

## CHAPTER NINE

### PHILOSOPHICAL BASES OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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#### **Introduction**

Special education is generally described as a specialized educational scheme designed to cater for children and adults with some degree of deviation. The deviation may be so significant that the individual's, growth and development is so impaired, which certainly affects the ability to function adequately within the community and school. This shortcoming may result in misgiving towards them in society and school. Therefore, the logic of special education is to activate the residual ability. For instance, individuals' sources of knowledge through sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste are not wholly diminished at the same time in an individual. This means, if the environment and psychology of the people are approximately attuned, the incumbents, according to FRN (2014), have "learning difficulties of different kinds, of handicaps, blindness, deafness, mental retardation, social maladjustment, limb deformity or malformation, social accidents" and a host of others; would palpably suffer less stigmatization and devaluation. This is however not the case as societal actions and attitudes towards exceptional children, unexpectedly treat including those children with special learning needs with bias. Instructively, the degree and the extent of deviations are crucial and critical elements which calls for emotional management. This management process may reasonably justify deployment of additional services in order to enable the incumbents cope with their academic pursuits. Which way best should society handle these schemes designed to reach the un-served or under-served special needs children?

Moreover, it is generally believed that education is the most important agency for placing people in the various positions in society. This is because education, is responsible for "sorting out" who occupies what positions and on what criteria in society. Adewole (1994) indicated that the exercise of stratifying people in society begin at the school level, where on the basis of one selection Processes, students are sorted into major compartment of education. Intricately, in most cases, the way the sorting exercise is carried out, affect individuals especially

what becomes of them at the societal level. In respect to persons living with disability (properly christened exceptional persons), therefore, the sorting function of education system is a very important one to consider. This is because, it relates to a systematic consideration of the distribution of education products which itself has veritable role to play in special needs education. Arguably, sometimes the distribution process unwittingly takes for granted individual differences. Morally it is argued that, individual differences in humans need to be adequately catered for if a child is to realise full potentials in life. But who should create the necessary enabling environment, when evidently; civil society organisations and voluntary groups are the major service producers? The fear is, without a philosophy intervention may result in injustice of the second-order; "treating unequals equally and equals unequally".

The phenomenon of equal educational opportunity, although a sociological matters has a huge philosophical bent, because of the perennial and thorny garb it wears, particularly with distribution of opportunities; and education is considered a starting point (as earlier indicated). Akinpelu (1981) paints this picture rightly as he opined that the other disadvantages in society are blamed on the educational disparity of society. Simply cast, the school as an institution exist to provide the right atmosphere and proper direction for the growth and personality development, to change their personalities by increasing their knowledge as well as cultivate their aesthetic taste, to tone their characters, and to equip them with suitable skill; (Akinpelu 1984). Then, this concern forms the basis of worry for special needs education for people living with disabilities.

### **Thesis Statement**

The aim/objective of this chapter is to provide an enlightened understanding of the essence of special needs education from the philosophical perspective, through explication of core themes notably the theoretical framework, which is, the distributive justice principles annunciated by Aristotle, in order to lay bare the logical geography of philosophy and special needs education (a synoptic view). To establish that special needs education is a moral duty of society and not a humanitarian exercise. The chapter also explains the relevance of philosophy of education for special needs education in Nigeria and a conclusion. The gap the work intended to fill is the moral trajectory that anchors on the means-end relationship between the principles of equal educational opportunities. It is the believe of these writers that making available reasonable access to education for citizens is morally defensible, because *mutatis - mutandis*, individuals' advancement in life makes a huge economic and social difference.

### **The Conceptual Framework**

This discourse is based on Aristotle's theory of distributive justice, contained in the Nichomachean ethics. That justice is seen to be done in relational terms among people who are free and relatively equal to one another. Furthermore, two

forms of justices exist, namely distributive justice (also known as equality of proportion) and corrective justice. The high points of distributive justice include firstly, men may receive shares, either equal or unequal to the share of others. Meaning, treatment should be proportional to the extent to which individuals differs in relevant respects. However, the cannon of relevant respect may or may not be definitive enough for easy application. It however demonstrates inherent intention towards equity for equals, to be treated equally and unequals to be treated unequally. Therefore the principle offers bright light in dealing with unequal members of the society who are perceived not equal. This principle can be applied in the delivery of services amongst the “varied groups” of people living with disabilities on the one hand, and those who are not significantly affected by any impairment on the other hand. Interestingly distributive justice is assumed to be feasible once valuation of the members of a society are given due regards to their relative worth.

