



## Professional integration of students handicapped by the recruitment derogatory to the Civil Service of Côte D'Ivoire

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### Abstract

With a view to reducing unemployment among the population, the Ivorian State undertakes to implement a policy in favour of various social strata including people with disabilities leaving universities and colleges. It is in this context that this study aims to determine the factors that are at the origin of the difficulties in integrating disabled students into the public service of Côte d'Ivoire. Through a qualitative and quantitative analysis (with respectively for data collection instruments, the questionnaire and the interview guide), the factors causing difficulties in integrating students with disabilities into the public service through exceptional recruitment have been identified. However, consideration of the content of the exceptional recruitment policy for disabled people as well as the socio-professional integration strategies implemented by the Group for the Integration of Physically Handicapped Students of Côte d'Ivoire (GIEHPCI) are important determinants in understanding this phenomenon.

**Keywords:** Professional integration, disabled students, exceptional recruitment, Civil service, Côte d'Ivoire

### Introduction

Successfully integrating into the workforce in a constantly changing world is a challenge faced by people with disabilities. These difficulties arise both from the people in their immediate community and from the organisations responsible for supporting them. It is a veritable obstacle course that they must navigate. This is in the hope of gaining acceptance and consideration from society, even though the way people with disabilities are viewed and their social integration vary from one society to another. Whilst people with disabilities are viewed through the lens of stigma in some societies, this is not the case in others (Florence Lombard, 2015). Traditional perceptions seem to be universally condemned, though this should not be generalized. The author Audeguy Stéphane (2007) <sup>[4]</sup> states: "Certain civilizations deserve, in our view, special mention: these are those which, like Egypt and India, believe in the transmigration of souls and have hybrid gods such as the Egyptian Anubis (a jackal-headed deity) and the Indian Ganesha (an elephant-headed deity). It seems that the Egyptians, unlike most cultures, did not regard the birth of abnormal children as a bad omen".

This raises the question of the value placed on people with disabilities within our societies. Whilst the integration of people with disabilities is evident in the West, in Africa it is a journey fraught with obstacles. At the international level, the United Nations World Program of Action concerning Persons with Disabilities recognizes the need for 'the full participation of persons with disabilities' and 'equal opportunities' identical to those of the general population (Hamonet Claude, 1990) <sup>[12]</sup>. The question arises of the full participation of people with disabilities and equal opportunities identical to those of the general population.

In Côte d'Ivoire, government authorities and various associations for people with disabilities are involved in the fight for the inclusion of people with disabilities. These organizations, including the GIEHPCI <sup>[1]</sup>, act as intermediaries with government authorities to highlight the

difficulties faced by people living with disabilities when it comes to their social and professional integration. Faced with all manner of prejudices, which are most often rooted in social constructs or value judgements linked to their condition, people with disabilities suffer from the often disparaging looks and attitudes of those around them. These individuals are perceived as incapable of succeeding in any activity they might undertake. This is the case with the schooling of children with disabilities in Africa. Whilst the number of children with disabilities in education is steadily increasing, the fact remains that a large proportion are not in school. Nevertheless, the commitment of our African states to the struggle for the integration of people with disabilities into our societies is a source of hope. This commitment is reflected in the social policies put in place by the African governments. Among these policies is the preferential recruitment of people with disabilities into the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire. In addition to this government initiative, there is Law No. 98594 of 10 November 1998 on support for people with disabilities, which was passed by the Ivorian National Assembly. These various government initiatives thus demonstrate a commitment to supporting the integration of people with disabilities into both society and the workplace. We note, however, that despite these measures, problems regarding the socio-professional integration of people with disabilities are becoming more pronounced. These can be summarized as the challenges faced by students with physical disabilities within the GIEHPCI. Whilst employment difficulties are becoming increasingly acute, driving up the unemployment rate on a large scale, exceptional recruitment offers a renewed sense of hope to students with disabilities, given that by applying for these positions, they will be able to integrate into society. Between

Between 1997 and 2006, only 54 students with disabilities from the GIEHPCI, who were eligible for the special recruitment scheme for the civil service, were actually selected out of a total of 437 people with disabilities. This

corresponds to a recruitment rate of 14% of students in total. This observation forms the basis of our research question: 'Why do students with disabilities encounter problems with professional integration, given that they benefit from a social measure in their favors?' This main question gives rise to the following subsidiary questions:

- Does this exceptional recruitment scheme for the civil service meet the minimum requirements (in terms of structures and infrastructure) for the genuine integration of people with disabilities into the workforce?
- Do students with disabilities show an interest in this exceptional recruitment scheme? The aim of this study is to identify the factors underlying the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into the civil service in Côte d'Ivoire. More specifically, our first step is to determine the content of the exceptional recruitment policy for people with disabilities and the socio-professional integration strategies implemented by the GIEHPCI. Secondly, we aim to analyze the factors underlying the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into the civil service through this exceptional recruitment scheme.

