

**A survey of challenges, opportunities and threats faced by
students with disabilities in the post-independent era in
Zimbabwe**

Compiled by

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For



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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out with the main aim of bringing out the challenges, opportunities and threats faced by students with disabilities and conditions who are enrolled in institutions of higher education in Zimbabwe. The study covered three provinces namely Harare, Bulawayo and Midlands targeting all universities, both teachers' and technical colleges in these respective provinces. To collect data the researchers used questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions. The questionnaires targeted administrators, lecturers and students with disabilities and conditions while interviews and focus group discussions were aimed at capturing data from students with disabilities and conditions. The data collected was analyzed using (SPSS) method and the results were presented in form of tables and pie –charts. The population was composed of 103 students with disabilities and conditions, 9 administrators and 11 lecturers which make a total of 123 participants. The sample had 50 students with disabilities and conditions, 20 both administrators and lecturers making a total of 70 participants.

Main findings from the study

- Inaccessibility of buildings for example lecture theatres or rooms, halls of residence, toilets and tubs thereby disadvantaging greatly those students who are physically challenged;
- Shortage of equipment and materials for example Perkins Braille machines, Pac-Mates, Tape Recorders, brailed textbooks or reading materials for the visually impaired students;
- The majority of students with disabilities fall under the category of the visual impaired;
- Offices of Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors and Registrar in majority of state universities are not accessible to students in wheel chairs;

- In all tertiary education institutions the majority if not all lecturers in post have no formal training in handling students with disabilities;
- In natural sciences and technical subjects there is lack and in some institutions un-availability of trained lecturers to teach students with disabilities;
- Most institutions of higher learning discourage and or marginalize students with disabilities who intend to pursue natural sciences;
- At A-level, of which the A-level qualification is used as entrance at universities, fewer disabled students who would have passed O-level choose sciences subjects. Additionally disabled students generally perform badly in sciences;
- Donations by well wishers and support by the international community to students with disabilities have dwindled in the past decade due to Zimbabwe's sour relations with countries in the West;
- There is lack of programmes to sensitize able-bodied students and other college/university staff that is not directly involved with students with disabilities on the needs and plight of students with disabilities;
- In most tertiary education institutions there are no waiver of tuition fees, no special budgets and no affirmative action to aid students with disabilities;
- Study findings reveal that all institutions of higher learning are not mainstreaming HIV and AIDS issues in programmes for students with disabilities. There is lack of peer counseling, lack of HIV and AIDS promotional material available in a format accessible to various categories of students with disabilities;
- Visually impaired students faced mobility problems as information of changes in the environment like digging of trenches is not communicated to them, further cars parked in undesignated areas, obstacles such as chairs left on their paths, open doors in corridors present everyday challenges in their mobility hence the need for able-bodied students sensitization programmes;
- Visually impaired students also had challenges accessing communication pasted on notice boards in print;
- For students with Albinism their main concern was inability to read lecture notes on chalkboards during lectures and also failure to read notices on notice boards due to their short-sightedness. Also these students are not provided with their special skin lotions to protect them from sun burns. On sports the main findings were that there was the lack of specially trained instructors to cater for students with disabilities and conditions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
Table of contents	iii
List of tables	iv
List of figures	
CHAPTER ONE	
THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the study	
1.2 Statement of the problem	
1.3 Justification of the study	
1.4 Objectives of the study	3
1.5 Significance of the study	3
1.6.0 Research question	3
1.7.0 Definition of key terms	
1.8.0 Delimitations of study	5
CHAPTER 2	
2.0 Literature review	
2.1 Introduction	6
2.1.1 What is Disability?	
2.2. Mainstreaming disability	
2.2.1 Legislation	6
2.2.1.1. United Nations Initiatives	6
2.2.1.2. Disabled Persons Act (DPA) of 1994	9

2.2.1.5 Disability and Human Rights	9
2.2.1.6 College and University students with disabilities	10
2.2.1.6.1 Institutional Mission	10
2.2.1.6.2 Policy Issues	11
2.2.1.6.3 Disclosure of Disability	14

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction	12
3.1 Research design	
3.1.2 Disadvantages of the descriptive survey technique	
3.2 Population	
3.3 Sample	13
3.4. Instrumentation	
3.5 Data collection procedure	
3.6 Data analysis	18
3.7 Pilot study	
3.8 Results of Pilot study	19
3.9 Summary	

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction	20
4.1 Questionnaire Responses	
4.2 Administrators' Responses	
4.3 Interviews	

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction	41
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- 5.1 Summary
- 5.2 Conclusion
- 5.3 Recommendations

REFERENCES 41

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
4.1.1: Distribution of lecturers at State Universities according to subjects they teach students with disabilities	20
Table 4.1.2: Provision of Extra time for students with disabilities' work by lecturers	23
Table 4.1.3: Prevalence rate of Trained Teachers	23
Table 4.2.1: Types of disabilities that the Universities are catering for	28
Table 4.2.2: Existence of Special Legislation in Institutions' Charter	31
Table 4.2.3: Provision of Sports for students with disabilities	32
Table 4.2.4: Mainstreaming of students with disabilities in HIV and AIDS, Peer Counseling Services	32

List of Figures

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AU	Africa University
CRPD	Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DRC	Disability Resource Centre
DPA	Disabled Persons Act
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GPA	Global Political Agreement
HIV	Human Immuno-Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labor Organizations
IYPD	
MSU	Midlands State University
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientist
SST	Student Solidarity Trust
UCE	United College of Education
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

ABOUT SST

It was born out of the Zimbabwe National Students Union, as a strategic vehicle to deal with practical solidarity issues for the student's movement. To date the SST has assisted well over 95 student activists with continuing their education after being expelled, and at least 1248 students who have found themselves in situations where they were being persecuted for participating in the struggle for the right to education and respect for student and academic rights. The first 15 student activists to complete their education through the assistance of the SST graduated in 2006, and were honored by the students movement at a ceremony dubbed the "**Against All Odds Ceremony**" on November 17 2006 in Bulawayo

SST PROGRAMS

1. Students Social Safety Net Program

The Students Social Safety Net (SSSN) is a solidarity program that the SST uses to cushion student activists and leaders from the effects of politically motivated Victimization by way of suspensions and expulsions. It also aims to act as a capacity building tool for current and future leadership through education of those who have shown courage, and exceptional leadership as activists within the student's movement, as such ensuring that the mechanics are in place for continuous churning out of leaders both for the student's movement, civil society but also for the future. It also has an essential component of the program, **The Students Rapid Solidarity Support Program (SRSSP)** which is an emergency mitigation tool that the SST intends to use as a cover in times of unforeseen crisis with regards to arrests, victimization and other abuses, within the students movement.

2. Research and Information Program

The Research and Information program seeks to abate the smooth flow of information on activities, violations and actions within the students movement and carry out research and policy analysis on issues pertaining the education sector. The program ensures the collection, packaging and dissemination of activities that are obtaining within the students' movement, including human rights abuses which are manifested through suspensions, expulsions and arbitrary arrests, while also telling the world the humane stories from within the same sector. As function of this program, the SST also tries to ensure that there is a standing crop trained Human rights monitors and reporters in Zimbabwe's institutions of higher learning, who are familiar with effective information packaging which insures that injustices are reported on and captured in a bid not only to flag the issues, but also to attempt remedial action and fight against impunity.

3 Regional Solidarity Building and Networking

The Regional Solidarity Building (RSBN) Program is a networking initiative that is meant to sensitize primarily the SADC region on the situation in Zimbabwe especially with regards to students, and at the same time build relationships for the possibilities of people to people solidarity actions. The program entails establishing relationships with student's movements, social movements and rights based organisations and watchdogs in the regions.

