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HISTORY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Inclusive education and sustainable development goals: A study of the physically challenged in Nigeria

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Abstract: The objective of this paper centres on quality, equitable and inclusive education for all, which underscores SDG 4. This is because the importance and linkage of education to the development of any society cannot be over-emphasised. It argues that for a society to develop, education must be inclusive (including the physically challenged). It examines the prospect of inclusive education within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with particular reference to goal number four. It contextualizes this within the challenges facing education system in Nigeria. The paper adopts quantitative method of enquiry. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 188 were retrieved and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0) software. Preliminary findings suggest that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs 4) in Nigeria's education system towards the physically challenged is in serious jeopardy and requires immediate policy revalidation. The study concludes

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This volume is a follow-up to a special edition addressing Covenant University's perspectives on the achievement of SDGs-2030 (Amoo, 2018). Hence, end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) era in 2015 immediately succeeded by the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September of the same year in New York, United States by a coalition of national, regional, international and sectorial actors and stakeholders marked an important turning point for Africa (D'Alessandro & Zulu, 2017, p. 8). This was due to the dismal performance of many economies and sectors in Africa regarding the implementation of the MDGs which attracted global condemnation and criticism. Nigeria, being one of the key players in regional politics and indeed, one of Africa's regional hegemons (Folarin, Ibieta, & Chidozie, 2015, p. 3) was the worst hit. The authors of this paper argue that sustainable and inclusive education for all (SDG, 4), especially the physically challenged presents an interesting development trajectory for the country.

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that for a meaningful development to be achieved by Nigeria, every citizen (physically challenged inclusive), must have access to knowledge, skills and information.

Subjects: International Political Economy; International Politics; International Relations

Keywords: Education system; inclusive education; physically challenged; sustainable development; Nigeria

1. Introduction

This paper underscores the primacy of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), especially in relation to the indispensability of education at all levels in addressing global problems. SDG (4) ensures that both equitable and quality education as well as inclusion is available to all which will, in turn, promote opportunities for those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable. According to Bajaj and Chiv (2009, p. 9) education is not just an end in itself it is likewise an important instrument for realizing changes in information, qualities and practices and ways of life required to accomplish sustainability and stability among and within nations. Similarly, education has been viewed as the best tool that can be acquired to realize desirable changes. Aminu (1995) stated that for a nation or society to develop its financial, human and sociological resources, the nation must invest in education. This is because education is fundamental to the development of any society. He further stressed that education provides people with the necessary knowledge to help develop a nation or society. This explains why the Nigerian government introduced the policy of attaining national development through quality education.

Fafunwa (2004) sees education as an important curriculum which is used in developing a child's physical skill, character, intellectual skill as well as vocational skill. Another important factor of education is that it gives the physically challenged the feeling of acceptance to their society enabling them to develop normally without viewing themselves as outcasts. The United Nation Development Program (2018) however stated that there might be some limitations to accessible and quality education for all because of issues such as poverty, armed conflicts and other unforeseen circumstances as well as emergencies which hinder the agenda of SDG (4). Ochoyi and Donald (2008) argued that education is a veritable tool for the development of both the individuals and the state. It is a process that involves the spread of valuable knowledge, planned activities and skills that help individuals in the pursuit of national development.

Etuk, Ering, and Ajake (2012 p. 178) defined education as a basic tool for achieving development at all levels. They argued that "education is the process of acquiring new values and skills for the purpose of effective functioning in the society". Adeyanju (2010) stated that development cannot take place in human society without education, and conversely, no lasting peace and security can be accomplished without development (cited in Anaduaka & Okafor, 2013, p. 152). This is to imply that for development to occur in a society; both individuals and the state should have access to quality education. Education, therefore, becomes the indices for measuring the development capacity of both the individuals and state (Daura & Audu, 2015, p. 72). It becomes an important social commodity that is desired by all, but relatively not affordable by all either on account of scarce resources or ill-equipped teaching personnel. Some scholars view education as a right to all which is supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which argues that "everyone has the right to education, and that education should be made available to all" (cited in Unagha, 2008, p. 4).

