian communities. Nevertheless, my classmates in the city of Ile-Ife were more inclusive and went out of their way to help in my academic progress. This was quite different from my days at the undergraduate level where my friendship with my classmates was somewhat limited. Indeed, my classmates provided accessibility support and even helped with educational materials when I needed them. Perhaps, this could be attributed to the level of maturity of the students in the graduate program.

In any case, my fears and anxieties could not go away as the level of discrimination in the admission process was so high that professors began to avoid the subject of admitting me. According to what I heard, it was only when a top professor in the school spoke in my favour that I was able to gain admission into the program of my choice. Hence, I was considered unworthy to be there right from the start. After all, this is the Great Ife, one of the best universities in Nigeria, so their students must be part of the elite group, and disabled people are seemingly not considered as one.

The lack of acceptance into the university continued right into my program as some professors maintained that a master’s program was not meant for persons with disabilities. At first, I did not allow that to affect me, as a lot of professors were also very helpful and very instrumental to my graduation from the university. But gradually it began to eat into my emotions and create chaos in my personal life. Consequently, I was told that as a person with a

disability, I would not graduate because it will be impossible to pass my exams and conduct research as well. This was very problematic for me because when I heard stuff like this during my undergraduate program, I felt it came from students alone. To hear this from professors – it was not easy to take. It got to the point that I had tears coming from my eyes in an exam, as the professor said he was not going to read my questions for me. It was only when a fellow student took a break from writing his exam and helped with the question paper that I was able to participate in that examination.

This level of distress was also present in the university residences for students. When I got to the residence, I discovered that it was not accessible, and the staff made it clear that I could not live there. On the other hand, I was determined to live there and decided to get a room. Consequently, the living arrangement was a disaster as I had to depend on people to get water from the reservoir, make use of the bathroom, and get food and navigate the hostile environment. This was coupled with issue that the staff did not want me there and were not concerned about my well-being. Although I eventually moved out of the residence, I began to experience some emotional troubles during my time in Ile-Ife.

My experience in Ile-Ife was not what I thought it would turn out to be. I was almost destroyed emotionally and my abilities for doing things began to slip away from me. Secondly, the period I spent there did not yield much academic gain of becoming a researcher and a career diplomat as issues with some professors and questions about my academic abilities were always somewhere around the corner.

It was on this note that I began to search for ways to improve social inclusion for persons with disabilities in society. I decided to pursue a degree in Disability Studies in a Western

country. At this point, I felt I would gain more knowledge on social inclusion and ways for eliminating ableism or discrimination towards persons with disabilities.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the campus environment in Nigerian universities and highlights the presence of ableism. Using the experiences of the researcher from two major universities, it explains that the life of a disabled student is extremely emotionally stressful and filled with a lot of academic and social obstacles for persons with disabilities.

The researcher indicates that at the undergraduate level, social isolation and ableism from students and a few professors made the period filled with moments of anxiety, depression and a display of naivety by the researcher. The lack of disability support by the university left accessibility matters to the discretion of individual professors, and obtaining accessible materials was only made possible by friends and family members.

However, while the researcher gained more independence at the graduate level, ableism from professors and members of staff in the university residence also produced a period of emotional distress. The researcher had to cope with pressures from professors to quit the program and even faced hostility from a professor who refused to conduct an exam due to request for an accessible procedure.

In the final analysis, ableism makes the academy very uninteresting for disabled people. This is as a result of the fact that the academy becomes a place of anxiety and in my view, the unrecognized status of disabled people in most Nigerian institutions makes ableism more problematic to address. This is because disabled students are often without any official support from the authority and most universities in Nigeria usually do not have an established centre for accommodation.

In this way, disabled people, in most cases, lack the social and academic gains of attending a centre of higher education. This is as a result of disabled students not having full access to academic materials and being unrecognized in the social environment. This leaves open the possibility of disabled people to be oppressed, abused and forced out of the academic institution.

CHAPTER SIX: “A JOURNEY TO SOCIAL INCLUSION, OR SO I THOUGHT”

6.1 Introduction

In my community, the talk generally was Canada. I remember my mom telling me that Canada might be the best place for me to have another graduate degree and learn the fundamentals of social inclusion. As a disabled person, I was thrilled by the stories I heard about the level of tolerance in the Canadian society and really got interested in travelling to Canada. I heard a lot of comments about how the educational system is very accommodating for disabled people and when qualified, persons with disabilities are usually considered for job opportunities before regular applicants. However, surprises about the presence of ableism and racism have perhaps made me question the real state of the Canadian society. I have experienced subtle racist behaviour by a few Canadian students and have witnessed an active form of discrimination based on ableism at the University of Manitoba and generally in Winnipeg. Coupled with this is the impact of culture shock in trying to get used to the Canadian society, which has limited my ability to feel comfortable in everyday activities in Canada. As described by Irwin (2007), “culture shock is the depression and anxiety experienced by many people when they travel or move to a new social and cultural setting” (para. 1).

However, it is not unusual for people to have culture shock in a new community or country, as Winkelman (1994) notes that “Multicultural domestic and international relations create cultural shock for both immigrant and resident groups” (p. 121). As people travel from one place to another, there is the tendency to experience new ideas, behaviours and social values. This is not problematic as it often brings about a period of honeymoon or romanticism in the life experience of a new visitor to a culture (Demes & Geeraert, 2015). The honeymoon period is filled with the appreciation of new food, dreamlike experience of a new environment and the

excitement that comes with making new friends. This is often the case with students in colleges, whereby the culture or environment is exciting, filled with fun and open to great opportunities. Consequently, it is likely to be more intense for international students in universities, as the experience of a new country creates the feeling of achievement and awe (Schartner & Young, 2015). However, Newsome & Cooper (2016) explain that this period of honeymoon is likely to lead to a culture shock, as students gradually grow into the system; “the students’ personal journeys are traced through a three-stage process that moves from (1) high initial expectations, through (2) culture shock, to (3) various eventual patterns of accommodation” (p. 196).

Indeed, I still remember how in my early days in Canada, like most international students talked about the excitement of being in a new country and the endless opportunities for them. In my experience I will say there is the appreciation of the environment and the civility of the country and its people. After all, Canada is often regarded as the haven of the first world. However, a few weeks or months after being in Canada, this safe haven perception begins to wear off. International students are introduced to issues like systemic discrimination in some aspect of the Canadian society like the labour market and racist attitudes by individuals in social interaction (Bartosik, 2017). Coupled with this is the general discussion of the history of the flawed relationship between European settlers and indigenous peoples of the land. This institutionalized mistreatment of indigenous peoples by European colonialists in Canada is considered as a very ugly past of the country and affects a lot of indigenous peoples in areas like academic growth (Gallop & Bastien, 2016). Although, this is not to suggest that Canada is not amongst the world’s most developed nations, but to highlight the fact that there is the possibility of international students to set their expectations over and above reality (Calder et al., 2016).

At this point, it is important to understand the romanticism that many people hold about coming to Canada, especially those from third world nations in Africa and Asia. According to a documentary on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (2018), most migrants believe in the Canadian dream that once they come into Canada, their problems are solved and as such, they will do anything to get to the country. Consequently, the Canadian dream is an idealistic state of mind that constitutes Canada as a land without stress, socio-economic problems and cultural biases (Al-Haque, 2019).

There is a general perception amongst actual and prospective migrants that Canada offers a good quality of life and good health care services (78%); Canada is a very safe country to live in (74%); there's respects for human rights and dignity (73%); and Canada is a place where Nigerians and other immigrants can easily integrate into the society (71%). (African Polling Institute, 2020, Key findings section, para. 4)

As an international student from Nigeria, I fully identify with this opinion and affirm that such views influenced my decision to study in Canada. Consequently, just like most international students, it is not uncommon to search the internet for comments on a potential destination and seek for opinions from others within your environment. However, the danger to this is not that the opinions are false, but lies in the fact that they are often overly exaggerated (Tomlinson, 2019). In an analysis provided by Green (2018), the study points out that international students in Canada are up against several barriers relating to employment, connecting with domestic colleagues and social inclusion, as well as difficulties accessing required support in multiple areas. A report from Ryerson University states that “the complexity of Canada’s immigration policies, a lack of connection opportunities and insufficient supports at universities across the country make life in Canada harder for international students during and after university” (Green,

2018, para. 2). In the same vein, international students in Canada face both overt and covert racial discrimination during and after their study at the university. The existence of racial discrimination is often intimidating to international students and shows a sign of lack of tolerance by some Canadians.

In a story reported by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the level of threat and public humiliation faced by international students is brought to view. According to a turbaned, bearded participant in the news story, “I was on my phone, and I was walking toward my house and some two, three people left and they started following me and passing comments, like negative comments” (Rutherford, 2019, Comments section, para. 6). In a similar analysis by Martis (2020), the theme of being racially black in a pre-dominant white school is highlighted:

On- and off-campus, I was often the only Black person around, and I wasn’t allowed to forget it—in class, the seat beside me was always empty, no matter how full the room was... in bars and clubs, I was called the N-word; both on- and off-campus, I was told to go “back to your country” and threatened with physical violence. (para. 4)

The barriers to social and economic inclusion, humiliation and threat conditions faced by some international students in Canadian universities could bring about a moment of reality shock. The concept of reality shock was coined by Kramer (1974) in the field of nursing and refers to the level of assessment that informs a newly employed staff that things in the professional world are quite different from the imagined notion. According to Gaundan & Mohammadnezhad (2018), “reality shock has been defined as an unsettling and/or jarring experience resulting from wide disparity between what was expected and what the real situation turns out to be” (p. 159). This could be applied to the situation of international students that come to Canada with to gain full social inclusion and end up being disappointed with issues

relating to cultural and racial discrimination, history of indigenous oppression and more important to this research, ableism towards persons with disabilities (Bartosik, 2017; Michalski et al., 2017).

Indeed, the presence of ableism in Canada has constituted a big shock for me as my pre-arrival research did not prepare me for that. I recall how shocking it was for me when a white girl told me that she was not sure on the need for disabled people to attend institutions of higher education. Consequently, it is on account of stories like this that I will narrate my experience of a blind black man and as an international student at the University of Manitoba.

6.2 Coming to Canada and Ableism in the Canadian Immigration

In mid-2018, I was admitted into the Inter-Disciplinary Program in Disability Studies at the University of Manitoba. This was a huge victory as I was excited to learn more about social inclusion and the effective policies that have improved the lives of disabled people in a developed country like Canada. In the same vein, it was the beginning of a journey to an inclusive society, or so I thought at the time. However, while the admission euphoria gradually dissipated, the fears of getting a study permit to Canada began.

Generally, the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is often regarded as having some level of ableism and discrimination towards persons with disabilities (Blower, 2016; Wong, 2012). This is coupled with the tendency for racism and colonial attitude to be exhibited towards persons from developing countries in continents like Africa and Asia (El-Lahib, 2015).

In explaining how disabled people are not welcomed into Canada, Wong (2012) states that “immigration policies construct people with disabilities as societal burdens who are unable to contribute to the community” (p. 2).

This framework of ableism in the Canadian immigration reflects the medical model in assessing disabled people and creates an unfair scale to obtain legal documents. The predominant conception of disabled people by the CIC is that there is the high tendency to cause excessive demand on the healthcare system and as such, are often regarded as medically inadmissible (Wong, 2012). A story that made global headlines in 2014 was that of Karen and her daughter Jasmine from the Philippines, who was rejected for being deaf. In this story, Karen who was already living in Canada, wanted her daughter to join her. However, Jasmine's disability was viewed by Immigration Canada as a potential burden to the healthcare and social system (Niles, 2018). This was despite Jasmine's ability to communicate with the American Sign Language which gave her basic skills for communication and participation in society and the labour market when necessary.

It is in this regard that the Canadian Immigration perception often defines disabled people as unproductive and unable to contribute to the labour market or the economy (Blower, 2016). The perception here is that disability affects the human capacity of an individual, hence disabled people would not have many jobs to participate within Canada. In this regard, disabled people must show significant proof of funds for coverage of their medical and social care in Canada (Wong, 2012). Consequently, it is under this stilted framework that I applied for a study permit to Canada.

In my application for a study permit, I was subjected to extra medical examination procedures due to my disability. I was told to return for a supplemental disability examination after I completed the main medicals. This was stressful for me, as I had to travel by road for ten hours from my home city to the capital territory of Nigeria where I completed the application. So, after undergoing the first medical examination which I felt was thorough enough, travelling

for another examination gave me a lot of emotional and physical stress. When I arrived at the medical center, the doctor informed me that it was mandatory that they examine my daily functions within the scope of my disability.

I saw a red flag, as I thought this was a way to disqualify my application for a study permit. Herein lies the issue of ableism, as my disability at the time was considered as an issue that could hinder the success of my study permit. Nevertheless, my application was successful, and I was provided with a study permit to school in Canada.

However, it is important to note here that when I arrived at the Toronto Airport on New Year's Day, after a 20-hour flight from Nigeria, it was difficult to negotiate my way through the rigor of the border services. While waiting to disembark, the air hostels had to inform the airport workers that someone was legally blind. The next thing that happened was quite funny and a total display of ignorance. Two members of the airport staff came with a wheelchair and told me to sit on it, even when they saw that my disability was being blind. I was naive, as I sat on it without providing a persuasive explanation. Although, my main reason for not explaining to them that I did not need the wheelchair at the time was to avoid any time wasting for others who were waiting in line. The wheelchair looked quite old and did not look good at all. It probably saw a better life during the World War Two era. The seat had no proper base, and the fabric was torn. Consequently, while I was being wheeled by two girls, I had to abruptly stop them, and I stood up because I realized that the wheelchair was going to collapse and that would have been humiliating. At this point I explained to them, "Please just take my arm and I think that should be fine." Nevertheless, they felt a mobility aid was needed, so a golf cart was ordered, which to my joy, was okay.

We returned to walking after a point, and I eventually got to the border and immigration services. It was at this point that I had to get into a slightly heated discussion with the agent. The agent wanted to know about my disability. I politely informed him that I had already explained in my visa application that I am totally blind. Consequently, from the sound of his voice, I recognized that he was not satisfied with my simple and short explanation. He wanted more, but I did not have anything else to tell him. Then he asked the name of the program and how long it was. When I informed him that it was Disability Studies and told him the duration, he was shocked about the name and said in a very high pitch, “Why should your program be up to that?!” It was then that I gave him an answer that came from the combination of tiredness and slight irritation as I stated, “I believe I gave you my admission letter.” After he was satisfied, he gave me my papers. Then he tried cracking a joke and we shook hands and he sent me on my way.

6.3 Early Days in Winnipeg

When I arrived in Winnipeg from Toronto, it was still about mid-day, so I had the opportunity to meet great people. I remember meeting a woman who told me about the cold as it was winter, and I said that I believe that the weather in Canada was somewhat overrated. For her part, she took me outside without a winter jacket and told me to stay there for 30 seconds, I did and knew that I was really in ‘winter land.’ I guess this was a great start to my days in Winnipeg. Eventually, a friend who I met through the University of Manitoba Accessibility Office and was the President of the Nigerian community in the school at that time, came to pick me up and I was on my way into the city.

My first taste of the treatment of disabled people came when I went to my hotel room. At first, the staff responded to my questions, probably because I was with someone, and they felt

they were talking to my companion and not me. Disabled people often face attitudinal barriers from hotel and tourist staff, which often hampers the enjoyment of their travels (Card et al., 2006). Consequently, when I was alone and tried talking with the staff, things were different, and it almost looked like I was being avoided. Indeed, this was the case when it was time for breakfast, and they refuse to provide me with any meal. I called and was told that the hotel staff were busy, and I would have to wait. So, wait I did and when they finally came to my room, it was like an army of hotel workers had to serve me. I am sure you will say ‘grand,’ only that this was a show of fear and hesitation. The workers stood at my door and were contemplating on who to do the service. It was at this time that a senior staff came and instructed one of them to get the cart into my room. The senior staff on her part, had to do a lot of encouraging and assured the hotel worker that it will be alright.

The hotel staff acted like she was going into a burning bush and needed great comfort. In a bid to comfort her as well, I remembered I had some change from the cup of coffee I got at Toronto airport and decided to give her some when other staff had left. The transformation was instant as she laid my food on the table like a close friend, sat down and felt relaxed, took the TV remote, informed me of the stations in Canada and even returned to take my luggage to my vehicle 15 minutes later. Perhaps it could be suggested that if a lot of disabled people had the money to spend, they would have probably bought their way out of discrimination and manifestations of ableism. However, disabled people like me struggle to make ends meet and are often amongst the poorest of the poorest in the society. This places disabled people in a vulnerable situation, as there is the tendency to suffer social pressures and discrimination due to financial limitations (Braithwaite & Mont, 2009; Beresford, 1996).

It was time to head to the University of Manitoba and my friend from the Nigerian community took me there. It was quiet because it was the second day of January and students were still away on holidays. A small number of staff was present in the student residence to allow international students like myself gain entrance into the building. It was here that I began to experience the most dreaded manner of conversation that I believe most disabled people want to avoid, where the individual looks directly at your companion, rather than providing you with the answers. The residence staff kept on talking to my friend from the Nigerian community without paying me much attention. At the time, I also took this as maybe I was not looking Canadian enough. Eventually, I got to my room and life as a student at the University of Manitoba began.

6.4 Feeling Alone Among the Crowd

Attitudinal challenges are a major cause of loneliness and social isolation (LSI) for disabled people. This affects the integration of disabled people in the society, as ignorance, disregard and the possibility of violent abuse constitute a lack of an enabling environment for persons with disabilities (Bridger, 2020). The presence of LSI in the lives of disabled people, could arise even in situations of large gatherings and busy locations (Macdonald et al., 2018). This is as a result of the fact that disabled people might face unfulfilling social encounters and disabling environmental factors.

