

# **BARRIERS EXPERIENCED BY PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN SEEKING WORK PLACE ACCOMMODATION IN RIVERS STATE**

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigated barriers experienced by persons with hearing impairment in seeking work place accommodation in Rivers State. Descriptive research design was used for the study. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population consisted of all adults with hearing impairment in Port Harcourt and Ikwerre Local Government Area. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 24 adults for the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled: 'Barriers in Seeking Workplace Accommodation Questionnaire (BSWAQ)' was used for data collection. The reliability coefficient for (BSWAQ) was  $r=0.70$ . Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that; the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State include; communication barrier, educational barrier, attitudinal barrier, environmental barrier, and expenditure barrier. That age, significantly influenced barriers in seeking work place accommodation. That gender did not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation. It was recommended among others that; National Assembly and Labour Unions should set up policies that will guide government ministries and organized private sectors to reserve 10% of employment chances for persons with disabilities.*

**Keywords:** Barriers, work place, accommodation, hearing impairment

In any economic climate, two topics often arise during business conversations. First, business leaders speak in recognition of their employees as key contributors to their organisations success. Second, business leaders recognize that engaged and satisfied employees are better performers in the workplace and that higher performance equates to increased profits for their companies (Eder, 2017). It is strange then to find that the needs and attitudes of a segment of the workers contributing to the organizational growth line are not

understood and that these employees are often underutilized and underemployed. The group referred to are those with hearing impairment.

To understand issues of employment among persons with hearing impairment in largely hearing settings/environment, one must first become familiar with the global precedents established in recent decades for this unique population. Persons with hearing impairment have long struggled to secure and retain competitive employment globally. Hearing impairment has historically been equated with the inability to work or live independently and persons with hearing impairment were viewed as objects of pity (Ubani & Sanikpege, 2020). This paradigm changed significantly, however, with the civil rights movement of the 1960's, which applied pressure on government to create laws addressing barriers to entry in social and employment sectors for minority populations, including persons with hearing impairment. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and, most notably, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, are key pieces of subsequent legislation mandating accommodations in workplaces, educational institutions, and public settings.

Social integration is even more complex as attempts at effective interpersonal blending of workers with hearing impairment and workers without is not easily understood nor accomplished. Persons with hearing impairment are faced with limited opportunities to access the job market and are typically rendered unemployed or accommodated into temporary, low-income jobs (Ubani & Sanikpege, 2020). Employment plays a vital role in maintaining financial wellbeing and low levels of employment have socio-economic implications, placing increased strain on government social security systems companies (Eder, 2017).

Specifically, target 8.5 focuses on achieving equal pay for equal work and the productive employment of all individuals, including those with disability while target 10.2 promotes social, economic and political inclusion of all persons, irrespective of status (Olusanya, 2017). The idea of the SDGs is an important concept and could help in the development of a global sustainable trajectory. Goals and targets have been formulated to account for the pressing needs of developing countries and the support required from the international community (Osborn, 2019). The Nigerian government, amongst most others, cannot rely on international support to create job opportunities for persons with disabilities. The challenge is to thus stimulate successful employment opportunities or persons with disability, specifically those with hearing impairment, as communication difficulties are becoming a growing concern. (Sokinsa, 2018).

Hearing impairment is a hidden disability, which significantly impacts on an individual's quality of life. The sense of hearing is critical for communicating, engaging within an environment, independence and performing activities of daily living (Shaw, 2021). It is estimated that hearing difficulties will constitute the ninth leading burden of disease, globally, in the year 2030. The national disability prevalence rate is approximately 7.5% and the national profile further showed a prevalence rate of 3.6% for hearing difficulties (Osborn, 2014). Osborn (2014) reported that approximately 1 out of 15 individuals experience difficulty hearing. Osborn (2019) further reported that between 2017-2018, persons with disability were grossly under-represented in the workforce. As per this report, only 1.3% of the working disabled population were employed in top management level positions, and 1.3% were employed at a professionally qualified level.