4 International Solidarity Building and Networking

The International Solidarity Building and Networking (ISBN), is a program that specifically aims to enhance the possibilities of having international solidarity for the students movement politically victimized students in Zimbabwe. It also specifically aims to internationalize the crisis in Zimbabwe as it regards students while ensuring international relationships that can be used to ease the burden of extremely victimized student leaders and activist, through offering international safety nets.

SST Governance

The SST has a 9 member board of trustees which oversees the running of the organisation. The board is made up of young but prominent Human Rights Defenders from different sectors of Zimbabwean Civil Society where they lead. It is renewed through perpetual succession.

SST Secretariat

The SST has a staff compliment of 8, which is led by a Programmes Coordinator and regularly takes aboard interns on attachment. The SST has a strong volunteer base through its fellows (students expelled from local universities now pursuing alternative education through the SST educational programme with UNISA and abroad), who from time to time volunteer at the organisation for different tasks.

Staff Complement

Masimba Nyamanhindi: Programmes Coordinator, Simba Moyo: Programmes Manager, Marlene Mutsira: Finance and Administration Manager, Trevor Murai: Research and Information officer, Darlington Madzonga: Social Safety Net Officer, Masimba Kuchera: Programmes Officer (Research and Information), Rachel Matatare: Administrator, Goodman Mimise: Programmes Officer (Fellows Liaison and Resource Centre) and Levyniah Katshana: Intern (Gender and Information)

CHAPTER ONE

A SURVEY OF CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS FACED BY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA IN ZIMBABWE

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe witnessed a huge expansion in learning institutions that offer certificates, diplomas, degrees and other post-graduate qualifications to students, which also included students with disabilities. For instance, at Independence, Zimbabwe had one university but now, there are seven state universities, four church related universities and a women's university that are fully internationally accredited. (<http://www.zimembassy.se/health.html>). In many of these institutions research on students with disabilities in higher education has shown that these students often face additional challenges and threats in their educational milieu. Paul (2000) note that students with disabilities face both physical and attitudinal barriers within their college or university environments. Rao (2004) states that, 'attitudinal barriers' are recognized widely as an impediment to success of people with disabilities. Unfortunately, this topic happens to be one of the least researched variables in studies done with faculties and students with disabilities in higher education (Fonosch and Schwab, 1981).

Furthermore, there are a few other studies undertaken since 1981 that studied this factor in relation to success of students with disabilities in higher education. Benham, 1995; Lewis, 1998; McCarthy and Campbell, 1993, 2002; Schoen, Uysal and McDonald, 1987; William, (2000) also expressed the same contention. The study seeks to examine and expose the challenges, opportunities and threats faced by students with disabilities and conditions in Zimbabwe.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Education for students with disabilities in Zimbabwe has undergone a tremendous revolution since 1980. The inclusion of students with disabilities has not been taken seriously in Zimbabwe. For instance, The 1987 Education Act, that was amended more than six times now, is silent about the education of students with disabilities. However despite this lack of seriousness in Zimbabwe's legislative system, students with disabilities have always struggled to access higher and tertiary education in Zimbabwe. Today some Teacher Training, Technical Colleges, and Agricultural Colleges such as Kushinga Phikelela, United College of Education and Bondolfi Teachers' College, occasionally enroll students with disabilities. Additionally, some Zimbabwean Universities such as University of Zimbabwe (UZ), Africa University (AU) National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) and the Midlands State University (MSU), are currently enrolling students with disabilities. This study sought to gather information on challenges, threats and opportunities faced by students with disabilities at universities and colleges in Zimbabwe.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Higher Education in Zimbabwe has undergone changes in response to modifications in the perceived needs of the society, legislative policies and social attitudes. Consequently, the student pool has changed considerably in higher educational institutions and now includes a significant number of students with disabilities seeking to complete their studies as colleges and universities increases across the country. The students with disabilities and conditions face a number of challenges, threats and opportunities which this study seeks to unveil.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

No known research in Zimbabwe has managed to determine the challenges, opportunities and threats that are faced by students with disabilities in the tertiary or higher education sector in Zimbabwe. The study has exposed specific concerns about the challenges, opportunities and threats faced by students with disabilities in the higher education sector in Zimbabwe. The study provides valuable insights into ways of improving the learning environment and opportunities for students with disabilities in higher education in Zimbabwe.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To establish major challenges faced by students with disabilities and conditions in higher education institutions;
2. To explore the possible opportunities in higher education that are an advantage to the education of students with disabilities and conditions;
3. To expose the threats which students with disabilities experience in their studies in higher education institutions.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at highlighting the major problems which students with disabilities and conditions are encountering in pursuance of their higher education institutions in Zimbabwe. The research findings brought out clearly the challenges, opportunities and threats of each specific disability or condition under study.

The information gathered is vital to policy makers, stake holders, donors, service providers, and administrators, civil society organizations and the general public in the provision of intervention strategies to address the plight of students with disabilities and conditions. The study added new information and also opened new avenues for further research in the education of students with disabilities.

1.6.0 RESEARCH QUESTION

1.6.1 Main question:

What are the challenges, opportunities and threats faced by students with disabilities in the higher educational institutions in Zimbabwe?

1.6.2 Sub questions:

1. What are the effects of stigmatization on people with disabilities and conditions?
2. What are the social challenges experienced by students with disabilities and conditions in Zimbabwe?
3. What are the policy issues in relation to the students with disabilities and conditions in tertiary education in Zimbabwe?
4. What literature surrounds the understanding, and provision of support services for students with disabilities in Zimbabwe?

1.7.0 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.7.1 Physical Impairment:

Include impairment of upper limb(s), lower limb(s) manual dexterity, and disability in coordination with different organs of the body. Often cause a person to use special equipment like a wheel chair, cane, or prosthetic limb. Persons with physical disabilities may have difficulties with movement or self care. (<http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/>)

1.7.2 Visual impairment:

This includes blindness and ocular trauma. Some of the visual impairment include scratched cornea, scratches on the sclera, diabetic-related eye conditions, dry eyes, and corneal graft (<http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/>).

1.7.3 Hearing Impairment:

This includes people who are completely or partially deaf. People who are partially deaf can often use hearing aids to assist their hearing. Deafness can be evident at birth, or later in life from several biological causes. For example Meningitis can damage the auditory nerve or cochlea. Deaf people use sign language as means of communication.

(<http://www.barrierbreak.com/typesofdisabilities.php>)

1.7.4 Albinism:

An inherited condition that is present at birth. It is characterized by lack of the usual amount of pigment melanin, which is the substance that gives colour to the skin, hair and eyes. Albinism always affects vision and may ultimately lead to skin cancer. The genes that cause albinism also cause abnormal developments of the nerve connections between the eyes and the brain. Most people with albinism are

born to parents without the condition but both parents must carry a copy of the defective gene and both must pass on that copy to their child. (<http://www.answers.com/topic/albinism>).

1.7.5 Invisible/ health-related disability:

The Invisible/health related disability refers to any medical condition which includes sicknesses or diseases such as epilepsy, diabetes, cancer. Another invisible disability is psychiatric disability characterized by disorders of mood or feeling states either short or long term. This category includes conditions like bipolar disorder and depression among others. (<http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/>)

1.7.6 DELIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The study focuses on challenges, opportunities and threats which students with disabilities and conditions experience in tertiary education institutions in Bulawayo, Gweru and Harare.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter will review related literature on students with disabilities in higher education done by other researchers. Also the rights of people with disabilities will be discussed. The literature will be reviewed under the following subheadings: What is disability, mainstreaming disability through Legislation, policies, practices on making environments to accommodate people with disabilities.

2.1 What is Disability?

There is no universal agreed definition of disability. Historically disability was seen primarily as a medical condition, with the problem located within the individual. This medical or individual model was challenged by disability activists who re-conceptualized disability as primarily a social phenomenon. The social model of disability draws a clear distinction between impairments and disability. Society disables people with impairments by its failure to recognize and accommodate difference and through the attitudinal environmental and institutional barriers it erects towards people with impairments. Disability thus arises from a complex interaction between health conditions and the context in which they exist. Disability is a relative term with certain impairments becoming more or less disabling in different contexts.