Consequently, disabling environmental factors promote LSI in the lives of disabled people through physical barriers and lack of accessibility support. This could take the shape of a deficiency in mobility awareness for instance, which would possibly keep a disabled person confined in a particular location (Bridger, 2020; Macdonald et al., 2018).

In my case, I began my education at the University of Manitoba during the winter and at this point I really felt alone because there was no means of integrating into the community of students. I could not go outside on my own because I had poor mobility skills. Consequently, when I eventually got mobility lessons, the buildings and sidewalks were difficult to navigate. For instance, it was very difficult for me to navigate the University Center, as few tactile signs for disabled people existed in the building. This was similar to the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, which was trickier than the University Center, as I often saw it as an open space without navigating corners for a disabled person. Hence, I could only visit these buildings when I had my academic attendant with me, which the Accessibility Unit approved to be with me for about 2 hours a day or 10 hours weekly during the period I was taking courses at the university.

In the same regard to navigating buildings, sidewalks were challenging for me prior to the pandemic. This was highly noticeable en route from my student residence to my department in the Education building. I remember how I often got stuck while navigating via the University Center and would have to wait for a pedestrian to get me back on track or probably assist me to my destination. Suffice to say that some of the sidewalks were not properly designed for accessible travel. This often interfered with my ability to walk alone. Some of the sidewalks lacked tactile signs and did not have well defined edges to keep me on track. It is on this note of a poorly designed sidewalk that caused me to be involved in an accident as I lost track of my route and fell into a pit close to a construction site within the University of Manitoba. Consequently, the constructions were often problematic for me especially when it interfered with the bus route or sidewalk area, I was familiar with. This was the case with the Agriculture bus stop route, when construction was being done in the area. This greatly affected my ability to navigate the campus environment and head to classes on my own, as the route was the most

familiar to me within the university. Also, the constructions were carried out without ensuring that disabled students were fully aware of things, and to provide alternative routes if necessary.

To this end, I often depended on the accessibility unit for navigating the campus environment. The accessibility unit had a system of transportation, which was great, as it provided rides for disabled people within the campus environment. However, this had its downside, as only one vehicle operated for this purpose, and it was necessary to book beforehand. In the same vein, rides were scheduled in order of importance. This limited how rides could be scheduled in the system.

Although, I will say I was lucky to have a roommate for the first four months in Winnipeg who was extremely understanding and helpful. Consequently, he was the only white Canadian I knew at the time and in fact, he was the only person I talked to in the residence. I am pointing the racial difference here because I noticed that in the residence, only black people often talk to black people and the same with white people as well.

In explaining the phenomenon involved in the racial disintegration among university students, especially in the interaction within white and black ethnic groups, White & Burke (1987) postulate that the concept of 'identity theory' acts as a propelling factor within the self for interacting with others. According to White & Burke (1987):

Identity theory considers an ethnic identity (like all identities) to be a portion of the self that contains shared understandings of what it means to be a member of a given ethnic group. Within the framework of identity theory, ethnic identification is hypothesized to be related to self-esteem, identity salience, identity commitment, and other structural characteristics. (p. 310)

However, my case was different as many black students avoided talking with me because I am disabled. This was not considered when I left Nigeria. I failed to think about the negative reaction that many people from African cultural groups have towards persons with disabilities and how it might affect my interaction with them (Nyangweso, 2021). Indeed, I remember one very cold night during the Fall semester of 2019 when it was obvious that I was trying to get to the bus-station with some difficulties, two persons I believe were Nigerians walked past me without stopping to ask if I needed help. This was a major occurrence during the period I took courses at the University of Manitoba, whereby people of all cultures and races did not appear to consider helping when I needed it.

In any case, lack of social integration support from the university also played a major role in my isolation. This was despite the fact that I discussed the need for support with several groups within the university and the International Centre. My troubles to connect with the International Center got me referred to the accessibility unit for assistance. In the same vein, my quest for support saw individuals giving me what I will describe as “tongue acrobatics.” I have coined the term “tongue acrobatics” to refer simply to the rapid speech of natural English speakers that displays superiority in the knowledge and command of the language. To Munro (2003), this superiority of ethnicity in the use of language creates a basis for discrimination in the display of accents within the Canadian context. According to Munro (2003),

Negative attitudes toward foreign-accented speech have led to discrimination against second-language users in Canada... [There are] three types of accent discrimination arising in human rights cases: discrimination in employment due to inappropriate concern with accent, discrimination due to accent stereotyping, and harassment based on accent.
(p. 38)

Indeed, the tongue acrobatics is a major way of talking in Canada, often by persons of European descent over other cultural groups and races. Consequently, I quickly realized that the tongue acrobatics became a common phenomenon in my interaction with people of European descent. Thus, I had to get used to it or find a way to listen more attentively.

6.5 Navigating Cultural and Racial differences

Right from the start, I knew that it was important to have a good approach in my interaction with people in order to navigate the cultural/racial differences at the University of Manitoba and Canada in general. However, I came to Canada with the inferiority complex of a young black blind man, and I was afraid of how I would be accepted in society. Thus, I have often assumed an apologetic posture and mannerism when interacting with people. Although it is a general knowledge that Canadians are very polite and ready to apologize when needed, in my case, I was an international student, and I was simply scared of offending anyone. In this way, my issue is different, as I often feel like a disturbance. Consequently, I have often said things like, "I am sorry... I hope I am not bothering you... Please if it is not okay for you, you can stop me here." Ironically, I say things like that even when I do not have a plan or a way out. I remember a situation on one occasion when it was clear to a couple that I was lost and just wondering about. The wife felt they should help me, but the husband was not too sure. When I noticed that they were having a difficult time on how to approach the issue of helping me, I kept on apologizing even when the husband told me it was okay. This type of behavior I understood from class discussions at the Department of Disability Studies, is a common phenomenon among disabled people. According to one of the professors in Disability Studies, disabled people often feel that they are unwelcome and see themselves as constituting some form of occasional inconvenience to people. To Cruickshank (1951), this characteristic among disabled people may

be conceptualized as the feeling of fear and guilt. This situation could create a negative psychological perception, through which disabled people continually judge their actions. Similarly, Ji et al. (2019) explain that the issue of disabled people being apologetic could be the result of a poor mental state and having a low self-esteem. They believe this phenomenon is related to the level of happiness, social support and perception of their disability. Consequently, it is this kind of discussion in Disability Studies that helped me to understand issues relating to ableism and navigating the general culture as a disabled person. Indeed, the class discussions were very helpful as it was a combination of cultural lessons and disability issues in the social domain.

In any case, my interactions with people were not totally based on what they could do for my situation. Although, the first person I met in the university residence told me a simple and honest statement: “If there is anything I can do to make your stay better here, please let me know.” He was true to his word, as he was my roommate and was instrumental in my settling down in Canada. However, outside the room, things were different, as people often wondered about the mode on how to interact with a disabled person. I got mixed reactions from people. Amongst the reactions I got, a depressive fact was the avoidance people often showed to me at the beginning of my studies in Canada. This often took the method of people taking a different route so they do not come close to me, remaining quiet when it was clear that I was actually talking to them, and a host of other minor actions of discrimination. Although, it is not clear if this was because of my race or disability, but it could be a combination of me being a noticeable young black blind man. To Eisenman et al. (2020), such actions are in fact manifestations of micro-aggression and could be influenced by a host of factors which could impact negatively on the psychology of the student. According to Eisenman et al. (2020), “students who are members

of minoritized groups may have more negative perceptions of campus climate because dominant campus environments, systems, and people can explicitly and implicitly perpetuate racism, ableism and other discrimination patterns” (p. 2).

In some cases, the people I met wanted me to be what they have always thought about people with disabilities, which is dirty, socially awkward, and financially broke. This was a common attitude among young white Canadians, especially males. I also experience such attitude from international students that had rich appearance or were indeed very wealthy. This I discovered was a motivating factor for some people to interact with me as a disabled person. Thus, I had to manage the situation. Although I survived on 20 to 35 dollars a week during a large section of the entire duration of my program, I knew it was not right to appear poor and go cap in hand begging everyone for money. On the other hand, I learnt at a very young age that your dressing goes a long way in defining how you might be addressed by others. In my experience as a disabled person, I have noticed that when you are smartly dressed, people warm up to you more easily, regardless of your race or nationality. To this end, I often wore my best clothes in my everyday life and tried to keep them neat. Concerning my dressing, I knew I was not loud, but again young Canadians who were white and male were not comfortable with a black blind man being able to make himself look good on a number of occasions. This got me into cultural and personal hostility, whereby the people tried to talk me down and make me feel that I was from “the bush.” I recall a day when, a white guy had agreed to assist me to a destination I needed to visit. On that day, I decided to be smartly dressed, just to feel good about myself. But the moment I stepped outside, I noticed a clash with him. I was rudely addressed throughout the journey and as such, I had to reconsider my relationship with him afterwards.

In a different type of interaction I had with people, the acceptance was great but took the mode of a disabled person who needs help. This is because the way I got into interacting with a lot of people was through the words, “Do you need help?” This often occurred in situations whereby I got lost while trying to make my way to the bus station at the University of Manitoba. Consequently, the interaction with people I met was always based on things like “whenever you need help, don’t think twice before calling,” “I am always here to help,” “anytime.” While this itself is great, it leaves the question of disability under the probability that you always need help. I remember when I had to walk home one day. The guy close to me took my hand and wanted to take me across the street. This is when I did not need to go across the road, as my apartment was very close by. However, things do not always end that way, as I remember when an eighty-five-year-old woman helped me cross the intersection and when I said thank you, she said to me, “I hope you return the favor one day.”

Indeed, it appears to me that women are more socially aware in terms of disability issues and interactive procedures. I even noticed this in class discussions and programs within the University of Manitoba. For instance, when I needed help from libraries and other school facilities, it looked to me like the guys dreaded talking with a disabled person, while the members of staff that were females took a more disability aware intonation. However, I need to point out here that there is a big difference when a guy is present in the interactive process with people at the university community. Consequently, this is even noticeable when a guy, especially of European descent, is not the partner of the female in a place, there is always the cultural tendency for her to take the back seat while the guy does the interaction. This was a common occurrence when I was living at the student residence on campus, wherein the female workers in the building would prefer to leave the male staff to answer my inquiries, even when I felt they

had a better understanding of the situation. To Wicks & Bradshaw (1997), the behaviour of women to be less self-assured in Canadian workplace environments is often caused by cultural values based on established authority, which leans towards the pre-eminence of masculinity. In referring to the workplace environment, they explain that “current cultures are perceived to reward men and women differently in terms of the values shown in their behavior, contributing to a discriminatory climate that makes many women feel unwelcome and uncomfortable” (p. 372). Hence, creating the tendency for a gender relaxed role for women in situations where a male is present.

6.6 Socio-Economic Status as a Determinant for Integration

Generally, the socio-economic status of an individual in North America is closely related to the health level and peer composition among youths (Fletcher et al., 2013; Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010). However, this creates a social barrier for disabled people as they often fall within a low-income status in the labor scale. Consequently, disabled people are more likely to be without a source of income than their peers of the same educational level or labor experience. Hence, affecting the level of social stability, food security and financial capacity in the lives of disabled people. In most cases, this makes disabled people vulnerable to abuse and discrimination among their peers (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010).

The first thing I noticed in the social environment was that your job came first in any interaction and where a person worked was important. To this end, when you interact with people, you hear things like: “How is it going,” “I am so tired, my manager asked me to work 12 hours yesterday and I had assignment to do,” “Good for you, man. I have been working 12 hours once a week for a long time now.” On the surface this would look like a discussion that is without any dynamics. However, the main story to this is that your job defines your importance

for interacting and social value. It was at this time that interacting with people was somewhat difficult for me, as I was without a job for almost the duration of my program.

I could not make friends as I was not in the social class. Consequently, even friends that were okay at the beginning acted differently when they discovered that I was without a job. I recall a situation in a gathering I often attended around the university. A guy in that place saw me as a friend, but the moment I told him I did not have a job, he stopped interacting with me. Unfortunately, I understand that it is very difficult for disabled people to get jobs in Canada. This was a major issue for me, as employers felt that due to my disability, I would not be a good fit for their organization. I remember how after an interview, the person told me that I was her best candidate, but she was not sure if they would be able to offer me the job due to accessibility issues. To this end, I was unable to secure a job for a long time and when I eventually did, it was difficult to manage my education and duties as an employee.

In this regard, I lived at the edge of the social environment in Winnipeg. While this is a fact, it means that I could not interact with a lot of people, especially individuals of European descent. This is because a lot of people expect international students to be very wealthy, so when you are not, then you are the wrong buddy. For instance, when I told someone that I stay at downtown Winnipeg, it meant that I was not worth talking to. I was a waste of time for further interaction. Indeed, I have faced a lot of socio-economic difficulties as a disabled student in Canada that I consider it wise to keep to myself. On the other hand, it is important to interact with people in the environment, so as to avoid the problem of being isolated. Hence, my socio-economic status is a tricky situation for me in the process of navigating the environment as a disabled student in Manitoba. Consequently, I have recognized that being isolated keeps me

away from possible help and necessary contact with other individuals, especially during COVID-19.

6.7 Finding My Place at Participatory Events

While most universities have advocated for diversification and inclusion, the system in most campuses is still largely set up to promote ableism and the white race as the dominant group. It is very likely for the racial and disability status of an individual to define their experience in universities across North America. This creates a threat perception among minority students as they are likely to face racial discrimination and/or ableism in the case of disabled individuals (Eisenman et al., 2020). Subsequently, the experience of ableism among disabled students could occur regardless of the racial background. The student finds it difficult to be part of the community, as most campus environments still struggle to include disabled people in the day-to-day affairs of the university. This is made worse in situations where the student is of a racial minority and disabled at the same time (Baker, 2019).

In my situation at the University of Manitoba, I will start by saying that the professors were very helpful and made it possible for me to participate in class activities. The professors were very fair in managing racial and disability issues in class. In my home department, the professor did ensure that everybody had equal opportunity to participate in class activities. This was also my experience in other departments. For instance, I remember a professor in the Faculty of Law who made everyone in class re-introduce themselves just for me to take note of them and their voices as I did not attend the previous class.

However, it was difficult to interact with a lot of students, in my case as a young black blind man. First, racial differences were a major issue in how people could participate in social and academic activities. In class discussions, it was clear to me that individuals of European

descent felt entitled to dominate proceedings and have the most heard views. This was evident to me in a lot of classes I took outside my department. For instance, when I tried to contribute to class discussions, the students acted like they were tolerating me, by displaying noticeable signs of impatience to speak. On the other hand, I noticed that this did not occur, when a white student was speaking.

In another situation, I recall an event whereby I was snubbed by a couple of white students prior to the start of a class in early January 2020. It was an evening class and people were talking about an international event that just happened few hours ago. At the time I was getting live news from the BBC and felt I had something to contribute to the discussion. However, when I decided to join the discussion, the entire class became silent, and the topic was stylishly changed. Unfortunately, this was a pattern in several areas prior to the pandemic in 2020. For instance, during the orientation for students in 2019, I was ignored and treated like a visitor to the program. This is as I was promised that the process would be inclusive and interactive for everyone. However, when I tried interacting like I was a regular member of the orientation, I was heavily snubbed by the students that sat close to me. On the other hand, the facilitator of the program did not make any effort to integrate me into the activities and games of the orientation. Perhaps the facilitator believed it was the duty of the accessibility unit of the university, to ensure the integration of disabled students in school activities.

Indeed, a lot of programs and activities at the university always referred me back to the accessibility team for any form of integration to be achieved. For instance, when I decided to participate in the gym, the members of staff kicked against this and informed me that the accessibility team had to send someone to provide support around the facility. This was as I informed them that I only needed the assistance of someone who was aware of the machines and

could provide important help when it was necessary. Consequently, the people at the gym informed the accessibility unit that I can only come to the facility when they have someone to take me around. To this end, my academic attendant, which the accessibility in their kindness provided their services for assistance in my schoolwork, was advised to carry out this task. Nevertheless, I knew this was not going to work as I had limited time per week with the academic attendant and the gym required a lot of hours. To this end, I had a truce with the management of the facility that, if we (me and the members of staff at the gym) tried without the assistance of my academic attendant for a while and it was not working, then I would look for other ways. Fortunately, it was a success, and gradually members of staff at the gym became the only social support I got prior to the pandemic in 2020.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the arrival of the researcher to Canada and provides a narration of events in navigating the environment in what was supposed to be socially inclusive for disabled people. The lack of inclusion or the researcher's perception of discrimination towards disabled people began with the visa application process. The researcher understood from the process that the Canadian Immigration and Citizenship Canada engaged in extra medical scrutiny due to the presence of a disability. This extra scrutiny seemingly continued at the airport as the border agent acted shocked to hear that a course was called Disability Studies and the duration was 2 years.

Anyways, the researcher was granted entry into Canada and life as a student began at the University of Manitoba. However, navigating the environment was filled with a lot of challenges, which had to do with lack of accessible space, socio-cultural barriers and racist behaviour. The researcher speaks on how sidewalks were not accessible and how it affected

mobility. This lack of accessible space was also noticeable in buildings, as it was difficult to navigate places like the University Center and the library.

The researcher also narrates how socio-cultural barriers and racist behaviour affected the possibility of inclusion in the environment. First, a section of students, especially white Canadians, did not exactly warm up to a black blind boy for social interaction. In the same vein, the researcher explains that white males did not seemingly appreciate a smartly dressed disabled person who displays confidence.

Lastly, the chapter discusses how the participation of the researcher in several events and class activities was at the receiving end of perceived racism and the display of unwillingness on the part of some university staff to ensure a process of inclusion.

