



RESEARCH REPORT

in Implementation of Inclusive Education
in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) in Tanzania

A Case of three Universities in Tanzania
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Implementation of Inclusive Education in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) in Tanzania

A Case of three Universities in Tanzania Researchers

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Abstract

The study sought to contribute to the democratization of education delivery in tertiary institutions with a focus on students with disability through analysis of evidence on the availability and quality of the services provided as well as the role and functioning of Units for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) within selected higher learning institutions. Specifically, the study aimed to: assess the status of inclusive education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania; establish support services available for students with disabilities in higher learning institutions; assess the suitability of learning environment for supporting inclusive education in higher learning institutions; explore the perceptions of key stakeholders on inclusive education in higher learning institutions; and suggest appropriate strategies for enhancing inclusive education in higher learning institutions.

The study adopted a case study research design. Three higher learning institutions namely University of Dodoma, University of Dar es Salaam and Mkwawa University College of Education were purposively selected. The selection was informed by the undergraduate programmes offered by the universities and the number of students with disabilities admitted. Questionnaires and interviews were administered to members of academic staff, students with disabilities, non-disabled peer students. In addition, library staff and university management staff. A total of 155 respondents formed the study population.

Findings from the study revealed that members of academic staff had awareness about students with disabilities in the categories of hearing impairment, visual impairment, albinism and intellectual impairment. However, it was found that students with albinism were more familiar to instructors than other categories of disabilities. In addition, non-disabled peer students showed more experience with albinism highly rated by the University of Dodoma than other categories of disabilities. In terms of support services for students with disabilities, only 18.7% of the respondents indicated that students with disabilities were provided with readers, 22.6% indicated to have been provided with transcribers. On this aspect, UDSM was rated very low. It was also found that universities do not provide time extension during examination and quizzes whereby UDSM was rated highly followed by MUCE and UDOM. On provision of sound amplifiers, UDSM was rated highly followed by MUCE and UDOM,

and on provision of transport facilities MUCE was rated highly followed by UDSM and UDOM. It was further revealed that most of the instructors and library staff had not attended any training for supporting students with disabilities. On the suitability of learning environment, the overall rating was 43% whereby MUCE was rated highly followed by UDSM and UDOM.

On the perceptions of University Management on inclusive education, revealed that university management are positive about embracing inclusion. However, it was xfound that a large part of the university communities are not aware about inclusion and the notion of inclusive education. It was acknowledged that the universities have accommodated the issues of diversities in the charter and rules. It is recommended to mainstream inclusive education in the functioning of universities.



1.0 Background

Academic discourse on Inclusive Education (IE) is an amalgam of two complementary perspectives. Legal experts, human rights activists and international conventions tend to consider IE as a transformation and human rights tool (Maguvhe, 2015). It is also recognised as a basic human right and the basis for a fair and equitable society (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012; Forlin, 2013). Educational theoreticians and practitioners consider IE as a model that proposes an educational model in which all students are able to learn, participate and are welcome as valuable members of the university (Ainscow, 1998; Barton, 2009; Parrilla, 2009; Sapon-Shevin, 2003). For the latter group, IE is an educational philosophy and practice that aims to improve the learning and active participation of all the students in a common educational context. IE is thus conceived as an unfinished process and a belief system that poses a challenge to any situation of exclusion.

The significance of inclusive education has been recognized at the educational policy level in Tanzania (Kapinga, 2012). The Sustainable Development Goals, Goal number 4 targets at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The goal specifically aims that by 2030 education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes and by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. Mmbaga (2002) argues that there are clear indications of inclusive attitudes in Nyerere's ideology of socialism and self-reliance enshrined in ESR, which still guides the legislation on education today in Tanzania. The policy was based on the culture of people living together, working together and helping each other. In Tanzania, the culture of African socialism points towards a culture of inclusiveness (Mmbaga, 2002). Many of these norms

and customs originate in indigenous customary education [Kisanji, 1998]. According Hockings, inclusive learning and teaching in higher education refers to the ways in which pedagogy, curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. It embraces a view of the individual and individual difference as the source of diversity that can enrich the lives and learning of others [Hockings, 2010].