## Material and Methods

### 1. Study site

Félix Houphouët-Boigny University, located in the municipality of Cocody, served as the setting for our study. The choice of this university was not arbitrary. As a public higher education institution, it houses several teaching and research units. It comprises a campus on which student halls of residence are situated. Our target population resides within these halls. The target population consists mainly of students with disabilities who are members of the Group for the Integration of Students with Physical Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire (GIEHPCI). However, for the purposes of our study, it was essential for us to consider people with disabilities who have entered the civil service through the exceptional recruitment to the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire. Nevertheless, they were full members of the GIEHPCI. The exploratory study enabled us to outline the scope of our research problem. We were in contact with the Association for the Integration of Students with Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire. We interviewed the human resources directors of the civil service and the DPPH, as well as the presidents of associations for people with disabilities, namely those of the GIEHPCI and one of their representatives regarding the FAHCI. All these interviews enabled us to identify the key areas of interest that were used to develop our questionnaire.

### 2. Data collection and analysis

The target population comprises all disabled people affiliated with the GIEHPCI and disabled people who are currently working and were previously members of this group. There are 337 disabled students in total. As for people with disabilities employed as civil servants, there are 136 of them. We have a total of 473 people representing the target population (or parent population). The civil service has integrated people with disabilities with varying levels of education. The aim of our study is as part of our study into the integration of students with physical disabilities into the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire, we were able to identify, from among this population who had gained access to the civil service, those who would form part of our sample. To be included in the sample, individuals within this group of people with disabilities whether aspiring to join or already working in the civil service had to have been members of the GIEHPCI. In other words, they had to have been

students. Consequently, the sampling technique used to select our sample was the purposive sampling technique. Using this technique, we were able to select, based on pre-determined criteria, a sample that reflects the characteristics of the reference population. The interviewer surveys a specific number of people based on predefined data. As we did not have the exact number of students with disabilities who had entered the civil service under special provisions, within the target population of workers with disabilities, we had to emphasize the criteria of 'having been a student' and 'being a member of the GIEHPCI'; furthermore, the individual had to be living with a disability. Thus, the criteria selected for inclusion in our sample are: For students with disabilities: to be a registered member of the Group for the Integration of Students with Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire (GIEHPCI); to be a registered student at a university or a great school.

Having a disability. For workers with disabilities. Having been a student. Having been a member of the GIEHPCI; Having a disability. The purposive sampling method enabled us to select 'average' individuals who are considered representative of the group (Paul N'Da; 2000)<sup>[14]</sup>. We were able to select 84 students from among the 337 students with disabilities. The field survey was conducted by administering the questionnaire to students with disabilities. This was done both directly and indirectly, depending on the geographical location of their place of residence. As the questionnaire was administered mainly on the Cocody University Campus, it was likely that we would encounter students with disabilities living in halls of residence. We processed our data using computer software. Three software programs were used for this analysis. Epidata 3.0 enabled the entry of questionnaire data, data validation and transfer to SPSS. SPSS 10.0 then generated tables. Excel 2003 was used to produce graphs. Thus, in order to explain the phenomenon under study, two theories were employed to deepen the analysis of the field data: methodological individualism and strategic analysis.

## Results

### 1. The special recruitment process for people with disabilities in the Civil Service of Côte d'Ivoire

In 1998, the Ivorian government enacted the Framework Law on Support for People with Disabilities; Law No. 98594 of 10 November 1998. This law enabled people with disabilities to benefit from various advantages ranging from training to employment. Among all these provisions, socio-professional integration was a first of its kind, constituting a national obligation that had to be implemented. Such initiatives are part of the broader effort to promote human rights, and more specifically those of people with disabilities. The United Nations declared 1981 the 'International Year of Disabled Persons' (Hamonet; 1990)<sup>[12]</sup>. France, through the act in favor of people with disabilities of 30 June 1975, offered people with disabilities an opportunity to to their social and professional integration. To put words into action, the Ivorian government launched a special recruitment scheme for people with disabilities in 1997. Students with disabilities are covered by this social measure. This initiative is carried out in stages, forming a process. The recruitment process since 1997 has followed six phases: planning the number of staffs to be recruited; registration of applications; deliberation by the committee; classification into grades and posts; communication to the Council of Ministers; assignment and commencement of duties; and the drafting and signing of the letter of appointment.