In the final analysis, while indeed Canada is a global leader in inclusive measures and diversification, in reality, the country is a society of peoples, and amongst them, the presence of socio-cultural challenges. It is difficult to separate humanity from personal biases in interactions and social behaviour. To this end, social inclusion becomes a matter of personal tolerance, wherein humans learn to accommodate the preference, abilities, cultural and racial background of individuals in general.

It is on this note that we can speak of the need for more education on diversity and inclusion in universities to promote a society based on tolerance. For instance, this could take the promotion of disability issues in academia, which will do a lot to eradicate myths about disabled people and educate members of the campus community on the effects of ableism.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DATA ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATION

7.1 Introduction

Based on the ideas and philosophical frameworks like socio-cultural barriers and ableism explored in this work, the feminist disability notion can be introduced as a way of appraising the procedure within the scope of social inclusion. The notion of feminist disability reflects on the multiplicity of issues and intersections that could be unraveled in analyzing matters affecting disabled people within the theoretical framework of social inclusion (Thomson, 2002). Although the feminist disability notion is an offspring of the feminist theory in general, it recreates the concept by dwelling on issues that are rather shunned in mainstream analysis. This includes areas impacting the lives of persons with disabilities like race, class, bodies, acceptance and ableism, as well as other intersecting factors in human and gender relations (Goethals et al., 2015). Knoll (2012) provides a concise view on the concept by stating that “feminist Disability Studies engages with theories that may be contradictory and incomplete. This process has the potential to reveal power, privilege, and oppression, and therefore, it can provide opportunities for liberation” (p. 1). Thus, its relation to this work lies in the ability to affirm that several issues could affect the social inclusion of disabled students in the environment. In this work, the idea of social inclusion at the University of Manitoba is discussed using the narrative of an international graduate disabled student in the academy. Several issues like race, socio-economic status, ableism and social definition of disability are highlighted in the narrative. The narrative in the work would be instrumental in discussing the findings of the research objectives. Consequently, there is a main research objective and secondary objectives that will be explored in further detail.

7.2 Main research Objective

Self-reflection on the inclusion of disabled students in the environment of the University of Manitoba.

According to Simplican et al. (2015), “we define social inclusion as the interaction between two major life domains: interpersonal relationships and community participation. We then propose an ecological model of social inclusion that includes individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and socio-political factors” (p. 18). This definition takes into consideration the idea that while the interpersonal level of interaction is important, the ecological or environmental component helps to bridge the existing gap in society for persons with disabilities. It is on account of this that we can analyze the level of social inclusion and the environment at the University of Manitoba.

Indeed, the University of Manitoba is very much aware of this fact, as on their Accessibility webpage they state:

At the University of Manitoba, we strive for an inclusive, welcoming environment that supports all abilities. The University wishes to promote and support a community that embraces accessibility, diversity and inclusion, provides for equality of opportunity, and recognizes the dignity of all people. (University of Manitoba Accessibility, n.d., para. 2)

While this is a fact about the accessibility unit of the University of Manitoba, it is rather difficult to recognize this in other areas of the campus. The self-reflection in this study, shows that a lot of units and departments within the university, probably think all issues of disability should be handled by the accessibility unit or are not basically interested in doing so. This shows a flaw in the socio-cultural awareness of disability at the University of Manitoba. The researcher

experienced situations where members of staff often avoided dealing with disability issues as the easy way out for them was always to redirect the matter to the accessibility team.

The downside to this is that the accessibility team cannot be everywhere and would not have the manpower to take up such task in every section of the university. Thus, the lack of socio-cultural awareness on disability issues and flawed communication process in the university between the general staff and the accessibility team creates physical and socio-cultural barriers for disabled students. These barriers could reflect the lack of willingness by a lot of people to promote or even accept participation of disabled people. It is on this note that this work in chapter one refers to Michalski et al. (2017) who state that universities and colleges in providing a welcoming environment, must ensure support services in all areas of the institution.

In addition, issues in ensuring a welcoming environment could be as a result of lack of proper physical planning or in some cases, negligence by staff. For instance, in the University Center Building of the University, the researcher noticed the structure looks outdated and inaccessible to persons with disabilities. The researcher found it very difficult to navigate the building alone, even after mobility lessons. In a similar line, the researcher discovered that some sections of the sidewalk system were not good enough for navigating with the white cane, especially places where reconstruction procedures were not done properly. As a result, the researcher found navigation from the residence to the University Center quite difficult.

Regarding another issue about the environment, the construction within the university occurs without alternative routes for disabled students. The important point to note here is that when construction is taking place, the route familiar to a disabled student might be blocked off, creating a danger of not being able to proceed to their destination. This affected the navigation of

the researcher, especially while heading for classes from what was supposed to be the Agriculture Bus Stop area of the University of Manitoba.

7.3 Objective (a)

Examine if there is a noticeable presence of attitudinal challenges towards disabled people in interacting with students and members of staff at the University of Manitoba.

According to the President of the University of Manitoba, the school is committed to increasing student, staff, faculty, and leadership diversity, especially with respect to the inclusion of women, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, and racialized minorities. The university recognizes the importance of creating an inclusive campus for all (University of Manitoba Strategic Plan, 2015-2020, n.d.).

It is difficult to measure the level of inclusion on a campus. However, one factor that can make a campus inclusive is the level of interaction that can be found among diverse groups. This fosters a sense of an inclusive academic community and cultural diversity.

The researcher noticed that there is a level of cultural gap between students of European descent and other minority groups. In the same vein, the researcher gathered that the system does not pay much attention to disabled people. This affects the integration and representation of disabled people within the social and academic community. For instance, the researcher, while in the process of writing this report, carried out a review of the university Graduate Communications weekly email between October 2021 and January 2022, wherein it shows that the level of reference to disability is extremely non-existent. This is as we are in the time of COVID-19 and a lot of students might not be aware that we have disabled students on campus and how they might connect with them.

Indeed, awareness concerning disabled students on campus is rather limited and as such, creates room for members of the campus community to be surprised when disability is mentioned. For instance, in interacting with people at the University, the researcher noticed that several individuals do not expect you to be disabled and be enrolled on campus. According to the researcher “this is especially when they discover that my course is a department called Disability Studies”.

This points to the emphasis on socio-cultural integration of persons with disabilities is at best low and in truth, rather unrecognizable on campus. Perhaps it is in line of improving this situation that the President’s Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (2020) refers to – the need for all members of the university of Manitoba to fully participate without barriers, including persons with disabilities. However, in the report, the flaw of relying on the accessibility team is very much present, when matters of disabilities should be in the socio-cultural representation of disabled people and not basic technological or accommodation support.

7.4 Objective (b)

Critically Reflect on the Social Environment of the University of Manitoba, for Indications of Barriers in the Participation of Disabled Students in Activities.

Professors at the University of Manitoba encouraged diverse participation and ensured that members of their classes all felt okay to air their opinion. This provided a great experience for the researcher and provided a comfortable environment for academic interaction. However, the researcher notes that, the student population was not all welcoming this due to ignorance on ways to interact with disabled people and some level of racism on the part of some people. For instance, the researcher noticed in certain classes, especially those dominated by students of European descent, that people acted impatiently for the researcher to air his view. The researcher

is of the opinion that this high level of ignorance and lack of tolerance starts with the Graduate Student Association, as matters of disability are not represented in their monthly communication and call for student participation. This is a major problem as it does not encourage disabled people to participate in the programs of the University of Manitoba's Graduate Student Association.

Apparently, this lack of inclusion in the participation of disabled students, might be a result of flaws in the overall system, as it is also lacking in several areas including the International Center activities and social programs by the university. Perhaps this might be as a result of the fact that the school is still at the point of deciding how to ensure that all areas are responsive to the idea of an inclusive framework in the university. Consequently, the researcher is of the opinion that, due to the lack of existence of an inclusive framework, COVID-19 has made participating in the affairs of the university more difficult for disabled people.

Indeed, since the outbreak of COVID-19, the participation of disabled students in the affairs of the university has been extremely limited. This is because the school has not created a structured platform for an accessible integration of disabled students. Although virtual platforms are in place in the university, disabled students like the researcher lack an accessible design for participation. This is largely related to the fact that online facilitators might not have the means and skills of integrating disabled students in chats and discussions. Hence, leaving disabled students isolated in the virtual platforms.

In the same vein, with COVID-19 and the transformation to virtual procedures, the level of interaction disabled students can have with their non-disabled colleagues and members of staff has been practically reduced. For instance, the researcher notes how difficult it is to connect with

a lot of students and staff at the fitness center which was a form of social support prior to the pandemic.

7.5 Intersectionality and Understanding the researcher's experience at the University of Manitoba

It is no exaggeration to state that the researcher faced a lot of intersecting factors that defined the experience as a disabled graduate student at the University of Manitoba. These factors, like the researcher's race as a black man, a young blind individual, migration profile as an international student from Nigeria in Canada, low socio-economic status, as well as being single and unattached, while in themselves appear to be separate from one another, their contribution to determining the overall experience within the system and structure of the university environment and beyond places emphases on the phenomenon of intersectionality. According to Hankivsky et al. (2014),

intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., 'race'/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion). These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power. (p. 1)

In the same vein, Atewologun (2020) explains that "A predominant focus in this field is on individual subjectivities at intersectional locations (such as examining the occupational identities of minority ethnic women)" (p. 1). In other words, intersectionality provides a framework for analysing impacting social locations that define, shape, constrain and build the character and personality make up of an individual, all with a view to understand how the undercurrents for empowerment can be found within structures and the experiences of persons or groups.

On this note, one can present a framework of issues that defined the researchers experience in Canada. First, the introduction of the researcher to the environment in Canada, was as an international student from Nigeria, which perhaps did not allow for a lot of possibilities to explore the beauty and benefits of the Canadian society. This was noticeable right from the Winnipeg Airport, where the researcher was advised that he was ill-prepared for the winter. While the researcher was happy to experience the snow, the winter jacket that was acquired from Nigeria was not proper for the Canadian weather. Consequently, the weather impacted the researcher's experience for the first 18 months negatively, as mobility skills for navigating with the white cane was poor and was also affected due to snow on sidewalks and a lot of rain during the spring months as well. As a result, interaction with the Canadian system (job opportunities, visiting public institutions, obtaining identification and/or social registration numbers) was quite difficult as the researcher had to depend on private individuals or persons who worked for the University of Manitoba or places like the Canadian Institute for the Blind (CNIB) in Winnipeg. This meant that the researcher had a slow start to getting settled in Canada, which was not helped by an extremely low or inadequate level of social support network.

Indeed, finding a network of people that could act as a base of social support for the researcher was very difficult. This can be attributed to two major factors, which were the researcher's racial profile as a black man and disabled status as a young blind individual. These factors greatly affected the researcher's experience in an intersecting manner and at the same time, acted separately in a lot of events. On the issue of being a young disabled individual, the researcher wanted to be part of the environment like everybody else. However, limitations in respect to mobility, accessibility and inclusion affected the overall experience and participation within and beyond the campus environment. For instance, it was a regular practice for the

researcher as a male to have a hair cut in Nigeria, which enhanced his level of confidence in appearance and provided comfort as well. However, this could not be done in the first 18 months in Canada, as the researcher could not locate a cheap salon for haircut. The only one that was found charged about thirty dollars for a single haircut, which was very expensive, considering the fact that the researcher had no job and was not from a rich Nigerian family. In the same vein, the researcher's hair is very short, so paying thirty dollars for a single treatment seems somewhat senseless. The main point here is that the researcher was unable to visit locations that charged lower than thirty dollars, as he was either unaware of any or could not go to them, as most that were known to him at the time could only be found at the downtown area. Coupled with struggles in mobility and concerning issues like haircut and other appearance related issues, the researcher did not go out very often, as he probably lacked the confidence to do so. To this end, making friends became an issue; in the pre-pandemic 2019 society, going out was a major key to meeting people and making friends. Consequently, while mobility was a major issue in order for the researcher to get around, gaining access to the social network of various location was quite difficult as well. This was as a result of the fact that the researcher felt he needed friends to visit public social gatherings, so the fact that he did not have anyone that was a regular person made it virtually impossible to leave his room. Even the gym that the researcher felt was necessary was not an easy task to be part of, as the staff there felt he needed an accessibility support person before he could visit the facility. Nevertheless, the researcher was 'politely stubborn' on this occasion and was later accepted as a member that could get help from staff at the gym facility, but knew that in other situations, any refusal to be in line with opinions of a social or public space, could attract security agents. Thus, the researcher did not try to visit other gatherings in a bid to avoid heartaches and disappointments. This was made worse by the fact that the student

union association did not encourage or invite disabled students to be part of the activities of the body. So, the researcher did not expect to get help from them and as such, did not visit the body for any possible orientation or assistance to settling down in Canada. This avoidance of the student union body by the researcher arose from negative experiences with inclusion, like the orientation for students in January 2019 where he was left out from activities in the event. In that event, the researcher was excluded from games and other fun activities, including icebreaker and general interaction. Although, it is not very clear if this was as a result of cultural/racial differences or disability, or a combination of both.

Apparently, the racial profile as a black man also caused the researcher to struggle with belonging in social groups or gatherings that were dominated by other races, especially white people. For instance, when the researcher attended a semi-formal gathering at downtown in December 2019, which was dominated by white people, he was treated as an intruder when he tried to be part of conversations. This lack of belonging did not only manifest outside the school, but also within the campus environment, like in the Arthur V. Mauro residence for instance. During the researcher's stay in the residence, he discovered that whenever he tried talking with people of other races outside the room, especially white people in the lounge area, he was snubbed and gradually they left.

However, this snobbery attitude towards the researcher began to change as confidence in appearance and more ways of discussing with people was adopted. In other words, the researcher started to understand the Canadian society and how to interact with people in it. Although, while this helped in building the confidence of the researcher, it did not particularly transform into a strategic gain of acceptance into any social network or gathering. One reason for this could be as a result of the researcher's low socio-economic status, which made it difficult to visit places like

restaurants or even join in pizza gatherings. The researcher for most of the study did not have a job and was without a stable funding, so feared visiting places for entertainment as he did not have sufficient money to avoid embarrassment of not being able to make payment. For instance, prior to the start of the pandemic in 2020, the researcher only visited the movies twice, with one occasion being as part of a class trip to view a disability related story. To this end, the researcher found it difficult to go out for fun activities and establish any friendship or relationship. This affected the researcher's ability to be attached to any romantic relationship, as on one hand, many African girls felt he was rich and that is why the researcher was not working. Nevertheless, when it was discovered that this was not the case and that in fact getting a job appeared to be very difficult for disabled people, they politely avoided any kind of friendship and rather preferred to keep their distance. On the other hand, Canadians who were not from Africa saw the researcher as 'an African Prince' and wanted him to maintain the status. Unfortunately for their belief, the researcher is not 'an African Prince' and as such, he could not pretend to be one. In the same vein, the researcher did not have the money to attend events for entertainment like movies or musical concerts. The researcher encountered a situation wherein a girl raised the topic of going for a concert, but the researcher stylishly avoided it because he did not have spare money for entertainment. To this end, the researcher remained an unattached single man, which however caused a lot of people to ask why. This was a common occurrence when the researcher went for grocery shopping, wherein people felt that he should had been assisted by his girlfriend or partner. In a similar occurrence, the researcher, while dressed for a job interview, inquired from a taxi driver if he was looking good and the man while providing an affirmative answer, simply asked, "Why are you asking me? Where is your girlfriend?"

In any case, it can be understood that the level of intersectionality and social locations connected to the researcher's stay in Canada did not allow for much interaction with the environment and as such, did not make a lot of social gains. This left the researcher to fight with loneliness throughout the duration of the study and as such, had to look for ways of encouragement and empowerment. However, this was not to be found in the environment, as things moved from bad to worse with the outbreak of the pandemic.

The only encouragement and empowerment that was available to the researcher was reading academic books, novels, romantic stories and other forms of literature. The benefit to this is that it has helped the researcher to build up a great writing style, which is beneficial to completing tasks and expressing ideas. Indeed, the researcher is of the opinion that a proper writing style that is clear and filled with original ideas is a form of empowerment that creates opportunities to be part of the society and connect with other people.

7.6 Implication of Key Findings

While this thesis highlights a lot of issues pointing to a less inclusive environment in the academy, it is critical to understand how they might impact disabled students as part of a disparate group of minorities within the environment in Canadian universities. Gautreaux (2018) explains that the impact of a less inclusive environment in the academy cannot be ruled out from the experience of Canadian students from minority groups including persons with disabilities.

The author sums up this point by saying:

Although the student bodies at Canadian universities have become increasingly more diverse, there still remain significant barriers to access, meaningful participation, academic success, and achieving an overall sense of well-being and belonging for many students, especially those from historically marginalized and underserved communities,

including Indigenous and First Nations students, racialized students, queer and trans students, students from low-income families, students with immigrant status, students with disabilities, first-generation students, and students living in rural areas. (Gautreaux, 2018, p. 3)

Apparently, the implication of a less inclusive environment for disabled student as part of the minority within Canadian universities are numerous (Bruce & Aylward, 2021; Roberts, 2019).

Aubrecht & La Monica (2017) in a cross-ethnographic study, affirm that this is because the existence of a less inclusive environment produces a situation where disabled students are forced to confront situations that affect their academic, social, emotional and physical wellbeing. According to one of the authors, “I don’t want to continue feeling ashamed of my disabled identity. I’m not. But I am tired of fighting ableist structures of the academy... and having the extra work of proving my academic merit to others” (p. 10).