While academicians and several international conventions recognize the right of all citizens to quality education without regard to their individual characteristics in form of social or economic conditions (sex, race, ethnic grouping, skin colour or type of disability) the ideal for an inclusive education at all levels is still far-flung [Finkelstein, 2001; Porter 1999; Giangreco & Doyle, 2000; Smith 2000; Florian & McLaughlin, 2008; Barnum & Glass, 2009; Gardner 1983; Rose & Meyer, 2005; Strangman & Meyer, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999; 2003; Booth & Dyssegaard, 2008; Cook & Schirmer, 2003; UNESCO, 1994; 2005; 2006; 2008; UNGA, 1948; NCAC, 2002; Duguay, 2010; UNCRPD, 2006; UNESCO European Agency 2003; 2007; CEC, 2007]. The prevailing situation is at its worst in higher learning institutions (HLIs) particularly in developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America [Eleweke & Rodda, 2002].

Efforts towards realization of an IE are hampered by numerous barriers including discriminatory education systems, traditional attitudes and stereotyping, continued use of a medical discourse of disability, inappropriate curricula, lack of curricular flexibility and lack of inclusive teaching and learning methodologies [FOTIM, 2011; Kabuta, 2014; Corley, 2005]. When one looks at practices in HLIs across the world, one can appreciate proactive measures directed towards increased access to education by students with disability (SWDs), promulgation and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, and institutionalization of

support services for SWDs. According to the Population and Housing Census 2012, there were 2,567,088 persons with disabilities in Tanzania mainland in 2012 which is equivalent to 5.84% of the total population (NBS, 2014). Of those attending school in age groups 5-6 years, 7-13 years, 14-17 years 18-19 years and 20-24 years, persons with disability accounted for about 1% in all age groups under consideration for both male and female (NBS, 2014).

The total student population in Universities and University Colleges in 2014 was 218,959 (TCU, 2016). The total number of students with disabilities enrolled in tertiary non-university and universities in 2014 was 34,742 in Tanzania (NBS, 2014). Although the enrolment rates for students with disabilities have increased, such increase is not significant. The number of students admitted to higher learning institutions is limited by the number of places available and the direct costs of enrolment to households (Lewin, 2008).

The worldwide positive trend is reflected through formal recognition of SWDs. In 2004 Tanzania adopted the National Policy on Disability, whereby disability was described as a “loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical, mental or social factors”. Similar recognition and description of disability are found in section 3 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2010. Way back in 1977 the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania and its amendments recognised the rights of persons with disabilities and prohibited all forms of discrimination. In the same vein the new Draft Constitution 2014 (yet to be adopted) has some disability specific provisions. Para 44 of the draft constitution recognises that a person with disabilities has the right to be respected, recognised and treated in a way which does not lower his dignity; right to education through special

equipment and participate in social affairs; have infrastructure and environment which allow him to go wherever he pleases, use transport facilities and get information; use sign languages, written language by the aid of special machines or other methods that are appropriate; learn with persons without disabilities; and get a job and contest leadership posts in various sectors.

Similarly, Tanzania has an Education Act of 1978 and its amendment in 1995 and 2014, the National Disability Policy (2004), the Disability Act Number 9 of 2010 and the Inclusive Education Strategy (2009-2017) of 2009. The disability policy underscores education as a tool to support persons with special needs and disabilities in order to improve their quality of life, while the Disability Act outlines the right to education for all. The Sustainable Development Goals, Goal number 4 targets at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The goal specifically aims that by 2030 education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes and by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Ohajunwa et al (2015) consider two models of disability. The individual model focuses on individual deficit or impairment, and attributes any restriction of activity or social disadvantage that the individual confronts in his or her everyday life as the inevitable and tragic consequence of that impairment (Hammell, 2006). The social model (as proposed by the disability rights movement) posits that society creates barriers for any person with impairment. These barriers include but are not limited to negative attitudes, and inaccessible environments, systems and structures. Disability arises when a person with impairment is excluded because of societal barriers (Oliver, 1996).