The second principle, “corrective justice”; has to do with restoring a violated equality. It is also known as remedial justice. By nature, human beings are not endowed in the same respects; some people are advantaged, while some are disadvantaged. Therefore, the application of the principle of corrective or remedial justice entails, ensuring that differences are compensated through a system of reverse action in which those who previously benefited from the violated equality are made to forfeit certain advantages which those who suffered are made to benefit now, in proportion to their advantages and disadvantages. The qualms with the proportional implementation of gains or losses on the one side are visible and tangible. The reverse discrimination is illogic. In addition, the theory is an abstract account of the basis on which equality or inequality of persons can be determined. The theory admits that in the process of distribution, justice should be administered on the basis of merit; but some people with dubious and clandestine motives may come up with crooked criterion as merit (which in itself is injustice). And when two higher values clash, which one do we appeal to?

The theory teaches educators to be judicious in applying justice, especially where there are no other higher authorities to appeal to. By this practice, we would avoid instituting second-order injustice, especially with reference to “correctional justice”. Disability is/may be accidental and provisional arrangements should provide as safety measures, including provision of appropriate education services delivery. Importantly, humans who suffer from one form of challenge(s) or another have ability or abilities which should be ably harnessed with favourable attitudes. The researcher argued that philosophical mindset can influence positively adjustment patterns of exceptional children and adults and so face their respective conditions with hope.

## **A synopsis of Philosophy and Special Needs Education**

The cradle of all learning started as philosophy, the first order discipline while other disciplines, such as education are the second-order. In the first order function of philosophy, the philosopher is not interested in ready-made answers, but in that which has no standard or ready-made answers. By the craft of philosophers, careful and thoughtful questions are asked and which needs answers. Then, the answers provided are examined to see how coherent, logical, rational and systematic they are to the question(s). Describing philosophical activity, Ali (2019) asserts that philosophers: attempt to rationalize experience, attempt to see reality steadily, attempt to understand all that comes within human experience(s) and attempt effort to comprehend the structure and purpose of the universe as well as man's place in it and a search for ultimate reality. The answers philosophers offer are normative or tentative and valuational.

Thus, philosophy by the foregoing description is a matter of rational argument aimed at improving our existing stock of knowledge on any subject whatsoever (Akinpelu, 2002). This is why it is not uncommon to read in literature about philosophy of science, philosophy of religion, philosophy of Sociology, philosophy of education and a host of other disciplines. Each of these disciplines developed a tradition which assists practitioners to rationally put forward what philosophy is (as a first order in their respective disciplines). Apparently, philosophers come from different environments and destinations, the fundamental questions they address come from mankind's heritage of ideas concerning the physical objects, the meaning and meaninglessness of life and the nature of God. Secondly, in man's cultural enterprise, exists acquired ideas, concerning the cosmic and onto-logical realms; these acquired ideas like, evil-spirit, witches, bad luck and existence of ghosts are common in African sociology. In view of these cultural beliefs about these extra-mental entities created a cast state of curiosity and the desire to know whether or not witches exist or not? Beyond doubt, responses we give are most likely to depend largely on the individual cultural orientations. Thus, we may agree that every individual has a philosophy even though the individual may not be aware of these scared facts (Jimba, 2018).

Remarkably, for instance, Sodipo (2006) posits that philosophy should be seen as a reflective and critical thinking about the concepts and principles we use to organize our experiences in morals, in religion, in social and political life, in law, in psychology, in history and in natural sciences. This position agrees with Dewey's postulation which admits that the social function of philosophy by inference is to free man's mind from bias and prejudice and enlarged their perceptions of the world about them. Meaning, persons as persons must engage reason(s) rather than emotions, culture, tradition and a host of others and by so doing, may likely develop a refined perspective about people living with disabilities (PLWD) and thus engage in activities that would enhance humaneness in ability and capacity instead of focusing attention on disability only. What shuts our reasonableness in life in most cases is tradition, superstition and the environment. Certainly a

philosophic minded person can triumph over these fallacies which are in all ramifications obstacles to clear thinking.