2.2. United Nations Initiatives

Although the human rights charter promulgated in 1948 and its subsequent versions clearly indicated that its provisions are meant for all human beings the unique circumstances of persons with disabilities have in the last thirty years called for special focus.

A number of important UN instruments have been developed to reflect the growing understanding of the special circumstances. The first was the 1971 UN Declaration on the Rights of the Mentally Handicapped, which called for the recognition of people with mental disabilities as human beings. It calls upon the world community to consider them all the entitlements of other human beings. It specifies concerns unique to the mentally handicapped and gives guidelines on how to address them. The Declaration set pace for more activities at UN level in respect to other disabilities.

The 1975 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expanded the space for persons with disabilities must be accorded respects, opportunity for rehabilitation, education, employment, human dignity and enjoyment of life within a family set up.

The Global awareness created during the UN IYDP in 1981 expanded social participation and equality for disabled persons. This was followed by the 1982 to 1992 UN Decade for Persons with Disabilities. To ensure the decade had the desired impact, a comprehensive document entitled World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons was developed and adopted through a UN resolution in 1982. The document provided guidelines on effective measures for the realization of full participation of persons with disabilities in social life, development and equality. UN agencies were encouraged to globally implement the document in accordance with their areas of specialization.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) formulated the first ever enforceable documents to its members. The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention of 1983 ensures that the appropriate vocational rehabilitation measures are made available to all categories of disabled persons. It also promotes the employment of disabled persons in the open labour markets.

The UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities stipulated twenty – two rules on the behaviour of states. The rules were divided into four categories. The first category included four rules, which addressed preconditions for equalization of opportunities. These include awareness raising, medical care and rehabilitation and support services. The second and most important covered rules are 12 on target areas of equalization of opportunities. These are accessibility, education, employment, income maintenance social security, family life and personal integrity, culture, religion, recreation and sports. The last 10 rules were on measures of implementation and mechanism for monitoring. The document was presented to the UN Assembly and adopted in December 1993. Seven years after adoption of the UN Standard Rules it became clear that goodwill was not enough to change the lives of persons with disabilities. More pressure through enforceable instruments was required to impact heavily on countries to provide a favourable social environment. Efforts to increase cooperation, integration and awareness on disability issues by governments and relevant organizations remained insufficient in promoting full and reflective participation and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in economic, social, cultural and political life. There was still need for a more comprehensive and binding instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disability.

The United Nations International Convention on the Rights of people with Disabilities (CRPD) is therefore a product of five years of work by the United Nations Ad Hoc committee which included among others, member states and the disability organizations. The CRPD is guided by the following principles:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons;
- Non – discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human dignity and humanity;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- Equality between men and women and

- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

Countries that fall under the Convention commit themselves to develop and carry out policies, laws and administrative measures for securing the rights recognized in the convention and abolish laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination (Article 4).

On the fundamental issue of accessibility (Article 9), the convention requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers, and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation and public services.

Personal mobility and the greatest possible independence are to be fostered by facility affordable personal mobility, training in mobility skills and access to mobility aids, device assistive technologies and live assistance (Article 20)

States are to ensure equal access to education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning. Education is to employ the appropriate materials, educational technologies and forms of communication. Pupils with sport needs are to receive support measures and pupils who are blind, deaf and dumb are to receive their education in the most appropriate modes of communication from teachers who are qualified in sign language and Braille Education of persons with disabilities must foster their participation in society their sense of dignity and self worth and the development of their potential, personality, creativity and ability (Article 24).

Disability is not specifically mentioned in the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs), but persons with disabilities are implicitly included.

2. Disabled Persons Act DPA (Chapter 17:01) of 1992

Disabled people in Zimbabwe are protected by the DPA of 1992 which prohibits “discrimination against disabled in relation to opportunities.

The Amended Constitution of Zimbabwe 2005 Section 23 also provides against discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, gender or physical disability.

2.2.1.3 Disability and Human Rights

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birth rights of all. This is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and finds specific application in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other International instruments. States have affirmed this principle again and again, including in the Copenhagen Declaration acknowledging that the promotion and protection of these rights and freedoms is primarily the responsibility of governments.

The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute and enjoy economic, social and cultural and political development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. Because all human rights are sacrosanct and none is superior to another while development facilitates the enjoyment of all human rights, the lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of

international cooperation in the eradication of poverty and promotion of development is apparent. The principle of international cooperation has been recognized in the international covenants as affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons.

2.2.1.4 College and University students with learning disabilities

2.2.1.5 Institutional Mission

Institutions have established learner outcomes for all programs. While students with learning disabilities should be expected to meet the institution's academic standards they should be given the opportunity to fulfill learner outcomes in alternative ways. The process by which students with learning disabilities demonstrate mastery of academic standards may vary from that of the larger student body, but the outcomes can and should remain the same. Accommodating students with learning disabilities need not to jeopardize the academic standards of the institution.

It is highly recommended that provision of services for students with disabilities, including those for students with learning disabilities be housed within the administrative structure that promotes a strong academic focus and shared faculty responsibility for providing accommodation. For some campuses that office reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor or principal, for others disability issues may be under the preview of the academic or student affairs offices.

2.2.1.6 Policy Issues

It is essential to have written policies that ensure that students with learning disabilities receive the same high quality education as their peers. These policies should address the issues of admission, documentation of a learning disability, accommodations and curriculum modification. It is important that students be made aware of the existence of an appeal process which is set forth in writing; students should have easy access to all written policies and procedures including appeal process. Such documents should be available in a variety of formats, in appropriate campus literature and through available technology, such as a Web Site, which all students can access.

2.2.1.7 Disclosure of Disability

Disclosure of hidden disabilities such as learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities or HIV and AIDS, pose unique implications for students with disabilities (Lynch and Gussel 1996) often involving labels which carry significant stereotypes and societal stigmatizations.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This survey was carried out to investigate the challenges, opportunities and threats that are faced by students with disabilities in Zimbabwean colleges and Universities. The main focus of this chapter is to give a description of how the research was carried out. The research design, research instruments used, data collection procedures, data presentation and analysis plans, are described below.

3.2 Research design

This study employed the descriptive research design. According to McNabb (2010), Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in anyway. The main goal of this type of research is to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. The research involved the collection of data using face to face interviews, questionnaires and observations. This design was chosen because the research question is social in nature. Consequently, the researcher had the advantage of profiling and examining associative relationships among community members of different colleges and universities. Descriptive survey allows different researchers to observe a similar phenomenon yet still come up with different findings. Thus descriptive survey scrutinizes the actual situation in a chosen setting.

3.2.1 Disadvantages of the descriptive survey technique

Descriptive survey has its own shortfalls. For instance, there are no variables manipulated, and consequently, there is no way to statistically analyze the results. According to Gilbert (1993), many scientists regard this type of study as very unreliable and 'unscientific'. In addition, McNabb (2010) argues that the results of observational studies are not repeatable, and so there can be no replication of the experiment and reviewing of the results. Kelly, Clark, Brown and Sitzia (2003) report that the significance of the data can become neglected if the researcher focuses too much on the range of coverage to the exclusion of an adequate account of the implications of data for relevant issues, problems, or theories. Consequently, the data that is produced is likely to lack details or depth on the topic being investigated. Furthermore, Browling (2002) advance that securing a high response rate to a survey can be hard to control, particularly when it is carried out by post, but is also difficult when the survey is carried out face-to-face or over the telephone. For instance, in this study, the anticipated

cooperation from the respondents was difficult since some of the students with disabilities were busy with their own researches and other course work demands.

