

INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIES ON EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN KIRIMARI WARD IN EMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was establishing the influence of the strategies on empowerment of persons with disabilities in Embu County. The study was guided by the following objectives; To establish the influence of inclusive education on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Embu County; to determine the influence of access to equitable employment on empowerment Persons with disabilities in Embu County; to establish the influence of social protection strategies on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Embu County and; to establish the extent to which family support promotes the empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Embu County. This study employed Cross-sectional descriptive survey research design. The target population of this study comprised 75 participants. Since the target population was small the researcher employed census which involves capturing the entire population as a sample size which is 55 participants. The study found out family support influenced empowerment of PWDS the most with 28(40%), followed by access to equitable employment 18(26%), then social protection 14(20%) and finally inclusive education 10(14%). This implied family support influenced empowerment the most. Most assistance and support come from family members or

social networks. In conclusion therefore promoting a more inclusive society and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities requires improved access to basic education, vocational training relevant to labor market needs and jobs suited to their skills, interests and abilities, with adaptations as needed. There is the need to dismantle barriers and make the physical environment more accessible, provide information in a variety of formats, and challenge attitudes and mistaken assumptions about persons with disabilities. The study also concludes persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to deficiencies in services such as health care, rehabilitation, and support and assistance Based on the findings the study recommends Provide vocational guidance to PWDS to ease the transition from education and training to work life. Where opportunities for wage employment exist, assist persons with disabilities to find and retain jobs. This may require networking with employers, trade unions and employment service providers; providing job-seeking skills; conducting specific job and work site analysis to match the disabled person to a job; providing supports and accommodations.

Key Words: *strategies, empowerment, persons with disabilities, Kirimari ward, Embu county, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment of persons living with disabilities (PWDS) is vital for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); according to the World Disability Report (2001), approximately 15% of the world's population are disabled and are most affected by poverty and difficulty. Empowerment refers to the measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination amongst a select group of people. Economic empowerment is defined as being able to engage freely in economic activity (UNDP, 1993) while disability

according to Thomas (1999) is defined as a social oppression involving the social imposition of restrictions of activity on people with impairments and the socially engendered undermining of their psycho-emotional wellbeing. Economic empowerment is a critical driver of economic growth and a precondition for poverty alleviation. Empowering of persons living with disabilities involves according them access to high quality education and healthcare.

Globally, persons with disability experience worse education and labor market outcomes and are more likely to be poor than persons without disability. A study conducted by OECD, (2009) covering about 21 upper-middle and high-income countries shows higher poverty rates among working-age persons with disabilities than among working-age people without disability in all but three countries (Norway, Slovakia, and Sweden). The relative poverty risk was shown to be the highest more than two times higher in Australia, Ireland, and the Republic of Korea, and the lowest only slightly higher than for nondisabled people in Iceland, Mexico, and the Netherlands. Working-age persons with disabilities were found to be twice as likely to be unemployed. When employed, they are more likely to work part-time. And unless they were highly educated and have a job, they had low incomes.

The United Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006, is the first human rights convention of the 21st century. The agreement provides a comprehensive framework for protecting disability rights and emphasizes the need for States to create an enabling environment, to promote full inclusion and participation of PWDS. India, a signatory of the UNCRPD has a large population of disabled People living in both countries are likely to be living in poverty, to lack access to basic services and to face huge barriers to participation in society.

The Action on Disability and Development Annual Report (2008) based in Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe reported that the healthcare sector was the only sector that met more than 50% of the reported needs of Persons with disabilities. The report revealed large gaps in service provision for PWDS with unmet needs in welfare, education, vocational training and counseling. According to Thomas (2004) person with disability require a range of services from relatively minor and inexpensive interventions to complex and costly ones. Data on the needs both met and unmet are important for policy and programs. Unmet needs for support may relate to everyday activities such as personal care, access to aids and equipment, participation in education, employment, and social activities, and modifications to the home or workplace.