Some key documents in higher education such as the Universities Act 2005 and University Charters have provisions for inclusive education. For instance, the University of Dodoma Charter 2007 Article 4(1) stipulates the objects of the University as to establish a comprehensive University aiming at fostering equity and fairness in education by providing an inclusive learning environment through teaching, research extension, life sciences, consultancy, particularly in education, health and allied sciences, earth sciences, information communication technology, business, humanities and social sciences and any other area or field of learning and knowledge. Mkwawa University College of Education Charter and Rules 2009, Rule No. 52 (1) and (2) provides for protection of women and other vulnerable persons (MUCE, 2009).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Although the number of higher learning institutions has increased in the recent past, it is not known the extent to which SWDs and particularly those in HLIs have actually benefited from the existing policy environment and whether there is inclusiveness in the educational processes. Also, documentation on the number and category of SWDs is not systematic and reliable. Attempts at quantifying their number have yielded different results depending on the adopted methodology of enumeration. It is also not known as to how many of the SWDs who attend primary or secondary education get the opportunity to study in HLIs. Furthermore, little is known about whether they get the quality education they deserve and what influences the success rate of SWDs who study in universities.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to contribute to the democratization of education delivery in tertiary institutions with a focus on students with disability through

analysis of evidence on the availability and quality of the services provided as well as the role and functioning of Units for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) within selected higher learning institutions.

1.3 Research objectives

- i. To assess the status of inclusive education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania;
- ii. To establish support services available for students with disabilities in higher learning institutions;
- iii. To assess the suitability of learning environment for supporting inclusive education in higher learning institutions;
- iv. To explore the perceptions of key stakeholders on inclusive education in higher learning institutions; and
- v. To suggest appropriate strategies for enhancing inclusive education in higher learning institutions.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Prevalence of Disability in Tanzania

According to the World Bank, one billion people or 15% of the world's population, experience some form of disability, and disability prevalence is higher for developing countries. In addition, one-fifth of the estimated global total, or between 110 million and 190 million people, experience significant disabilities¹. According to NBS² (2016) there are 4,094,663 persons with disabilities in Tanzania of whom 2,362,294 (57.6%) are females and 1,732,369 (42.3%) are males. Furthermore, in terms of level of education, 48% have never attended adult education or pre-school, 45.6% have attended primary education, only 3.7% have attended

1 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability/overview>. Downloaded on 14th December 2016 at 10:50 p.m.

2 <http://www.nbs.go.tz/disability/index.php/welcome/Reports>

secondary education, 1.2% have attended vocational education and training and only 0.54% have attended university education (NBS, 2016). About 13 per cent of Tanzanian households have at least one member who is disabled. People in rural areas are more likely to have hearing, mobility or other limitations, than those living in urban centres. About 8.3 per cent of the rural population over seven years is affected by disabilities compared with 6.3 per cent of the urban population over seven. The extent of disability may be under-estimated due to the difficulty of diagnosis especially in children under seven years. Many children with a range of impairments are denied their right to education. The 2008 Disability Survey revealed that persons with disabilities were twice as likely not to have attended school: overall four out of 10 (41.7%) of all persons with disabilities aged 5 and above had no school experience compared with two out of 10 (23.5%) of non-disabled individuals.

2.2 Disability and Policy Context in Tanzania

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), launched in New York in September 2015, define the global development agenda for the next 15 years. The role of higher education is specifically referenced within this framework, through Goal 4: 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. In 1978, Tanzania enacted the Compulsory Education Act of 1978, the aim of which was to incorporate such issues as access to education and equality (Possi, 1998). This Act, however, had a less significant impact on the education of children with disabilities. The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government both seek to provide all citizens with education, which is appropriate to their needs and abilities and meets the country's development aspirations. However, education sector faces the problem of insufficient resources, which makes implementation of the policy of universal access to education difficult.

2.3 Inclusive Education in Tanzanian HIs

Implementing the philosophies of inclusive education within higher education can be demanding and challenging. According to Moriña (2017) inclusive education was originally developed for younger students, prior to its application within higher education. Higher education in Tanzania has experienced a rapid expansion and growth in the recent past. Inclusive education in HLI in Tanzania is not fully implemented. Students' enrolment in Universities and University Colleges has increased from 123,434 in the academic year 2009/2010 to 218,959 in the academic year 2013/2014 equivalent to 177.4% increase with females constituting 36% and males 64% of the total enrolment [Tanzania Commission for Universities, TCU, 2015]. According to the Population and Housing Census 2012, there were 2,567,088 persons with disabilities in Tanzania mainland in 2012 which is equivalent to 5.84% of the total population [NBS, 2014]. Of those attending school in age groups 5-6 years, 7-13 years, 14-17 years 18-19 years and 20-24 years, persons with disability accounted for about 1% in all age groups under consideration for both male and female [NBS, 2014]. However, the number of students with disabilities has not increased significantly to match with the increasing number of higher learning institutions³. According to TCU (2017) the number of students with disabilities enrolled in higher learning institutions in 2016/2017 academic year was 570. Mnyanyi (2014) argues that the reasons for enhancing inclusion are that regular schools with inclusive orientation are regarded to be the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