According to Bryant, Smith, and Bryant (2008) inclusive education or inclusion as implemented in the industrial world (United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Canada, etc.) can be interpreted as the practice and philosophy of educating special children in regular schools. This is to say that all students have equal rights to learn. Anupriya and Salim (2014) stated that the basic reason for inclusive education is to encourage those students with disabilities to be independent and also to benefit from educational resources, practices and activities for all. Lipsky and Gartner (1997)

stated that the practice of inclusion stands for equal right of every child to have quality education irrespective of his or her differences. Therefore, stating that children requiring special attention should be able to learn in regular classrooms which will boost their confidence, while regular students learn how to accept children with different characters, temperament and talents. The idea behind this is to shun discrimination and stigmatization from their early years. United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) stated that “persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live” (United Nations, 2006: art 24, no.2b).

UNESCO and World Education Forum (2015) recognized the global momentum of achieving accessible and quality education for children with special need. This awareness has grown steadily and most recently metamorphosed into an objective embraced within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (United Nations, 2015). The concept of inclusive education is that which the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) developed. Therefore, inclusive education is a process of educating all children in regular schools, not just children with disabilities (UNESCO). Herein-lies the major challenge confronting inclusive education in Nigeria.

Thus, the major objective of this paper is to examine the level of preparedness of the Nigerian state in domesticating the SDGs 4: (quality, equitable, inclusive and lifelong learning opportunities and education), specifically regarding the country’s National Education Policy as it affects the physically challenged. With this objective in view, the following research questions are answered:

- (1) What is the National Education Policy on the physically challenged in Nigeria?
- (2) Has Nigeria successfully integrated the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into her National Education Policy?
- (3) Are there prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030?

The paper is divided into six sections. Following the introduction, the literature review and theoretical framework are presented. The third section explains the importance and benefits of inclusive education in Nigeria. It further examines Nigeria’s policy on inclusive education. The fourth section addresses the research methodology adopted for the study. The fifth section presents the data analyses and results of findings. The final section concludes the study and proffers policy-relevant recommendations.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

This section examines important discussions and research on Sustainable Development Goal 4 and inclusive education. It also reviews Nigeria’s education policy and how it has been implemented to accommodate inclusive education. According to the United Nations (2015), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 ensures equitable, quality education and inclusion as well as provides a long-term learning opportunity for all. The idea behind SDG4 is to highlight the importance of educating special children despite their challenges. It is pertinent to know that the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) charges the society by guaranteeing that children with special needs and the physically challenged can gain access to free inclusive education both at the primary and secondary schools with the same advantage as their peers (United Nations, 2006). On this basis, Nigeria’s education policy adopted what is known as inclusive education whereby everyone benefits and discrimination is reduced among the physically challenged.

Garuba (2003) argued that the best way of eradicating stigmatization and discrimination is by creating an inclusive environment where all people despite their differences are accepted. This can be done through education, creating awareness and building inclusive societies. It is important to note that education also goes a long way in changing the mind-set of both the physically challenged and the physically fit child. This is because, the physically challenged are able to see

themselves being accepted to a society despite their differences while the physically fit encourage acceptance which reduces discrimination in the society.

Staub and Peck (2003) however defined inclusion as the permanent allocation of special need children (physically challenged) despite their challenges such as (dyslexia, cerebral palsy, autism, crippled, deaf, dumb, etc.) in regular classrooms. These authors believe in the policy where special need children attend regular schools as they would have attended if they were not physically challenged or impaired. They further state that the physically challenged should not be excluded from education as well as a normal environment. Therefore, it promotes the idea that each child is to be in a regular classroom and there should be no circumstance whereby they should be exempted from that environment. However, in a situation where the child is mentally ill, he may have to be taken to a special school or care.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), special education is the education of both adults and children who find it rather difficult or have learning difficulty due to their challenges which includes sight impairment, hearing impairment, handicapped, social maladjustment as well as mental illness. These impediments sometimes occur due to conditions of birth, mental, position and physical health patterns or accidents in later life. It is pertinent to understand that inclusion is about assisting mainstream schools to accept inclusive education so they can breach the barriers and educate children as well as youths despite their challenges. Ainscow (2004) stated that inclusive education and inclusion is one of the critical problems of education in the world, which is mostly situated in developing states which includes Nigeria. Inclusive education is understood to be the approach of educating special need children within a regular school environment.

The National Policy on Education (2004) buttressed the fact that special education is formed as a different type of education given to people (both young and old) with special needs (in Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004. p, 47). Vitello and Mithaug (1998) stated that it is important to take into consideration that the major reason of inclusive education and inclusion is to eradicate segregation and discrimination which includes (unpleasant attitudes) from the society towards the physically challenged. Inclusive education introduced diversity in learning to help not only the physically challenged but those who are of different cultural backgrounds, lifestyle and so on. Inclusion breaches the stigmatization and discrimination of being different thereby enabling accessible quality education for all (cited in Ainscow, 2004).