Accordingly, Jimba (2018) submits that philosophy serves as an aid to life for we are planted in a world where we are required to think and reflect on the nature of the cosmic, the destiny of the humans, the idea of right or wrong and the issues of life and death. Agreeing with this description, is the fact that: [Philosophy seeks to understand the general principles underlying all reality, the universe, man, human affairs, issues, problems and the non-human. In line with this submission, Asiegbu (1988), argued that, society must respond to the exigencies of our time meaningfully through formulation of ways of understanding events, solving problems, accepting situations, formulating statements, encapsulating our collective experience towards making these distillations available to future generations.

Similarly, philosophy is a personal attitude towards life and the universe. The way an individual perceives natural phenomenon is likely to derive from his interpretation of reality, his value judgment and knowledge as well as understanding. It is believed that an individual Y sees X as hostile rather than being peaceful, Y may not tend to relate with all X phenomena peacefully. And if Y internalizes X, the reaction to all phenomena X would become negative almost always and vice versa. Relationships are deeply rooted in attitudes towards entities, human and non-human. This may explain why individuals and communities harbour feelings that devalue people living with disabilities. To cause adjustment therefore, teachers must be philosophers and philosopher's teachers to realize the goals of special needs education in Nigeria. In life circumstances, nothing is final. There are many human activities that can easily take place to make one disabled or deformed. We must be open-minded, calm and tolerant of situations and circumstances around us. It is therefore pretty good to accommodate in our reflections, that conditions of life are amenable to changes and only ability can make us thrive in the future.

Special education exhibits the character of historical style of philosophizing. According to Abang (2005), the direct concern for people with disabilities is traced to the renaissance period. This marked a new era in world history. During this period, people began to search for reasons and truths behind various events and solutions to problems of human experiences. In point of fact, philosophers, theologians, psychologists and a host of others added marked efforts in the development of special education in the world, and in Nigeria in particular. The beauty of this epoch till today is the strengthening of our belief system, to say the least, is the acceptance of human worth and dignity. Speculative Style of Philosophy: played a significant role in the development of special education. Deeply rooted in the style of philosophising is, the speculative mode; and its second order function, carry inquiries into other disciplines - such as philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, philosophy of law, philosophy of education and a host of others (Mgbakor, 2019). Among the inquiry paths of

philosophy in its second-order function is, it provides comprehensive and penetrative theoretical bases. Thus through critical reflections, the discipline's frame-work is laid down clearly. Philosophy of education, for instance implies, articulating the logical, epistemological, metaphysical and ethical basis of education. Apparently, when the philosopher inquires into other disciplines, he does so to ensure that the metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and logical tenets are well grounded. This scenario establishes the nexus between philosophy and special needs education in Nigeria. Certainly, philosophers embark on philosophic activities to ascertain whether or not a particular discipline is functioning in accordance with its philosophic tradition. Hence, no discipline can exist and subsist without a philosophy.

In eras before the renaissance, mythology was used to explain supernatural occurrences, sometimes correctly and another incorrectly. The basic theme of mythology is, the visible world is also speculative having those unseen gods manipulating the world from their perches on mount Olympus; and that the gods are responsible for some things happening to human beings, (Dodo, 2016). It is instructive to state that it is not all thinking that is philosophical. So mythologists made guesses (like in Africa and elsewhere) about seen and unseen things in the universe. Also, pre-Socratic philosophers made guesses about this unseen universe. Insight was given less attention and more attention was given to people who argued with proofs (Dodo, 2016). For example, philosophers speculated on the responses made by people on a given issue, such as, is there evil in the world? Or what is the nature of the soul? In all these questions, speculation comes first. These types of questions philosophers rationalise the type of direction to take in order to reach a reasonable conclusion that can also be justified (Ali, 2021). Apt in this assertion is, through successful application of the speculative method, philosophers' thought-out ways to reasonably make recommendations, after thorough observations and analysis of the issues under examination.