3.3 Population

The population comprised 103 students with disabilities and conditions, 11 lecturers and 9 administrators making a total of 123.

3.4 Sample

Since the population of students with disabilities is significantly small, stage sampling or whole population sampling was used on students with disabilities who took part in the study. Convenience sampling was also employed to select lecturers and administrators who participated in this study. Lastly, purposive sampling was used to select the Deans of Students who took part in the study. The sample comprised of 9 administrators, 11 lecturers and 50 students with disabilities and conditions.

3.5 Instrumentation

The researchers used a structured questionnaire, interview schedules and observations to collect data. In order to avert bias, respondents were not assisted as they completed the questionnaire.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a form of structured interview. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data because of its anonymity which gives the respondents the latitude to give responses without prejudice. As a mechanism for obtaining information and opinion, questionnaires have a number of advantages and disadvantages when compared with other evaluation tools (Best and Kahn, 1983).

3.5.2 Advantages of questionnaires

Questionnaires are very cost effective when compared to face –to-face interviews. Questionnaires are also easy to analyze. Data entry and tabulation for nearly all surveys can be easily done with many computer software packages. Bell (1993) upholds that questionnaires are less intrusive than telephone or face-to-face surveys. The questionnaire as an instrument does not interrupt the respondent since the respondent is free to complete the questionnaire on his own time-table. Cohen and Manion (1989) accentuate that a questionnaire requires less skill to administer and can address a large number of issues and questions of concern in a relatively efficient way with the possibility of a high response rate. Additionally, each respondent receives the identical set of questions. With closed-form questions, responses are standardized, which can assist in interpreting from large numbers of respondents

3.5.3 Disadvantages of Questionnaires

Questionnaires have been known to suffer from misinterpretation by the respondents. Some scholars argue that questionnaires are complex instruments and, if badly designed, can be misleading. They are an unsuitable way of evaluating if probing is required-there is usually no real possibility for follow-up on answers. Bell (1993) also exhorts that questionnaires have pre-arranged questions which are more rigid because terms are not explained. Furthermore, Moser and Kalton (1979) believe that respondents can lie if they wish to because they are likely to remain anonymous. Thus, quality of data is probably not as

high as with alternative methods of data collection, such as personal interviewing. Questionnaires like many evaluation methods occur after the event, so participants may forget important issues. Additionally, Gilbert (1993) notes that respondents may answer questions superficially especially if the questionnaire takes long time to complete. Hence the common mistake of asking too many questions should be avoided. To guard against the accusation that the study's findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's biases, the researcher in this study had to triangulate the questionnaire responses with the responses from interviews and observations that were conducted.

3.5.4 Overcoming Questionnaire weaknesses

The researcher used a questionnaire with predominantly fixed or closed choice questions which gave specific answers. Closed questions are easier to analyze and answers can be compared more easily. They are also likely to have a higher response rate and less missing data. To avert the problem of questionnaire being misinterpreted, the questionnaire questions were phrased using simple and straight forward terms which did not give room for ambiguity. The researcher tried to avoid using double-barreled questions so as to minimize ambiguity. Some scaled questions were also included since they are good for sensitive topics and also easy to analyze.

3.5.5 Interviews

Interviews are the oral equivalent of questionnaires. Hogle and Sweat (1996:187) argue that, "Capturing what people say in their own words is the most important contribution of qualitative research to understanding human behaviour". Interviews helped to capture some of the information that had not been captured by the questionnaire. However, like any other method of collecting data, the interview method has its own advantages and disadvantages.

3.5.5.1 Advantages of interview

The advantages of using interviews is that the researcher (interviewer) can adapt the questions as necessary, clarify doubt and ensure that the responses are properly understood by repeating or rephrasing the questions (Moser and Kalton, 1979). Another advantage of using face-to-face interviews lies in the quality of the data obtained. Un-ambiguity is reduced through probing and a better rate of return of the interviews is achieved when compared to the average 30-40% rate of return in posed questionnaires. Bell (1993) articulates that interviews can yield rich material and can often put flesh on the bones of questionnaire responses. This implies that when conducting interviews, one can seek further clarification on some of the questionnaire responses through probing. In this particular study researchers were able to develop the interview responses and got some clarifications through probing. Each interviewee's tone voice and facial expression helped to provide information that could not be revealed by the questionnaire. Using the face-to-face interview, the researchers were able to establish rapport with the respondents. Another advantage of using face-to-face interview as propounded by Gilbert (1993) is that they can be conducted in the respondent's home or workplace or in locations such as shopping malls or even simply on the streets. For this study, the researchers were free to interview the interviewees, anywhere at their respective institution, including during the times when students were taking their lecture breaks.

3.5.5.2 Overcoming interview weaknesses

Although it has been noted that using the interview technique has a number of disadvantages, face –to- face interviews can be very expensive, time-consuming since travel is usually involved. Fortunately transport was availed to visit all the targeted institutions. The problem concerning the coding and scoring of open-ended questions was overcome by using pre-coded interview schedules.

3.6 Data collection procedure

Permission to carry out the research was sought from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education and was granted. Permission to carry out the study was also sought from the respective Universities and College administrators and was granted. Permission was also sought from all the seventy-four respondents. The researchers collected data from the 4th of October 2010 to the 5th of November 2010 using a self administered questionnaire, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A self administered questionnaire with 62 questions was used. The researchers hand delivered the questionnaires personally to 54 students with disabilities. To avert the problem of questionnaire being misinterpreted, the questionnaire questions were phrased using simple and straight forward terms which did not give room for ambiguity. The researchers tried to avoid using double-barreled questions so as to minimize ambiguity.

3.6.2 Interview

All the 54 respondents were interviewed. Face-to- face interview technique was employed in all instances. Vague replies were probed further using non-directive questioning. All the interview responses were recorded.

3.6.3 Focus Groups

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a group discussion of approximately 6 - 12 persons guided by a facilitator, during which group members talk freely and spontaneously about a certain topic. (http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-56615-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html). Focus Group discussions were held using a focus group guide with groups of students who had similar disabilities forming a single group.

3.6.4 Advantages of focus group discussions

Focus groups are quick, cheap and relatively easy to assemble. They are good for obtaining rich data in participants' own words and developing deeper insights. Additionally, people are able to build on one another's responses and come up with ideas they might not have thought of in a one-on-one interview. Focus groups also provide an opportunity to involve people in data analysis (For instance, "Out of the issues we have talked about, which ones are most important to you?"). Most importantly, in focus groups, participants can act as checks and balances on one another - identifying factual errors or extreme views (<http://www.webcredible.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/web-usability/focus-groups.shtml>).

3.6.5 Disadvantages of focus groups

Focus groups also have disadvantages: The researcher has less control over a group than a one-on-one interview, and thus time can be lost on issues irrelevant to the topic; the data is difficult to analyze because the talking is in reaction to the comments of other group members; observers/ moderators need to be highly trained, and groups are quite variable and can be tough to get together (Marshall and Rossman (1999). Moreover, the number of members of a focus group is not large enough to be a representative sample of a population; thus, the data obtained from the groups is not necessarily representative of the whole population, unlike the data of opinion polls.

Focus groups are "One shot case studies" especially if they are measuring a property-disposition relationship within the social sciences, unless they are repeated (Lindlof & Taylor 2002). Focus groups can create severe issues of external validity, especially the reactive effects of the testing arrangement (Campbell and Stanley, 2005). A fundamental difficulty with focus groups (and other forms of qualitative research) is the issue of observer dependency: the results obtained are influenced by the researcher, raising questions of validity. The issue evokes associations with Heisenberg's famous Uncertainty Principle. As Heisenberg said, "What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning." Indeed, the design of the focus group study (e.g. respondent selection, the questions asked, how they are phrased, how they are posed, in what setting, by whom, and so on) affects the answers obtained from respondents. In focus groups, researchers (and the moderators and observers of the focus group, if the researcher is not there) are not detached observers but always participants.