There are currently 1.3 million people in Kenya with disability. According to the Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities (2008), only 39% have attended a mainstream primary school, and only 9% have attended high school (Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities, 2008). According to Draft Education policy (2012) the enrolment of learners in special institutions and units currently stand at 102, 749 students, of which 21,050 are in special schools and 81, 649, are enrolled in integrated special units at both primary and secondary schools. These estimates imply that the enrolment figures represent about one-third

of the expected number of learners with special needs (NESSEP draft 2012). Such exclusion from education further perpetuates the cycle of disability and poverty.

In Embu county persons with disabilities and their families often incur additional costs to achieve a standard of living equivalent to that of non-disabled people, this additional spending goes towards health care services, assistive devices, costlier transportation options, special diets, and personal assistance. It is very important protecting and empowering persons with disabilities since it plays a key role in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities of all ages: providing them with an adequate standard of living, a basic level of income security; thus, reducing levels of poverty and vulnerability. Several plans can be adopted to help disabled people achieve an independent living and accord them full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life (Diana, 2013). As a result, PWDS are accorded a chance to be respected and included as equal members of the society.

Inclusive education involves developing the education system, programs, activities and even physical structures in a way that all students, both with and without disabilities have an opportunity to learn and participate together (Agraval, 2007). Inclusive education promotes respect and understanding as well as exposes PWDS to a nurturing learning environment that leverages their position for career advancement and openings in employment and improved livelihood. This strategy can be affected by improving support for families with young disabled children by ensuring families of disabled children benefit from childcare and early education provided to all children; meeting the extra needs of families with disabled children; and ensuring services are centered on disabled children and their families, not on processes and funding streams (Africa Research Institute, 2008).

There is a need to improve support and incentives for getting and staying in employment as well as providing effective work-focused training for disabled people; and improving Access to Work and other in-work support (Barnes, 2001). The British Government introduced radical changes including the New Deal for Disabled People, extensions to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the national minimum wage and Pathways to Work. Strategies include imploring employers to employ disabled people and thus improve the labor market status of disabled people (Albert, 2005).

According to the National Survey on disability from 2008, about 4.6 % of men and women are living with a disability in Kenya. Disability Rights Promotion International (DRPI) estimates that 10 % of the Kenyans are living with a disability (2007). The World Health Survey (2011), suggests that the prevalence among the working age population is 8.6%, with 11.6 % in rural areas and 4.4 % in urban areas. Based on these estimates around 3.8 million men and women are living with a disability in Kenya. 80 % of them live in slum areas, informal settlements at the edge of cities, or under very poor conditions in rural areas. The Government of Kenya has adopted several laws and policies pertaining to persons with disabilities, including their right to productive and decent work and basic services for example The Persons with Disabilities Act, 2003, is a comprehensive law covering rights, rehabilitation and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. It creates the National Council of Persons with Disabilities as a statutory organ to oversee the welfare of persons

with disabilities. The Law also requires that both public and private sector employers reserve 5 per cent of jobs for disabled persons, (Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

Social protection plays a key role in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities of all ages: providing them with an adequate standard of living, a basic level of income security; thus, reducing levels of poverty and vulnerability (Barron, 2007). The Convention on the Rights of the Child places obligations on States to recognize the right of every child to an adequate standard of living for their proper development (Blaikie, 2000). There is a need to put in place necessary measures to achieve the full realization of every child's right to benefit from social security. Social dimensions of vulnerability such as gender, ethnicity, HIV status, geographic location, and disability fundamentally shape PWDS's exposure to risk and their resilience. They can also be barriers to accessing secure livelihoods and essential services like health and education.

Discrimination of PWDS takes various forms, ranging from denial of educational opportunities, segregation and isolation because of the imposition of physical and social barriers (Berman-Bieler, 2010). Effects of disability-based are evident in sectors such as education, employment, housing, transport and access to public places and services. There is a need to systematically address violations of the human rights of persons with disabilities (Coleridge, 2010). Rights of disabled people have not been systematically addressed in society. A need exists for more comprehensive legislation to ensure the rights of disabled persons in all aspects political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights (Cramm, 2008). Appropriate measures are required to address existing discrimination and to promote thereby opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate based on equality in social life and development.