The gains of speculation to special needs education, especially in Africa and in Nigeria is, myths were used to teach people behaviour that helped them live in concert with one another. Certainly mythical assertions had some strange and non-acceptable tones, yet some stories often demonstrated such topics that amplified the need for hospitality. Philosophy beyond its speculative role continues to be relevant in human condition and human enterprise. This is because the reflective mindset philosophy provides especially its comprehensive interpretation of fundamental issues (including cause of disability, the nature of disability and remediation) is heartwarming. And articulation of events outside the human comprehension heralded by psychological and environmental factors provided insight on how to accommodate accidental occurrence. Clearly and dearly understanding of the nature and causes of disability among people assists prescription of strategies that aid adjustments of human beings in society. The parent- discipline philosophy co-ordinates all of the (second order disciplines) aimed at arriving at a holistic knowledge of reality (Orhungur, 2013). Indeed,

agreeing with Okafor (2010) Philosophy help man to perceive reality in its entirety, (no longer the mystic insight). The interrelation of phenomena and acknowledge of the orderliness and coherence of the universe are visible lessons we learn. In the Face of change, Changing conditions and situations of life, man can still perceive that universal principles somehow remains with absolute order and continuity, affording him the opportunity to rise above the plane of individual interest or accidental circumstances of time and places.

The foregoing, makes it easy to ask, can change occur within us and all around us? Can the laws of nature change with time? Can the basic difference between man and animal(s) rationally change tomorrow? Can man change with time from being with imperfections and limitations? These are inevitable questions in the world of change (Okafor, 2010); which special needs practitioners must ask and provide answers.

### **Relevance of Philosophy in Relation to People Living with Disabilities**

Ideas are the raw materials of action and a person is not likely to make any serious attempts to act (positively or even negatively) unless he/she believes in X or Y entities. In addition, there is a deep tendency in humans to rationally become whatever he/she thinks oneself to be. To buttress the fact that ideas have decisive power in human history, Jimba (2018) cited Luca who asserts that, the capacity to believe is the most significant and fundamental human faculty; and the most important thing about what a man is, and what he/she becomes in the depth of his/her being. Thus, philosophy traditionally has been nothing less than the attempt to ask and answer in formal and disciplined way, the great questions of life about ordinary men (Jimba, 2018). Suffice it to say, even scientist might put themselves in reflective moments in order to arrive at truth, reality and knowledge about the cosmic, the nature of man and society.

The relevance of philosophy in understanding exceptional children as well as the society they live in, is intricately linked in the decision to love, to hate, to be honest, to be accommodative of others, to be tolerant as well as act accordingly with the inner mind-call it soul or spirit (Ilori:1994). Everyday, we have to decide on questions about reality of the events in the world, (whether straight or crooked) and search for standards and goals of everyday living. Implicitly, philosophy “throws open many possibilities which enlarges our thoughts and free human beings from the pangs of tradition and custom, as long as it does expand the possibilities from which decision can be made” (Enoh 1985). Obviously quality decision processes can make room for special needs education; thus, invariably their life prospects enhanced beyond the disability format.

Philosophy provides an enlarged world view with varying impact on our perspectives and perceptions in life. Persons as persons who are fully acquainted with varying viewpoints stand in the right path to apply his acquired perceptions of acting on different situations than one who is limited by few truths (sometimes made to hold them falsely). Considering the uncertainty of the world space (in

constant flux), especially conflicting values, we need a scale of marked preference when confronted with material disorder and moral discomfort. Much of what philosophy intimates is, a world beyond our present existence. So, when one applies philosophical principles such as relevance, rationality, objectivity and consistency and consciously, society becomes better than the quality of pre-conceived mindsets resulting from interactions with people with challenges; either in social gathering, political participation, in employment, occupation and commerce. Philosophical principles once internalized and used by society drives us to realms ordinarily we would not have reached. The principles of philosophy guarantee dispositions that do not take any idea for granted just as the demand for reason, coherence and logical consistency would pervade acting and thinking about oneself.