The concept of ableist structures of the academy in the above literature implies a presence of disabling factors that can impact the experience of disabled students. It is on this note that this research has identified major disabling factors from an autoethnographic narrative by the researcher, while navigating the environment of the academy. The research identifies issues like lack of accessible environments for disabled people in the physical space, socio-cultural barriers, communication failures between the accessibility team and the entire members of staff at the University of Manitoba, as well as racism from the perspective of an international student from Nigeria.

The status of the researcher as an international disabled student helps to highlight the diversification of individuals on Canadian campuses, which has been predicted to continue to grow (Gautreaux, 2018; Tamtik & Guenter, 2019). However, challenges encountered in relation

to the level of inclusion in the environment of the university implies that international students with disabilities in Canada are likely to encounter some difficulties while navigating the environment of universities.

This creates a new framework for understanding the concept and trend of equity and diversification within the Canadian context. The researcher discusses how racism or racist behaviour by some students can impact a functional framework of equity and diversification. However, it is unclear to determine the level of impact racism or racist behaviour can have on the experience of international students with disabilities. However, in an academy whereby the framework of equity and diversification is well structured for the inclusion of everyone, perhaps disabled students can face less challenges in the environment. Wolbring & Lillywhite (2021) succinctly define this:

Equity, diversity and inclusion (from now on both called EDI) are used as phrases by universities in many countries to highlight ongoing efforts to rectify the problems that are linked to EDI of students, non-academic staff, and academic staff, whereby the focus broadened from gender to include other underrepresented groups, including disabled students, disabled non-academic staff, and disabled academic staff. How EDI efforts are operationalized impacts the success and utility of EDI efforts... and impacts the social situation of disabled people in general. (p. 1)

To this end, it can be affirmed that the lack of clear equity and diversification strategies can affect the inclusion of disabled students in the environment. This is especially when the socio-cultural representation of disabled students are quite vague or critically lacking in the academy. For instance, the researcher in this study, describes how individuals within the University of Manitoba promoted socio-cultural attitudinal barriers concerning issues relating to

disability. To the researcher, a possible factor for this was as a result of the under representation of disabled students at the University of Manitoba. The researcher buttresses this point by affirming that email communications hardly discussed or highlighted issues relating to disability in the academy.

This under-representation of disabled people in the academy, promotes a less-inclusive environment and negatively impacts the participation of persons with disabilities on Canadian campuses. According to Hill (1992):

The reasons for the under-representation of students with disabling conditions at Canadian universities have not been determined; however, in order for a student with special needs to pursue successfully a program of higher education, two basic obstacles must be overcome: (a) specialized services must be provided in order to maximize the student's ability to participate fully in the chosen course of studies, and (b) the campus must be physically accessible (i.e., the grounds and buildings must be barrier-free). (p. 49)

Apparently, the above remark implies that the researcher in this study is limited by under-representation as a disabled person within the environment of the University of Manitoba. First, the fact that the researcher felt that opportunities for participation were very low, implies that the framework for inclusion and diversity at the University of Manitoba requires fundamental design on disability issues. The researcher notices that members of the university community had a poor channel of communication with the accessibility team and over-relied on them for all matters relating to persons with disabilities. This makes issues of accommodation quite tricky for disabled students, as poor channels of communication provide situations where the individual is left to coordinate the process alone. Svendby (2021) echoes this by stating that “disabled

students in Norway often end up coordinating their own accommodations. One of the reasons is lack of knowledge and communication between the Disability Office and other staff” (p. 637). Similarly, the researcher encountered several issues with the physical environment at the University of Manitoba. The overall implication for this is that barriers in the physical space of the campus environment isolate disabled students and prevent their visibility in the academic community. It is on this note that this work in chapter six discusses the issue of loneliness and social isolation caused by mobility barriers in the physical environment. This issue of loneliness and social isolation among other things like attitudinal barriers based on ableism and racism in the case of the researcher, creates emotional distress for disabled students in the academic environment. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 outbreak in early 2020 and the transition to online platforms as a response to managing the pandemic, has perhaps made the issue of isolation more challenging for disabled people.

7.6 Covid-19 and the changing dynamics in the academic environment for disabled students

In early 2020, top news stations like the CNN and BBC filled the airways with the story about a new respiratory pandemic first called Corona-virus and later Covid-19. It was pointed out that the World Health Organization (WHO) was trying to ascertain its origin and behaviour, and provided prescribed prevention methods like washing of hands regularly and social distancing in public places (Kelly, 2020; Regan et al., 2020). The researcher recall how the topic of a global virus was a major discussion everywhere he visited at the time, including the University of Manitoba and other public institutions like the CNIB in Winnipeg. At this time, everyone acted and talked like a scientist, as they expressed their views on the pattern of the virus. Consequently, the general view and opinion from the scientific community was not

encouraging in terms of the behaviour and pattern of the outbreak. Shereen et al. (2020) highlight a significant view: “The coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)” (p. 91). In the same vein, describing it as a pneumonia, Zhou et al. (2020) appear to be in no doubt about the infectious and deadly nature of the disease by explaining that “The epidemic, which started on 12 December 2019, had caused 2,794 laboratory-confirmed infections including 80 deaths by 26 January 2020” (p. 270). As a result of the pattern of the pandemic, cultures and known ways of living were altered by policies of nations as they tried to cope with Covid-19. As highlighted by Hiscott et al. (2020), “The coronavirus pandemic has engulfed the nations of the world for the first five months of 2020 and altered the pace, fabric and nature of our lives” (p. 1).

In response to the virus, governmental policies throughout the world adopted a similar response by closing major sectors of the society in what Altavilla et al. (2020) describe as “the great lockdown” while explaining that “the worldwide spread of the coronavirus and the associated containment measures launched during the first half of 2020 led to a shutdown in many economic activities, including part of the banking sector” (p. 1). This closure of major sectors like education sector/universities for instance felt like a global holiday for the researcher at the beginning, as it gave me the opportunity to take my mind off all major activities for a while. At this time, the researcher did not have to go for classes, because the school took a while to organize the process of online meetings. Consequently, for the first time in two years, the researcher had the opportunity to view a movie in his room without being bothered about doing something else with his time. In fact, the researcher holds the view that it will not be wrong to state here that the world at the time was at a standstill. However, in response to the great

lockdown, major sectors and institutions began to conduct activities online, which was also adopted by the University of Manitoba as everyone was advised to learn from home.

This process of conducting activities online through virtual video conferencing, became known as the “new-normal” and was to characterize major events from 2020 onward. According to Corpuz (2021), “A year after COVID-19 pandemic has emerged, we have suddenly been forced to adapt to the ‘new normal’: work-from-home setting...” (p. 344). However, as a disabled person who is blind, the researcher would say that adapting to the new normal has been very challenging for him. Consequently, the researcher thinks the new normal has been challenging for a lot of disabled people, as Phillip et al. (2020) state, “Several months into the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been quite clear that the pandemic and the systemic responses it has forced – including the initial lockdown, the world’s largest on human movements... have compounded the challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities (PWD)” (p. 46). In the situation of the researcher, the challenges located in online facilities have presented me with accessibility difficulties and as such, affected my ability to join meetings and complete work or learning related activities on various virtual platforms. For instance, it was very difficult for the researcher to join Zoom activities, because he has struggled to access it with his screen reader. To this end, if the researcher has nobody to assist with the technical process (which is often the case) then he might not be part of that meeting or discussion. The researcher recalls a situation in early 2020, wherein he had to leave his home in search for someone to connect to an evening class via zoom, but the place he got help was filled with noise and he had to cope with it throughout the duration of the lecture. Suffice to state here that the sudden nature of the transfer to online activities changed the dynamics for disabled people like the researcher who has struggled with the learning process for understanding online virtual platforms and the steps for accessible connections. In a study

conducted by Gin et al. (2021), an assessment on the transition to online platforms and the impact on disabled people is identified by explaining that

The COVID-19 pandemic caused nearly all colleges and universities to transition in-person courses to an online format. In this study, we explored how the rapid transition to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic affected students with disabilities.... we identified that students were unable to access previously established accommodations, such as reduced-distraction testing and note-takers. We also found that the online learning environment presented novel challenges for students with disabilities. (p. 1)

In a nutshell, the transition from in person activities to online platforms has caused a lot of challenges for persons with disability to successfully participate in events in virtual environments. In my opinion, this raises the question of further under-representation and marginalization of disabled people in universities, as participation is key to being recognized within and beyond the academic community. According to Mullins & Mitchell (2021),

Following the World Health Organization's announcement of the global pandemic because of the Coronavirus Disease 2019, most Canadian universities transitioned to offering their courses exclusively online. One group affected by this transition was students with disabilities... However, their unique needs are often not taken into consideration. As a result, students can become marginalized and alienated from the online classroom. (p. 13)

Indeed, the transition from in person to online class activities prevented the researcher from full participation, as he has been unable to master the functions of the platforms like raising of hand, muting or unmuting himself, and other related functions. Consequently, the issue of transition to online activities, also affects the participation of disabled students in the general academic

community. For instance, when the University of Manitoba Active Living Centre/fitness and gymnastics reopened online, the researcher could not participate because there was no indication that they had a way of integrating persons with disabilities in their proceedings. To this end, it can be argued that the gradual transition to a new normal could present a lot of disabled people with challenges, both within the classroom and the campus environment in general. Thus, the changing dynamics of a new normal needs improved access and planning of platforms to properly accommodate disabled people.

In addition, the use of online platforms has in many ways limited the opportunities for disabled people to socialize or interact with people outside their regular domain or homes. This has potentially increased the level of loneliness and isolation for disabled people as a result of not being able to go out regularly due to the restrictions introduced in the Covid-19 era. According to Shafiq et al. (2020), “Social isolation and loneliness are serious health concerns for adults with disabilities. COVID-19 has magnified the problem” (p. 1). In the situation of the researcher, going to school was very interesting as it gave me the opportunity to interact with people and make new friends if possible. For the researcher, meeting people outside the house just had a way of improving his mood, but with the ‘less-contact environment’ due to Covid-19, interacting with people has become a rare occurrence. In the same vein, it has become very difficult to access simple assistance, like someone helping to read a letter or piece of paper for the researcher. For instance, prior to the Covid-19, the researcher usually took his letters to the management of his building to help read them out to him, but with the introduction of a ‘less-contact environment’ with people, he has struggled with this. Hence, it will not be out of point to state that Covid-19 has increased the challenges faced as a disabled person, not just with the virus itself, but as a result of the environmental and social changes in the community.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter highlights a plethora of issues that affected the researcher and disabled student at the University of Manitoba. In my opinion, the existence of the various issues discussed in the chapter creates an environment that lacks inclusion for disabled students in the academy. However, with the framework of equity and diversity as a major trend for inclusion, I am hopeful that the academy would be more inclusive for disabled students soon. But the process of developing an inclusive framework must include disabled people to arrive at a comprehensive procedure for social inclusion in online platforms and the general community.

CHAPTER EIGHT: PERSONAL OPINION ON INCLUSION, ALTERNATIVE THEORY AND AREAS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

8.1 Introduction

Earlier in this work, I discussed the Igbo conceptual framework of the world as a marketplace. I am applying this to conceptualize my pursuit of education within the academy. I believe the academy could be considered as a marketplace for purchasing scholarly learning and gaining possible increase in social awareness. This procedure from my experience, is done by learning from a knowledgeable individual or individuals, who often bear the title of professor.

The professor is there to exchange acquired knowledge and experience, while the student is in practical truth, a buyer. It therefore means that, without a party involved, the meaning of the university as it currently exists might not be able to take place. Consequently, the student as a buyer of knowledge meets other prospective buyers who collectively form the student body. On the other hand, the professor as an academic body is the main holder of knowledge, and students are in the university to shop for important knowledge in life. Although this idea is open to discussions and could be dismissed, this is my opinion for understanding my role in this research.

8.2 Explaining the Perspective of the World as a Marketplace and the Inclusion of Disabled People

Unlike most children in my community, it was a common occurrence for me to regularly visit the market after school. While the special school I attended as a child with disability did not offer me the best academic experience, the process of going to school and returning home every day was quite stressful for my parents. This was due to the fact that the only special school in the

city was some distance away from where I lived, and no system of transportation existed to convey pupils to and from school. But luckily the school was close to my mom's office at the time. So, she would take me to school in the morning and my dad would usually pick me up later in the day. However, it was sometimes difficult for my dad to make the school trip to get me from that part of the city. So, on such days, the school trip was done by my mom, who would take me to her office, where I would stay with her until she closed for the day.

Anyways, after the office she had an enterprise in the outskirts of the market square, and she would go there to check what her sales agent had done for the day. While they discussed sales and talked about things in general, I would wonder off and see things around the market. This was before I became totally blind, so I was able to move around in an environment that would rather present great accessibility challenges to me now. The experience was very educating as the environment was different from what I saw in my neighborhood.

In the market I was what you would consider as a lone child, as I had no friend there and such situations could lead to kidnap, but this did not stop me from wondering around. In my sessions of wondering around, I discovered various facts. First, traders did not trade on the same goods and services. Though you could have a section of foodstuff for instance, the traders might specialize in different farm produce. Consequently, I also recognized that various stores were not furnished the same way. Some stores displayed affluence and achievement, some showed an average venture, while others represented a collection of struggling masses. In the same vein, some individuals were very prominent in the market, while some had nothing to even sell and just wandered about, interacting with different people. I also took note of disabled persons who were often limited in their abilities to trade, but still came to offer their services every day and did jobs like basket weaving and shoe mending. Consequently, the inability of disabled people

was not directly as a result of their disability, but due to the inaccessibility of the environment and market system.

To this end, the saying by the Igbos that the world is a marketplace, or we are in this life to trade, 'Uwa bu ahia,' might be largely true, but the participation of disabled people in that structure is another story. In a bid to understand the conceptual framework of the word as a market and the participation of humans within it, it is important to have a working definition of the structure. Unfortunately, it is difficult to provide a globally accepted and encompassing definition of the market. This is because of the ever-evolving nature of the concept and the eclectic forms available in the global domain (Karppinen & Hallvard, 2014). To this end, a loose but somewhat inclusive definition of the market would be helpful in presenting an analytic framework for this work. The market herein after, would be considered according to the perspective of Farrell & Shapiro (2010) who discuss the concept as a social structure that allows the act of exchange.

In this way, the market can be seen as a place where people can interact, exchange ideas and favours, provide goods and services, as well as pursue learning through apprentice programs. In the Igbo culture, the market holds a position of centrality in everyday life. It could be for this reason that the days of the week amongst the Igbos are named according to the market days: Eke, Orie, Afo and Nkwo. It is to the market that every individual takes what they have with the aim to exchange it for what they might need. To this end, those with more resources or with greater strength in life are in the position of taking more things home, since they have a stronger negotiating power (Agozino & Anyanike, 2007). However, this should not lead to arrogance and oppression by such individuals, as it could lead to their downfall. To this end, Otakpor (1996) points out,

“*uwa bu afia*, is a reminder that the world is not a permanent place of abode just as a market is not. It draws attention to the fact that the only permanent phenomenon is temporality. It is a warning against the mindless monuments which we erect because of insensitivity to our otherness.” (p 530)

To the Igbos, the world is open to the interaction between humans and spirits, and it is possible to offend them with such attitude (Mbabuike, 1996). It is on this note that Achebe (1958) in a fictional narrative, tells the story of a powerful wrestler who defeats a lot of people on earth and decides to go into the spirit world for a greater challenge. On getting there, he defeats a lot of spirits as well. The wrestler is commended for the great fighting skills showcased but is told to end the fight and go back. However, he feels he needed more battles, so the spirits bring his *chi* for him. The *chi* is flexible and just as powerful as the wrestler. The wrestler tries all his tricks and eventually he gets tired and is defeated by the *chi* (Achebe, 1958).

While this narrative provides a basis for humility amongst individuals in the premises of power, it also points to the fact that no one should wrestle with their *chi*. In the Igbo traditional religion, the *chi* as a Personal god or guardian spirit, can be said to have the master plan of individuals and must be followed with humility and devotion, so as to actualize a person's destiny in this life (Onyibor, 2020). Chukwukere (1983) also points out that the *chi* could be considered as the god in every individual or the energy that forms the basis of a person's personality. The *chi* is also considered to work with the more central power called *Eke* in promoting the destiny of an individual (Chukwukere, 1983). Hence, individuals with lesser resources should not be jealous of others, rather it should lead them to negotiate with their *chi* to teach them how to advance their wealth and resources with the little they have.

This collaborates with the biblical parable of the talent (New English Translation Bible, n.d., Matt. 25:14-30). According to the parable of the talent, a man was on a journey. Before leaving, he entrusted his property worth about 8 talents to his servants. To one, he gave five talents. To another, he gave two talents. And to the other, he gave one talent. On returning from the journey, he received ten from the one that received five talents, four from the one that was offered two, but did not get any increase from the one that he gave one. To this, he became angry and took the one talent from the servant and added it to the one with ten.

This illustration points out that, it is necessary for humans to try to make the best use of what resources that has been handed over to them in life. In the case of disabled people like myself, it simply means that we should make use of what space we find ourselves within in the market of life. There should be a mindset of trying to increase our position in the world market, even when society is less inclusive and presents challenges of ableism. This means that even when disabled people are not as successful as their non-disabled peers, they should avoid regrets and learn to make best use of the talent they have in day-to-day activities.

8.3 Growing Up in a Family within the Academic Community and Seemingly Finding My Talent

Growing at the heart of academia in Nigeria was not easy. This is because, as a disabled person, I constantly felt inferior, and a lot of people did not fail to remind me of things I could not do. I remember people telling me, “Hey, look at that boy. You guys are friends, right? He can read and write and here you are struggling to spell your name.” This was coupled with the fact that, prior to losing my sight completely, I saw a lot of books in our personal study, and they made me wonder what my future would be like, as I could not read them. This was before I ever

heard about blind people using the computer with screen readers like JAWS or even electronic textbooks.