The government of Kenya has taken many legislative and policy steps that indicate commitment to advancing the rights of persons with disabilities. In terms of international instruments, these steps include: Signing and ratifying (in 2008) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the optional protocol, the first international, legally binding treaty aimed at protecting the human rights of persons with disabilities; Signing and ratifying other treaties that advance the rights of people, including those with disabilities, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women all of which make some reference to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to fair treatment, appropriate care, inclusion and full participation in society, committing to the East African Policy on persons with Disabilities (2012) outlining joint policy commitments in line with the CRPD and country level recommendations.

For many persons with disabilities, assistance and support are prerequisites for participating in society. The lack of necessary support services can make persons with disabilities overly dependent on family members – and can prevent both the person with disability and the family members from becoming economically active and socially included. Throughout the world persons with disabilities have significant unmet needs for support. Caregiving is at the

heart of family life. Parents care for children, spouses care for each other, and, when illness or disability occurs, family members care for each other. At least 80% of primary caregivers for individuals with severe disabilities are family members (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2014).

Families affected by a disability experience a host of relational opportunities and challenges. Many persons with disabilities need assistance and support to achieve good quality of life and to be able to participate in social and economic life on an equal basis with others. A sign language interpreter, for instance, enables a Deaf person to work in a mainstream professional environment. A personal assistant helps a wheelchair user travel to meetings or work. An advocate supports a person with intellectual impairment to handle money or make choices. People with multiple impairments or older persons may require support to remain in their homes. These individuals are thus empowered to live in the community and participate in work and other activities, rather than be marginalized or left fully dependent on family supporter social protection (Berlac 2011).

Most assistance and support come from family members or social networks. State supply of formal services is generally underdeveloped, not-for-profit organizations have limited coverage, and private markets rarely offer enough affordable support to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. State funding of responsive formal support services is an important element of policies to enable the full participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic life. States also have an important role in setting standards, regulating, and providing services. Also, by reducing the need for informal assistance, these services can enable family members to participate in paid or income-generating activity (Gooding, 2009).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Throughout history, persons with disabilities have been isolated both from general society and from each other, which has restricted opportunities to participate in public domains or to politically organize (Gooding, 2009). Disability policies have typically been developed for persons with disabilities, rather than with their direct participation (Sneider, 2011). In addition, persons with disabilities continue to be marginalized in all aspects of the policymaking process. Inequalities still exist in basic areas such as public accessibility and transportation, which prevents persons with disabilities from full civic and social participation. The use of advocacy by persons with disabilities has been successful in changing policies and programs, most of which are associated with protests organized by the disability rights movement. Many disabled people in Kenya, as in most developing countries in the world, live in poverty, have limited opportunities for accessing education, health, and suitable housing and employment opportunities. Many will have been denied an education or face inhibitions due to low self-esteem. Attempts to bridge the gap in unmet needs in welfare, education and vocational training are appropriate to the economic environment in which they live, is crucial to achieving the goal of economic empowerment (Coleridge 2006). These include technical skills linked to trades, entrepreneurial skills, designed to equip disabled people to run their own businesses, or personal skills, such as effective communication and interviews skills. According to UHRC report (2011), approximately 25% of Children with

Disabilities (CWD) are enrolled in schools under the UPE program. The other population of the children could be on the street begging for money to help their families. Some of them are possibly staying at home with their parents who don't priorities them as other children. The United Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) clearly calls on State parties to promote inclusion and remove the barriers to participation, to facilitate the economic participation of disabled people. Reviewed literature has shown that Working-age persons with disabilities were found to be twice as likely to be unemployed. When employed, they are more likely to work part-time. The Early Years Connect program (EYC) advocates for the attainment of quality basic education for all in Kenya; the disability movement in Kenya through The United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) has been engaging with EYC on advocating for right to education for Persons with disabilities. However, despite these efforts there is still a long way to go in terms of the government implementing international and national policy on influence of strategies promoting empowerment of persons with disabilities in Embu county; therefore, there is a need to highlight the strategies which could be adopted to promote the empowerment of Persons with disabilities.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of the strategies on empowerment of persons with disabilities in Embu County.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To establish the influence of inclusive education on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County.
2. To determine the influence of access to equitable employment on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County.
3. To establish the influence of social protection strategies on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County.
4. To establish the extent to which family support influences the empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Critical Theory

Critical theory was first defined by Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of sociological in his 1937 essay 'Traditional and Critical Theory'. Critical Theory is a social theory oriented towards critiquing and changing society. The theory also involves a normative dimension, either through either through criticizing society from some general theory of values, norms or "ought's" or through criticizing it in terms of its own espoused values. The theory sees disabled people's problems explicitly as the product of an unequal society. It ties the solutions to social action and change. Notions of disability as social oppression mean that prejudice and discrimination disable and restrict people's lives much more than impairments do. So, for example, the problem with public transport is not the inability of some people to walk but that buses are not designed to take wheelchairs. Such a problem can be "cured" by

spending money, not by surgical intervention, assistive computer technology, or rehabilitation.