The first batch of students with disabilities [VI] was enrolled at UDSM in 1978. Until 2009/2010 academic year UDSM had enrolled a

3 Higher learning institutions in the context of this study refers to Universities and University Colleges.

cumulative total of 234 students with disabilities. The UDSM and its Constituent Colleges (MUCE and DUCE) and UDOM admit students with disabilities particularly those with visual impairments and low vision (those with albinism), hearing impairments and hard of hearing, and physical impairments. MUCE has a total of 15 students with disabilities enrolled in the 2015/2016 academic year.

2.4 Supportive Learning Environment for Inclusive Education in HLIs

Students with disabilities are a challenge for the university, not only in terms of eliminating architectural barriers, but also with regards to more ample access to the curriculum, teaching, learning and evaluation (Morgado, Cortés-Vega, López-Gavira, Álvarez & Moriña, 2016). It has been argued by Bausela (2002) that universities are among the most discriminating institutions, both in terms of access for certain students with disabilities in facilitating their continuity in Higher Education so that they do not abandon their educational career prior to earning a degree. The study by Morgado, et al. (2016) revealed that the structure of the classrooms does not facilitate learning and the classroom equipment needed for the subject-projectors, blackboards, podium-are not accessible for students with certain disabilities. The study also identified unawareness and lack of knowledge on part of the teaching staff especially on rules regulating the academic attention that students with disabilities should be provided with and the subsequent organisational and attitudinal encumbrance. In addition, problems related to access to the University and bureaucracy on registration, requests for scholarships and help related to the needs of students with disabilities were noted (Morgado, et al. 2016).

2.5 Stakeholders' Perceptions of Inclusion in HLIs

A number of universities in Tanzania have launched programmes for accommodating students with disabilities with universities becoming

progressively more committed to the processes of inclusion. A study conducted on inclusive education in higher education by Morgado, Cortés-Vega, López-Gavira, Álvarez and Moriña (2016) at the University of Seville found that most of the participants concurred that the University failed to provide lecturers with information about their students' disability and lecturers were unable to plan the class programme with sufficient time in advance. In response to these demands, some universities have established offices to support the educational needs of students with disabilities have incorporated the use of new technologies and have implemented inclusive educational practices. However, these actions are insufficient to ensure the right of the students to quality education, without discrimination and based on the principles of inclusive education (Moriña, 2017). At the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) for example, there is a unit for students with disabilities coordinated by the School of Education (SoEd). The University of Dodoma (UDOM) has a bachelor's programme in special education although there is no independent unit established at the university. At Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE) a number of students with disabilities have been enrolled although there is no unit to cater for this group of students.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a case study research design. According to Yin (2009) a case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. Halinen and Törnroos (2004) assert that case studies allow the study of contemporary phenomenon, which is difficult to separate from its context, but necessary to study within it to understand the dynamics involved in the setting. The case studied was inclusive education in higher learning institutions and the participating universities. This approach was chosen because the aim of the study was to have an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon.

The study was carried out by a research team from the University of Dodoma and Mkwawa University College of Education. Three higher learning institutions were purposively selected for the study. The University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) is the oldest university in Tanzania whose establishment dates back to 1961 and has a unit for students with disabilities with experienced and qualified staff. The University of Dodoma (UDOM) is a newly established university with a degree programme in special needs education. Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE) is a young growing university college and a constituent college of the UDSM with a strong foundation on educational programmes and with a steady increase in the enrolment of students with disabilities.

Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were administered to members of academic staff randomly selected. Students with disabilities purposively selected and non-disabled peer students were randomly selected. In addition, library staff were purposively selected and involved in the study. The Management staffs were reached through interviews. Also, questionnaires were administered to key informants. A total of 155 respondents formed the study population. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 20.0 for windows. Descriptive statistics mainly frequencies and crosstabs were carried out. The qualitative data collected through interviews and open-ended questions in the questionnaire were used to enrich the quantitative data.