**1.1 Introduction to the group (GIEHPCI)**

Following its establishment in the 1960s, Félix Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan has, over time, welcomed students from various social backgrounds. These students come from diverse walks of life. Among them are students with physical disabilities. The ambition of students with disabilities in the 1970s was to establish a structure through which they could bring the difficulties they faced to the attention of university administrative authorities and even the government. A few years later, the group was established to the integration of students with physical disabilities in Côte d’Ivoire (GIEHPCI). Unofficially, the GIEHPCI already existed in 1975. The Association for the Integration of Students with Physical Disabilities in Côte d’Ivoire, abbreviated to GIEHPCI, was founded on 20 January 1980 at the University of Cocody, Abidjan (then the National University of Côte d’Ivoire). Academic issues, catering problems, departmental difficulties and other

challenges faced by students in general, and students with disabilities in particular, led to the creation of this association. The GIEHPCI was registered with the Ministry of the Interior under number 1709 on 24 December 1997. The GIEHPCI is an organization that brings together all students with physical disabilities from universities and great school in Côte d’Ivoire. Whilst the group initially had only a small number of students with disabilities among its members, this number has grown over the years. By 2003, the organization had 500 officially registered members. The GIEHPCI has established a structure to implement its master plan, which is the intellectual advancement of people with physical disabilities in Côte d’Ivoire. The various bodies that make up this structure are:

- The general meeting
- The executive committee
- The supervisory board
- The branches



Source: Our survey (August 2022)

**Fig 1:** Students with disabilities gathered at an extraordinary general meeting

This exceptional recruitment policy will face various obstacles, both from the disabled people themselves (through disabled people’s organizations which, for reasons of leadership, are at odds with one another) and from the Ivorian state, which is struggling to establish a genuine social policy bringing together the appropriate structures and infrastructure for the integration of the disabled people recruited. Students with disabilities, through the GIEHPCI, will therefore face numerous difficulties in integrating into

the workforce as a result of this recruitment scheme. These difficulties do not appear to inspire in them a strong desire to apply for the exceptional recruitment scheme for the Ivorian civil service.

**1.2 Factors underlying the lack of interest among students with disabilities in the recruitment process**

**1.2.2 Number of recruitment applications submitted**

**Table 1:** Have you ever submitted an application for recruitment?

<b>If yes, have you ever submitted an application for the civil service?</b>	<b>Eff</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>% approved</b>	<b>%cumulative</b>
Yes	27	32,1	47,4	47,4
No	30	35,7	52,6	100
Total	57	67,9	100	
None	27	32,1		
Total	84	100		

Source: Our survey (August 2022)

The study data show that 57 students claim to be aware of this recruitment process, representing 67.7 per cent; as for the remaining 27, they state that they are completely unaware of such a measure. Among these 27 students, whilst some are certainly completely unaware, for the vast majority, a lack of interest combined with a lack of faith in

the process is the reason for their lack of enthusiasm. The same applies to those who, although aware, do not submit their applications for recruitment. Of the 57 students who stated they were aware of the scheme, 27 claimed to have submitted their applications at least once for recruitment into the civil service, representing 47.4%. As for the

remaining 30 students in this group, accounting for 52.6%, they remained indifferent regarding their eligibility for recruitment. The reasons for such attitudes are as follows: for the former group, educational level and age are the main factors; for the latter, the reasons are varied: these include,

amongst others, a lack of motivation, disinterest, a lack of desire to join the civil service, and ignorance of the existence of such a process.

### 1.2.2 Educational attainment

**Table 2:** Educational attainment at the time of application

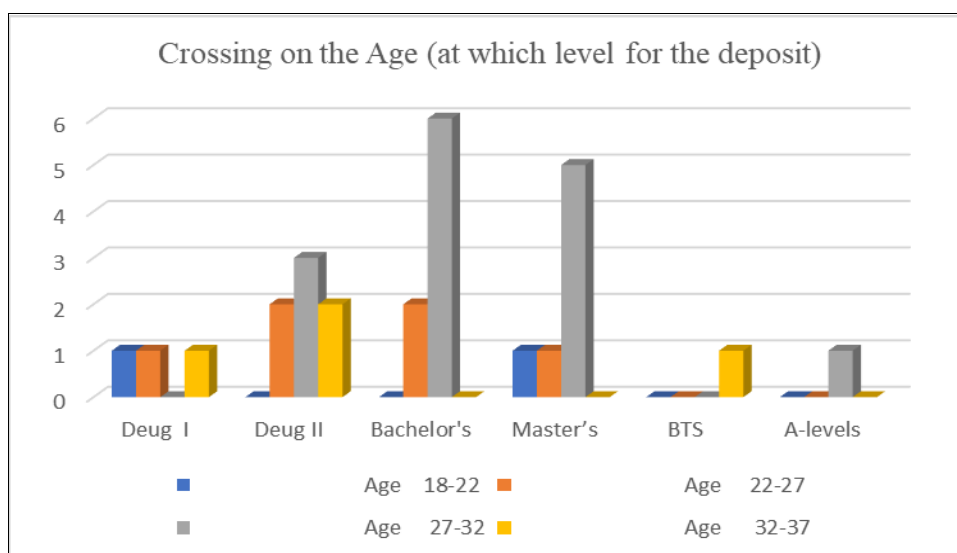
At what level for submission?	Eff	%	% approved	%cumulative
Deug I	3	3,6	11,1	11,1
Deug II	7	8,3	25,9	37
Bachelor's	8	9,5	29,6	66,7
Master's	7	8,3	25,9	92,6
BTS	1	1,2	3,7	96,3
A-levels	1	1,2	3,7	100
Total	27	32,1	100	
None	57	67,9		
Total	84	100		