Education for All (EFA) agenda of the 1990 states that every person which includes “child, youth and adult should be able to benefit from educational opportunities which would meet their basic learning needs” (World Conference on Education for All [WCEFA], 1990). During the Dakar World Education Forum (2000) the issue of exclusion and marginalization was seriously addressed stating that the most important and effective way to challenge discrimination and implement inclusion effectively is by reflecting inclusive education in government funding and national policies (UNESCO, 2000).

Thus, Boyi (2013) argues that to achieve sustainable national development of state or society as it may be, there must be a high level of education. However, Fafunwa (1974) argues that the knowledge given to the younger generation which enables them to develop positive attitudes and good attributes is one of the evidences of quality education in the society. While Amaele (2011, p. 7) sees education as the complete development of a child by using adequate techniques and methods in accordance to his or her ability and area of interest so that he or she will not be left behind and also the child will be able to survive and add to the development of the society.

Development theory was adopted in this work. This is because the development of a society is a key instrument in measuring the growth of that society. However, the ideology of development varies. According to Kolawole, Adeigbe, Zaggi, and Owonibi (2014) the development of each society has its own method or stages of development which it has to undergo. The achievement of these stages can be traced to features such as communication or interaction with various societies

externally or internally, culture, leadership, management, individual goals as well as the collective goals of citizens. Therefore, the ideology behind the development of a society emphasises on the change as a process of what is to occur in a higher state. Therefore, development theory simply tries to explain how the society changes and factors or instruments used to implement change, as well as understanding the process of change (Amsden, 2005).

3. The importance of inclusive education in Nigeria

The effectiveness of education cannot be over-emphasised. It is important to everyone in the society or community. The Federal Government in Nigeria accepted the integration of special education (education of the disabled) through the National Policy of Education (1981 p. 3); “integration is the most realistic form of education” for both the physically abled and the physically challenged. Integration makes the physically challenged feel that they are members of a society. However, many governments have not conducted adequate research on the physically challenged. One of the obstacles of integration in Nigeria is the inadequate facilities and equipment, which constitute a barrier to the proper training and adjustment of disabled people, especially children. Education is important in the society because it contains a curriculum that helps in the development of a child’s skill either physically, character-wise, intellectually and also inculcates discipline and helps in the upbringing of a child (Fafunwa, 2004).

Magrab (2003) described inclusion and inclusive education as the method that acknowledge the difference in a child and accept the child in a regular school despite the barrier or physical challenges affecting the child to receive quality education. However, most Nigerians are sceptical about educating the physically challenged. Some are of the view that they should have special education, while others feel they should either be educated at home or not attend regular schools due to discrimination and superstitious beliefs. Adamechi and Romaine (2000) observed that the purpose of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) is the provision of compulsory and free education for every young Nigerian child at primary and junior secondary school age. This provision is also extended to the physically challenged.

3.1. Benefits of inclusive education in Nigeria

Mitchell and Brown (1991) observed that the benefits of inclusive education include the integration of the physically challenged to develop his or her learning ability to be able to interact in his or her community which is suitable for the progress of that physically challenged. Ferguson (1996) states that the physically challenged will function more effectively when they are included in various schools, communities and environments. The National Policy on Education (2008) argued that educating the physically challenged should be in a conducive and less restrictive environment, and also the training of special need children should empower them to accomplish their long-term goals. Apart from the fact that education is one of the key instruments in attaining change, it is also one of the greatest investments a nation can make for the development of its human resources, as well as improve her knowledge economy (Aminu, 1995).

3.2. Nigeria’s policy on inclusive education

According to Ezewu, Fasokun, Akpe, and Oluduro (1981), education has a great impact on the upbringing of a child. It also plays an important role in the development of Nigerian children and by extension, the development of the society at large. He further argued that equal opportunity should be given to every Nigerian child in terms of education so that he/she can develop according to his/her ability. Ajuwon (2012) argued that inclusive education is important to the development of Nigeria. This is because it enhances the education system in Nigeria which extends to different sectors of the economy. He further stressed that the primary reason for inclusion is the benefit that special students gain and experience they get in a regular school which includes education with peers without disability. However, some inclusionists are of the view that separate classrooms should be allocated only when a child impairment or disability is severe and the use of regular class for that child cannot be accomplished.