This study was carried out with the support from the University of Dodoma through the Disability Rights Education and Legal Aid Clinic (DRELAC). Participation in the study was voluntary. A permission to carry out the study was obtained from the University of Dodoma and from respective institutions. Participants were requested to voluntarily participate in the

study and were adequately informed about the objects and significance of the study (Kvale, 1996; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).



4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

A total of 155 participants formed the research group, of which 104 [67.1%] were males and 51 [32.9%] were females. The research group comprised of students with disabilities [27.1%], non-disabled peer students [52.3%], course instructors [15.5%], library staff [2.6%] and management staff [2.6%]. Majority of the participants were drawn from MUCE [48.4%] followed by UDOM [38.7%] and UDSM [12.9%].

4.2 Status of inclusive education in HLIs in Tanzania

The first objective aimed at assessing the status of inclusive education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Findings show that 98.8% of the respondents acknowledged that the three higher learning institutions admit students with disabilities and 1.2% did not know if their institutions admit students with disabilities. In addition, 79.8% of the course instructors acknowledged having students with disabilities in their classes while 20.8% did not confirm to have students with disabilities in their classes.

In terms of teaching students with disabilities, instructors from the three universities indicated to have the awareness that they had taught students with hearing impairment, visual impairment, albinism and intellectual impairment. However, data show that instructors were more familiar with students with albinism followed by students with visual impairments and less familiar with students with intellectual impairment. In addition, instructors at the University of Dodoma had taught students with albinism [69.2%], visual impairment [61.5%] and hearing impairment [38.5%]. On the other hand, non-disabled peer students revealed their experience with students with albinism rated highly by UDOM [96.9%], UDSM [93.3%] and MUCE [91.2%] followed by experience with students with physical

disabilities rated highly by MUCE (94.1%), followed by UDOM (93.8%) and UDSM (93.3%). Experience with students with intellectual impairment was rated very low at 20% by UDSM, 23.5% by MUCE and 28.1% by UDOM.

On the other hand, overall instructors indicated to have taught students with visual impairment (66.7%), students with physical disabilities (62.5%), students with hearing impairment (37.5%), students with albinism (58.3%) and students with intellectual impairment (4.2%). This confirms that course instructors are more familiar with students in the categories of visual and hearing impairments, physical impairment and albinism, and less familiar with students with intellectual impairment. This data is also confirmed by data from the Tanzania Commission for Universities which indicates that in the 2016/2017 academic year, higher learning institutions enrolled a total of 570 students with disabilities and about 33.3% were students with visual impairments followed by students with physical impairments (12.6%) [TCU, 2016].

4.3 Support Services Available for Students with Disabilities in HLIs

This objective sought to establish the support services available for students with disabilities in the three institutions of higher learning in Tanzania. All the library staff acknowledged to have supported students with disabilities in accessing library services. However, the library staff indicated to have only supported students with disabilities in the categories of albinism and physical impairments and not of them indicated to have not supported students in the disability categories of visual impairment, hearing impairment and intellectual impairment.

In addition, only 18.7% of all the respondents indicated that students with disabilities are provided with readers. However, 50% of respondents from UDSM indicated to have readers for students with disabilities. Also, only

22.6% of respondents from the three universities indicated that students with disabilities were provided with transcribers. However, UDSM rated this aspect highly at 65% percent and rated very low by MUCE at 13.3%. With regard to time extension during examination, quizzes and tests, the overall rating is 25.2% and rated highly by UDSM (50%), MUCE (26.8%) and UDOM (16.7%). It has been also revealed that the universities do not provide time extension during teaching whereby the overall rating stands at 14.6% in which UDSM was rated at 30%, MUCE (12.7%) and UDOM (11.7%). In relation to provision of sign language interpreters, the overall rating is 12.2% whereby UDSM is rated at 40%, MUCE (6.7) and UDOM (10%). On provision of sound amplifiers, UDSM was rated at 50%, MUCE at 20% and UDOM at 1.7%. On provision of wheelchair pushers, UDSM is rated at 52.6%, MUCE at 12.7% and UDOM at 5.4%.

Regarding provision of transport facilities such as tricycles, MUCE was rated at 69%, followed by UDSM at 60% and UDOM at 10%. Results indicate further that the universities do not provide assistance related to tape recorders and recreational facilities for students with disabilities. Additionally, data revealed that instructors and librarians had not received adequate training on inclusive education rated at 30% for MUCE, UDSM (20%) and UDOM (7.7%). Furthermore, data show that none of the instructors and library staff had attended short courses, and only 20% of the respondents from UDSM were aware that the instructors and library staff had attended a short course on inclusive education. It was however observed that 30% of the respondents indicated that instructors or library staff had attended a degree course on inclusive education and none of the instructors and library staff from the universities had attended a postgraduate course on inclusive education.