Another issue is with the setting itself. If the focus groups are held in a laboratory setting with a moderator who is a professor and the recording instrument is obtrusive, the participants may either hold back on their responses and/or try to answer the moderator's questions with answers the participants feel that the moderator wants to hear. Another issue with the focus group setting is the lack of anonymity. With all of the other participants, there can not be any guarantee of confidentiality. Again we have to deal with the issues of the reactive effects of the testing arrangement. Rushkoff (2005) argues that focus groups are often useless, and frequently cause more trouble than they are intended to solve, with focus groups often aiming to please rather than offering their own opinions or evaluations, and with data often cherry picked to support a foregone conclusion. In addition there is anecdotal evidence of focus groups rebelling.

3.7 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and pie charts will be used to analyze data. Data from questionnaire and interview schedules shall first be coded and related information grouped together.

3.7.1 Organizing Data

Data from questionnaire and interview schedules shall first be coded and related information grouped together.

3.7.2 Analysis

According to Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs (2003) and MacDonald (1982), one of the traditional and simplest procedures for organizing and summarizing the data for a meaningful representation is in a simple or ungrouped frequency table. Weiss (2004:44) put that by 'suitably organizing data, we can often make a large and complicated batch of data more compact, easier to work with and understand. The researcher shall use frequency tables to analyze the responses from the questionnaire. Frequency tables are very easy to construct and as noted by Bell (1993), they are a fast way of indicating a variable. According to L'Esperance (1971: 24), data grouped in a simple frequency table allow the investigator to 'determine very quickly where most of the items are concentrated' and as observed by Hamburg (1989:9), 'if a frequency distribution of individual figures is formed, many features of ungrouped data become readily discernible'. Montcalm & Royse (2002) registered frequency tables as one of at least 4 ways in which data can be summarized. The other three being: narration, graphs, and cross-tabulation tables. On their part, Hopkins, Glass, and Hopkins (1987) and Minium (1978) argued that statistical information could be more easily understood, comprehended and interpreted more accurately if it is organized into tables and displayed in graphs. Hence, in this study, data shall be organized into tables and also displayed in graphs. The last advantage of a simple frequency distribution, according to Raymondo, (1999:50), is that 'we are able to achieve all of this convenience without any loss of precision'.

3.8 Pilot study

Pilot studies are used as feasibility studies, to ensure that the ideas or methods behind a research idea are sound, as well as to "work out the kinks" in a study protocol before launching a larger study (Stachowiak, 2008). A pilot study to eliminate some of the questions that may have been irrelevant to the study was carried out on twenty randomly chosen students with disabilities at the University of Zimbabwe. The pilot study was carried out from the 25th to the 30th of September 2010 and results of the study were noted.

3.9 RESULTS OF PILOT STUDY

A number of questions on the initial questionnaire made were altered. For instance, under demographic data, question number 1, initially had answers which included an age range of less than 15 years. This age range was later completely left out because it was realized that one can hardly get any student in higher and tertiary institutions of learning whose age will be less than 15 years. Section A which initially had 45 questions ended up having 38 questions. Similarly, section B had 30 questions which were downsized to only 24.

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter has outlined a detailed explanation of the methods used in this study. The next chapter presents the results obtained with those methods. The next Chapter also, analyses and discusses the results of this study.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the findings of the challenges, threats and opportunities faced by students with disabilities at Tertiary Institutions of learning are presented. Quantitative data obtained from close ended questionnaires is analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0), while content analysis is used for qualitative data. Quantitative data is presented in the form of tables and graphs.

The analysis and presentation of data is done in three stages starting with responses from Lecturers, followed by Administrators and lastly but not least Students.

Table 4.1.1: Distribution of lecturers at State Universities according to subjects they teach students with disabilities

Subject	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Arts	3	50.0
Social Sciences	4	40.0
Natural Sciences	0	0.0
Commerce	1	10.0
Medicine and Veterinary Sciences	0	0.0
Total	10	100.0

An analysis of the above table reveals that the majority of students with disabilities are enrolled in the Social Sciences department. No students were enrolled in programmes such as natural sciences, Medicine and Veterinary Sciences. Probably, this was due to lack of orientation to different faculties that they could be enrolled in, prior to their registration in the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences where they seemed to be dominant. Equally possible, could be that the students with disabilities lacked fine motor dexterity in handling objects of different structures. For instance, in Medicine, students are expected to perform a lot of practical work with military precision. Similarly, programmes such as Electrical Engineering, may pose a threat to their physical well-being. Hence, the trend of avoiding such programmes which seem to be risky and opting for safer ones such as those found in the Arts and Social Sciences which basically need anyone who can debate. There was also the possibility that there existed lack of skilled personnel to teach students with disabilities in such areas as evidenced by the lecturers'

failure to understand, read and write in Braille. Data from the above table also indicate that, very few students with disabilities were enrolled in commercials (10%). Another implication of the results could be that students with disabilities are being marginalized in pursuing natural sciences by the universities' admissions offices. It was noted from the discussion with UCE Special Education group of students that, students with disabilities, particularly those with visual impairment, lacked mathematical and science Braille knowledge. If such subjects were not taught at that level, then, it meant that students with visual impairment were not benefitting; hence the high percentage of Arts and Social studies students at universities and colleges.

Fig 4.1.1 Nature of disability according to lecturers

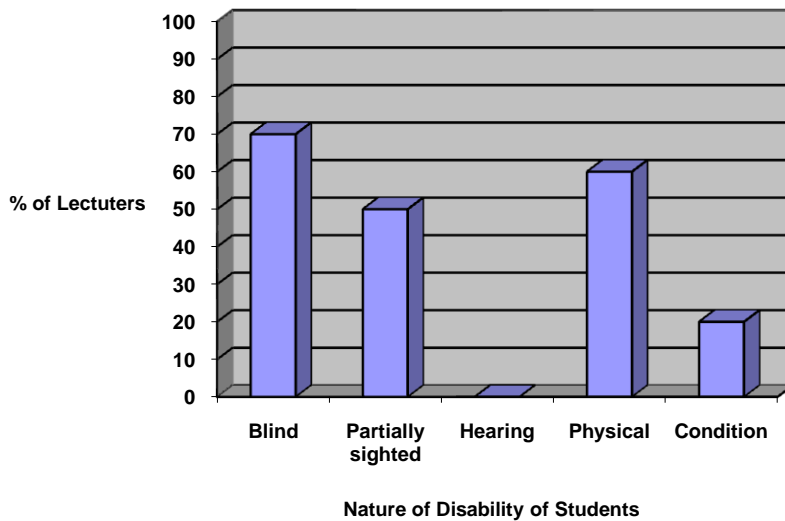
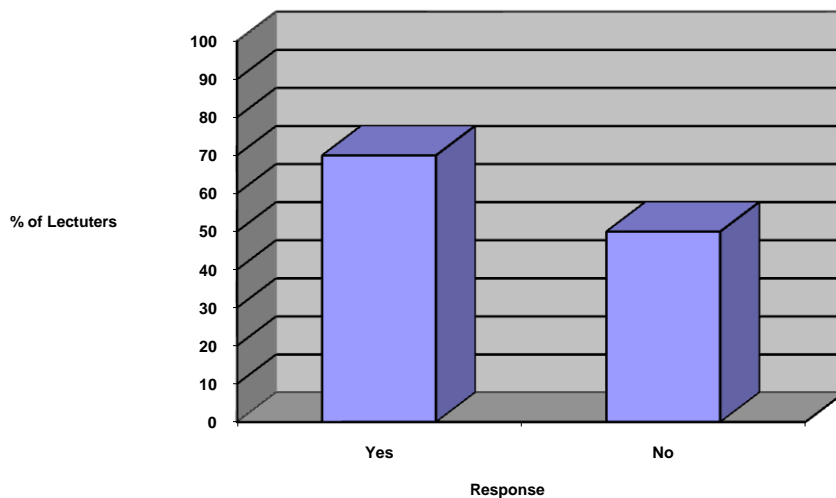


Figure 4.1.2 is indicates that the majority of the students with impairments are blind (70%), physical (60%) and partially sighted (50%). According to the lecturers, very few students with disabilities had conditions (20%) such as albinism, mental disorders etcetera, while none of the students were hard of hearing.