Ideologies perpetuate practical barriers and exclusions. If disability is assumed to be an individual matter of personal tragedy or heroic triumph over difficulty, disabled people are excluded from society. Ordinary education, employment, buildings, public transport, and other things which most people can take for granted remain largely closed to disabled people, or at least they present obstacles which each person must tackle individually. By emphasizing deficiency and dependency, doctors tend to reinforce these ideologies.

The impact of this critical theorizing on health care and research has tended to be indirect. It has raised political awareness, helped with the collective empowerment of disabled people, and publicized disabled people's critical views on health care. It has criticized the medical control exerted over many disabled people's lives, such as repeated and unnecessary visits to clinics for impairments that do not change and are Education and debate not illnesses in need of treatment. Finally, it suggests a more appropriate societal framework for providing health services for disabled people.

Social Constructionism Theory

Social Constructionism is a sociological theory of knowledge according to which human development is socially suited and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others. The theory was coined by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann 1987, the theory focuses on the artifacts that are created through the social interactions of a group, the theory focuses on an individual learning that takes place because of his or her interactions in a group. Based on our study it shows the crucial importance of learning from disabled people's experience to understand meanings of disability. For example, blindness differs according to the economic and cultural contexts. Classic study showed that in the United States blindness was experienced as loss requiring counseling, in Sweden as a problem requiring support services, in Britain as a technical issue requiring aids and equipment, and in Italy as the need to seek consolation or even salvation through the Catholic church.

Anthropologists and historians show how different societies produce certain types of disease, impairment, and disability. Disability can be produced by “the disability business.” In modern America, industrialization, the subsequent growth of the human service sector, and the more recent politicization of “disability rights” by the American disabled people's movement have transformed “disability” and “rehabilitation” into a multimillion dollar enterprise. Disability becomes a commodity and a source of income for doctors, lawyers, rehabilitation professionals, and disability activists. These examples treat disability as a shared experience, in contrast with conventional individualistic interpretations. Yet each fails to address key structural factors. Consequently, disabled people tend to be treated as an abstract, somehow distinct from the rest of humans, and the crucial question of the causes of disability is fudged rather than clarified

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted Cross-sectional descriptive survey research design. This type of research design is a research tool used to capture information based on data gathered for a specific point in time. Cross-sectional survey is an observational study that collects data from whole target population at a single point in time to examine the relationship between an aspect and other variables in a population at a given point in time. In this research, the data gathered was from a pool of participants with varied characteristics and demographics. The design gave information on the status of influence of strategies on empowerment of persons with disabilities in Kirimari Ward, Embu County the information helps answer the research questions.

Target Population

The target population of this study comprised of 20 Persons with disabilities in Embu rehabilitation centre, 20 parents of PWDs, 10 instructors in Embu rehabilitation centre, 20 county officials, and 5 at the NCPWDS. Therefore, the study targeted a total population of 75 respondents.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The study employed census method; this type of sampling procedure is such that, existing subgroups in the population are reproduced in the sample. A sample is a smaller group or sub-group obtained from the accessible population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The sample is selected in such a way as to ensure that certain sub-groups in the population are represented in the sample proportion. Since the target population was small the researcher employed census which involves capturing the entire population as a sample size which was 75 participants. In a census data is collected on the entire population hence the sample size is equal to the population size.

Data Collection Methods

This study used questionnaire for data collection. Questionnaires increase the chances of getting honest responses since they ensure anonymity of the respondent. The questionnaire both used open ended and closed ended questions. The use of open ended questions offers flexibility for the respondent to provide more details. Closed ended questions allows for quantitative analysis. This balance is useful for a comprehensive analysis.