(Ajuwon, 2008) also stated that in Nigeria today, there is a debate in which parents of special children, special teachers, stakeholders and policymakers challenge the benefit of inclusion which has been influenced by the principle of inclusion which states that: all children should be catered for in regular school despite their challenges. According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1994, p. 9), the orientation of inclusion in regular schools is an effective means of building a society without discrimination. (UNESCO, 1994, Art 18, P 17) argued that education policy from the local to national should ensure that physically challenged children are in the same school as their abled peers. With consideration of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2004, p.49) the integration of inclusion in schools is as a response to the needs of special children who clamour to attend regular schools, thus, making the reality of inclusive education in Nigeria a possibility. The National Policy on Education, however, buttressed that inclusive education should not be but rather separate education system should be created for those who are physically challenged and impaired (NPE 2004, p.47). Incidentally, this policy contradicts the international practice of inclusion, where inclusive education is seen "as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners" (UNESCO, 2000).

Since the first policy on education, there have been different approaches which the main goal is to improve inclusive education for special need children; it includes the creation of better infrastructures for special need children, employment of special trained teachers and therapist, creation of awareness of by the government, and adequate funding for the cause of helping the physically challenged. Section 7 of NPE (2008) stresses that the need for inclusion in Nigerian schools is very important. The Federal Government of Nigeria emphasizes the need to educate all because it is a necessity to attain national development.

Education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument for change: any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an education revolution. (FGN, 2004, p. 8)

According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, special education was designed to reach the need of specific individuals in the society which includes the disabled children, the disadvantaged children and the gifted (talented) children. This is because the special need children face some challenges in ordinary classrooms (FGN, 2004: pp. 47-48). It is expected that this policy enables quality, free, accessible and inclusive education for all. This will include, but not limited to the integration of inclusive education as well as special classes into regular schools., monitoring of special children to ensure they are given adequate welfare and planning programme, trained specialist and personnel should be recruited so they can be able to detect their impairment if not physically challenged. Also, it is imperative that the structures of special schools which are inclusive have a form of universal designs (Adetoro, 2014). However, it is pertinent to understand that the rise of separate schools for the physically challenged defies the policy of inclusion. Adetoro (2014) further argued that some special school is already marginalized to the impairment or the challenges of which cause more stigmatization and discrimination, for example, handi-capped school, school for the blind, school for the dumb and deaf, among others.

4. Research methodology

The study adopted the quantitative method of enquiry. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 188 were retrieved and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0) software. Survey design was used in the study combined with a simple random sampling technique. The sources of data were both primary and secondary. The primary data which were the copies of the questionnaire were supported with secondary sources from books, relevant journal articles, periodicals, online sources and unpublished works. The respondents comprised stakeholders from both regular schools and special schools. Also included were officials of Ministry of Education, Non-Governmental Agencies, National Hospital in Abuja and Igbobi Orthopaedic Hospital Lagos. Specifically, the population of the study included the physically challenged, regular

teachers, special teachers, social workers, non-governmental agencies, relatives of the physically challenged, officials of the Ministry of Education, physiotherapist and speech therapist.

5. Data analysis and results

In this section, the research questions raised in this work are answered. The work examines and tests whether inclusive education for all as stated in Sustainable Development Goals (4) is adopted in Nigeria’s National Education Policy to accommodate the physically challenged or other Nigerians with various forms of physical impairments or disabilities.

Interpretation: Table 1 is the distribution of respondents according to their gender. The table shows that 54.8% of the respondents are male while 45.2% are female. This shows that majority of the respondents are male.

Interpretation: Table 2 shows that the ages between 18 and 25 years constitute 59% of the respondents while those between 25 and 40 years old constitute 35.6%. Ages between 41 and above, however, constitute 5.3% of the respondents. This shows that majority of the respondents are between the ages of 18 and 25.

Interpretation: The marital distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 3. The table shows that 87.2% of the respondents are single while 10.6% are married and 2.1% of the respondent belongs to others which may be separated, divorced, widow or widower. This shows that majority of the respondents are single.