Fig 4.1.2 Catering for students with disabilities needs by lecturers during preparation and delivery of lectures



Findings shown in the graph above indicate that the majority of the lecturers in State Universities cater for students with disabilities when they plan and deliver their lectures. Only 20% revealed that they would treat students with disabilities as equal to other students.

On the question whether lecturers do to take care of the needs of students with disabilities, it came out that they will do so as far as they could. There are things that lecturers could do and some that will be beyond them. For instance reserving front and comfortable seats for these students the lecturers would definitely do. They would also ensure that recording equipment is functional and close to electrical sockets. Additionally they would ensure students with disabilities or conditions have handouts and other materials prepared especially for them during the delivery of lectures. The lecturers would also talk at the top of their voices and provide room for deliberation during the lecture to meet the students' needs. All the above efforts by lecturers acted as opportunities created for students with disabilities so that they would gain from university learning. This would in turn put them at the same footing with the able-bodied students, in spite of the above positive contributions by the concerned lecturers; equipment of poor quality is a challenge that had been caused by the Zimbabwean economic melt down experienced between 2000 and 2008.

However there are other issues that could not attend to during delivery of lectures. Lecturers were concerned with the quality of the equipment as some of equipment was not functioning properly. Some lecture rooms had no functional electrical sockets for power supply for equipment such as recorders and laptops. The persistent electricity power supply cuts witnessed through out the country also impacted negatively in the delivery of lectures to students with disabilities. The other important source of equipment for students with disabilities over the years besides the government has been well wishers and international donors. Zimbabwe's sour relations with the Western countries have seen a marked decrease in donations to university departments that cater for the needs of students with disabilities from donors in the West. Donations from countries in the East have been insignificant. Zimbabwe's relations with the countries in the West are set to improve in the context of the inclusive government, but however they are everyday threats posed by resistance and reluctance by partners in the inclusive

government to fully implement the terms of the Global Political Agreement in letter and spirit. Recommendation are in face of the unstable relations between the West and the Harare government, donations from Western agencies and countries be channeled through non-governmental organizations.

Table 4.1.2 Provision of Extra time for students with disabilities’ work by lecturers

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	6	60.0
No	3	30.0
NA	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

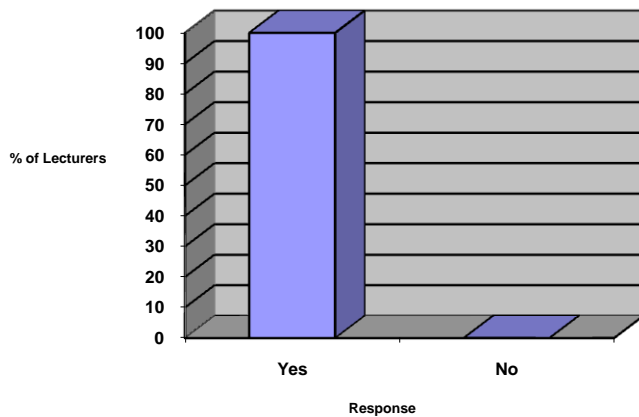
An analysis of the table 4.1.2 above reveal that 60% of lecturers investigated gave special treatment to blind students by giving them extra time for assignments, projects, tests and examinations. This can mean most lecturers cater for the needs of the visually impaired. This could be sensitivity exercised by lecturers to create success opportunities for the blind. However this could undermine the set University standards. After completion of the course, the blind student used to time extensions may need extensions or more time even at work which in turn could undermine production at that company or organization.

Table 4.1.3: Prevalence rate of Trained Lecturers

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	20.0
No	8	80.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 4.1.3 above shows lack of qualified lecturers with specialist training to handle students with disabilities or conditions, as only 20% of the sample indicated that they were trained as compared to the (80%) that was not trained. The paradox then was how were the lecturers to maximally assist those students with disabilities if they were under-equipped with skills to educate them?

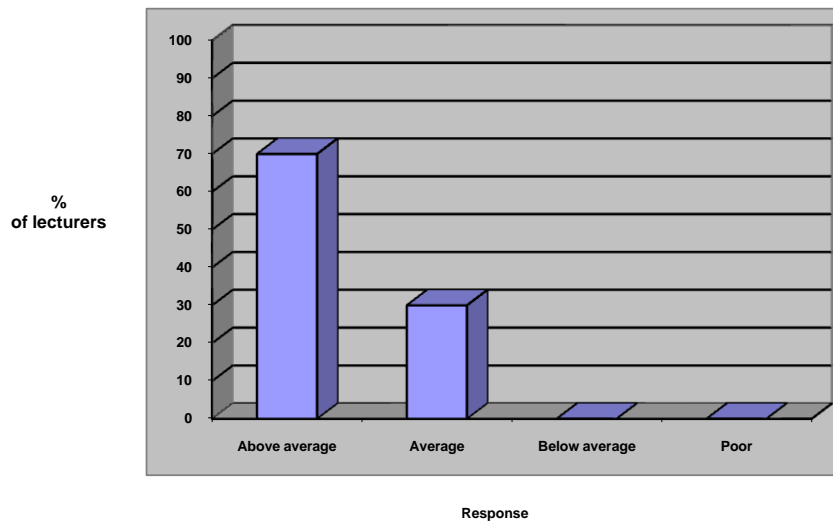
Fig 4.1.3 Rating of Standard projects of students with disabilities



Data from the figure 4.1.3 shows that students with disabilities are equally committed to college demands since all the lecturers (100%) who participated in the study acknowledged that the students with disabilities produced standard projects.

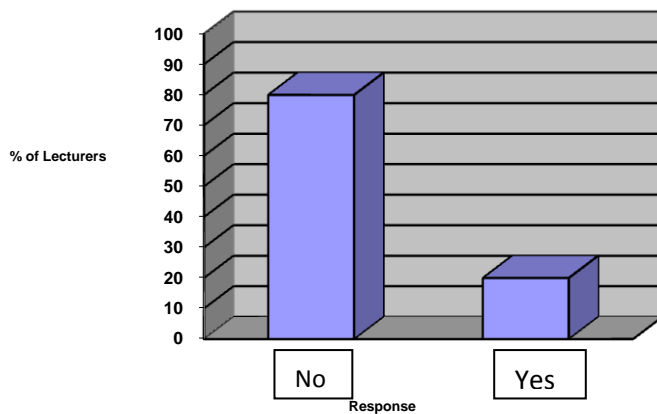
All the lecturers felt academically there was no difference in terms of performance between able-bodied students and the students with disabilities. The impression generated is that all students with disabilities are academically competent in spite of their respective disabilities. Hence the old adage disability does not mean inability is confirmed.

Fig 4.1.4 Comparison of performance of able-bodied students and students with disabilities according to lecturers



The analysis of figure 4.1.4 reveals that lecturers were of the feeling that students with disabilities projects and assignments were average (30%) to above average (70%).

Fig 4.1.5 Adequacy of Support Services given to students with disabilities



Findings revealed that the majority of the lecturers (80%) were of the idea that provision of learning materials was not enough for student with disabilities. However, 20% indicated that learning materials were enough to cater for the needs of these students with disabilities.