Data Analysis

The researcher checked the data collected through questionnaire, for checking on completeness, clarity and consistency in answering research questions. The data was then coded, tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences based on study objectives. Descriptive statistics was computed, and study findings presented using tables and percentages and interpretations made.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Inclusive Education and Empowerment of PWDs

The first objective of the study was to establish the influence of inclusive education on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County. The study found out that the schools in Kirimari ward are not well structured to accommodate learners with Disability. This implies that most of the institutions in the ward are not well equipped with structures to accommodate Persons with disabilities. This therefore means that inclusive education is not fully implemented structure wise. This goes in line with Duke (2009), success of inclusive systems of education depends largely on a country's commitment to adopt appropriate legislation; provide clear policy direction; develop a national plan of action; establish infrastructure and capacity for implementation; and benefit from long-term funding. Ensuring that children with disabilities can have the same standard of education as their peers often requires increased financing. Creating an inclusive learning environment will assist all children in learning and achieving their potential (Duke, 2009).

The study also found that PWDS who are educated in regular schools are likely to be more successful than PWDS educated in special schools. This implies that educating learners with disabilities together with the learners without disabilities boost their social skills hence empowering them. According to Deppler (2010) Children with and without disabilities learn with and from each other in inclusive classes. Because the philosophy of inclusive education is aimed at helping all children learn, everyone in the class benefits. Children learn at an own pace and style within a nurturing learning environment (Deppeler, 2010).

Finally, the study found out that there is a knowledge gap on the curriculum provisions. Agreeing with Donnelly (2011) Education systems need to adopt more learner-centered approaches with changes in curriculum, teaching methods and materials, and assessment and examination systems. Many countries have adopted individual education plans as a tool to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in educational settings. Many of the physical barriers affect children with disabilities. There are approaches adopted in inclusive education that focus on whole-school practice and in-class support. At a whole, school level good practices include adjustments to cultures, policies, and practices, development of support structures, regimes of funding support, and the provision of and access to equitable learning opportunities. At an in-class level, differentiating curriculum or introducing alternative curricula, the application of universal design, use of information technologies, individual planning through the individual education plan (IEP), and a focus on quality teaching for all students are the most prominent practices (Donnelly, 2011).

Access to Equitable Employment and Empowerment of PWDs

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of access to equitable employment on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County. The study found out that employers have been sensitized on the need to employ PWDs; however, most employers are not keen to implement the policy and that is why access to equitable employment influence empowerment only to great extent. According to Employment Act

2007 (Act No. 11 of 2007) there is elaborate provisions aimed at protecting PWDS from discrimination in the employment sphere. The Act also prohibits discrimination in employment within three main aspects: Promotion of equality of opportunity in employment; elimination of discrimination in any employment policy or practice, including against prospective employees based on their race, color, sex, ethnic origin, HIV status, disability, pregnancy; and the payment of equal remuneration for work of equal value.

The study also found out that the youth empowerment program has impacted positively on persons with disabilities. This implies that the youth empowerment program benefits the PWDs hence empowering them. The Workplace Accessibility Plan in America committed to the attraction, recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities. The focus was to provide universal access, remove barriers and learning and career advancement equality. It placed several the strategies and polices in place to encourage job applications from persons with disabilities. The plan, moreover, advocated for reasonable adjustment, that persons with disabilities could request workplace modifications or reasonable adjustments to assist in applications for positions and participations in recruitment processes. This was aimed at removing barriers for persons with disabilities and providing the tools and equipment to undertake their job in the best way possible (Eagar, 2006).

On the question about whether the 30% tender procurement reservation for women, youth and PWDS impacted on job creation for PWDS. The study found out that 30% tender procurement reservation for women, youth and PWDS impacted on job creation for PWDS. This implies that majority of PWDS are economically empowered. This goes in line with Eenet, (2013) who stated that employment programs and initiatives to assist and support persons with disabilities included: interpreters, readers, attendants or other work related assistance; information and communication in accessible formats such as converting text to audio, providing larger print versions of documents, and provision of a talking calculator; assistive technology such as screen reader, screen magnifiers, and speech to text applications; additional workplace equipment or facilities and adjustments to work methods and arrangements Equitable employment helps to foster an accessible and inclusive workplace by providing assistive technologies (Eisenman, 2011).