Source: Our survey (August 2022)

The data in this table shows that undergraduate students account for 29.6% of the total. Next come students at the DEUG II and Master's 1 levels, each accounting for 7%. One (1) student applied at A-level and BTS level,

representing 3.7% respectively. Finally, three students applied for recruitment at Deug I level, representing 11.1%.

### 2.2.3 Age as a factor in applications



Source: Our survey (August 2022)

In this chart, we have 15 students aged between 27 and 32 and a further 6 aged between 22 and 27. The 32-37 and 18-22 age groups comprise 4 and 2 students respectively. These high figures in the 27-32 age group reflect the sense of responsibility and the desire for independence to which these students aspire; given that they consider themselves to be of a certain age.

They therefore need to establish themselves socially and even economically (this appears to be more than an urgent matter for those aged between 32 and 37).

### 2.2.4 Reasons for the apparent reluctance of students with disabilities

**Table 3:** Reasons for the lack of interest

Reason for lack of interest in exceptional recruitment	Eff	%	% approved	% Cumulative
Lack of information and uncertainty	4	4,8	8,9	8,9
Educational level not met	8	9,5	17,8	26,7
Poor pay	17	20,2	37,8	64,4
Other interests	3	3,6	6,7	71,1
already taken	1	1,2	2,2	73,3
Failure to respect ranks and training requirements	6	7,1	13,3	86,7
Not the only path to success	4	4,8	8,9	95,6
Slow recruitment	2	2,4	4,4	100
Total	45	53,6	100	
None	39	46,4		
Total	84	100		

Source: Our survey (August 2022)

There are several reasons behind students' lack of interest in exceptional recruitment to the civil service. The reason that appears to be the main cause of this lack of interest, and which is evident in the table, is 'poor pay'; at 20.2%, this is far ahead of 'not having attained the required level of education', which stands at 9.5%. The reason 'failure to match grade and training' was cited by 7.1% of respondents. Reasons such as 'lack of information and uncertainty...' and 'not the only path to success' each account for 4%. In last place is the reason 'slow recruitment', cited by two (2) students with disabilities in our sample, representing 2.4%. One disabled student's view is particularly noteworthy. According to him:

"Every man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow; with the qualifications he has acquired, he should logically be placed on a pay scale corresponding to his level of education. This is not the case. Poor pay and a failure to respect qualifications are among the reasons why I do not wish to take part in the special recruitment scheme for the civil service in Côte d'Ivoire" (K. Y.; aged 25). Educational attainment is therefore very important for students with disabilities, as having achieved a high level of education (undergraduate or postgraduate degree), they hope to secure a decent salary. Opinions vary; for others, the civil service is not the only path to success.

### 2.2.5 Feelings of apprehension.

**Table 4:** The apprehensions of applicants for exceptional recruitment

<b>If you were to be recruited, would you have any concerns?</b>	<b>Eff</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%validated</b>	<b>% cumulative</b>
Yes	20	23,8,	60,6	60,6
No	13	15,5	39,4	100
Total	33	39,3	100	
None	51	60,7		
Total	84	100		

Source: Our survey (August 2022)

When discussing their concerns, students with disabilities placed the greatest emphasis on the meagre and even uncertain nature of the posts available in the civil service. They echo the views of disabled workers (who form part of our target population), who, experiencing the same fears, have tended to opt for the competitive examination for entry into the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, the uncertainty regarding whether recruitment will actually take place is justified by the simple fact that this process can sometimes drag on for long periods. The recruitment criteria are not objective.