4.4 Suitability of Learning Environment for Supporting Inclusive Education in HLIs

The aim of this objective was to assess the suitability of learning environment for supporting inclusive education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Relating to the support which students with disabilities received from management, the overall rating was 41.3%. However, the institutions were rated at 56% for MUCE, 55% for UDSM and 23.2% for UDOM. A similar trend was observed in respect to support from course instructors in which MUCE was rated at 56%, UDSM at 50% and 33.9% for UDOM. On support from non-disabled peer students, UDSM was rated at 75%, MUCE at 72% and UDOM at 69.6%. Regarding support from library staff, the overall rating was 26.2% whereby UDSM was rated at 33.3%, followed by UDOM (25.8%) and MUCE (23.5%). This is an indication that the learning environment in higher learning institutions is not supportive to students with disabilities.

An analysis of qualitative data, suggests that the notion of learning environment means different things to different types of disability. For students with albinism it means being provided with reading lenses, but for one with hearing impairment it may mean getting the support of sign language interpreter, while for the visually impaired it means getting the support of a reader. For a student with physical disability it means getting transport (tricycle) or a wheel chair with someone to push it. Additionally it may mean a smooth terrain that allows the visually impaired student to move around comfortably assisted by the 'stick' or white cane. An assessment of the learning environment can be gleaned from the verbatim responses of SWDs from the three study institutions that we quote below.

4.4.1 Quality of Learning Environment for Students with Physical Disability

With regard to students with physical disability, the University of Dodoma provides accommodation to SWDs in ground floor rooms as well as tricycles to help them move around. Generally, buildings are constructed with ramps to enable SWDs to move easily, although between some college buildings, the lanes have no pavements. Such shortcomings led one of the respondents to write the following remarks:

Mazingira sio mazuri. Madarasa yapo mbali na rooms halafu kuna vumbi, kabla ya kufika madarasani tunakuwa tumejaa vumbi kwa sababu ya shida ya kutembea kwa umbali. Mababaraba ya vumbi, mawe, mabonde hivyo inakuwa ngumu kutembea pia madarasa na library yapo mbali na rooms za kulala, hivyo mazingira UDOM kwa SWDs sio rafiki. Sio madarasa tu hata huduma zote ziko mbali kidogo bila usafiri. Kwa kweli yako vibaya asilimia 75 za chuo kwa wenye SWDs lakini kwa wengine yako vizuri sana.

At Mkwawa University College of Education SWDs are accommodated in rooms that are close to classrooms. Although students with physical disability are provided with tricycles, most of the buildings (except the newly constructed buildings) have not been designed to favour students with physical disability. That is why some respondents made the following remarks.

My institution has no accessible built environment for SWDs to participate in learning. I need to stay around the university place and given the special shoes so as to keep comfortable during walking (BA ED). There is a room for SWDS but there are no special shoes.

In the case of the University of Dar es Salaam, efforts are being exerted at the Institute of Journalism to ensure the physical environment supports learners with physical disability. One official was quoted saying

There are efforts to maintain ramps. While at IJMC I had to ensure that ramps are in place and maintained for students with physical impairment.

4.4.2 Quality of Learning Environment for Students with Visual Impairments

Visually impaired (VI) students at the three institutions also face challenges that are unique to this SWDs category. These students need special gadgets to support their learning. The gadgets include Embosser machine that helps them to transcribe the ordinary text into Braille prints for the VI students to read. They also need study materials with enlarged font size to enhance readability. Such materials include lecture notes and examination papers. Responses from SWDs from all three institutions are negative on this aspect. The respondents do not seem to be satisfied with the level of support they are getting from their institutions.

Not many course instructors do care about SWDs (UDOM)

Students are not given extra teaching time and time extension during examinations (3rd year BA Ed student, visually impaired) (MUCE).

Most of the instructors use power point projector during teaching and not providing notes or handouts to students regarding that all students we have the same visual ability (MUCE).