In scholarly or academic discussions in my house, my knowledge was practically non-existent, as the only thing I did at a young age was to listen to music. The discussions often centered on literature, economics, general medicine, law and the political state of Nigeria. But I was too shy as I did not have much to contribute then and was happy that I was in fact the youngest, as I was able to avoid any pressure that comes with being silent. Another major issue was speaking the English language correctly. This was problematic for me, as I did not feel confident about myself, since the schools I attended did not have very effective ways to teaching the subject. I only spoke Pidgin English at school with my friends, so was very ineffective with the language at home. I thought this was only possible in Nigeria or broadly speaking, in post-colonial African countries, until I read the fictional narrative by Archer (2008). Although a fiction, the book narrates the impact of a poor secondary school education on a young man in East London, England and subsequent inability to communicate properly in Standard English Language. As narrated by Archer (2008), the main character, Danny Cartwright, was framed for murder by a group of Cambridge graduates in a pub while celebrating his engagement with his fiancé in company with her brother Bernie. The story saw Danny and Bernie, who was his best friend as well, go into a confrontation with the Cambridge graduates over words about the fiancé. Her brother was murdered by a guy called Spencer Craig, and Danny was framed to have murdered his best friend. Because of his poor educational background and inability to communicate in very good English, he was unable to defend himself in court and got a harsh sentence to a maximum centre called Belmarsh Prison (Archer, 2008).

However, unlike Danny Cartwright in the story, I learnt from people the basis of analytical presentation and logical reasoning. This was as a result of listening to family friends and members of my house talk about different subjects and debate over their opinions. Gradually, I systematically began to fuse the various skills I got from different people to form the basis of my own education. Consequently, the various analytical and argumentative skills I gathered from listening to people from multiple subjects has greatly influenced my way of viewing academic procedures and got me interested in pursuing a career in academia. In view of the development of my career goals, Hargrove et al. (2005) have provided a perception for understanding the impact of family interaction patterns and the process of establishing an occupational interest. The authors affirm that the family environment, i.e. quality of family relationship and level of family orientation, could be considered as major factors in career planning and the development of vocational identities among young people (Hargrove et al., 2005).

Although, while the pursuit of a career in academics may look like a great plan, I understand it is very difficult for disabled people to be members of academia. This is as a result of multiple barriers that exist with the academic community for disabled people, including issues relating to lack of acceptance by other members.

8.4 Understanding barriers to the pursuit of a career in academia as a disabled person

It is not surprising that a lot of barriers exist for disabled people to pursue a career in academia. This is especially when one considers the privileged nature of academic institutions for rich white males in its history. Unfortunately, most institutions around the world that have followed the European model have found it difficult, if not considered unnecessary, to divest themselves from the cultural, procedural behaviour and architectural configuration of the ideal

academic environment as designed by scholars of mediaeval European centers (Castellia et al., 2012). While this perhaps fulfils the fantasy of a lot of people, it is in fact a source of exclusion for persons with disabilities. The reason for this is not farfetched, as the privileged members of the social order of mediaeval Europe paid little attention to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the society. Hence, academic institutions, in a bid to uphold the designs by privileged scholars of mediaeval times without appropriate and consistent review, are bound to fall into the difficulties of maintaining the status quo of exclusion for disabled people to be part of academia (Dolmage, 2017).

In their work, Brown & Leigh (2020) provide a theoretical analysis of the impact of being disabled or having chronic ailment in academia. The work details how issues like disclosing one's disability or chronic ailment for instance, is still a major problem for professionals in academia, as they may not be easily accepted. While growing up, I recognized the difficulties for professionals in academia to disclose their inability in my local institution in Nigeria. This was largely due to disclosing issues like that making a person more likely to lose their job or become a laughingstock in the academic community. This perception of ableism in academia could possibly create a feeling of discomfort for disabled faculty members. Disabled faculty members even after disclosing their disability may not get the required accommodation for their day-to-day task. It is on this note that Waterfield et al. (2017) point out that in Canada, disabled faculty members are often left to manage their own accommodation in a lot of encounters; "few universities have offices providing support to disabled faculty members and fewer than half have written policy regarding processes for accommodation" (p. 330).

Indeed, the consideration of issues like accepting disabled faculty members in academia and the provision of accommodation by institutions has often made me question my investment

to pursue career in academics. I remember a situation in Nigeria when a faculty member in an academic institution in my community lost his sight and made it known to the university. A lot of people kicked against allowing him to continue with his job. Consequently, he was only able to keep his job and got some form of acceptance with the intervention of a disability rights group. This lack of acceptance of disabled people by members of the academic community creates a great barrier for disabled people worldwide. In plain words, it is a major point of discrimination in universities that prevent disabled people from having equal opportunities with their non-disabled peers in academia (Brown & Leigh, 2020; Waterfield et al., 2017). In class discussions at the department of Disability Studies, professors often highlighted how members of the academic community are still finding it difficult to accept disabled people or persons with chronic ailment on the teaching side of the desk.

In all this, the influence of cultural and societal view of disabled people cannot be discarded from the lack of acceptance by the academic community (Dolmage, 2017). This is because while the academic community may consider itself highly independent from external control, there exists a strong interconnection with the social and cultural values of the community where it resides (Jongbloed et al., 2008).

8.5 Cross-cultural experience as a disabled person in the Canadian and Nigerian Society

It is not an easy task to analyze the concept and operations of culture in multiple societies. This is as a result of the dynamic nature of the concept in relations to the role of institutions and individuals in formulating and sustaining cultural values (Hanel et al., 2018). To this end, Inglis (2005) explains culture as all the ways of thinking, understanding, feeling, believing and acting characteristic of a particular group that is imbued in an individual through

socialization. This explanation points to culture as a way of life of a particular group, which cannot be replicated by individuals in a different society.

However, I think it is imperative to point out that as a disabled person with visual impairment, I experience cultures differently. For me, cultures or cultural values do not represent the way of life of a particular group or society, but the way disabled people are treated amongst other individuals. In other words, the experience of culture to me refers to the inclusion of disabled people within the total way of life in a group or society. It is based on this experiential definition that I will talk about regarding moving from Nigeria to the Canadian society as an international student.

The cultural experience in Canada and Nigeria has a common point of similarity but is quite different in a lot of ways for me. This is because when disability is present, the struggles within the society cannot be excluded when discussing cultural experience. However, the experience of a disabled person in Canada would have less barriers to interfere with the process due to the flawed but recognizable elements of inclusion in Canadian institutions (Stienstra, 2018). At this point, it is important to highlight that Canada is one of the most advanced countries in the world and a leader in inclusion and diversity (Lei & Guo, 2022). On the other hand, Nigeria is a struggling and underdeveloped country that is perhaps still trying to incorporate some fragments of inclusion within its borders (Akobo, 2016). Thus, there is bound to be some level of benefits that a disabled person would have access to in Canada that would not be readily available for individuals in a society like Nigeria. While benefits like healthcare, disability credit and social assistance may be taken for granted, in my opinion, they greatly impact how an individual might be placed within the cultural frame of things. This is because

having more recognition in societal institutions presents disabled people with the ability to act independently within the culture where they reside.

It is on this note that the cultural expectation of disabled people in Canada is to be more independent and lead a productive life just like every other individual. This is recognizable in most activities where I observed, like schools, the work environment, the transportation system and even in religious centers. Although, it should be clear that I believe the level of recognition in Canadian institutions is rather low. However, it creates a pathway of inclusion for disabled people. This is since the institutions are set up to promote the self-determination of persons with disabilities. Consequently, disabled people within Canadian society are recognized by the cultural institutions, though barriers exist that prevent the inclusion of persons with disabilities in day-to-day affairs.

On the other hand, Nigeria has struggled with the acceptance of disability at both the cultural and individual level. For instance, I explain in chapter four that, in Nigeria, the main belief is that disabled people can only get help from religious centres and there should be no need for persons with disabilities to lead an independent life. This view is even present in academia where disabled people are openly discouraged from attending higher education. Disabled people are considered unfit for society and I remember situations when I was in secondary school, whereby people acted like they were scared that I would attack them spiritually. This points to the fact that, in most cultures in Nigeria, there is the belief that disabled people are rejected by the ancestors and as such, should not be allowed to participate in the society. This affects the lives of disabled people as they are hidden from the public by family members to avoid being ostracized or facing harmful discrimination from members of the society.

In summary, I would say there is a big difference in my experience between the Canadian and Nigerian society. For instance, when I arrived in Canada, most people asked for how I might require their help. In the Nigerian society, whatever help you get, you must accept, and in most cases, you are not asked for the way you should be helped. So, when I got people, especially at the University of Manitoba, asking me if they could hold my hand to lead me (prior to the pandemic) I was thrilled. In another situation, when I go to religious centres, people are welcoming me, and I easily get to talk to several members before leaving the premises. This was quite different in Nigeria, wherein people see you as a beggar or miracle seeker, once you step into centers of worship, especially churches in my own case. I remember a situation when a reverend advised me to visit his friend who was a pastor in the city where I was residing in Nigeria. On getting to the church, the pastor avoided me and instructed his members to inform me that he was very busy in his office. This is as I could hear him talk close by and I felt I was properly dressed to avoid this kind of situation in the first place. In any case, it should not be suggested that I have not experienced such attitudinal challenges in Canada.

I think Canadian society, while creating opportunities for inclusion, is also set up to promote some level of attitudinal challenges for disabled people. This is referred to as ableism, wherein disabled people are affected by the behaviour of individuals that value a certain form of the human body and mental capacity over others. For instance, I remember how I was told to leave an office where I went for an interview, just because when I applied, I did not indicate my disability status. When he saw I was disabled (the interviewer), he had a different opinion of me working there. The man told me that the centre could not organize an interview for me, even when I told him that I was sure I will be able to do the interview and eventually would be a good

fit for the job. And the funny aspect is that, on their website, disabled people are welcomed to apply for jobs.

This points to the fact that Canadian societal institutions to a great extent recognize disabled people, but one cannot rule out the negative effect of ableism. Thus, in both Canadian and Nigerian society, there is the need to promote the inclusion of disability at all levels of the society. This is necessary in creating an inclusive process where disabled people would face less attitudinal challenges in their day-to-day affairs.

8.6 Promoting an Inclusive Society in Theory

This work makes use of the social inclusion model as a basis for analyzing the impact of various barriers to disabled people in the society and by extension, the academic community. The social inclusion model has proven to be instrumental in presenting societal flaws that create a disabling environment. This disabling environment is responsible for preventing disabled people from participating in the community, like the campus environment for instance, and enjoying a fulfilling life. In practical terms, the social inclusion model is a great tool for promoting the awareness of disability issues in the community. This basically places the model in the domain of an informative procedure, though it is opened to acting as a medium for prescribing and analyzing best practice towards disabled people.

This makes it somewhat important for the social inclusion model to work with additional models for guiding the informative process and creating a substantial level of consciousness of disability issues at the individual level in the society. Indeed, the individual forms the basis of every society, as the self, helps promote established cultural values and patterns or acts as a building block for creating a new social paradigm in the society (Schwartz, 2011). Thus, in the interaction between the self and the society, there is the need for individuals to be conscious of

disability issues in the socio-political process. This involves the acceptance of disability or disabled people as an integral aspect of the society and the consciousness of the self (me) in establishing or promoting a responsive and inclusive environment.

On this note, this work postulates the creation of an inclusive consciousness theory as a normative concept for analyzing disability issues. The inclusive consciousness theory implies the need for individuals to constantly appraise themselves as actors that could possibly promote the inclusion of disabled people in the society. The postulation of this model could be informed by two main theories: the dialogical self-theory and the rational choice theory.

The dialogical self-theory discusses the communication process that helps the individual to ingest the external society of people, by pretending to hold several dialogs with various personalities within the mind. The dialogical process helps the individual to understand people within their sphere of recognition through a process of populating the mind with various personalities and attempting to connect with them within the self. In this way, the self becomes a conscious actor that can define a suitable environment for dealing with the external society (Hermans, 2001).

However, the emphasis on the process of defining suitable assumptions may defeat the need for normalization in the appraisal of disability issues. It is on this ground that the individual should adopt a rational approach in their conceptualization of disabled people. This brings the rational choice theory into the framework of the inclusive consciousness model. Basically, the rational choice theory is a concept in sociology and economics as well as other related fields that describes individuals as actors who constantly evaluate the cost and benefits of their action in social interaction. This social behavior often acts as the core motivation of their actions, no matter how irrational it might look (Scott, 2000). However, the inclusive consciousness theory

would slightly deviate from this view and recognize the rational choice theory as the ability of individuals to engage in self-reflection and education on social inclusion and apply the learned experience in disability issues. In this way, the rational choice theory considers the individual as being responsible for gaining some form of information on social inclusion and adopting such values in a way that would help promote a substantial level of inclusive consciousness in their social interaction.

At this time, let us have a step-by-step analysis of the inclusive consciousness model in a university setting. The inclusive consciousness model begins with the self. The self here means both persons with disabilities and other individuals in the university community. First, the inclusive consciousness considers every individual as a community influencing actor. Then it moves to the self as a person with disability, who must learn to accept themselves as an actor within the academic community. This would raise the consciousness of the individual as a member of the inclusive process in the academic community and therefore they must see themselves as required actors that can engage in fulfilling interactions and the pursuit of self-determination. The next step considers other individuals in the academic community as actors within the inclusive process that should be conscious of respectable social values that promotes the inclusion of disabled people. At this stage, inclusive conscious actors should be interested in learning about social inclusion and keeping themselves updated on the best behaviour towards persons with disabilities in the community.

However, the learning process for a lot of individuals might be quite difficult and challenging. It is to this end that it becomes necessary for the governing bodies and various forms of communication teams and procedures to engage in inclusive consciousness efforts that would make the information on the inclusion of persons with disabilities readily accessible to

people. This does not have to necessarily be in large volumes of information, but could take the form of little chunks of ideas that would help awaken the minds of individuals to inclusive consciousness and promote the trend in the academic community. To this end, individuals would be able to make rational decisions according to their knowledge and empathy towards the inclusion of disabled people. At this stage, rational efforts should not imply a particular way of interacting with every disabled person, but appraising the environment to adopt best steps for the inclusion of various individuals with disabilities. To Dolmage (2017), the teaching of the inclusion of disability at various levels of education and in almost all subjects could help promote the consciousness of individuals on their inclusive responsibility.

The inclusive consciousness model then requires formal decision makers at the institutional level to promote the inclusion of disabled people through their actions and social process. This signifies that formal decision makers should be conscious of the inclusion of disabled people when making decisions and should be arrived at through a rational process with a substantial level of inclusive consciousness and consultation with the disability community.

In any case, while the inclusive consciousness model presented in this work could be a way of analyzing normative issues affecting disabled people, the social inclusion model remains the widely accepted explanation in Disability Studies. The social inclusion model has been tested and proven to be valid in the study of disability issues in multiple societies. Therefore, any model or theory that is developed must hope to work with it and not attempt to displace the social inclusion conceptual framework of disability issues in the current society and time of humanity.

8.7 Area for Future Studies

This study addresses the experience of an international disabled graduate student at the University of Manitoba. The essential elements of the findings in the research look at issues like

barriers in the physical and socio-cultural environment and how these affect the participation of disabled students in the academy. The research, however, discusses how the lack of opportunities for the participation of disabled students could be as a result of a void in the operations of an inclusive and diverse framework in the academy.

To this end, future studies could be conducted in the following areas:

- Disabled students and the exploration of inclusive frameworks in the academy.
- Understanding the impact of social values on the experiences of disabled students in the academy.
- Exploring international disabled students and impact of the environment on academic learning.
- Exploring the inclusive consciousness theory as a model for understanding the interaction of disabled people with other societal elements like members of the academic community.

8.8 Process

The process of this work relies completely on the narrative of a disabled graduate student from Nigeria studying at the University of Manitoba. The personal narrative was totally based on real events, though the researcher did not include the names of people for obvious issues relating to image rights. The events are narrated to provide answers to **the main research questions** of this work which were:

How is the environment of the University of Manitoba inclusive of disabled students?

Secondary questions:

- (a) How do current attitudes toward disability affect interactions between disabled students and staff members at the University of Manitoba?

- (b) What social barriers exist that hinder the participation of disabled students in activities at the University of Manitoba?

In the background section of the work, concepts like campus environment, socio-cultural definition of disability, ableism and academic ableism, as well as inclusive framework for disabled students in universities are highlighted to provide context for answers to the research questions. These concepts inform the literature review process which evaluates works based on the self-reflections of authors. The review process examines the following themes:

- Opinions of diversity and inclusion of disabled students in self-reflective studies.
- Narratives on issues affecting the social environment for disabled students in higher education. Personal experience on navigating emotional challenges in an ableist environment of higher education.

The work then makes use of the social inclusion theory as the analytical framework. The methodology relies on the autoethnographic research method for data collection. This gives the researcher enormous opportunity to provide personal narrative on the process of navigating the academy as a disabled student. Consequently, the narrative process begins from the childhood stage of the individual to provide some background on the researcher as a visually impaired person. It then explains how this affected the researcher academically, especially in relations to the quality of education received from the elementary to secondary level.

In this way, the researcher provides a substantial account on how the lack of quality education and social inclusion at the elementary and secondary school level impact negatively on the subsequent learning and integration process at the university. This was especially noticeable at the undergraduate level, which almost became a disaster save for the assistance provided by

friends and family members. The researcher explains how ableism is a common theme in the higher education experience in Nigerian universities, which is very intense at the graduate level. The narrative then takes a shift to Canada where the researcher was hoping to get a substantial level of social inclusion and academic integration at the University of Manitoba. However, issues relating to racism, ableism, socio-cultural barriers, isolation because of poor access to the environment, and difficulties in gaining participation in campus activities provided some level of reality shock for the researcher.