This response shows the ignorance of the lecturers concerning the existing support services offered to students with disabilities. Even among those that said the provision of support services was not enough a further probing during interviews indicated that they were not fully aware of the study aids and other equipment a student in each category of disability will require. An interesting observation is that among

those that said the support services are not enough they are some who also considered social and cultural needs of these students such as sporting and recreational needs. Among those that said the learning materials were enough they based their assumptions on the current economic situation and on the fact that learning is taking place anywhere with the current available resources.

Fig 4.1.6 Rating of students with disabilities according to their participation in class

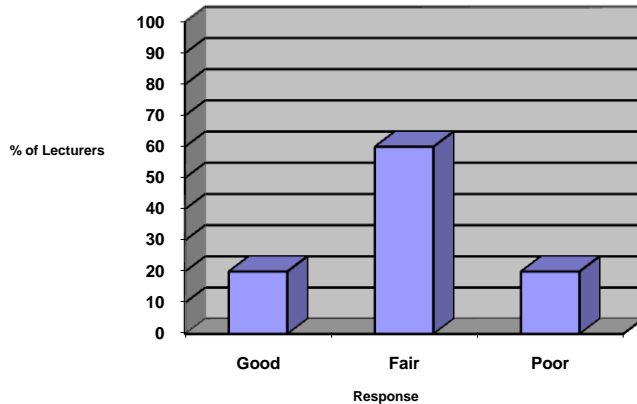
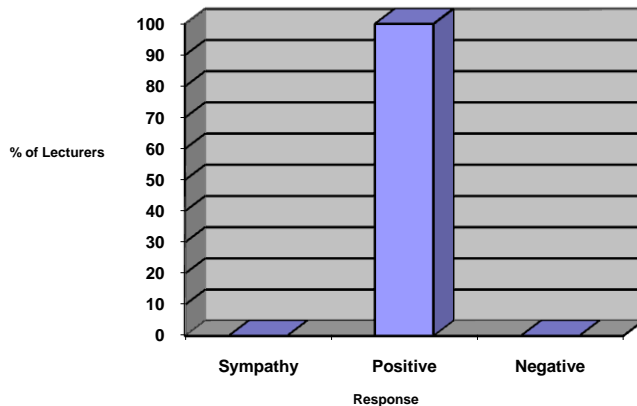


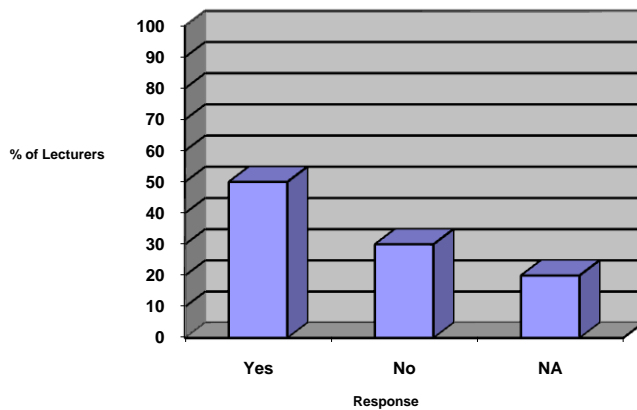
Figure 4.1.6 shows that most students with disabilities fairly (60%) participate in lectures, while 20% perceived them as good and the other 20% as poor.

Fig 4.1.7 Rating of students with disabilities according to their participation in class



An analysis of figure 4.1.7 can mean that all lecturers who took part in this study do not give special treatment to students with disabilities when marking examinations or assignment. The students are treated like any other students. By demonstrating the above, the lectures portrayed that they were professionals who should not be neither sympathetic nor develop negative attitudes towards students with disabilities. This could suggest that the lectures had been given enough induction on how to handle students with disabilities since being sympathetic is a vice that could curtail their psychological and educational well-being

Fig 4.1.8 Feedback on assignments for students with disabilities



The figure above shows half of the lecturers (50%) indicating that the students understudy receive feedback on whatever they do at the same time as other students. However 39% of the lecturers tended to differ, while the remainder 20% did not indicate their views. From the above data, since 50% of the lecturers confirmed that they give feedback to students with disabilities at the same time as the other students, the implications maybe that braillists and transcribers of the work of students with visual impairment seemed to be doing a great job since they had to transcribe the students' assignments in time for the lectures to make them in time. But it could also mean that the feedback given in time was only for other students who had no visual challenges, that is to say those who use print when presenting their work. In this case the 39% felt that feedback for student with disabilities came late.

Those who indicated No felt that students with disabilities hand in their assignments later than the able-bodied students and hence receive feedback much later. This may also imply that the braillists and transcribers were failing to cope with their workload which then let the students with visual impairment not to submit work in time or it could be that due to lack of brailled textbooks for those students to use, they had a challenge of accessing textbooks which they had to use to write their assignments.

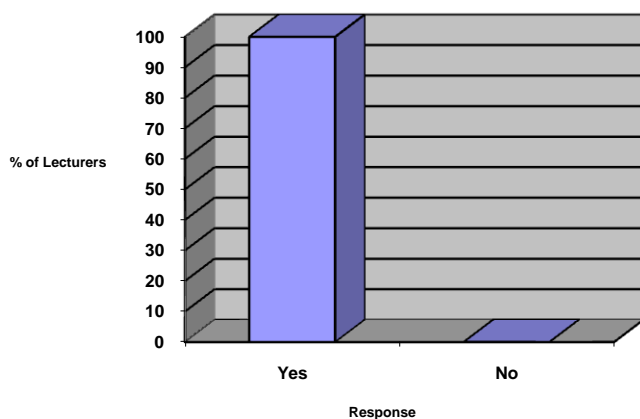
Any additional comments

It was the lecturers' view that students with disabilities need enhanced support and administrative efficiency in examinations. Examination papers should be delivered in time and handwriting should be done during lessons. Lecture theatres should be conducive to connection to electrical sockets.

Students with disabilities should have confidence in themselves and transcribers need to shape letters for easy reading. University must avail material to lecturers.

4.2.0 Administrators' Responses

Fig 4.2.9 Availability of services offered to students with disabilities



An analysis of figure 4.2.9 above reveals that universities are catering for students with disabilities and conditions. Contrary to the lecturers and students with disabilities' responses, the university administration claimed that services for students with disabilities were readily available. This may imply that the administrators were not properly monitoring and evaluating the services offered to students with disabilities.

Table 4.2.5 Types of disabilities that the Universities are catering for

n=4

Disability Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Visual	2	50.0
Hearing	1	25.0
Physical	4	100.0
Albinism	1	25.0
Other	1	25.0

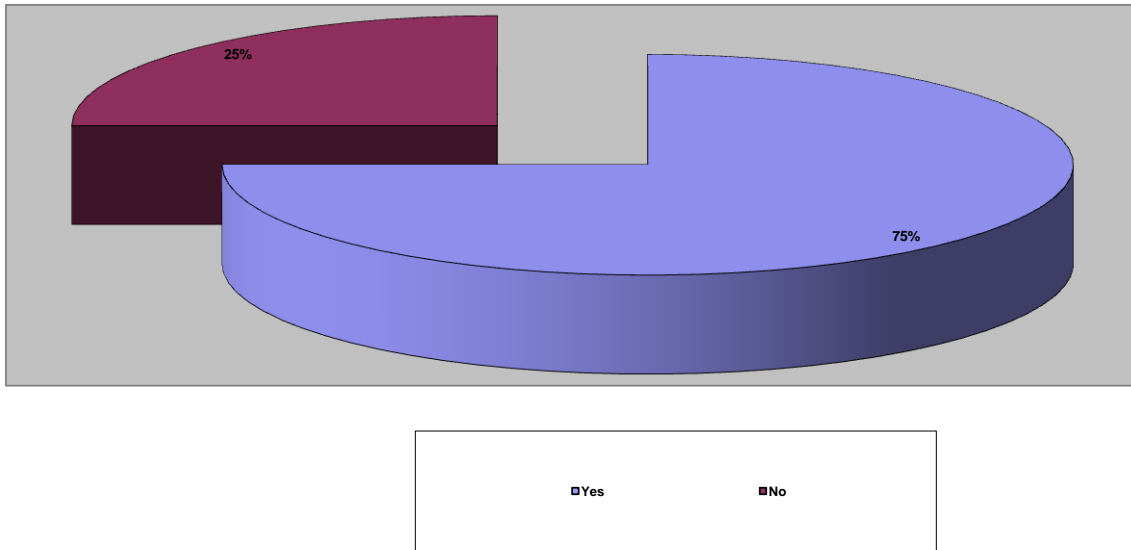
Table 4.2.5 above indicates that universities are catering for types of disabilities, although those who are physically challenged are most prevalent from the administrators' point of view.