There are times when some lecturers are not treating the students with special needs as equals in terms of education provision. The reason is that some lecturers

do not have special needs education training. Many have a negative attitude towards SWDs hence avoiding even asking questions or interacting with them in the classroom. Some do not even call them by their names [UDSM].

SWDs at MUCE expressed mixed feelings about the learning environment. While they acknowledged that the environment was generally favourable for other students, the learning environment for SWDs posed different types of challenges.

The following statements summarize this position.

The general environment at our institution is conducive only for those with no any kind of disabilities, but for the one with disability is somehow.

There is no special built environment/facilities for SWDs to adequately participate in the learning such as classes, libraries, offices, recreation, etc.

4.4.3 Quality of Learning Environment for Students with Albinism

Students with albinism share some special requirements that are similar to requirements for the VI students. However, they are affected by social stigma arising from their skin defects. Remarks from respondents suggest that not much has been done at UDOM to support students in this category. At MUCE there is special care which is provided to people with albinism whereby they live in special rooms equipped with special lights for them. At UDSM, stigma affects room sharing and it was reported that at times students with albinism get isolated.

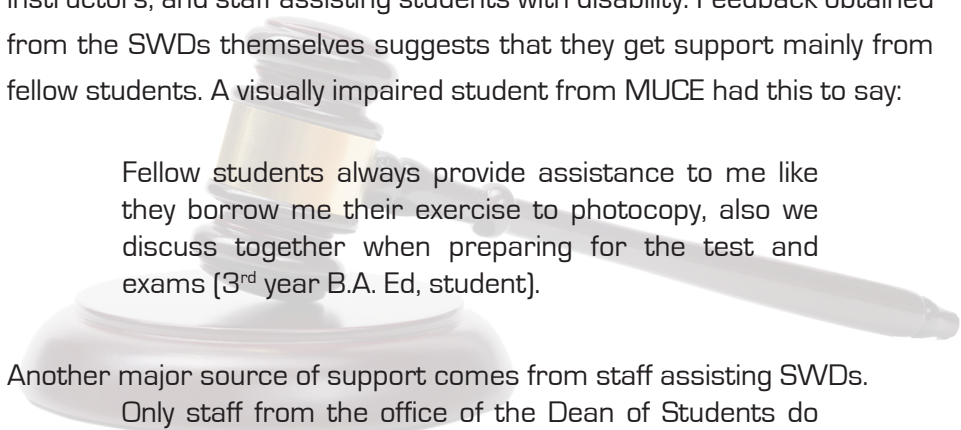
4.4.4 Quality of Learning Environment for Students with Hearing

Impairment

Students with hearing impairment (HI) are the most marginalized category in terms of receiving support from the institutions and other stakeholders. This is largely because of the communication barrier. Sign language is a special skill that is rare to the environments in institutions of higher learning. Severely affected HI students face challenges in following and getting value from lectures. At UDOM one student acknowledged being assisted with hearing aids by the university. Otherwise no formal support is provided to HI students. Nevertheless, they are assisted by their fellow students after classes on personal agreement.

4.4.5 Support for SWDs

There is limited support for SWDs from University management, instructors, and staff assisting students with disability. Feedback obtained from the SWDs themselves suggests that they get support mainly from fellow students. A visually impaired student from MUCE had this to say:



Fellow students always provide assistance to me like they borrow me their exercise to photocopy, also we discuss together when preparing for the test and exams (3rd year B.A. Ed, student).

Another major source of support comes from staff assisting SWDs. Only staff from the office of the Dean of Students do provide some assistance that require no financial obligation (UDOM).

These [implying staff assisting SWDs] are slightly better since most of them are trained staff who have handled SWDs either at secondary school or college levels (UDSM).

A student with albinism from UDOM wrote the following remark:
The environment is not friendly. No reading lenses [magnifiers], no hard copy materials.

A remark from another student with hearing impairment ran as follows:

UDOM has a difficult environment for learning because on myself I don't know sign language and also I suffer from visual and hearing. There is no assistance from the teacher. So difficult to understand the notes concerned.

The University of Dar es Salaam is comparatively better endowed with a learning environment that is supportive to SWDs. According to remarks by one instructor:

SWDs are being provided with personal assistants for their basic needs at the same time there is a special unit to provide technical support for their academic matters.

However, another instructor from the same institution had a different opinion:

I have, on several occasions, met students who are visually impaired in my classes. In almost all cases these students seem to be taking care of themselves – with very little institutional support.