Moreover, philosophy inculcates in individuals virtues of critical thinking, veritable in the discovery of reality of life, knowledge of hidden treasures in human culture as well as value in human and non-human existence. We live in a world where problems we face in our daily living do not always require ready-made answers (like individual differences in actions, conducts and thoughts) but require constant thinking to overcome. Critical thinking follows from attitudes of reflective and clear thinking acquired from philosophy. This character trait is most critical for any individual to possess than the mere body of fact we draw from different disciplines. For instance, society is able to reflect deeply on those conditions that can make individuals “Exceptional” or “Extraordinary”, either physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially which requires, application of resources to adjust them debilitating burdens which compensatory or remediation services can make living better.

Section 7 of NPE, captured specifically that special needs education is an educational programme, designed to meet the unique needs of persons with special needs that the general persons with special needs education programme cannot cater for, (FRN 2014: 52). Importantly the aims of special needs education enshrined in the policy includes:

- a. Provide access to education for all persons, in an inclusive setting;
- b. Equalize educational opportunities for all persons, irrespective of their genetic composition, social, physical, sensory, mental, psychological and emotional disabilities;
- c. Provide adequate education for all persons with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation;
- d. Provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talents, persons to develop their talent, natural endowments/traits at their own pace in the interest of national development ; and
- e. design a diversified and appropriate curriculum for the different target groups.

A cursory examination of each of these aims of special needs education in Nigeria, suggests that the country is thinking in the right direction. This is because,

access to education for all (including PLWD) is not only necessary but inevitable to ensure inclusivity in the affairs of society. Remarkably education increases economic capacity - at the social level, educated PLWD would enjoy enhanced status in time and space, hence a better society. For instance, in games, laurels are won by persons living with disability and, the national anthems of their respective countries - (like Nigeria) are played to showcase their countries of origin irrespective of whether or not you are disabled. A lesson for a better future for the Nigerian society.

Yes, the value of equalising educational opportunities for all persons irrespective of their composition, social, physical, sensory, mental, psychological and emotional disabilities is immeasurable. The intent of distributive justice denotes recognition of human dignity, capacity and humaneness. It is also the case that merit alone count as parameter, and removal of arbitrariness count as the major criteria. By inference, there is a favourable emotional reaction to the proposition that everybody should be given equal educational opportunities (Ebuta, 2021). Simply, education should be accessible to everyone in the society regardless of his/her socio - economic background is reasonable. This argument is in tandem with the provision in the NPE document. However, the submissions in both the national policy on education and what literature provides, demonstrate positive reasons to equalising educational opportunities for all; (notwithstanding the contentions whether or not education can be equalized in any society because of the uneven natural transcendence). Even psychologists believe strongly in the existence of individual differences among learners, ranging from intellectual ability, social class, income and even the environmental factors. Thus, to assert absolutely that the policy will benefit people living with disability in educational distribution is vacuous. For where X defined it to suit his interest, Y will also do the same, thereby resulting in misinterpretation and misconception of what exactly is meant. This is because there is almost nearly no practical situation on earth upon which individual differences can be resolved among humans. Therefore, the provision should not be a political slogan for the special needs person as persons. A realistic and considered criterion should be developed based on realistic criteria-according to the severity of each case, justly.

Moreover, provision of "adequate education for all persons with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation" is plausible. Every person on earth has potentials and these individual potentials and when harnessed properly can aggregate to a defined capacity of the nation's wealth. Developed nations have utilized this framework to reach the zenith of their development. In the light of this, our nation's realisation of aggregate capacities of Nigerians inclusively is a great knowledge and understanding. It is germane for a nation that has its goals as: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; united, strong, and self- reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizen. This is also to emphasise that nation building is not the prerogative of a selective few, but every

citizen is a stake holder. Nigeria should neatly make haste to institute seriously this vision firmly without delay. The special needs person must be free to participate in the governance of the nation where their ability or abilities can be justly fit in without prejudice. Justice must prevail in accordance with the harnessing of ability (with emphasis) rather than denial of opportunities because of disabilities. It is crystal clear that there are abilities in disabilities. Persons with clandestine motive should not be allowed to have their ways in relation to PLWD in Nigeria.

