

## **EDITORIAL: Disability and Social Inclusiveness: A Coronavirus Pandemic Aftermath in the African Environment**

The traditional causes of intellectual disabilities include genetic syndromes like Down and Fragile X syndrome, inborn errors of metabolism, brain malfunction like microcephaly, and maternal disease like placental diseases. However, environmental influences have become a major source of intellectual disability in different parts of the globe, especially in Africa. Environmental factors like alcohol, drugs, and toxins have negatively affected or retarded many children's performance level in their learning and intellectual development across the African continent. The culture of excessive alcohol consumption is not unconnected to the multiple existential problems, conflicts, resource mismanagement, and failure of governance that have befallen African countries. This special issue specifically focuses on the place of Covid 19 and intellectual disability in Africa.

There is no ounce of doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the plight of physically disabled people, particularly in Africa. Before the coronavirus outbreak, the marginalization of disabled persons across all spheres of social lives had become a catchphrase in intellectual discourses globally. Progress in the arena of building inclusive societies that take into consideration physically disabled persons remained disabling in the African continent mostly. Instead, the word "marginalization" continues as a popular slogan by all and sundry on the continent. Thus, the introduction into the socialization process of African societies of this dumbfounding coronavirus on Africa's disability question, amid the established impression of the place of disabled people already, requires intellectual engagement to proffer effective solutions.

Justification of the above-stated theme stems from the reality that COVID-19 has thrown up new modes of doing things and getting things done in all avenues of social relations. Be it in government or governance, public health, sports, relaxation, partying or entertainment, and even holding formal and informal meetings, the coronavirus is and will forever be impactful in unusual ways. The globally agreed social norms to combat the spread of the virus, such as maintaining social distancing, wearing face masks, avoidance of physical contact, etc. are therefore bound to impact the disability question.

Consequently, the rationale for this Special Issue speaks for itself. This is against the backdrop of the topical currency of the stated theme and its modernizing intent to fast track achievement of social, political, economic, and all-around inclusiveness of African socio-political systems for her disabled populations. And this is the reason why critically researched and well-thought-out intellectual papers on this Special Issue's theme has been assembled. The need to modernize the place of disabled persons in African societies cannot be underrated. In fact, this intellectual undertaking is necessary if the theme of inclusiveness in the nation-building discussions in Africa will have to go beyond just theory but concrete realities on the ground.

This Special Issue, therefore, went a long way to further the topicality of disability diagnosis and treatment, especially in developing social systems such as are found in Africa during this Covid 19 pandemic. A collection of twelve articles from scholars in different parts of the African continent were assembled. Topics discussed ranged from the chronicles of Covid 19 on students with disabilities in South Africa to the place of politics and disability inclusion governance of Paraspport Athletes in a coronavirus pandemic aftermath in Africa. Other articles discussed

the Covid-19 pandemic and preparedness for institutions in serving people living with disabilities as well as discrimination against female gender and implication for mental health counselling in the era of coronavirus. The place of the United Nations' COVID 19 disability inclusion strategy was also discussed. The fatality rate in Third World Countries and environmental challenges were interrogated too. Other articles engaged in reflections on the COVID-19 lockdowns and its impact on aspects of social–ethic and psycho-social support for disability care as well as the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Southern Africa. The last set of articles discussed the role of Christian Missions in Africa and Latin America in covid 19 management was captured. The next study was the place of journalism in the COVID-19 web and in the Edo State gubernatorial electoral process as well as the Nigerian Education System.

Finally, special thanks go to the Editor-in-Chief, Editor, and publisher of this journal for finding me worthy of reviewing the articles for this special issue.

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