Social Protection and Empowerment of PWDS

The third objective of the study was to establish the influence of social protection on empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County. The study found out that the amount provided to the PWDS was not sufficient to cover their expenses. This implies that the government needs to provide more funds as grants. According to Boyle (2011) lack of access to transportation is a frequent reason for a person with disability being discouraged from seeking work or prevented from accessing health care.

The study also found that the government undertakes sufficient monitoring and supervision of social programs thus the social programs provided by the government achieve their intended goal. Social protection programs on their own will not eliminate the vulnerabilities persons with disabilities face. Therefore complementary programs are needed to create an enabling

environment for persons with disabilities, such as adaptations to the built environment, inclusive education, rehabilitation and vocational training services, and the enactment and enforcement of disability legislation (D'Allessio, 2011). As per the findings majority of the respondents strongly agreed National and County government respond to Lobbying initiatives and sensitization programs being undertaken by special representatives of PWDS.

Family Support and Empowerment of PWDS

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the extent to which family support work influences the empowerment of Persons with disabilities in Kirimari, Embu County. The study found out that there are no cases where PWDS are disowned and neglected by their family members and, PWDS are not exploited financially by family members. On whether there are cases family members are involved in physical and emotional abuse to PWDS majority of the participants disagreed. This implies that family members are in support of PWDS. Families with a person with intellectual disability tend to have lower levels of resilience than those found in the general population. Individual characteristics such as age, gender, caring workload, and care-recipient dependency can contribute to resilience (Yiolitis, 2000).

Social isolation and restrictions of opportunities can also lead to anxiety and feelings of a lack of control over life situations. According Montie, (2011) children with disabilities often have fewer opportunities to explore their environment because of their impairment as well as barriers in the environment. In addition, parents or caregivers might not be enabled to compensate for these challenges and as a result the child receives less stimulation and encouragement for its development. At school, children with disabilities are more likely to be bullied and harassed, might have a limited number of friends, and engage in fewer extracurricular activities than their peers all of which effects their psychosocial development.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded that promoting a more inclusive society and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities requires improved access to basic education, social protection policies, employment opportunities and family inclusivity. There is the need to dismantle barriers and make the physical environment more accessible, provide information in a variety of formats, and challenge attitudes and mistaken assumptions about persons with disabilities. The study also concludes persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to deficiencies in services such as health care, rehabilitation, and support and assistance. Based on the strategies, the study concludes family support influenced empowerment of PWDS the most, followed by access to equitable employment, then social protection and finally inclusive education which influenced empowerment least. This is because most assistance and support come from family members or social networks. State supply of formal services is generally underdeveloped, not for-profit organizations have limited coverage, and private markets rarely offer enough affordable support to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. State funding of responsive formal support services is an important element of policies to enable the full participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic life. States also have

an important role in setting standards, regulating, and providing services. Also, by reducing the need for informal assistance, these services can enable family members to participate in paid or income-generating activity

RECOMMENDATIONS

Inclusive Education – The Government should ensure that persons with disabilities have access to basic education, favourable physical environment, transportation, information and communications and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, on an equal basis with others. The study recommends the government, and NGOs should build new facilities or infrastructure accessible to disabled people, or making existing facilities accessible to persons with disabilities through modifications, for example installing an entrance ramp; retrofitting bathrooms; improving signage, Providing information in alternative formats, such as on a CD, in Braille, or visual format for those with hearing impairments.

Access to Equitable Employment - Provide vocational guidance to PWDS to ease the transition from education and training to work life. Where opportunities for wage employment exist, assist persons with disabilities to find and retain jobs. This may require networking with employers, trade unions and employment service providers; providing job-seeking skills; conducting specific job and work site analysis to match the disabled person to a job; providing supports and accommodations.

Social Protection -The study recommends that the county and National Governments should increase the amount provided in disability grants and cash transfer programs to enhance sustainability.

Family Support - The study also recommends the government and other stakeholders like representatives of PWDs should provide training to the family members of PWDs households on special needs skills such as sign language, braille as well as emotional needs.

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