Furthermore, the percentage of individuals with disability employed at semi-skilled level and unskilled levels were both 0.9% (Olusanya, 2017). When compared to previous reports from 2014-2015, the current employment equity report suggested a decrease in an already low employability rate of persons with disability across various levels. There was no data available specific to the employment of hearing impaired individuals, however, the burden of hearing impairment is believed to be greatest in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia and the Asian Pacific region (Olusanya, 2019). Amongst other Sub-Saharan countries, Nigeria is gradually becoming epicentre of the HIV/Aids pandemic, and has the added burden of tuberculosis (TB) as a co-morbidity (Mangeni, 2019).

Medical advances have increased the life expectancy of individuals' diagnosed with HIV/Aids and Tuberculosis (Shaw, 2021). However, treatment regimes can negatively affect the auditory system and is one of the major causes of hearing impairment in this population (Khoza, 2019). These patients, as well as others with hearing impairment, experience difficulties entering into and retaining employment, as employers may believe the disability to be a hindrance towards productivity. Hence the researcher intended to investigate the barriers experienced by persons with hearing impairment in seeking work place accommodation in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As hearing impairment is called an unseen disability because people often don't realize they are talking with a person who has a hearing loss. If a person enters a room using a wheelchair, crutches, a guide dog, or white cane, those in the room often recognize that extra help is needed and offer assistance without being asked. If a person comes into the same room and sits at the conference table, then repeatedly asks individuals to speak up or repeat themselves, those individuals may think the person is rude or not paying attention but probably do not consider that the person may be hearing impaired. This lack of understanding concerning persons with hearing impairment drives the general attitude and many of the common perceptions held by employers and co-workers who do not have a hearing impairment. Negative attitudes toward persons with hearing impairment ranks among the most harmful attributes in attaining work and in reaching and maintaining a high level of work and personal satisfaction. These examples serve to illustrate the workplace complexities and difficulties often faced by persons with hearing impairment in seeking and retaining work place accommodation.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of the study was to investigate the barriers experienced by persons with hearing impairment in seeking work place accommodation in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Determine the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.
2. Examine the extent age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.
3. Find out the extent gender influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does gender influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

1. Age does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State
2. Gender does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State

### Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population involved in this study consisted of all adults with hearing impairment in Port Harcourt and Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a target population of 24 adults with hearing impairment. The research instrument was a self-designed “Barriers in Seeking Workplace Accommodation Questionnaire (BSWAQ). Section A contained the demographic data of the respondents while Section B contained 20 items. The items in section B were placed on a four-point modified likert rating scale of: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE) respectively. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while Independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### Analysis and Results

#### Research Question One

What are the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?

**Table 4.1: Mean and standard deviation showing barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State**

| A | Communication Barrier   | N  | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Decision |
|---|---|----|-----------|------|----------|
| 1 | I am unable to get employed because I have difficulty communicating with other potential  | 24 | 2.77      | 0.66 | Accepted |
| 2 | I am been denied employment because my employers feel I will not be able to communicate   | 24 | 3.87      | 0.72 | Accepted |
| 3 | I am unable to get employed because the organization is unwilling to hire a sign language | 24 | 3.10      | 0.90 | Accepted |

