



Is Disability On The Increase In Tanzania?

74. St. Marys



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What is a Disability?

When most people think of the word "disability" they immediately picture someone in a wheelchair.

But there are many different types of disability.

People with a disability may include:

- people who are blind or partially sighted
- people with learning or intellectual disabilities
- people who are deaf or hearing impaired
- people with a physical disability
- people with long term illnesses
- people with mental health or psychological difficulties
- people with an acquired brain injury



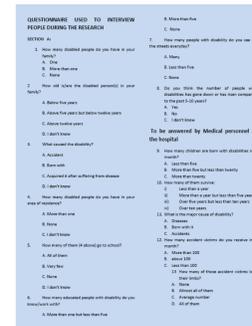
PROBLEMS FACED BY THE DISABLED PEOPLE

The disabled people interviewed in this project expressed a lot of dissatisfaction, towards society where they live, work or even go to seek various services namely hospitals. Some of the major problems they face have been listed here below:-

They lack attention from society, since society does not recognize them as competent people who can do any productive activity.

•In hospitals and other places where they go to seek for public services eg in bus stands, they are not catered for. They find it hard to struggle for public transport. Disabled pregnant mothers are abused by the medical personnel especially when they go for prenatal care. Some hospitals are stored and this has become hard for them get medical care.

•In most families, disability is a curse and so some parents have gone ahead to reject their disabled offspring. They lack education. Those who cannot walk are left at home as other normal children are taken to school. The disabled people who tend to go to school go those substandard schools especially those which are near their homes.



Results:

Definition was based on Convention 61/106 of the United Nations on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. According to the convention, "persons with disabilities include those who have long-time physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

People are more willing to report having a "difficulty" than having a "disability" Prevalence of Disability

7.8 percent of the population had some form of activity limitation.

Disability prevalence is higher on the Mainland (7.8 percent) compared to Zanzibar (5.9 percent) and is higher in rural areas (8.3 percent) than in urban areas (6.3 percent). Mainland households are more likely to have household members with disability (13.3 percent) than Zanzibar (9.3 percent). The overall percentage of households with at least one member with disability was 13.2.

Prevalence of Disability – Regional differentials

The results show that the prevalence of disability ranges from 2.7 percent in Manyara area to 13.2 percent in Mara region.

Higher disability rate in Mara region could be due to tribal conflict and cultural norms and attitude prevailing in this region, although the survey did not go further to ask the reasons Further study that include qualitative approach is needed in this area.

Some Experiences of People with Disabilities

Around a fifth of all people with disabilities reported problems with the access to transport;

17.5 percent of all people with disabilities in Tanzania reported having problems with availability of information in accessible format;

10 percent of all people with disabilities reported having problems with the attitudes of others at home

33 % of all people with disabilities reported having problems with the attitudes of others at work or school.

About a quarter (27.4 percent) of Tanzania's population aged 15 years was illiterate, with 2 in every 10 males being illiterate compared to 4 in every 10 for women.

Illiteracy was highest among persons with disabilities. About half of them (47.6 percent) were illiterate compared to 25.3 percent of the persons without disabilities.



Conclusions:

The Students:

The students interviewed in this class included:

Primary school pupils (St. Mary's Junior School-Mbezi Beach)

The pupils of this school failed to answer the question whether disability is on the increase or not. Most of those interviewed said they don't know. When asked how many have ever seen a disabled, they said they only see them on the streets.

High school students (St. Mary's High School- Mbezi Beach)

In this school, out of the 30 students interviewed, 46.7% (14 students) suggested that disability has reduced. They said that the school has no disabled student and that even if you walk around it's hard to find a disabled yet on the streets the only disabled people are the aged ones.

16.7% (5 students) said disability is on the increase because they see so many albinos these days and even those beggars on the streets are too many today.

However, 36.6% (11 students) said they don't know whether disability is on the increase or not.

University Students (University Of Dar es salaam-Mbe).

The University students interviewed on this question had mixed suggestions/answers. Majority said disability has gone down, others said they are not sure (unless research is first carried out) while others said it has increased especially in the rural areas.

Out of the fifteen (15) students who were interviewed with the help of questionnaires;

Nine (9) of them (60%) said disability has greatly reduced. The reasons they gave included; immunization of the young ones, proper medical care among and others.

Three (3) of them (20%) said they had no idea unless we complete the research and we let them know of the actual results.

Three (3) of the students (20%) said disability is on the increase in the rural areas where people have low education. They added that the people in the rural don't know the importance of immunization after all there are no hospitals in the villagers and those that have them they are situated far from them. "It's only in town where we see that there are no disabled people but in the villages they are too many. In almost every family, there's a disabled", said one Computer Science student at the Mbezi Beach Branch.

Further information:

Download at: www.youngscientists.co.tz/posters

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