As for the fear of low pay, this relates to the gap between the educational level of those applying for these posts and the professional category into which they are placed within the civil service. One of our respondents with a disability, who is employed in the public sector, feels that her current role does not allow her to make use of her academic qualifications. She says: *"I deserve better given my level of education. I'm not being used to my full potential"* (T. S.; aged 30). Employing graduates from universities and prestigious higher education institutions in roles below the level of their qualifications results in them receiving lower pay. This is one of the reasons behind the fears and reluctance of many of them to apply for exceptional recruitment into the Civil Service of Côte d'Ivoire.

## 2. Impact of policies implemented by the GIEHPCI and obstacles to integration through exceptional recruitment into the civil service.

### 2.1 Impact of GIEHPCI policies

The GIEHPCI, as an association of students with physical disabilities, has set itself several objectives; among others, the socio-professional integration of its members. However, achieving this objective depends on the implementation of effective policies. These policies are reflected in the actions undertaken by the association for the benefit of the community. What do these actions consist of? Have policies aimed at the genuine socio-professional integration of students with disabilities always existed? The socio-

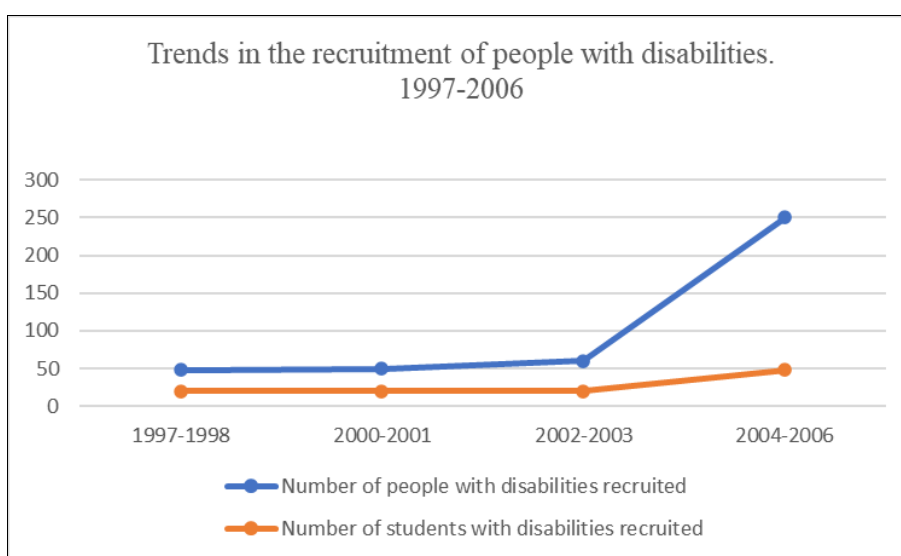
professional integration of students with disabilities has been the subject of a struggle that gained increasing momentum in the 1990s. However, this struggle lost momentum over the years, hampered by factors that determine. Students will pay the price. This is reflected in the virtually negligible number of those accepted in previous intakes (see chart on page 11). The difficulties faced by students with disabilities stem from several factors. The GIEHPCI's failure to act is one of them.

The government authorities felt it necessary for all people with disabilities (through associations and federations such as the AIPEHP (Ivorian Association of Parents of Children with Mental Disabilities), Assourmuvox, APSACI, ANAHPCI and FANAHPCI) to be united. The FAHCI (Federation of Associations for the Promotion of People with Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire), which was established on 18 June 1978, brought together the aforementioned associations under its umbrella. An apparent merger took place. However, the recognition of the GIEHPCI as a full member of the FAHCI remains unclear. There are several reasons for this somewhat indecisive stance on the part of the GIEHPCI. It is well known that this group claims to be independent of any other federation of associations for people with disabilities. However, it benefits from certain advantages (donations, etc.) provided by the FAHCI. Furthermore, for all students with disabilities, the autonomy claimed by the GIEHPCI is a given; and there is no question of this group affiliating itself with any federation. This position has, to date, shaped all initiatives undertaken by the successive executive committees that have led the group. These committees have expressed their reservations regarding any steps towards collaboration with this federation. It should be noted that, until the penultimate recruitment round, the FAHCI was the only federation authorized to sit on the civil service recruitment committee. However, a framework needed to be established to assist with the socio-professional integration of a significant number of students with disabilities. To this end, the GIEHPCI needed to be able to sit on the committee. This

has never been the case, given the almost conflictual relations between the two groups. This confirms the comments made by students with disabilities regarding the GIEHPCI's involvement in the fight for their socio-professional integration. Organizing and implementing strategies in line with the situation facing them was one of the initiatives of the GIEHPCI's most recent executive committee.