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|                                |   |    |      |      |          |
|--------------------------------|---|----|------|------|----------|
| 4                              | I find it difficult to get employed because most of my potential employers find I difficult to communicate with me during interview                         | 24 | 2.77 | 0.86 | Accepted |
| <b>B Educational Barrier</b>   |   |    |      |      |          |
| 5                              | I am often been turned down on employment because of my low educational qualifications  | 24 | 2.72 | 1.12 | Accepted |
| 6                              | I find it difficult to get a meaningful employment since have not been able to secure a post-graduate degree  | 24 | 1.87 | 0.70 | Rejected |
| 7                              | I have been denied employment on the basis that I have my major degree in the field of special education  | 24 | 2.80 | 0.90 | Accepted |
| 8                              | I find it difficult to get employment since there are not many tertiary institutions that have sign language interpreters in my area of career choice       | 24 | 2.58 | 1.00 | Accepted |
| <b>C Attitudinal Barrier</b>   |   |    |      |      |          |
| 9                              | I am been denied employment due to the negative attitude potential employers have towards persons with hearing impairment                                   | 24 | 3.09 | 0.98 | Accepted |
| 10                             | I am denied employment because my employers feel I will become a liability to their organization  | 24 | 3.07 | 0.96 | Accepted |
| 11                             | The reason have not been able to acquire an employment is because of the negative perception my potential colleagues have towards persons with disabilities | 24 | 2.87 | 0.72 | Accepted |
| 12                             | I feel have not been able to get employed due to the notion that am an additional burden to the organization  | 24 | 2.50 | 0.90 | Accepted |
| <b>D Environmental Barrier</b> |   |    |      |      |          |
|                                | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the organizations are not environmentally adapted to accommodate persons with hearing impairment          | 24 | 2.58 | 1.00 | Accepted |
|                                | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the information's I need through signage are not been provide in the organizations                        | 24 | 3.02 | 1.15 | Accepted |
|                                | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since my employers are unwilling to make use of an amplifier or microphone during interview session       | 24 | 3.33 | 0.85 | Accepted |
|                                | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since there are no sign language interpreter during interview   | 24 | 2.98 | 0.94 | Accepted |
| <b>E Expenditure Barrier</b>   |   |    |      |      |          |
| 17                             | I have been denied employment because of lack of willingness on the part of my employer to encourage colleagues to take up sign language courses            | 24 | 2.79 | 0.90 | Accepted |

|                      |   |    |             |             |          |
|----------------------|---|----|-------------|-------------|----------|
| 18                   | My employers worry about the cost of acquiring a flash light for emergency as opposed to the traditional alarm system                   | 24 | 2.86        | 0.92        | Accepted |
| 19                   | My employers are unwilling to provide me with employment since it may require the organization additional cost in getting an amplifier  | 24 | 2.71        | 0.56        | Accepted |
| 20                   | The fear of having to purchase an amplifier is among the major reasons why have not been give employment in any meaningful organization | 24 | 2.80        | 0.93        | Accepted |
| <b>Grand Mean/SD</b> |   |    | <b>3.06</b> | <b>0.66</b> |          |

**(Survey Data, 2021)**

Table 4.1 shows the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. Specifically the result indicates that communication barrier, educational barrier, attitudinal barrier, environmental barrier, and expenditure barrier were accepted as the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. The table shows a grand mean of ( $\bar{X} = 3.06$ ;  $SD = 0.66$ ).

**Research Question Two**

To what extent does age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?

**Table 4.2: Mean and standard deviation showing extent age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State**

| A                            | Communication Barrier   | 23-35 Years<br>N=15 |      | 36-Above<br>N=9 |      |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|
|                              |   | $\bar{X}$           | SD   | $\bar{X}$       | SD   |
| 1                            | I am unable to get employed because I have difficulty communicating with other potential colleagues                                 | 3.01                | 0.87 | 2.93            | 0.75 |
| 2                            | I am been denied employment because my employers feel I will not be able to communicate with customers                              | 3.15                | 0.73 | 3.20            | 0.99 |
| 3                            | I am unable to get employed because the organization is unwilling to hire a sign language interpreter for me                        | 3.36                | 0.66 | 3.19            | 0.58 |
| 4                            | I find it difficult to get employed because most of my potential employers find I difficult to communicate with me during interview | 3.02                | 0.75 | 2.83            | 1.31 |
| <b>B Educational Barrier</b> |   |                     |      |                 |      |
| 5                            | I am often been turned down on employment because of my low educational qualifications  | 2.10                | 0.92 | 2.97            | 0.84 |
| 6                            | I find it difficult to get a meaningful employment since have not been able to secure a post-graduate degree                        | 2.67                | 0.54 | 3.98            | 0.73 |