To this end, the answers to the research questions can be summarized as follows:

The environment of the University of Manitoba might be a great place for the regular student, but still requires a lot of effort to be fully accessible for students with disabilities like the researcher. This includes planning alternative routes for disabled students in situations of construction work, fixing inaccessible sections of old buildings and providing increased support for disabled students at all levels of the university. The work points out that the presence of socio-cultural barriers affected the researcher's experience of social interaction and integration as a disabled person, which was made worse by some level of racism among the student body.

The researcher also had issues with participating in events on campus because a lot of staff and the graduate student body leaves such issues to the accessibility team for creating an enabling environment for disabled people.

It is on this note that the work introduces a model for disability issues called the inclusive consciousness model. The inclusive consciousness model is meant to stimulate individuals to adopt more levels of inclusion in relating with persons with disabilities. It describes a normative process that could be helpful in improving the environment and social interaction for disabled

people in society. However, as the theory was only introduced in this work, it will be great to see how it is utilized and discussed in future studies.

In the final analysis, the acceptance of disability in the society would go a long way in creating an inclusive process for disabled people. In academia where this thesis is almost entirely based for instance, the creation of inclusive frameworks must emphasize the social recognition of the actual situation of disabled people. This could be achieved by providing a true representation of disabled people according to their views on disability and shared stories of life experiences. This will help inform the academic society of the pains, aspirations and barriers confronting the idea of social inclusion of various disabilities.

8.9 Concluding Remarks

I feel it is important to point out that the process of writing this thesis has been emotionally stressful for me. This is not because of the regular difficulties that come with producing a thesis, though that might be part of it, but as a result of the fact that I had to go to places in my memory I have tried to discard. In my personal experience living as a disabled person, I must say that there are issues relating to mistreatment and perhaps display of hatred as a result of the presence of a disability that creates a deep feeling of wonderment on why such socio-cultural issues exist. In my opinion, this mistreatment towards persons with disability like myself produces an environment that almost completely prevents the possible inclusion and fulfillment of disabled people in institutions and cultural aspects of the society. Hence, writing this thesis could add to the growing trend of activism for social inclusion and create further awareness on issues facing disabled people in the process of getting educated.

Indeed, during several discussions with people from various backgrounds, there is always a curiosity regarding how disabled people get educated. This points to the fact that ignorance

could form a major cause of discrimination for disabled people, especially at the individual level. Although, ignorance itself should not be blamed for the lack of inclusion, but perhaps increasing the awareness of disability issues could awaken the minds of a lot of people towards a more socio-cultural and environmental barrier free society for disabled people. To this end, an appraisal of the descriptive process of the academic life of an individual with a disability in this work might just be a good start for a lot of people in the quest of creating an inclusive society.

8.10 Recommendations

The environment of the academy at the University of Manitoba has been highlighted in this research to be less inclusive for disabled students. Although the findings of the research relates to the investigation of a single Canadian university, it can be used as a way to solve issues faced by disabled students in a lot of academic institutions. The way forward for the inclusion of disabled students requires a multi-policy approach and systematic combination of inclusive procedures that would involve disabled people and members of the general academic or wider society. To this end, this research suggests the following recommendations:

- Create a framework that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion for disabled people. It is important to have a framework that people can understand and work with in creating an inclusive environment for disabled people in the academy. This approach would include the participation of disabled people in the creation and monitoring of such framework, so as to ensure that the intended goals are met.
- Promote the participation of disabled people in all aspects of the academy. The lack of representation of disabled people in the academy cultivates a hostile environment for socio-cultural discrimination. Though issues concerning socio-cultural discrimination cannot be

eradicated with a single policy or systematic procedure, it will allow people in the academy to be aware of the presence of disabled people and ensure that their potentials are recognized.

- Ensure the inclusion of disabled people in all forms of communication. It is very important to ensure that the forms of communication in the academy, include and relate to the realities of disabled people. This can be regarded as an essential aspect of inclusive procedures in the academy, as it promotes the participation of disabled people and ensures disability issues are well represented in the affairs of the institution.
- Make accessibility issues a matter of general interest in the academy. It is important to make matters of accessibility issues a general interest for members of the academy. This aspect of inclusive procedure is necessary as it will ensure that members of the student body and staff alike are knowledgeable regarding their responsibilities in promoting the inclusion of disabled people. It will also ensure that the academic environment is enroute towards a barrier free community for disabled people.
- Promote inclusive and systematic planning and management of the physical space. It is necessary to ensure that the physical space is inclusive of factors that would promote the participation of disabled people in the academy. This includes involving disabled people in the planning and management of the physical space, communicating all major actions in a way that will help disabled people to understand current situations, and provide alternative options for disabled people in the physical space where necessary.
- Introduce inclusive and accessible online guidelines. As society and academic institutions gradually adopt online platforms as a medium for conducting a lot of activities, it is necessary that guidelines are introduced to ensure that the process is inclusive and accessible for diverse

individuals. This will not only help individuals with disabilities, but also provide a regulatory framework for ensuring proper participation by all.

- Foster leadership opportunities for disabled students within student union bodies. Based on the fact that disabled students are members of the university community just like everyone else, it is important for student union bodies to promote leadership opportunities for proper integration of persons with disabilities. This will be helpful in two ways: it will provide more recognition for disabled people in the student community and also give the student union body a direct liaison with the disability community. This would allow for better decision making on issues relating to inclusion and accessibility within student union bodies.

References

- Abes, E. & Dakow, D. (2020). Using crip theory to create campus cultures that foster students' disability disclosure (practice brief). *Journal of Postsecondary Education & Disability*, 33(3), 223-231. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1281097.pdf>
- Acar, F. P. (2010). Analyzing the effects of diversity perceptions and shared leadership on emotional conflict: A dynamic approach. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(10), 1733–1753. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2010.500492>
- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things fall apart*. London: Heinemann.
- Adebisi, R. O., Jerry, J. E., Rasaki, S. A., & Igwe, E. N. (2014). Barriers to special needs education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education & Research*, 2(11), 451-462.
- Adesina, O. C. (2005). Nigerian political leadership and Yoruba-Hausa/Fulani relations: A historical synthesis. *International Journal of Humanistic Studies*, 4, 17-33.
- Adetiba, T. C., & Rahim, A. (2012). Between ethnicity, nationality and development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Development & Sustainability*, 1(3), 656-674.
- Adima, E. (1992). Special education in Nigeria. *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, 16(1), 36-41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1030011200022624>
- African Polling Institution. (2020). *Deconstructing the Canada rush: A study on motivations for Nigerians emigrating to Canada*. <https://africapolling.org/2020/03/03/deconstructing-the-canada-rush/>
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2017). *Federalism and group-based inequalities in Nigeria*. Global Centre for Pluralism. https://www.pluralism.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Nigeria_CaseNote_EN.pdf

- Agozino, B., & Anyanike, I. (2007). IMU AHIA: Traditional Igbo business school and global commerce culture. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 31(1-3), 233-252.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624-007-9023-8>
- Agu, A. C. (1990). An examination of the Nri-Igbo concept of Chi in the light of oral traditions (Publication No. 10672916) [Doctoral dissertation, London School of Economics]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Akah, J. (2016). The resilience of Igbo culture amidst Christianity and westernization in Orlu local government area of Nigeria. *International Journal of Theology & Reformed Tradition*, 8, 137-154.
- Akobo, L. A. (2016). A review of diversity management in Nigeria: Organizational and national perspective. *Journal of African Studies & Development*, 8(3), 21-34.
<https://doi.org/10.5897/JASD2015.0381>
- Al-Haque, R. (2019). University internationalization, immigration, and the Canadian dream: How federal citizenship immigration legislation marginalizes international graduate students. *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*, 9(3), 5-9.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1233277.pdf>
- Allen, J. V. (1972). Sitting on a man: Colonialism and the lost political institutions of Igbo women. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 6(2), 165-181.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/484197>
- Allman, D. (2013). *The Sociology of Social Inclusion*. London: SAGE Open.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244012471957>
- Aluede, R.O.A., & Oniyama, H. O. (2009). Secret cults in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: an appraisal. *College Student Journal*, 43(1), 3-9.

gale.com/apps/doc/A194620717/AONE?u=anon~bc3c5c25&sid=googleScholar&xid=a5b7a8c3

Altavilla, C., Barbiero, F., Boucinha, M., & Burlon, L. (2020). The great lockdown: Pandemic response policies and bank lending conditions. European Central Bank, No 2465.

<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecb.wp2465~c0502b9e88.en.pdf>

Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 373-395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241605280449>

Anderson, P. (2017). *Autobiography of a disease*. Routledge.

Archer, J. (2008). *A prisoner of birth*. St. Martin's Press.

Arowolo, D. E. (2022). Ethnicisation of corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Financial Crime*, 29(1), 246-257. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFC-06-2020-0106>

Atanda, A. I. (2019). Corrupt practices in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: Management tips towards alleviation of corruption. *East African Journal of Educational Research & Policy*, 14, 277-288.

Atewologun, D. (2020). *Intersectionality theory and practice*. Oxford Research Encyclopedias, Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.48>

Aubrecht, K., & La Monica, N. (2017). (Dis) Embodied disclosure in higher education: A co-constructed narrative. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 47(3), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v47i3.187780>

Baker, L. A. (2019). Normalizing marginality: A critical analysis of blackness and disability in higher education. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto]. TSpace.

<https://hdl.handle.net/1807/95661>

- Bahadoosingh, A. (2021). Understanding the underrepresentation of visible minority school leaders through critical race theory and counter-story telling. [Master's thesis, University Manitoba]. MSpace. <http://hdl.handle.net/1993/35408>
- Baltaru, R. (2019). Universities' pursuit of inclusion and its effects on professional staff: The case of the United Kingdom. *Higher Education*, 77, 641–656.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0293-7>
- Bartosik, A. (2017). *International students' perceptions of factors affecting academic success in post-secondary studies* [Masters' thesis, University of Toronto, Publications and Scholarship]. TSpace. https://source.sheridancollege.ca/fhass_publications/1
- Beratan, G. D. (2006). Institutionalizing inequity: Ableism, racism and IDEA 2004. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 26(2). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v26i2.682>
- Beresford, P. (1996). Poverty and disabled people: Challenging dominant debates and policies. *Disability & Society*, 11(4), 553-568. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599627598>
- Berghs, M., Atkin, K., Graham, H., Hatton, C., & Thomas, C. (2016). *Scoping models and theories of disability. Implications for public health research of models and theories of disability: a scoping study and evidence synthesis*, 4(8). NIHR Journals Library.
<https://doi.org/10.3310/phr04080>
- Bergstrom, K. (2002, October). *Legacies of colonialism and Islam for Hausa women: An historical analysis, 1804-1960*. (Working Paper No. 276).
<https://gencen.isp.msu.edu/files/7714/5202/7093/WP276.pdf>
- Blower, J. (2016). *How the discourse of ableism functions in Canadian immigration policy: Undoing discrimination against persons with disabilities* [Master's thesis, Ryerson University]. Rshare.

[https://rshare.library.ryerson.ca/articles/thesis/How the discourse of ableism functions in Canadian immigration policy undoing discrimination against persons with disabilities/14654832](https://rshare.library.ryerson.ca/articles/thesis/How_the_discourse_of_ableism_functions_in_Canadian_immigration_policy_undoing_discrimination_against_persons_with_disabilities/14654832)

- Bobat, S., Reuben, S., & Devar, T. (2020). Representation and methods of normalisation: Narratives of disability within a South African tertiary institution. *African Journal of Disability*, 9(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v9i0.629>
- Bochner, A. P. (2014). *Coming to narrative: A personal history of paradigm change in the human sciences*. Left Coast Press.
- Bogart, K. R. & Dunn, D. S. (2019). Ableism special issue introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 75(3), 650-664. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12354>
- Boocock, S. (1973). The school as a social environment for learning: Social organization and micro-social process in education. *Sociology of Education*, 46(1), 15-50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2112204>
- Boote, D. N., & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher*, 34(6), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X034006003>
- Braithwaite, J., & Mont, D. (2009). Disability and poverty: a survey of world bank poverty assessments and implications. *Alter*, 3(3), 219-232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alter.2008.10.002>.
- Bridger, O. (2020). *Attitudinal barriers to disability and the loneliness and social isolation of disabled people in Reading, England*. Research Report, University of Reading. <https://images.reading.gov.uk/2020/10/Bridger-2020-Attitudinal-barriers-to-disability-and-loneliness.pdf>

- Brooke, B. A., & Smith J. D. (2009). Multiculturalism, religion, and disability: Implications for special education practitioners. *Education & Training in Developmental Disabilities*, 44(3), 295-303. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24233476>
- Brosseau, L. & Dewing, M. (2009). *Canadian multiculturalism* (Background Paper, No. 2009-20-E). Parliament of Canada Research Publications.
https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/200920E
- Brown, N., & Leigh, J. (2020). Theorising experiences of disabilities and chronic illnesses in higher education. In N. Brown & J. Leigh (Eds.), *Ableism in academia* (1-10). UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv13xprjr.6>
- Brown, Z. J. (2020). *Ableism, Intersectionality, Power and Knowledge: The Complexities of Navigating Accommodations in Postsecondary Institutions* [Major research paper, York University]. YorkSpace.
<https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10315/37846/CDS%20MRP%20Final%20October%2027%202020.%20Zahra%20Brown.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Bruce, C., & Aylward, M. L. (2021). Disability and self-advocacy experiences in university learning contexts. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 23(1), 14-26.
<https://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.741>
- Byrd, E. K. (1990). A study of biblical depiction of disability. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 21(4), 52–53. <https://doi.org/10.1891/0047-2220.21.4.52>
- Calder, M. J., Richter, M. S., Mao, Y., Burns, K. K., Mogale, R. S., & Danko, M. (2016). International students attending Canadian universities: Their experiences with housing,

- finances, and other issues. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 46(2), 92-110.
<https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v46i2.184585>
- Campbell, E. (2016). Exploring Autoethnography as a method and methodology in legal education research. *Asian Journal of Legal Education*, 3(1), 95-105.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2322005815607141>
- Campbell, F. K. (2008). Exploring internalized ableism using critical race theory. *Disability & Society*, 23(2), 151–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590701841190>
- Campbell, F. K. (2009). Medical education and disability studies. *Journal of Medical Humanities*, 30(4), 221-235. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10912-009-9088-2>
- Campbell, F. K. (2019). Precision ableism: a studies in ableism approach to developing histories of disability and abledment. *Rethinking History*, 23(2), 138-156.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2019.1607475>
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. (2018). *The Canadian dream: The migrant road to Canada* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds6fjfpOUYo>
- Canadian Construction Association. (2019). The value of diversity and inclusion in the Canadian construction industry: A business case. https://www.cca-acc.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CCA_13413_Business_Case_EN-nov2019.pdf
- Card, J. A., Cole, S. T., & Humphrey, A. H. (2006). A comparison of the accessibility and attitudinal barriers model: Travel providers and travelers with physical disabilities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism*, 11(2), 161-175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941660600727566>
- Castellia, L., Ragazzia, S., & Crescentinia, A. (2012). Equity in education: A general overview. *Procedia - Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 69, 2243 – 2250.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.12.194>

- Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Left Coast Press.
- Chukwukere, I. (1983). Chi in igbo religion and thought: The god in every man. *Anthropos*, 78(3/4), 519–534. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40460646>
- Clifton, S. (2020). *Hierarchies of power: Disability theories and models and their implications for violence against, and abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with disability* (Research Report). Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/system/files/2020-10/Research%20Report%20-%20Hierarchies%20of%20power%20Disability%20theories%20and%20models%20and%20their%20implications%20for%20violence%20against%2C%20and%20abuse%2C%20neglect%2C%20and%20exploitation%20of%2C%20people%20with%20disability.pdf>
- Conner, T., & Rabovsky, T. (2011). Accountability, affordability, access: A review of the recent trends in higher education policy research. *Policy Studies Journal*, 39(1), 93-112. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2010.00389_7.x
- Corpuz, J. C. (2021). Adapting to the culture of ‘new normal’: An emerging response to COVID-19. *Journal of Public Health*, 43(2), 344–345. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdab057>
- Cruickshank, W. M. (1951). The relation of physical disability to fear and guilt feelings. *Child Development*, 22(4), 291-298. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1126238>
- Custer, D. (2014). Autoethnography as a transformative research method. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(37), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1011>
- Cudd, A. E. (2005). How to explain oppression: Criteria of adequacy for normative explanatory theories. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 35(1), 20-49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0048393104271923>

- Dauphinee, E. (2010). The ethics of autoethnography. *Review of International Studies*, 36(3), 799-818. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210510000690>
- DeBerry-Spence, B. (2010). Making theory and practice in subsistence markets: An analytic autoethnography of MASAZI in Accra, Ghana. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(6), 608-616. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2009.02.024>
- De-Los Santos, S., Kupczynski, L., & Mundy, M. (2019). Determining academic success in students with disabilities in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8(2), 16-38.
- Demes, K. A., & Geeraert, N. (2015). The highs and lows of a cultural transition: a longitudinal analysis of sojourner stress and adaptation across 50 countries. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 109(2), 316–337. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000046>
- Díez, A. M., López, R. G., & Molina, V. M. (2015). Students with disabilities in higher education: A biographical-narrative approach to the role of lecturers. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 34(1), 147-159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.934329>
- Dolmage, J. T. (2017). *Academic ableism: Disability and higher education*. University of Michigan Press.
- Duquette, C. (2000). Experiences at university: Perceptions of students with disabilities. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 30(2), 123-41. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ621623>
- Eisenman, L. T., Rolón-Dow, R., Davison, A., & Yates, N. (2020). Disabled or not, people just want to feel welcome: Stories of microaggressions and microaffirmations from college students with intellectual disability. *Critical Education*, 11(17). <http://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/criticaled/article/view/186499>

- Ekundayo, H. T., & Ajayi, I. A. (2009). Towards effective management of university education in Nigeria. *International NGO Journal*, 4(8), 342-347.
https://academicjournals.org/article/article1381500283_Ekundayo%20and%20Ajayi.pdf
- El-Lahib, Y. (2015). *Ableism, racism and colonialism in Canadian immigration: exploring constructions of people with disabilities*. [Doctoral dissertation, McMaster University]. MacSphere. <http://hdl.handle.net/11375/18066>
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography: An autopsy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 429-449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286979>
- Ellis, C., Adams, T.E., & Bochner, A.P. (2010). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1).
<https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589>
- Eskay, M., & Oboegbulem, A. (2013). Designing appropriate curriculum for special education in urban school in Nigeria: Implication for administrators. *Online Submission, US-China Education Review* 3(4), 252-258. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED542970>.
- Eskay, M. Eskay, M. & Uma, E. (2012). Educating people with special needs in Nigeria: Present and future perspectives. *US-China Education Review*, 2(10), 898-906.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED537995.pdf>
- Eskay, M., Onu, V. C., Igbo, J. N., Obiyo, N., & Ugwuanyi, L. (2012). Disability within the African culture. In O. N. Ukpokodu & P. Ukpokodu (Eds.), *Contemporary voices from the margin: African educators on African and American education* (197-211). Information Age Publishing.