Table 1. Gender distribution of respondents

Gender		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	103	54.8
	Female	85	45.2
	Total	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by age

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
Valid 18–25	111	59
Valid 25–40	67	35.6
Valid 41- Above	10	5.3
Valid Total	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital Status		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Single	164	87.2
	Married	20	10.6
	Others	4	2.1
	Total	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by occupation

Occupations		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Public	112	59.6
	Private	51	27.1
	Others	25	13.3
	Total	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Interpretation: Table 4 shows the occupational distribution of the respondents. As indicated in the table, 59.6% are employees of the public sector while 27.1% constitute of private sector employees and others constitute 13.3%. This shows that majority of the respondents are Public sector employees.

Interpretation: Table 5 is the distribution of respondents on their physical ability. The table shows that 2.7% of the respondents are physically challenged while 97.3% are physically alright. This shows that majority of the respondent are not physically challenged. The inclusion of the physically challenged among the respondents is to enable balanced and robust information concerning the subject of the research.

Interpretation: Table 6 is the distribution of respondents on their relationship to a physically challenged. The table shows that 77.1% of the respondents are related to a physically challenged person while 22.9% are not related to a physically challenged person. This shows that majority of the respondents are related to someone who is physically challenged.

The frequency table shows that 5 (i.e., 3%) of the respondents are physically challenged while 97% are not physically challenged. On the other hand, 145, representing 77% of the respondents are related to a physically challenged while 43 (23%) of the respondent are not related to the physically challenged.

5.1. Inclusive education and accessibility of education for the physically challenged in Nigeria

The cardinal objective of this study is to examine the level of preparedness of the Nigerian state in domesticating the SDGs 4: (quality, equitable, inclusive and lifelong learning opportunities and education), specifically regarding the country’s National Education Policy as it affects the physically challenged. This section presents and interprets data gathered from the respondents through the

Table 5. Frequency distribution on physical ability

Physical Ability		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	183	97.3
	No	5	2.7
	Total	188	100.0

Source: Field work 2018

Table 6. Frequency distribution on relation to a physically challenged

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	145	77.1
	No	43	22.9
	Total	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 7. Frequency table showing inclusive education and accessibility of education for the physically challenged in Nigeria

Inclusive education and accessibility of education for the physically challenged	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
I am aware of access to quality education for all.	21	11.2	38	20.2	15	8.0	54	28.7	60	31.9
Quality access to education and education for all is covered in Nigeria's Educational Policy.	22	11.7	28	14.9	31	16.5	52	27.7	55	29.3
Physically Challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education in Nigeria.	3	1.6	0	0	10	5.3	29	15.4	146	77.7
Special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged in Nigeria.	20	10.6	47	25	36	19.1	43	22.9	42	22.3
Physically challenged should be allowed into regular classrooms in Nigeria.	6	3.2	10	5.3	37	19.7	75	39.9	60	31.9
Should Nigeria integrate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy?	16	8.5	18	9.6	42	22.3	56	29.8	26	29.8
Physically challenged should not have access to education in Nigeria.	166	88.3	18	9.6	4	2.1	0	0	0	0
There are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged in Nigerian schools.	53	28.2	64	34	34	18.1	22	11.7	16	8.5
Special teachers should be assigned to physically challenged in regular schools in Nigeria.	8	4.3	9	4.8	14	7.4	79	42	79	42
Are there prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on Inclusive Education for all by 2030?	70	37.2	67	35.6	24	12.8	15	8	12	6.4

Source: Fieldwork (2018)

questionnaire addressing specific research questions raised in the work. The data are presented in frequency tables as shown in Table 7.

6. Discussion and interpretation results

Table 7 represents the data regarding inclusive education and accessibility of Education for the Physically Challenged in Nigeria. The first row shows that 11.2% of the respondents strongly disagree about the awareness of access to quality education for all, 20.2% disagree that they are aware of access to quality education for all, while 8.0% are undecided about the awareness of access to quality education for all. However, 28.7% agree that they are aware of access to quality education for all and 31.9% strongly agree that they are aware of access to quality education for all. From the interpretation, it can be seen that the majority strongly agree that they are aware of access to quality education for all.

The second row shows that 11.7% of the respondents strongly disagree that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy, 14.9% disagree that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy, 16.5% respondents are undecided that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy, 27.7% respondent, however, agree that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy and 29.3% strongly agree that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy. This is to show that majority of the respondents agree that there is quality access to education and education for all in Nigeria's Education Policy.

The third row interprets the data stating that 1.6% of the respondent strongly disagree that the physically challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education, 5.3% are undecided if the physically challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education, 15.4% agree that the physically challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education and 77.7% strongly agree that the physically challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education. From this interpretation, one can see that majority of the respondents strongly agree and of the view that the physically challenged should be able to gain quality and inclusive education.