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|                                |  |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------------------|--|------|------|------|------|
| 7                              | I have been denied employment on the basis that I have my major degree in the field of special education   | 2.92 | 0.64 | 3.14 | 0.76 |
| 8                              | I find it difficult to get employment since there are not many tertiary institutions that have sign language interpreters in my area of career choice  | 2.50 | 0.39 | 2.54 | 0.53 |
| <b>C Attitudinal Barrier</b>   |  |      |      |      |      |
| 9                              | I am been denied employment due to the negative attitude potential employers have towards persons with hearing impairment                              | 2.56 | 0.94 | 2.91 | 1.41 |
| 10                             | I am denied employment because my employers feel I will become a liability to their organization   | 3.00 | 0.49 | 2.88 | 0.48 |
| 11                             | The reason have not been able to acquire an employment is because of the negative perception my potential colleagues towards persons with disabilities | 2.74 | 1.07 | 2.77 | 0.41 |
| 12                             | I feel have not been able to get employed due to the notion that am an additional burden to the organization   | 2.88 | 1.10 | 2.67 | 0.57 |
| <b>D Environmental Barrier</b> |  |      |      |      |      |
| 13                             | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the organizations are not environmentally adapted to accommodate persons with hearing impairment     | 2.10 | 1.00 | 3.97 | 0.90 |
| 14                             | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the information's I need through signage are not been provide in the organizations                   | 2.37 | 0.45 | 2.95 | 0.55 |
| 15                             | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since my employers are unwilling to make use of an amplifier or microphone during interview session  | 2.00 | 0.80 | 2.59 | 1.00 |
| 16                             | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since there are no sign language interpreter during interview  | 3.01 | 0.34 | 2.80 | 0.49 |
| <b>E Expenditure Barrier</b>   |  |      |      |      |      |
| 17                             | I have been denied employment because of lack of willingness on the part of my employer to encourage colleagues to take up sign language courses       | 2.00 | 0.54 | 2.83 | 0.81 |

|                      |   |             |             |             |             |
|----------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 18                   | My employers worry about the cost of acquiring a flash light for emergency as opposed to the traditional alarm system                   | 2.59        | 0.77        | 2.74        | 0.61        |
| 19                   | My employers are unwilling to provide me with employment since it may require the organization additional cost in getting an amplifier  | 2.63        | 0.45        | 3.44        | 0.65        |
| 20                   | The fear of having to purchase an amplifier is among the major reasons why have not been give employment in any meaningful organization | 2.52        | 0.92        | 2.54        | 0.65        |
| <b>Grand Mean/SD</b> |   | <b>2.51</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>2.90</b> | <b>0.87</b> |

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**(Survey Data, 2021)**

Table 4.2 shows the extent age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. Specifically the result in the table shows a grand mean for (persons aged 23-35 years is  $\bar{X} = 2.51$ ; SD = 0.91), and (persons aged 36years and above as  $\bar{X} = 2.90$ ; SD = 0.87) which is higher than the criterion mean of (>2.50). This further indicates that to a high extent, age influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.

**Research Question Three**

To what extent does gender influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State?

**Table 4.3: Mean and Standard Deviation Showing Extent Gender Influence Barriers in Seeking Work Place Accommodation among Persons with Hearing Impairment in Rivers State**