5.0 Perceptions of University Management on Inclusive Education in HLIs

This objective aimed at exploring stakeholders' perceptions on the implementation of inclusive education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Data were collected through interviews with key stakeholders,

especially the top university management.

Interviews were held with the top university management in order to establish policy directions they do have for implementing and enhancing inclusive education in respective institutions of higher learning. The interview guide focused on the following themes: how the institution is disposed towards embracing the idea of inclusive education; level of awareness about inclusive education among the University community; how the University implements clauses in the Universities Act 2005 with regard to enrolment of SWDs; level of institutional support to SWDs; whether there is need for clearer policy on SWDs and how such policy might look like. Findings from the interviews are thematically summarized briefly in the next paragraphs.

5.1 Attitude toward Inclusive Education

The management of the institutions are quite positive about embracing the idea of inclusive education. This is supported by the number and category of SWDs enrolled in various programs including education, the humanities and social sciences (the majority), natural sciences (Biology) as well as ICT.

5.2 Awareness about IE among the University community

There was general agreement that a good proportion of the university community are not aware about the notion of inclusive education and its importance. This explains why some instructors, for example, do not bother about adjusting their teaching approaches and methodologies to the needs of SWDs. It was suggested that sensitization of all stakeholders was necessary so that everybody was clear about their role in supporting SWDs and creating an environment that is more conducive for successful learning. Such sensitization, it was further suggested, should be focused and targeted to specific course instructors who teach courses that SWDs have registered for.

5.3 Implementation of IE of the Universities Act 2005 with regard to enrolment of SWD

In addition to enrolling students with various types of disability, the Universities do provide support to the SWDs. However, members of the University management expressed dissatisfaction about the manner in which The Tanzania Commission for Universities allocates SWDs to some institutions and programs that were not prepared logistically to support such students. Salient among the challenges faced by HLLs were lack of human resources in rare disciplines such as sign language expertise. In some cases, students are allocated to inappropriate programs. For instance, it was observed that in one college of ICT a physically disabled student was allocated whose hands could not even hold a pen to write.

5.4 Policy on SWDs

It was suggested by some members of the university management that there was need to mainstream IE in all university policies including University Examination Regulations, Quality Assurance Policy, Human Resources Policy and Student By-Laws to regulate and promote the practice of IE in higher learning institutions.

6.0 Strategies for Enhancing Inclusive Education in HLLs

Responses on strategies for enhancing IE in HLLs can be clustered into policy recommendations, organizational/structural, pedagogical, as well as welfare recommendations. Actors that are implied by the recommendations include the educational institutions, instructors, as well as staff supporting the SWDs.

Some respondents have called upon educational institutions to ensure the following:

- (i) Institute strict disability inclusive policies to regulate the treatment and service provision to students challenged by impairment.
- (ii) Establish special units or services which should be capacitated with facilities and required resources necessary for handling students with disability.
- (iii) Provide all facilities for learning as well as basic needs to SWDs, such as accommodation and learning materials;

Dissatisfaction with institutional performance focused on provision of lenses to visually impaired students as well as feelings that SWDs are not treated as humans like others who don't have disability. They complained that they received limited care from the institution and government particularly with regard to providing financial and material support

On the other hand, instructors and staff that are entrusted with the responsibility of supporting SWDs are entreated to do the following:

- (iv) Make continuous assessment and follow up on those with special needs;
- (v) Provide materials and handouts and ensure that the same are fairly provided.

According to some SWD respondents, international organizations have a big role to play in supporting SWDs. One respondent made the following remark in that direction:

WHO should help SWDs because they are suffering from harsh environment of learning so they should provide favourable environment which will encourage them to study in the university. I have not received any special facility ever [BA Ed, visually impaired student].

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study has highlighted on the situation of students with disabilities joining higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The findings suggest that inclusive education in higher learning institutions is not well coordinated. It further suggests that there is a missing link between higher learning institutions and secondary schools where students with disabilities are prepared. In addition, the teaching and learning environment in most of the higher learning institutions is not supportive for students with disabilities. The findings further call for more research in inclusive and special education. It is recommended for higher learning institutions to develop policy structure that will accommodate diverse learning needs. Public education on matters relating inclusive education must be provided. Also, the university communities must be prepared to respond to diverse needs.



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RESEARCH REPORT

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in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) in Tanzania

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