In this context of reviewing action strategies, the importance of collaboration between GIEHPCI and FAHCI was essential. The exceptional recruitment process for the civil service is taking place against a backdrop of increasingly challenging socio-political conditions. Given this, it was imperative for GIEHPCI to implement a robust policy to assist in the integration of its members into the civil service through this process. It was essential to rise above and set aside anything that might give rise to conflict. The stakes were high, and it was at the cost of various sacrifices that

the GIEHPCI secured, during the exceptional recruitment drive for the civil service (initially in 2005–2006), the recruitment of some thirty people with disabilities. This was achieved through the implementation of strategies that bordered on the cunning. Without revealing to all students with physical disabilities its true position regarding any affiliation with the FAHCI; it was a case of the end justifying the means. Collaboration with the FAHCI was essential. It was necessary to move away from problems faced by individuals in order to focus solely on the public interest. This has led to him sitting on the committee responsible for defending its members' cases. However, such actions do not sufficiently shield the GIEHPCI (through its offices) from suspicion on the part of its members regarding its ineffectiveness in fighting for their social and professional integration. The fact that several cases involving students with disabilities are submitted under the auspices of other associations is proof of this.



Source: Our survey (August 2022)

Graph 1: Trends in the recruitment of people with disabilities: 1997–2006

In order to achieve the objectives, set by the consortium namely, to support social and professional integration through a special recruitment process it was essential to adopt appropriate policies to help these members regain their independence. Furthermore, we can see from the graph that the number of students with disabilities recruited rose gradually to reach around thirty in the 2004-2006 recruitment period. This figure would have been higher had the students' confidence in their group been fully evident. Most preferred to submit their recruitment applications under the auspices of other associations and federations; this reflects a lack of cohesion within their own group. Furthermore, other factors underlie the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in terms of their socio-professional integration.

## 2.2 Barriers to integration through exceptional recruitment into the civil service.

Other factors contribute to the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into their workplace; among these is the glaring lack of adequate infrastructure to support the professional integration of people with disabilities (civil servants). This does not facilitate their adaptation to the workplace. In addition to this, there is also a lack of

(specific) equipment adapted to disabilities to help recruited disabled people deliver better services. This situation plunges disabled staff (the majority of whom) into despair. Apart from this aspect of the professional reality experienced by people with disabilities employed in government services, there are others linked to their professional duties. Many staff members with disabilities have found themselves facing discouraging situations. Upon arriving at their place of work, they are often surprised to find that no tasks have been assigned to them within the department. They thus find themselves idle, not knowing what to do with their day. Some (such as two blind people with disabilities whose (According to accounts provided to us by officials from their association) students with disabilities who have received their letters of appointment to public sector posts have not, in practice, been assigned any tasks to carry out. Among the factors that, for the vast majority, constitute the fundamental causes of the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into the workplace is the lack of genuine interest shown in them. The prejudices held against people with disabilities stem from a tradition adopted by all human communities. Consequently, any social action undertaken by politicians or other bodies is perceived as an act of charity granted to this

category of individuals, who are rendered vulnerable by the disability they suffer from. A former member of the Group for the Integration of Physically Disabled Students in Côte d'Ivoire (GIEHPCI), now employed in the civil service, told us that: "The impression we get is that it's as if we were begging for work, and once we'd got it, we had no right to complain about anything. We had to be content with what we had" (T.F.; aged 37).

Faced with these frustrating situations, many of the disabled people recruited feel obliged to stay at home rather than travel to work only to find themselves with nothing to do. It should be noted that these cases should in no way obscure the fact that in many other departments, disabled people recruited through this process adapt and integrate well into their working environment. Furthermore, their line managers report being satisfied with their performance. In addition to these issues, there remain those related to the lack of facilities or the inadequacy of existing ones. The provision of adapted facilities in most government departments that could enable people with disabilities to travel is limited.

In addition to this lack of suitable infrastructure to accommodate people with disabilities recruited into the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire, there are other types of difficulties, including the social acceptance of those recruited. The difficulties faced by people with disabilities in relation to the roles they are to fill also depend on the types of disability they have. Public services should therefore be equipped with the necessary devices, adapted to each individual's disability, to enable them to thrive in their working environment; this applies, for example, to blind people, who require equipment suited to their condition in order to receive high-quality services. Consequently, the acceptance of a person with a disability who is due to take up a post is essential for their better integration. This remains a barrier to their fulfilment, and thus to the full expression of their ability to participate in the service's activities.