- Etieyibo, E., & Omiegbe, O. (2016). Religion, culture, and discrimination against persons with disabilities in Nigeria. *African Journal of Disability*, 5(1), 1-6.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v5i1.192>
- Ezuluomba, N. (2018). *Belief and belonging: Changing social cultural landscape of southern Nigeria*. (Proceedings of the African Futures Conference). Wiley Online Library.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2573-508X.2018.tb00006.x>
- Ezenwa, C. P. (2017). *The value of human dignity: A socio-cultural approach to analyzing the crisis of values among Igbo people of Nigeria* [Doctoral dissertation, Julius Maximilians Universität]. https://opus.bibliothek.uni-wuerzburg.de/files/14760/Ezenwa_Paul_Human_dignity.pdf
- Fagbadebo, O., & Francis, S. (2016). Power relations among institutions of good government in Nigeria's presidential system: Issues and contentions. *International Journal of Politics & Good Governance*, 7(7.1), 1-22.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299391666_Power_Relations_among_institutions_of_government_in_Nigeria's_presidential_System_Issues_and_contention
- Fagunwa D. (2017). Inclusion and diversity in Yorùbá education. *Adult Education Development*, 84. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/adult-education-and-development/editions/aed-842017-inclusion-and-diversity/section-1-identity/inclusion-and-diversity-in-yoruba-education>
- Farrell, J. & Shapiro, C. (2010). Antitrust evaluation of horizontal mergers: An economic alternative to market definition. *The B.E. Journal of Theoretical Economics*, 10(1), 1-39.
<https://doi.org/10.2202/1935-1704.1563>

- Fibbi, R., Midtbøen, A. H., Simon, P. (2021). Consequences of and Responses to Discrimination. In *Migration and Discrimination*. (pp. 65-78). Springer, Cham.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67281-2_6
- Fletcher, J. M., Ross, S. L., & Zhang, Y. (2013). *The determinants and consequences of friendship composition*. National Bureau of Economic Research.
<https://www.albany.edu/sites/default/files/2019-08/Jason%20M%20Fletcher.pdf>
- Forde, D. (2017). *The Yoruba speaking people of southwestern Nigeria*. Routledge.
- Francis, G. L., Duke, J. M., Fujita, M., & Sutton, J. C. (2019). It's a constant fight: Experiences of college students with disabilities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education & Disability*, 32(3), 247-261. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1236871>
- Franklin, B. (1848). *The way to wealth*. Trow & Co. Printers.
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (30th Anniversary ed). The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Friedman, C., & Owen, A. L. (2017). Defining disability: Understandings of and attitudes towards ableism and disability. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 37(1).
<https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v37i1.5061>
- Fritsch, K. (2015). Desiring disability differently: Neoliberalism, heterotopic imagination and intra-corporeal reconfigurations. *Foucault Studies*, (19), 43-66.
<https://doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i19.4824>
- Gallop, C. J., & Bastien, N. (2016). Supporting success: Aboriginal students in higher education. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 46(2), 206–224.
<https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v46i2.184772>

- Gappmayer, G. (2020). Disentangling disablism and ableism: The social norm of being able and its influence on social interactions with people with intellectual disabilities. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 28(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1814394>
- Garcia, E. V. (2017). The duality of being both oppressor and oppressed in different places. *Innova Research Journal*, 2(3), 80-90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.33890/innova.v2.n3.2017.134>
- Garr, S. S., Shellenback, K., Scales, J. (2014). *Diversity and inclusion Canada: The current state* (Research Report). Deloitte Development LLC.
<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/ca/Documents/human-capital/ca-en-human-capital-diversity-and-Inclusion-in-canada.pdf>
- Gaudan, D., & Mohammadnezhad, M. (2018). Reality shock: A transitional challenge faced by intern nurses at labasa hospital, Fiji. *International Journal of Healthcare and Medical Sciences, Academic Research Publishing Group*, 4(9), 158-164. [https://arpgweb.com/pdf-files/ijhms4\(9\)158-164.pdf](https://arpgweb.com/pdf-files/ijhms4(9)158-164.pdf)
- Gautreaux, M. (2018). *Towards shared understanding: An exploration of the literature on inclusive teaching and its implication for building inclusive excellence at UBC*. University of British Columbia Student Diversity Initiative.
<https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/2018-36%20Inclusive%20teaching%20and%20its%20implication%20for%20building%20Inclusive%20Excellence%20at%20UBC.pdf>
- Getzel, E.H, & Thoma, C. (2008). Experiences of college students with disabilities and the importance of self-determination in higher education settings. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 31,77-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0885728808317658>

- Gibson, S. (2012). Narrative accounts of university education: Socio-cultural perspectives of students with disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 27(3), 353-369.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.654987>
- Gin, L. E., Guerrero, F. A., Brownell, S. E., Cooper, C. & Momsen, J. (2021). COVID-19 and Undergraduates with Disabilities: Challenges Resulting from the Rapid Transition to Online Course Delivery for Students with Disabilities in Undergraduate STEM at Large-Enrollment Institutions. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 20(3), 1-17.
<https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-02-0028>
- Goering, S. (2015). Rethinking disability: The social model of disability and chronic disease. *Current Reviews in Musculoskeletal Medicine*, 8(2), 134-138.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12178-015-9273-z>
- Goethals, T., De Schauwer, E., & Van Hove, G. (2015). Weaving intersectionality into disability studies research: Inclusion, reflexivity and anti-essentialism. *Journal of Diversity & Gender Studies*, 2(1-2), 75-94.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.11116/jdivegendstud.2.1-2.0075>
- Goldin, C., & Katz, L. (1998). The shaping of higher education: The formative years in the United States, 1890 to 1940. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 13(1), 37-62.
<https://doi.org/10.3386/w6537>
- Grayson, P. J. (2014). Negative racial encounters and academic outcomes of international and domestic students in four Canadian Universities. *Journal of International Students*, 4(3), 262-278. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1054986>

- Green, B. N., Johnson, C. D., & Adams, A. (2006). Writing narrative literature reviews for peer-reviewed journals: Secrets of the trade. *Journal of Chiropractic Medicine*, 5(3), 101-117. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0899-3467\(07\)60142-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0899-3467(07)60142-6)
- Green, K. (2018). International students face barriers to settling and employment in Canada, says Rye study. *The Eyeopener*. Ryerson University press. <https://theeyeopener.com/2018/12/international-students-face-barriers-to-settling-and-employment-in-canada-says-rye-study>
- Green, W., & Myatt, P. (2011). Telling tales: A narrative research study of the experiences of new international academic staff at an Australian University. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 16(1), 33-44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2011.546219>
- Grindstaff, L. (2022). Barriers to Inclusion: Social Roots and Current Concerns. In Bisson, L.F., Grindstaff, L., Brazil-Cruz, L., Barbu, S.J. (Eds.), *Uprooting bias in the academy*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85668-7_2
- Haber, L. D., & Smith, R. T. (1971). Disability and deviance: Normative adaptations of role behavior. *American Sociological Review*, 36(1), 87-97. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093509>
- Halder, S., & Assaf, L. C. (2017). *Inclusion, disability and culture: An ethnographic perspective traversing abilities and challenges* (3rd ed.). Springer. <https://link-springer-com.uml.idm.oclc.org/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-55224-8>
- Hall, M. C. (2019). Critical disability theory. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/disability-critical/>
- Hall, T., Kakuma, R., Palmer, L., Minas, H., Martins, J., & Kermode, M. (2019). Social inclusion and exclusion of people with mental illness in Timor-Leste: A qualitative

- investigation with multiple stakeholders. *BMC Public Health*, 19(702), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7042-4>
- Hanel, P., Maio, G. R., Soares, A. K. S., Vione, K. C., de Holanda-Coelho, G. L., Gouveia, V. V., Manstead, A. S. R. (2018). Cross-Cultural Differences and Similarities in Human Value Instantiation. *Frontiers in Psychology* 9 (849), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00849>
- Hankivsky, A. (2014). *Intersectionality 101*. The Institute for Intersectionality Research & Policy. Simon Fraser University. <https://bccampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Hankivsky-Intersectionality101-2014.pdf>
- Hargrove, B. K., Inman, A. G., & Crane, R. L. (2005). Family interaction patterns, career planning attitudes, and vocational identity of high school adolescents. *Journal of Career Development*, 31(4), 263-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089484530503100404>
- Harpur, P. (2013). From universal exclusion to universal equality: Regulating ableism in a digital age. *Northern Kentucky Law Review*, 40(3), 529-565.
<https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:311554>
- Heeren, J. W. & Shichor, D. (1993). Faculty malfeasance: Understanding academic deviance. *Sociological Inquiry*, 63(1), 49-63. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682x.1993.tb00201.x>
- Hermans, H. J. M. (2001). The dialogical self: Toward a theory of personal and cultural positioning. *Culture & Psychology*, 7(3), 243–281.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X0173001>
- Hill, J. L. (1992). Accessibility: Students with disabilities in Canada. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 22(1), 48-83. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ451739>

- Hiscott J, Alexandridi M., Muscolini, M., Tassone, E., Palermo, E., & Zevini, A. (2020). The global impact of the coronavirus pandemic. *Cytokine Growth Factor*, 53, 1-9.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cytogfr.2020.05.010>.
- Hsu, Chung-Hsien. (2011). *Factors influencing international students' academic and sociocultural transition in an increasingly globalized society* [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern Mississippi]. Aquila. <https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations/429>
- Hurst, B., Wallace, R., & Nixon, S. B. (2013). The impact of social interaction on student learning. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 52(4), 375-398.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol52/iss4/5
- Hyland, K. (2018). Narrative, identity and academic storytelling. *ILCEA*, 31, 1-16.
<https://doi.org/10.4000/ilcea.4677>
- Idaka, I. & Joshua, M. (2009). Attitude of academic staff in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions to student evaluation of instruction (SEI): A case study of Cross River State University. *Educational Research & Review*, 4(10), 470-474.
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Attitude-of-academic-staff-in-Nigerian-tertiary-to-Idaka-Joshua/e477afa7707d06651df55642c9a58ad3da7b5f1d>
- Inglis, D. (2005). *Culture and everyday life*. Routledge.
- Irmo, M. (2017). The history of treatment toward people with disabilities. In M. Irmo, N. M. Graf, & M. Millington (Eds.), *Psychosocial aspects of disability* (pp. 1-32). Springer Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1891/9780826180636.0001>
- Irokaba, G. (2019). Reforming Special Education in Nigeria for Global Competitiveness and Best Practices. *African Annals of the Deaf*, 3(1), 86-93.
<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user->

[32210174/documents/a577e6c7dbf64c09b1a848bf03976c00/AfADJulyDec2019006Iroka
ba.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1080/00141801.2019.1644444)

Irwin, R. (2007). Culture shock: Negotiating feelings in the field. *Anthropology Matters Journal*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.22582/am.v9i1.64>

Isaacs, D. (2020). I don't have time for this: Stuttering and the politics of university time. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 22(1), 58–67.
<http://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.601>

Jammaers, E., Zanoni, P., & Hardonk, S. (2016). Constructing positive identities in ableist workplaces: Disabled employees' discursive practices engaging with the discourse of lower productivity. *Human Relations*, 69(6), 1365-1386.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715612901>

Ji, Y., Rana, C., Shi, C., & Zhong, Y. (2019). Self-esteem mediates the relationships between social support, subjective well-being, and perceived discrimination in Chinese people with physical disability. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1-7.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02230>

Jones, S. H. (2005). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 763-791). Sage.

Jones, S. H., Adams, T. E., & Ellis, C. (Eds.). (2013). *Handbook of autoethnography*. Routledge

Jongbloed, B., Enders, J., & Salerno, C. (2008). Higher education and its communities: Interconnections, interdependencies and a research agenda. *Higher Education*, 56(3), 303-324. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-008-9128-2>

- Kabuta, L. G. (2014). Problems facing students with physical disabilities in higher learning institutions in Tanzania [Master's thesis, University of Tanzania].
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33425411.pdf>
- Kagnici, G. (2018). Insights from Sumerian mythology: The myth of Enki and Ninmah and the history of disability. *Tarih Incelemeleri Dergisi*, 33(2), 429-450.
<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/615820>
- Karppinen, K., & Hallvard, M. (2014). What we talk about when we talk about the market: Conceptual contestation in contemporary media policy research. *Journal of Information Policy*, 4, 327–341. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jinfopoli.4.2014.0327>
- Kelly, J. (2020, March 28). Coronavirus: The month everything changed. British Broadcasting Corporation. <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-52066956>
- Kattari, S. K. (2015). Examining ableism in higher education through social dominance theory and social learning theory. *Innovative Higher Education*, 40(5), 375-386.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-015-9320-0>
- Khemani, S. (2001). *Fiscal federalism and service delivery in Nigeria: the role of states and local governments*. Nigerian PER Steering Committee.
<http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/March2003Seminar/FiscalFedReport.pdf>
- Koren, E. R., & Xhey Evans-El, S. E. (2020). Laissez-faire ableism in the academy: Contouring the map with graduate student perspectives. *Critical Education*, 11(14), 14-30.
<https://doi.org/10.14288/ce.v11i14.186519>
- Knoll, K. (2012). *Feminist disability studies: Theoretical debates, activism, identity politics, and coalition building*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Washington].

https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/20505/Knoll_washington_0250E_10341.pdf

Kramer, M. (1974). *Reality shock: Why nurses leave nursing*. CV Mosby Company.

Leake, D. W., & Stodden, R. A. (2014). Higher education and disability: Past and future of underrepresented populations. *Journal of Postsecondary Education & Disability*, 27(4), 399 - 408. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1059990.pdf>

Lei, L., Guo, S. (2022). Beyond multiculturalism: Revisioning a model of pandemic anti-racism education in post-COVID-19 Canada. *International Journal of Anthropology & Ethnology*, 6(1), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-021-00060-7>

Lingard, L. (2015). Joining a conversation: The problem/gap/hook heuristic. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 4(5), 252-253. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-015-0211-y>

Lourens, H., & Swartz, L. (2016). Experiences of visually impaired students in higher education: Bodily perspectives on inclusive education. *Disability & Society*, 31(2), 240–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1158092>

Mahran, H. & Kamal, M. (2016). Physical disability in old kingdom tomb scenes. *Athens Journal of History*, 2(3) 169-192. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30958/ajhis.2-3-2>

Macdonald, S. J., Deacon, L., Nixon, J., Akintola, A., & Highmore, L. (2018). The invisible enemy: Disability, loneliness and isolation. *Disability & Society*, 33(7), 1138-1159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2018.1476224>

Macklem, T. (2021). *The benefits of an inclusive economy*. Bank of Canada. <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/2021/05/benefits-inclusive-economy>

- Maconi, M. L. (2016). *I'm not broken: Perspectives of students with disabilities on identity-making and social inclusion on a college campus* [Master's thesis, University of South Florida]. Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/etd/6113/>
- Madgett, P. J., & Bélanger, C. (2008). International students: The Canadian experience. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 14(3), 191-207.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13583880802228182>
- Martin, N. & Johnston, V. (2007). *A time for action: Tackling stigma and discrimination*. Mental Health Commission of Canada. https://multiculturalmentalhealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Stigma_TimeforAction_MHCommission.pdf
- Martis, E. (2020). How post-secondary students of colour can feel safe in their new home. *Macleans*. <https://www.macleans.ca/education/university-rankings/how-post-secondary-students-of-colour-can-feel-safe-in-their-new-home/>
- Mbabuike, M. C. (1996). The cosmology of Igbo anthroponyms: Life continuum and liturgy of culture. *Dialectical Anthropology*, 21(1), 47–65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29790419>
- Mckinlay, N. J., Pattison, H. M., & Gross, H. (1996). An exploratory investigation of the effects of a cultural orientation programme on the psychological well-being of international university students. *Higher Education*, 31(3), 379-395.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00128438>
- Meagher, K. (2009). The informalization of belonging: Igbo informal enterprise and national cohesion from below. *Africa Development*, 34(1), 31-46.
<https://doi.org/10.4314/ad.v34i1.57355>
- Meierdirk, C. (2018). The impact of the social environment on the student teacher's agency, *Teaching Education*, 29(1), 33-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2017.1346603>

- Méndez, M. G. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 15(2), 279-287.
<https://doi.org/10.14483/udistrital.jour.calj.2013.2.a09>
- Michalski, J. H., Cunningham, T., & Henry, J. (2017). The diversity challenge for higher education in Canada: The prospects and challenges of increased access and student success. *Diversity Challenge in Canada*, 39, 66-89.
<https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=hjsr>
- Mikkonen, J., & Raphael, D. (2010). *Social determinants of health: The Canadian facts*. York University School of Health Policy and Management.
https://www.thecanadianfacts.org/the_canadian_facts.pdf
- Monday, A. A., & Mogom, I. A. (2016). The challenges of schooling with disabilities in the University of Jos, Nigeria. *FULafia Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 1-22.
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311721427_The_Challenges_of_Schooling_wit
h_Disabilities_in_the_University_of_Jos_Nigeria](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311721427_The_Challenges_of_Schooling_with_Disabilities_in_the_University_of_Jos_Nigeria)
- Moola, F. J. (2015). The road to the ivory tower: The learning experiences of students with disabilities at the University of Manitoba. *Qualitative Research in Education*, 4(1), 45-70. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1111705>
- Muftahu, M. & Razak, N. (2020). Global movement of inclusive higher education policies: The trends and practices in the Nigerian higher education system. *Asia Proceedings of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 254-260. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31580/apss.v6i3.1392>
- Mukharji, B. P. (2017). Embracing academic elitism. *South Asian History and Culture*, 8(3), 354-359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19472498.2017.1350401>

Mullins, L., & Preyde, M. (2013). The lived experience of students with an invisible disability at a Canadian University. *Disability & Society*, 28(2), 147-160.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.752127>

Mullins, L. E., & Mitchell, J. (2021). The transition online: A mixed-methods study of the impact of COVID-19 on students with disabilities in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 11(2), 13-30. <http://hdl.handle.net/10464/15484>

Munro, M. J. (2003). A primer on accent discrimination in the Canadian context. *TESL Canada Journal*, 20(2), 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v20i2.947>

Museus, S. D., Ledesma, M. C., & Parker, T. L. (2015). Systemic racism in higher education. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 42(1), 49-71.