| A                            | Communication Barrier  | Male<br>N=8 |      | Female<br>N=16 |      |
|------------------------------|--|-------------|------|----------------|------|
|                              |  | $\bar{X}$   | SD   | $\bar{X}$      | SD   |
| 1                            | I am unable to get employed because I have difficulty communicating with other potential colleagues  | 2.88        | 0.56 | 2.51           | 0.93 |
| 2                            | I am been denied employment because my employers feel I will not be able to communicate with customers   | 2.61        | 0.77 | 2.63           | 0.93 |
| 3                            | I am unable to get employed because the organization is unwilling to hire a sign language interpreter for me   | 1.89        | 0.98 | 1.71           | 1.03 |
| 4                            | I find it difficult to get employed because most of my potential employers find I difficult to communicate with me during interview                    | 1.02        | 0.81 | 2.04           | 0.88 |
| <b>B Educational Barrier</b> |  |             |      |                |      |
| 5                            | I am often been turned down on employment because of my low educational qualifications   | 1.72        | 0.60 | 2.07           | 1.10 |
| 6                            | I find it difficult to get a meaningful employment since have not been able to secure a post-graduate degree   | 2.74        | 0.58 | 2.79           | 0.90 |
| 7                            | I have been denied employment on the basis that I have my major degree in the field of my choice   | 2.01        | 0.90 | 2.06           | 1.40 |
| 8                            | I find it difficult to get employment since there are not many tertiary institutions that have sign language interpreters in my area of career choice  | 2.12        | 0.88 | 1.96           | 0.85 |
| <b>C Attitudinal Barrier</b> |  |             |      |                |      |
| 9                            | I am been denied employment due to the negative attitude potential employers have towards persons with hearing impairment                              | 2.36        | 1.00 | 2.00           | 0.94 |
| 10                           | I am denied employment because my employers feel I will become a liability to  | 2.31        | 0.74 | 2.31           | 0.70 |
| 11                           | The reason have not been able to acquire an employment is because of the negative perception my potential colleagues towards persons with disabilities | 2.06        | 0.90 | 1.71           | 1.06 |

|                                |   |             |             |             |             |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 12                             | I feel have not been able to get employed due to the notion that am an additional burden to the organization  | 2.09        | 0.93        | 2.05        | 0.91        |
| <b>D Environmental Barrier</b> |   |             |             |             |             |
| 13                             | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the organizations are not environmentally adapted to accommodate persons with hearing impairment    | 2.01        | 0.34        | 2.00        | 0.49        |
| 14                             | I find it difficult to get employed since most of the information's I need through signage are not been provide in the organizations                  | 2.06        | 0.76        | 2.99        | 0.86        |
| 15                             | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since my employers are unwilling to make use of an amplifier or microphone during interview session | 2.51        | 1.07        | 2.53        | 0.74        |
| 16                             | Have not been able to get a meaningful employment since there are no sign language interpreter during interview                                       | 2.69        | 0.90        | 2.67        | 0.57        |
| <b>E Expenditure Barrier</b>   |   |             |             |             |             |
| 17                             | I have been denied employment because of lack of willingness on the part of my employer to encourage colleagues to take up sign language courses      | 2.02        | 1.04        | 1.61        | 1.00        |
| 18                             | My employers worry about the cost of acquiring a flash light for emergency as opposed to the traditional alarm system                                 | 2.63        | 0.99        | 2.56        | 0.97        |
| 19                             | My employers are unwilling to provide me with employment since it may require the organization additional cost in getting an amplifier                | 1.78        | 1.10        | 2.06        | 0.95        |
| 20                             | The fear of having to purchase an amplifier is among the major reasons why have not been give employment in any meaningful organization               | 2.70        | 0.54        | 2.53        | 1.01        |
| <b>Grand Mean/SD</b>           |   | <b>2.09</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>2.01</b> | <b>0.52</b> |

**(Survey Data, 2021)**

Table 4.3 shows the extent gender influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. Specifically the result in the table shows a grand mean for (male respondents' as  $\bar{X} = 2.09$ ;  $SD = 0.85$ ), and (female

respondents as  $\bar{X} = 2.01$ ;  $SD = 0.52$ ) which is less than the criterion mean of ( $<2.50$ ). This further indicates that to a low extent, gender does not influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.