## Discussion

The study has highlighted the factors underlying the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into the civil service of Côte d'Ivoire. Its findings have primarily focused on identifying the content of the special recruitment policy for people with disabilities and the socio-professional integration strategies implemented by the GIEHPCI, as well as analyzing the factors contributing to the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in entering the civil service through exceptional recruitment procedures. The first section of the findings, which aims to determine the content of the exceptional recruitment policy for people with disabilities and the socio-professional integration strategies implemented by the GIEHPCI, outlines the Ivorian State's implementation of a socio-professional integration policy for people with disabilities that forms part of the general framework of the 'International Year of Disabled Persons' (Hamonet Claude; 1990) <sup>[12]</sup>. In line with the promotion of human rights, and more specifically those of people with disabilities, the special recruitment scheme for the civil service in Côte d'Ivoire is an initiative that unfolds in stages, making it a process. Since 1997, the recruitment process has followed six phases. It offers a clear advantage to students of the Group for the Integration of People with Physical Disabilities in Côte d'Ivoire

(GIEPHCI). As a voluntary organization, the GIEPHCI must implement policies aimed at helping in recruiting its members amidst competition with other organizations representing people with disabilities. However, issues of leadership and the assertion of hierarchical dominance by the leaders of associations and/or federations act as barriers to the inclusion of students with disabilities.

The indescribable intolerance of some towards others, to the point of no longer truly accepting one another, is the doing of the leaders of these movements. These leaders betray the struggle for the common good by prioritizing purely personal interests. Pierre Bourdieu (1992) <sup>[7]</sup> through his genetic approach, aptly illustrates the positions taken by the various parties involved. Indeed, such an approach enables us to make sense of the often-consensual discourses and practices surrounding integration, which can thus be understood in terms of a struggle between actors whose stances reflect dispositions linked to their position within the field, but also within other fields of the social space. Other factors hindering the genuine integration of people with disabilities in general and students with specific issues exist. These fall within the remit of the policies implemented by the state. It seems as though this entire policy has been put in place without taking into account everything needed to facilitate the genuine integration of people with disabilities. The state is supposed to be capable, on an ongoing basis, of implementing such a social policy. It is a sense of doubt mixed with fear that some disabled workers express regarding what they observe and even experience within their departments. Everything suggests that the integration of people with disabilities is an initiative that the Ivorian state does not take seriously at all. In the view of some of our respondents: *'It's as if the State is getting rid of us'* (Y. C.; aged 27).

The final section of the findings analyses the factors underlying the difficulties faced by students with disabilities in integrating into the civil service through the special recruitment scheme. This study has sought to highlight the reasons why these students lack the motivation to take a greater interest in, or to genuinely commit to, this special recruitment process. The enthusiasm for submitting applications for recruitment among students with disabilities, which stands at 60.7%, reflects their desire and willingness to aspire to professional integration after their studies. However, the 39.3 percent of students who are not Those motivated to enter the workforce through the civil service highlight specific motivations that underpin these choices. According to Raymond Boudon (2002) <sup>[6]</sup>, an individual adheres to a belief or undertakes an action because it is meaningful to them; in other words, the primary cause of a person's actions, beliefs, etc., lies in the meaning they ascribe to them, or more precisely, in the reasons they have for adopting them. Students with disabilities face challenges that affect their professional future. It is therefore essential for them to take into account all the implications and conditions that will affect them. Such an attitude reflects the strategic choices that students with disabilities may make. Michel Crozier and Erhard Friedberg (1981) <sup>[8]</sup>, in their book entitled 'The Actor and the System', help us to understand the basis of the attitude of students with disabilities who, despite the opportunity presented by the special recruitment scheme for the civil service in Côte d'Ivoire, nevertheless remain perplexed by this process professional integration. Through the theory of

the strategic actor, their approach allows us to understand how collective actions are built from individual behaviors and interests.

Notwithstanding the necessity of seizing opportunities that constitute for them the exceptional recruitment to the public service, certainly feel the desire to submit their files in order to be recruited is desirable; however, other issues such as the assurance that should lead them to believe in the said exceptional recruitment process is another pair of sleeves to satisfy. In relation to living conditions which are increasingly difficult both at the level of studies (with academic years that are constantly troubled by strikes for demands, both among teachers and students themselves) and the cost of living, it is only with difficulty that the student manages to finish his studies and even, to have his end-of-year diploma. In addition to the factor of age which may push the respondents to either submit their files for exceptional recruitment or not, another factor that concerns the financing of studies and therefore the availability of economic means that can give them fulfillment in their university course, exists. Like the support of Maslow Abraham (1943) <sup>[13]</sup> in his theory, needs would fit within the framework of a hierarchy. All the needs are continuously present, but some are more felt than others at a given moment. While considering the case of a person deprived of everything, they are capable of putting their life at risk to feed themselves (in this case, it is observed that physiological needs are more important than security needs). The fact of not including salary grids corresponding to their level of study is an illustration of the categorical downgrading and 'the poor pay of the civil servant with a disability' noted by the people with disabilities interviewed. Poor pay and non-compliance with rank are sufficient reasons for them not to want to be recruited through this process in the public service of Côte d'Ivoire.