<https://fas.columbia.edu/files/fas/content/ASHE%20Higher%20Education%20Report.%20Nov2015%2C%20Vol.%2042%20Issue%201%2C%20p49-71.%2023p.%20.pdf>

Nardon, L., Kuzhabekova, A., Zhang, H., Schweitzher, L. (2019). Improving immigrant inclusion in the workplace. *Centre for Research on Inclusion at Work*, 1-21.

<https://carleton.ca/criw/wp-content/uploads/Report-Improving-Immigrant-Inclusion-in-the-Workplace.pdf>

Nario-Redmond, M. R. (2019). *Ableism: The causes and consequences of disability prejudice*.

John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119142140>

Netierman, E., Harrison, L., Freeman, A., Shoyele, G., Esses, V., & Covell, C. (2021). Should I stay or should I go? International students' decision-making about staying in Canada.

Journal of International Migration and Integration, 23, 43-60.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-021-00825-1>

New English Translation Bible. (n.d.). <https://netbible.com>

- Newsome, L. K., & Cooper, P. (2016). International students' cultural and social experiences in a British university: Such a hard life it is here. *Journal of International Students*, 6(1), 195-215. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i1.488>
- Niles, C. A. (2018). Who gets in? The Price of acceptance in Canada. *Journal of Critical Thought & Praxis*, 7(1), 148-162. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31274/jctp-180810-96>
- Novo-Corti, M. I. (2010). Attitudes toward disability and social inclusion: An exploratory analysis. *European Research Studies Journal*, 13(3), 83-108. <https://doi.org/10.35808/ersj/288>
- Nsoedo, E. (2019). The Marginalization of the Igbo people in Nigeria's political and economic sectors: What is the way forward? *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 7, 427-437. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.77035>
- Nwachukwu, K. U. (2021). Critical assessment of corrupt practices and its aftermaths on quality education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management*, 3(1), 194-206. [http://www.ijilpm.com.ng/assets/vol.%2C-3\(1\)-nwachukwu.pdf](http://www.ijilpm.com.ng/assets/vol.%2C-3(1)-nwachukwu.pdf)
- Nyangweso, M. (2021). Disability in Africa: A cultural/religious perspective. 1-36. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325642373_Disability_in_Africa_A_CulturalReligious_Perspective
- Obi, F. B. (2007). Institutionalization, Mainstreaming or Inclusion: Challenges for special education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 3(2) 267-273. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ijer/article/view/41680>

- Obiakor, F. E., & Afoláyan M. O. (2012). Analysis and opinion: Building paradigms for the change of special education in Nigeria. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*, 15(1), 44–55. <https://doi.org/10.9782/2159-4341-15.1.44>
- Obiakor, F.E., & Offor, M.T. (2011). Special education provision in Nigeria: Analyzing contexts, problems, and prospects. *International Journal of Special Education*, 26, 25-32. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ921180>
- Odion-Akhaine, S. (2009). The student movement in Nigeria: Antinomies and transformation. *Review of African Political Economy*, 36(121), 427-433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240903211133>
- Oduwole, A. E. (2019). *The state of disability in Nigeria: How society responds to persons with cerebral palsy* [Master's thesis, Saint Mary's University]. DSpace. https://www.library2.smu.ca/bitstream/handle/01/29002/Oduwole_Anuoluwapo_MASTE_RS_2019.pdf
- Ojo, . (2007). Review of the Yoruba in transition: history, values, and modernity. *Africa Today*, 54(2), 151-152.
- Ojogwu, C. N. & Alutu, A. N. G. (2009). Analysis of the learning environment of university students in Nigeria: A case study of University of Benin. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 19(1), 69-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2009.11892693>
- Oliver, M. (2013). The social model of disability: thirty years on. *Disability & Society*, 28(7), 1024-1026. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2013.818773>
- Oliver, M., & Barnes, C. (2010). Disability studies, disabled people and the struggle for inclusion. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 31(5), 547-560. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2010.500088>

- Olubukola, D. (2007). Intellectually retarded education in Nigeria: Past, present, and future. *Essays in Education*, 22(1), 75-77. <https://openriver.winona.edu/eie/vol22/iss1/7/>
- Oluremi, F. D. & Olubukola, O. O. (2013). Impact of facilities on academic performance of students with special needs in mainstreamed public schools in Southwestern Nigeria. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 13(2), 159-167. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1013389>
- Oluwole, A. F. & Ige, A. (2021). Gains and pains in students' unionism in tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria: Way forward. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Education, Technology & Social Strategies*, 8(1), 26-37. <https://doi.org/10.48028/iiprds/ijiretss.v8.i1.03>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2016). *Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability*. <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). *Post-secondary education*. <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/opportunity-succeed-achieving-barrier-free-education-students-disabilities/post-secondary-education>
- Onyibor, M. I. (2020). The role of Chi in self-actualization in traditional Igbo cosmology. *Nnamdi Azikiwe Journal of Philosophy*, 11(1), 84–100. <https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/index.php/najp/article/view/445>
- Oswald, M. & Swart, E. (2011). Addressing South African Pre-service Teachers' Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns Regarding Inclusive Education. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 58(4). 389-403. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2011.626665>

- Ostrove, J., Stewart, A., & Curtin, N. (2011). Social class and belonging: Implications for graduate students' career aspirations. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 82(6), 748-774.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41337169>
- Otakpor, N. (1996). The world is a market-place. *J Value Inquiry*, 30, 521–530.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00148558>
- Overboe, J. (2007). Vitalism: Subjectivity exceeding racism, sexism, and (psychiatric) ableism. *Wagadu*, 4, 23-34. <http://sites.cortland.edu/wagadu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/02/overbow.pdf>
- Pearson, H., & Boskovich, L. (2019). Problematizing disability disclosure in higher education: Shifting towards a liberating humanizing intersectional framework. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 39(1). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v39i1.6001>
- Pfeiffer, D. (2002). The philosophical foundations of disability studies. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 22(2). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v22i2.341>
- Phillip, S., Jayarajan, D., & Thirthalli, J. (2020). Challenges faced by people with disability in a pandemic. In Janardhan R. & T. Jaisoorya, (Eds.), *Mental health in the times of COVID-19 pandemic guidance for general medical and specialised mental health care settings*. (pp. 46-51). National Institute Mental Health & Neurosciences.
<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/COVID19Final2020ForOnline9July2020.pdf>
- Pizzuti-Ashby, J., & Alary, D. G. (2008). *Campus snapshot: Assessing the campus environment through a student lens*. Paper presented at the Association for Institutional Research Conference. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED507068>

- Popoola, B. I., & Alao, K. A. (2006). Secret cults in Nigerian institutions of higher learning: Need for a radical intervention programme. *Journal of School Violence*, 5(2), 73-85.
https://doi.org/10.1300/J202v05n02_06
- Poteet, M., & Gomez, B. (2015). It's both ways: How international students negotiate belonging in local and global contexts. *Journal of New Brunswick Studies*, 6(1).
<https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JNBS/article/view/23061>
- President's Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. (2020). Final Report. *University of Manitoba*. https://umanitoba.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/presidents_task_force_on_edi_final_report.pdf
- Racho, M. M. (2017). *Assessing the cultural effects of neoliberalism on empathy* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Northern Colorado].
<https://digscholarship.unco.edu/dissertations>
- Regan, H., Yeung, J., George, S., & Alfonso, F. (2020, Jan 31). January 31, 2020 coronavirus news. Cable News Network. <https://www.cnn.com/asia/live-news/coronavirus-outbreak-01-31-20-intl-hnk/index.html>
- Rienties, B., Grohnert, T., Kommers, P., Niemantsverdriet, S., & Nijhuis, J. (2011). Academic and social integration of international and local students at five business schools, a cross-institutional comparison. In P. van den Bossche, W. H. Gijsselaers, & R. G. Miller (Eds.), *Building learning experiences in a changing world* (pp. 121-137). (Advances in Business Education and Training (ABET); Vol. 3). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0802-0_8

- Reuter, L. (2017). *Entering the inclusive space: An Autoethnography of a future educator* (Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects, 1025).
https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/1025
- Roberts, E. K. (2019). *Who is missing? A critical analysis of disabled students' subjectivity in an ableist university culture*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia]. UBC Library Open Collections. <https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/stream/pdf/24/1.0378471/4>
- Rodríguez, C., Chavez, C. R., & Klauber, C. (2019). International graduate student challenges and support. *International Research & Review, Journal of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars*, 8(2), 49-64. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1227500.pdf>
- Rutherford, K. (2019). International students describe threats, intolerance while in Sudbury. *CBC News Online*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/diversity-discrimination-international-students-cambrian-laurentian-1.5256577>
- Sachs, D. & Schreuer, N. (2011). Inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education: Performance and participation in student's experiences. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 31(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v31i2.1593>
- Samaha, A. M. (2007). What good is the social model of disability? *University of Chicago Law Review*, 74(4), 1251-1308. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20141862>
- Schartner, A. & Young, T. (2015). Culture Shock or Love at First Sight? Exploring the 'Honeymoon' Stage of the International Student Sojourn. ResearchGate, 1-29.
https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137397478_2
- Schwartz, S. H. (2011). Values: Individual and cultural. In F. J. R. van de Vijver, A. Chasiotis, & S. M. Breugelmans (Eds.), *Fundamental questions in cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 463-493). Cambridge University Press.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272175956> Schwartz S H 2011 Values Individual and cultural In F J R van de Vijver Eds A Chasiotis S M Breugelmans Fundamental questions in cross-cultural psychology pp 463-493 Cambridge Cambridge University Pre

Scott, J. (2000). Rational choice theory. In G. Browning, A. Halcli, & F. Webster (Eds.), *Understanding contemporary society theories of the present* (pp. 126-138). Sage Publications. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446218310.n9>

Scott, S. (2019). Access and participation in higher education: Perspectives of college students with disabilities. *NCCSD Research Brief*, 2(2), 1-25. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED602378.pdf>

Shafiq, F., King, J., & Rontal, R. (2020). Social Isolation and Loneliness. National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. http://www.chrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/SocialIsolationLoneliness_Accessibility.pdf

Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), 1262-1289. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310385943>

Shown, D. G. (1983). *Historical development of special education in Nigeria*. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED258421>.

Simplican, S. C., Leader, G., Kosciulek, J. F., & Leahy, M. (2015). Defining social inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: An ecological model of social networks and community participation. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 38, 18-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2014.10.008>

- Singer, S., & Bacon, J. (2020). Ableism in the academy: A series about disability oppression and resistance in higher education. *Critical Education*, 11(14), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.14288/ce.v11i14.186616>
- Shereen, M. A., Khan, S., Kazmi, A., Bashir, N., & Siddique, R. (2020). COVID-19 infection: Emergence, transmission, and characteristics of human coronaviruses. *Journal of Advanced Research*, 24, 91-98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jare.2020.03.005>.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333-339.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- Stodolska, M. (2005). Implications of the conditioned attitude model of individual discriminatory behavior for discrimination in leisure settings. *Leisure Sciences*, 27(1), 59-74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400590886051>
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271–286. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271>
- Stienstra, D. (2018). Canadian disability policies in a world of inequalities. *Societies*, 8(2), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/soc8020036>
- Subair, S., Okotoni, T., Adebakin, C. A., Azeez, B. (2012). Perceived quality of infrastructure in selected Nigerian universities. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*, 4(1), 111 – 124.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/majohe.v4i1.9>

- Suberu, R. T. A., & Osaghae, E. E. (2005). *A history of identities, violence, and stability in Nigeria*. (CRISE Working Paper No. 6).
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228354552>
- Svendby, R. (2021). Learning by doing it wrong: An autoethnography inviting critical reflection of lecturers' disability awareness. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 26(4), 636-643.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1872528>
- Tamtik, M. & Guenter, M. (2019). Policy analysis of equity, diversity and inclusion strategies in Canadian Universities-How far have we come? *Canadian Journal of Higher Education / Revue canadienne d'enseignement supérieur*, 49(3), 41-56.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1066634ar>
- Tan, T. Q. (2019). Principles of inclusion, diversity, access, and equity. *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 220(2), 30-32. <https://doi.org/10.1093/infdis/jiz198>
- Tarvainen, M. (2019). Ableism and the life stories of people with disabilities. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 21(1), 291–299. <http://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.632>
- Thomson, R. G. (2002). Integrating disability, transforming feminist theory. *NWSA Journal*, 14(3), 1-32. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4316922>
- Tomlinson, K. (2019, June 26). The foreign students who say they were lured to Canada by a lie. *The Globe & Mail*.
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.theglobeandmail.com/amp/canada/article-international-students-coming-to-private-colleges-say-they-were-duped/>
- Trigwell, K., Prosser, M., & Waterhouse, F. (1999). Relations between teachers' approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning. *Higher Education*, 37(1), 57–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1003548313194>

- Uma, K. E., Ikwo, N. A., Obidike, P. C., Ogbuagu, A. R., Ogba, S. E., Ndubuisi, P., & Aniagolu, H. (2019). Eliminating the impact of poor governance and migration through economic transformation in Nigeria. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 58 (2), 83-102.
- University of Manitoba – Accessibility. (n.d).
https://umanitoba.ca/admin/vp_admin/ofp/ohrcm/accessibility/
- University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020. (n.d). *Taking our place*.
<https://umanitoba.ca/sites/default/files/2020-06/um-strategic-plan-2015-2020.pdf>
- Uweru, B. C., & Ubrurhe, J. O. (Eds.). (2000). *Readings in general studies: Nigerian peoples and cultures*. General Studies Department, Delta State University.
- Walford, G. (2004). Finding the limits: Autoethnography and being an Oxford University proctor. *Qualitative Research*, 4, 403-417. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794104047238>
- Waterfield, B., Beagan, B. B., & Weinberg, M. (2017). Disabled academics: A case study in Canadian universities. *Disability & Society*, 33(3), 327-348.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2017.1411251>
- White, C. L., & Burke, P. J. (1987). Ethnic role identity among black and white college students: An interactionist approach. *Sociological Perspectives*, 30(3), 310–331.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1389115>
- Wicks, D., & Bradshaw, P. (1999). Gendered organizational cultures in Canadian work organizations: Implications for creating an equitable workplace. *Management Decision*, 37(4), 372-381. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251749910269429>
- Winkelman, M. (1994). Cultural Shock and Adaptation. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73(2), 121-126. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1994.tb01723.x>

- Wilson, J. D. (2017). Reimagining disability and inclusive education through universal design for learning. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 37(2). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v37i2.5417>
- Wolbring, G., & Lillywhite, A. (2021). Equity/equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in Universities: The case of disabled people. *Societies*, 11(2), 1-34. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc11020049>
- Wong, E. H.-S. (2012). Not welcome: A critical analysis of ableism in Canadian immigration policy from 1869 to 2011. *Critical Disability Discourses*, 4, 1-27. <https://cdd.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cdd/article/view/34877>
- Xiao, M. (2021). Chinese international graduate students at Canadian universities: Language barriers, cultural identities and perceived problems of engagement. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1941318>
- Zaid, Y. A., & Zaid, Y. (2017). The exclusion of persons with visual impairment in Nigerian academic libraries' websites. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, (e-journal). 1601 . <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/189476139.pdf>
- Zhou, P., Yang, X. L., Wang, X. G., Hu, B., Shi, Z. L. (2020). A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin. *Nature*, 579, 270–273. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2012-7>
- Zachernuk, P. S. (1998). African history and imperial culture in colonial Nigerian schools. *Africa*, 68, 484 - 505.