In addition, provision of “opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented, natural endowment traits in the NPE calling for individuals to work is recommendable at their own pace in the interest of national development”. The gifted and talented refers, according to Ogwu, (2001) those who exhibits the following characteristics, notably: specially gifted children who are intellectually precocious and find themselves insufficiently challenged by the programme of the normal school as well as who may take to stubbornness and apathy in resistance to it. It is interesting to note, literature has identified spectacular characteristics as creativity in diverse areas of life such as being, morally upright in judgment, invention oriented personalities etc. Remarkably, these endowments are not possessed in the same degree and so the assessment of these traits attracts varied and controversial inputs. In our generation, there must be scientific ways of identifying and developing these capacities in Nigeria. Nigeria need these class of individuals to advance our technology, to explore and exploit the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital world. Certainly education arrangement and the curriculum of special needs person must be suitably developed for a better future.

Understanding means having a grasp of the substance of an issue or issues in the context of its nature, content and scope. In the sphere of special education, we can stretch the understanding of key element to historical, speculative, analytic and prescriptive epochs within time and space. For instance, in historical terms, the field of special education has undergone several phases, from the period of superstition to humanitarian attention to social acceptance to the present day institutionalisation of care for human beings. Abang (1992) asserts, special education developed as societies searched for ways to care for the child who on accounts of his/her physical or mental deviation could not profit from the regular education services. This rethinking overshadowed the hitherto beliefs that describes all forms of deviation are either punishment from the gods, or of reward(s) for sins of the parents. In John gospel chapter 9 verse 1-3 it is recorded *“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Teacher, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”* (NKJV). Jesus heals a man born blind, a serial question from his disciples was: *“Teacher who did sin, this man, or his parents that he was born blind? Jesus answered, neither has this man sinned nor his parents but that the work of God should be made manifest in him”* The foregoing exemplifies the psychotic belief that a physical or mental deviation is a factor of sins against the gods or God. The response of Jesus is worthwhile, neither “the man” nor “his parents”. This is to say,

exceptional characteristics of humans are existential and should be positively accommodated and empathised rather than engage in bulk-passing (as indicated in the case cited). Abang, (2005) initiated that this period (renaissance) saw the beginning of naturalistic doctrines as well as elementary education. The essence of the period was that change was possible that people could alter their environment and there was worth and dignity in each individual.

In Nigeria and Africa in general, historical accounts of handling disabled or exceptional persons is thin. However, reasoned and reflective soul searching of African belief systems ignites highly damning episodes. According to Okeke(2001), down through the ages, the birth of an exceptional child is usually frowned at in most countries of the world (including African countries and Nigeria in particular) Specifically put, “the frown cannot be divorced from the culturally inherited misconceptions and attitudes towards exceptional children resulting in devaluing, fearing and discriminating against them” (Okeke, 2001). The different feeling about handicapped persons are clothed in suspensions (Okeke, 2001). Echoing the place of superstition in the maltreatment of handicapped persons, Abang (2005), opined that “some communities were of the opinion that the handicapped children were animals turned human beings and that as far as they are allowed to live they would prevent the delivery of normal children in the family. Hence, it was considered wise to send them back to where they came”. All these beliefs negated reasoned global thinking about Special needs persons in Africa. In point of fact, there are no logical or systematic self-evident truth(s) in these kinds of symbolic assumptions; neither does empirically based evidence exist to accept these illogics. Agreeing with Ogwu, (2001) these beliefs resulted in the stigmatization of disabled person and leading to being treated cruelly and harshly; some were killed while others were left to die slow and painful death. Understanding the emptiness of these beliefs about the exceptional children, the Christian missionaries, western education public awareness, medical advances uplifted the care leading to practically changed attitudes towards the handicapped individuals. The trajectory changed the narrative to establishment of special needs education the world over.