These students with disabilities invest in choices that are wise. Franscisco Naishtat (1995) <sup>[9]</sup>, when he makes the case for the Weberian theory of methodological individualism, mentions that it falls under a norm that requires explanations of social phenomena to be posed in terms of individual human agents, their actions and interactions, understanding individual beliefs, values, and ends. The reaction of students with disabilities is that they do not want to engage in initiatives that could lead them to undesirable setbacks. So, why should they serve the State only to be subsequently confronted with a salary payment below their academic skills? This is explained by the gradual loss of confidence among students in this recruitment process that derogates from the public service. For some, is there much to be hoped for from this recruitment process? While for others, the probability of being integrated into the Public Service and having the amenities required for genuine integration is lower. It is a feeling of fear that prevails within them. Maslow Abraham (1943) <sup>[13]</sup> points to a progressivity in the appearance of the next level by stating:

“As with the concept of emergence of a new need after satisfaction of a primary need, emergence is not a sudden phenomenon but rather a slow and gradual emergence from nothingness. For example, if the primary need A is only satisfied at 10%, then the need B will not be visible at all. Yet, if need A is met at 25%, need B may appear at 5%, if need A is met at 75% need B may appear completely and so on.”

There is no doubt that the fact that students with disabilities do not dare to apply for exceptional recruitment is part of an appreciation of advantages and benefits they could acquire by not taking risks to continue the studies. Committing to take the path of professional initiative turns out to be a recourse that would remain mandatory for them.

As for the fear of low pay, it is related to the gap that exists between the level of education of those who apply for this recruitment and the professional category in which they are placed in the public service. While considering the third postulate of rationality stemming from the theory of rationality, it is given to us to appreciate the meaning of the position adopted by students with disabilities regarding exceptional recruitment to the public service. Raymond Boudon (2002) <sup>[6]</sup>, states that as actors, they adhere to a belief, or undertake an action because it makes sense for them. The main cause of the actions of these disabled students lies in the meaning they give them, more precisely in the reasons they have to adopt them. The desire for disabled students to submit their applications for exceptional recruitment is a fact that notes for the vast majority of cases (students who express this desire) an attempt at luck. Indeed, taking competitive exams for these 54.8% of students who do so is the best way to ensure the exercise of an activity in the public sector with fewer worries about certain provisions (including salary...). For them, it is risky to have complete faith in such a process, because the chances of being recruited are so much lower that one has to submit to the public service entrance exams to hope to be legitimately integrated. Far behind them come those who evoke the lack of financial means, corruption and disinterest as a reason for their abstinence. Indeed, in the face of the evils that undermine our societies such as corruption, the graduates who leave our universities are confronted with disarray. The question of the motivation of students with disabilities is based, like support for the Herzberg theory, on an absence of dissatisfaction and satisfaction (Granger Raphaël, 2023) <sup>[10]</sup>. It is well known that taking competitions in Africa without raising the issue of bribes is difficult to conceive. For disabled students, their chances are all the more diminished because they have little financial means allowing them to survive from day to day on the university cities without forgetting their studies which they must ensure ; all the more reason for the competitions for the success of which, it is necessary to pay enormous sums. Might as well not take a competition. These are all reasons that underlie their demotivation and disinterest.

## Conclusion

The integration of physically handicapped students through exceptional recruitment into the public service of Côte d'Ivoire will be faced with various obstacles located both at the level of disabled people themselves (through the federations of disabled people who, for leadership issues, oppose each other) that of the Ivorian State which has difficulty establishing a genuine social policy bringing together the appropriate structures and infrastructures for the integration of recruited disabled people. Students with disabilities through the GIEHPCI in relation to this recruitment will thus be exposed to many integration difficulties. Obtaining a job in the public services of the State is an obstacle course for disabled students. If the latter sees his chances reduced with regard to the passage of integration competitions into the Ivorian public service, his

chances regarding integration through exceptional recruitment prove precarious. Notwithstanding this fact, other factors pertaining to the economic order and politics determine the integration of disabled students through this exceptional recruitment to the public service. The policy determines this recruitment, because the choice or government actions in addition to being economical are effective. The prejudices that are part of the cultural order evoke a set of clichés about people with disabilities and which cause their discomfort, in short a deficit of social integration. A change of mentality is needed in developing societies (Albertini Jean Marie, 1967) <sup>[2]</sup>. This, in order to guarantee human dignity for people with disabilities. The integration of disabled people in general and particularly that of students with disabilities will only be truly achieved with a change in society's attitude towards people with disabilities. We can remember that social, cultural, economic and political factors underlie the difficulties faced by disabled people in general in integrating into the socio-professional fabric.

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