### **Hypothesis One**

Age does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State

**Table 4.6: T-test analysis showing significant influence of age on barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State**

| Age        | N  | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Df | Standard Error | Calculated t-value | Critical t-value | Remark      |
|------------|----|-----------|------|----|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 23-35years | 15 | 2.51      | 0.91 | 23 | 0.134          | 4.081              | 1.980            | Significant |
| 36-Above   | 9  | 2.90      | 0.87 |    |                |                    |                  |             |

### **(Survey Data, 2021)**

Table 4.6 shows that the calculated t-value is 4.081 and at 23 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value (4.081) is greater than the critical t-value (1.980) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that age does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State is rejected.

### **Hypothesis Two**

Gender does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State

**Table 4.7: T-test analysis showing significant influence of gender on barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State**

| Gender | N  | $\bar{X}$ | SD   | Df | Standard Error | Calculated t-value | Critical t-value | Remark          |
|--------|----|-----------|------|----|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Male   | 8  | 2.0       | 0.85 | 23 | 0.130          | 1.071              | 1.980            | Not Significant |
| Female | 16 | 2.0       | 0.52 |    |                |                    |                  |                 |

### **(Survey Data, 2021)**

Table 4.7 shows that the calculated t-value is 1.071 and at 23 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value (1.071) is less than the critical t-value (1.980) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that gender does not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State is retained.

## **Discussion**

### **4.3 Discussion of the Findings**

The finding of research question one revealed that the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State include; communication barrier, educational barrier, attitudinal barrier, environmental barrier, and expenditure barrier. The finding are not surprising as Opoku, Gyamfi and Kwadwo (2017) writing on “They think we are all beggars. The resilience of a person with disability in Ghana” revealed that most persons with hearing impairment including those with other forms of disabilities have innate potentials to excel that could be enhanced if they are been given the right environment to flourish. As Opoku et al, (2017) maintained that individuals with disabilities have burning concerns of several factors that limit them from securing a meaningful employment within their society. Opoku et al, (2017) insisted that this barriers are not unconnected with negative societal attitude, lack of communication, environmental barriers, and expenditure concerns among others.

The finding of research question two hypothesis one revealed that age significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. The finding are in tandem with the observation of Diawuo and Issifu (2016) who maintained that age was a significant factor in seeking employment both for persons with or without disabilities. In affirmation, Soldatic (2018) maintained that unemployment rate was increasingly higher in Africa compared to most western countries and that due to high level of discrimination among persons with disability, irrespective of the fact that they may fall within the employment age, they were been denied employment based on the ground of their disability. Soldatic (2018) insisted that government policies that will enhance employability of persons with disabilities should be encouraged at all cost.

The finding of research question three hypothesis two revealed that gender did not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. The finding are however surprising to the researcher as one would have taught that a difference would have existed between both genders. The finding however is in line with the revelation of Oliver (2016) who maintained that among individuals with disabilities, female are easily susceptible to gain employment than their male counterparts. In conformation, Sackey (2015) maintained that gender did not significantly influence barriers in seeking employment among persons’ with disabilities however the major influence was educational background and socioeconomic standing.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the study concluded that the barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State include; communication barrier, educational barrier, attitudinal barrier, environmental barrier, and expenditure barrier. That age, significantly influenced barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State. That gender did not significantly influence barriers in seeking work place accommodation among persons with hearing impairment in Rivers State.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation should encourage persons with hearing impairment seeking for employment to go for career counselling and vocational training to increase their skills and chances of gaining employment.
2. National Assembly and labour unions should set up policies that will guide government ministries and organized private sectors to reserve 10% of their employment chances for persons with disabilities.
3. Government of Rivers State should emulate western countries that pay a certain allowance to persons with disability to cushion the effect of their disability and unemployment status
4. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) should step up their effort in proving the right statics of persons with disabilities in the country which will serve as data base for those with disabilities who are employed and those who are not.
5. Government and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) should set up a shelter workshop that will serve as means of livelihood for person with disabilities within the society

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