Speculative philosophizing upgraded and added impacts to the humane treatment of exceptional children. Speculative mode of doing philosophy sparked off the period philosophers explored the innermost of nature to explain the meaning or reality of nature, factored in examining the essence and existence of things in the universe by asking whether essence is before existence or vice versa substance, (probing what stuff is the world is made up of) , unity and diversity (comparing the conflicting knowledge about perception); freewill and determinism (asking relevant questions about whether humans are free agents or uncaused or humans are determined and therefore whatever we are destined by God) and a host of others. Aristotle takes philosophical wonder to mean our amazement at inexplicable phenomena. Accordingly Dodo (2016), amazement gives rise to asking of questions about the origin and beginning of philosophy itself. Imperatively

Nigeria should begin to deeply think globally in respect of special needs education services. This is because it is the gateway to critical apparatus of development. The re - think would enhance the item - tied implementation of the aims of special education as enshrined in the national policy on education, FRN (2014, 6<sup>th</sup> edition).

### **Justifying Philosophy of Education for Special Needs Education**

The foregoing submission in this chapter, reveals that philosophy and philosophy of education play vital roles in adjustments and re-orientation of society towards imbibing healthy cultural attitudes towards the exceptional children, youths and adults in the society. What we observed in the course of writing this chapter is, there is a global concern for people who are “different in potentials, endowment, ability, talent and giftedness, Aptly global re-thinking of how society ought to relate to exceptional and people living with disability is current always. Society should be educated that there are abilities in disability.

### **Conclusion**

In sum, philosophy can/should help us to enlarge the areas of our awareness and intervention. While all these reflective and critical scrutiny of mass information about disability is made available, and internalized the society will be a better place for all humans. It is interesting to note that “a philosopher is not in a position to compete with a scientist in giving a description or explanation of the world; the function to judge is also denied him (philosopher). All that is left is some work of clarification (Ali, 2019) which these chapters represent rather than being wholly prescriptive. Philosophy is wholistic, underlie every facet of life, so best global practices should, or if not ought to be integrated in the implementation of special needs education infrastructure in Nigeria.

### **Implications of philosophical bases of special needs education**

Appropriate education leads to the development of latent and critical capacity of the incumbent. To acquire learning, knowing, thinking and creativity makes equal educational opportunities a sine-qua-non. For, education sharpens the mind and the spirit to refuse to be down, which elevates the residual capacity foundational to a good and economically sustainable personality.

1. Education opportunities should not be a matter of privilege to the exceptional children. The world can accommodate all of us. Building character in the ethical sense, is an inner consistency trait (a philosophical principle) and unity which gives steadfastness and dependability to man’s conduct (Ebuta, 2021). Both the society and persons living with disability benefit from this quality. It is product viable in stock-in trade of our daily, hourly actions, words and thoughts such as forgiveness, unselfishness, kindness, sympathies, charitable, sacrificial as well as good acts and habits (Ebuta, 2021). Society must develop the infrastructure for genuine educational distribution for all categories of learners. Positive attitude.

1. Development of capacity to confront unfavourable psycho-social and economic push and pull exacted on persons living with disability is an urgent matter. Society creates most hurdles in the forms of superstition, custom and attitudes inimical to adjustments, especially against the minority groups. Man should be educated as man (irrespective of deviation) because his nature is human. Hence the aim of education should be the development of the innate potentials to maximize the residual potentials, turn to in capacity to capacity in whatever enterprise. The individual should be given maximum freedom to express his/her natural endowment. Instructed and intelligent people are always more decently and orderly than an ignorant and uneducated ones. This can be achieved only when education is equally distributed based on corresponding ability, equity, access and quality.

2. Development of the culture of humanness. The cultural aim of education includes the inculcation of noble ideas, art, languages, literature, attitudes and pattern of behaviour. The sum total of humanness is amenable to training and education. So, education will purify and modify conducts of diversity In intellectual, physical, emotional and social differences. The provision of equal educational opportunities will encourage people to the acceptance of cultural diversity among human groups.

3. Acceptance of persons living with disabilities can promote man power efficiency through vocational training in sheltered workshops. The main role of vocational education is providing skills and knowledge required by the society. Articulate study of the various areas of a single workshop with varying trades in each state in Nigeria exceptionality and matching each category with appropriate vocation. A mix-ability atmosphere will result in mentors and mentees. Certainly, a psycho social adjustment is possible among persons living with disability.

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