The fourth row on the frequency table shows that 10.6% of the respondent strongly disagree that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged, 25% disagree that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged, 19.1% are undecided that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged. While 22.9% agree that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged and 22.3% strongly agree that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged. This shows that majority of the respondent agree and of the view that special schools should be separate from regular schools for the physically challenged looking at the close margin between the respondents who agree and strongly agreed (22.9% and 22.3%)

The fifth row on the frequency table shows that 3.2% of the respondents strongly disagree that the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom, 5.3% disagree that the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom, 19.7% are undecided if the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom. However, 39.9% agree that the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom, and 31.9% strongly agree that the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom. This shows that majority of the respondents agree that the physically challenged should be allowed in regular classroom.

The sixth row interprets the frequency table which shows that 8.5% strongly disagree that Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy, 9.6% disagree that Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy, 22.3% are undecided if Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with

Disabilities into her National Education Policy 29.8% agree that Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy while 29.8% strongly agree that Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy. This shows that majority of the respondents agree that Nigeria should integrate the United Nation Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities into her National Education Policy.

The seventh row interprets that 88.3% strongly disagree that the physically challenged should not have access to education, 9.6% disagree that the physically challenged should not have access to education, while 2.1% are undecided if physically challenged should not have access to education. From this interpretation, it shows that majority of respondents strongly disagree that the physically challenged should not have access to education.

The eighth row interprets that 28.2% strongly disagree that there are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged, 34% disagree that there are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged, 18% are undecided if there are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged. However, 11.7% agree while 8.5% strongly agree that there are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged. From this interpretation, it shows that majority of the respondents disagree that there are adequate special teachers for the physically challenged.

The ninth interprets that 4.3% of the respondents strongly disagree that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenge in regular schools, 4.8% disagree that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenge in regular schools, 7.4% are undecided that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenge in regular schools. However, 42% agree that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenge in regular schools and 42% strongly agree that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenge in regular schools. From the interpretation, it shows that majority of the respondents both agree and strongly agree that special teachers should be assigned to physically challenged in regular schools.

The tenth row finally interprets that 37.2% strongly disagree that there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030, 35.6% disagree that there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030, while 12.8% are undecided if there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030. However, 8% of the respondents agree that there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030 and 6.4% strongly agree that there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030. From the interpretation, it is evident that majority of the respondents strongly disagree that there are prospects of Nigeria domesticating the SDGs 4 on inclusive education for all by 2030.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

This paper has clearly demonstrated using empirical method the relevance of SDG (4) in furthering education agenda in Nigeria. It particularly addressed the need to integrate special children (children with disabilities) into regular schools in Nigeria in order to achieve the inclusive and equitable target of the SDG (4). In essence, these categories of people are to be accepted into society as well as help them develop their special abilities with their peers. It also shows the importance of education to all in Nigeria despite the nature of the pupil. It has reviewed the National Education Policy in Nigeria, and argued that while it has recognized and embraced the cause of the physically challenged, it still has a lot of work to do to meet the target of the SDG (4), which is inclusive education for all by 2030. Therefore, for Nigeria to have fully implemented the SDG (4), inclusion should be accepted in all schools which will foster the reduction of stigmatization and discrimination among special children (Ajuwon & Sykes, 1988).

The paper recommends that the need for a policy reform in Nigeria towards inclusive education is important, which will remove the concept of special schools to foster full social integration of special

children (children with disabilities) into regular schools. Also, the stereotyping of disabled people should be discouraged. Adequate facilities for the handicapped should be provided. According to (Agunloye, Pollingue, Davou, & Osagie, 2011) the importance of a special teacher cannot be over-emphasised; therefore, the policy of education should also include hiring trained special teachers in regular schools which will help inclusive education. Also, it is important that parents of the disabled have an important role to play in the lives of their children and should avoid discriminating against the child by either enrolling him or her in special schools or no school at all. In all, the following should be noted: Inclusive education should be enforced and special kids who have a hard time learning should be in special schools; Provision of specialists in areas concerning the physically challenged such as speech therapist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist should be considered; Government should encourage training of special teachers in regular schools which will enable and encourage the special kid to go to regular schools; It is important to also create awareness in education curriculum for special need children and youth so they do not see themselves as outcast of the society and the society should encourage special education as an occupation and it should be embedded in the constitution of the country.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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