Special facilities in place to cater for students with disabilities

Universities have modules and examinations in Braille and special examination conditions as facilities in place to cater for students with disabilities. In addition, most students with disabilities find their learning materials recorded on compact discs and audio cassettes. Students with disabilities have the privilege of communicating with administrators, even registrars without any problems. The Disability Resource Centre (DRC) at UZ is available to students with disabilities although it is incapacitated in terms of resources and facilities as the existing ones are aging.

Most of the reference books in Braille at DRC are gathering dust as they have become irrelevant. The few shared computers are old models and are very old and most of the time they will be down. The floor tiles are peeling off and the ablution facilities need attention to function normally.

Fig 4.2.10 **Prevalence rate of members of staff trained to cater for students with disabilities**

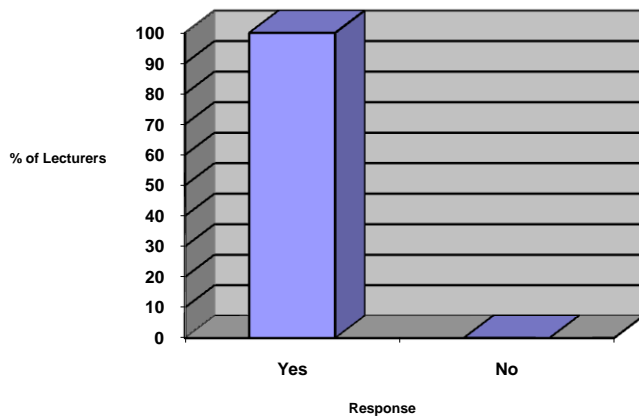


Analysis of the above figure indicates that amongst the administrators the majority of them (75%) are trained to handle students with disabilities and conditions. Only a few (25%) have not been trained.

This may imply that the colleges are very much committed to improving the welfare of students with disabilities. However, from the researchers' experiences, most administrators do not avail themselves on special events and occasions involving students with disabilities such as the commemorations of the International Day of the disabled or the famous Danhiko Paralympic Games where students from these institutions normally go to compete in sports. This makes one question their commitment in providing services to students with disabilities. It is recommended that institutions and non-governmental organizations put in place programmes at learning institutions to sensitize both students and staff of special needs of students with disabilities.

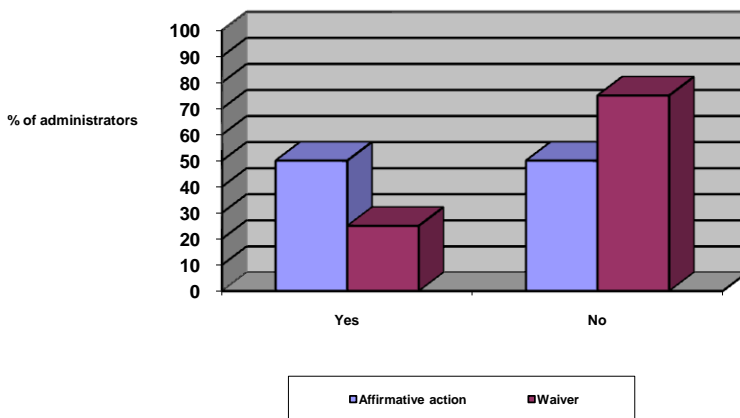
According to the administrators very few programmes are in place to sensitize other students and staff of the special needs of students with disabilities. At the University of Zimbabwe there are induction courses in sign language and special education training conducted to students' with disabilities helps during orientation, while Midlands State University has none. Not much is done to fellow able-bodied students and staff except those who work directly with the students.

Fig 4.2.11 **Accessibility of buildings at Institutions**



An analysis of the figure 4.2.11 above reveals that state institutions of higher learning were designed with students with disabilities in mind as all the administrators (100%) consented to the fact that they were easily accessible to students with disabilities. However the researchers observed that offices of the Vice Chancellor, Pro- Vice Chancellor and other administrators at universities such as the University of Zimbabwe and National University of Science and Technology (NUST), were not accessible to students who used wheelchairs.

Fig 4.2.12 Existence of Affirmative action and Waiver of policies on students with disabilities



Findings from the above figure mean that some State universities are not using affirmative action when they admit students with disabilities. Fifty percent of the administrators indicated they do, while an equal number felt otherwise no such policies were in place. Most of the administrators (75%) indicated that there is no waiver of special conditions to accommodate students with disabilities to be admitted into certain courses.

Fig.4.2.13 Granting of privileges and existence of Special Budgets for students with disabilities

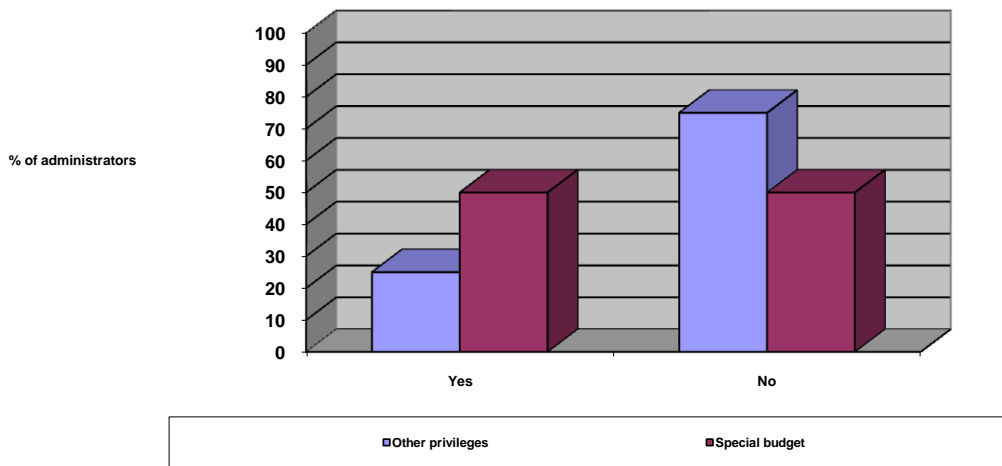


Figure 4.2.13 above indicates that some universities are granting privileges such as provision of accommodation to students with disabilities. Waiver of tuition fees is not provided for and these students rely on government sponsorship. The majority of the administrators (75%) revealed the non-existent of a special budget to cater for the purchase of assistive devices for use by students with disabilities is impacting negatively students with disabilities.

Table 4.2.6 Existence of Special Legislation in Institutions' Charter

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	25.0
No	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0

The majority of the administrators (75%) revealed the non-existence of any special legislation in their charters or constitutions of state institutions that address the issues of the students with disabilities.

Table 4.2.7 Provision of Sports for students with disabilities

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	75.0
No	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0

An analysis of table 4.2.7 above shows that most (75%) State institutions provide sports for students with disabilities, while very few Institutions (25%) could be failing to avail sporting activities for students with disabilities. The reason for failing to provide sporting activities is lack of trained coaches to coach

students with disabilities and lack of equipment. Equipment for most institutions has been supplied through donations from the corporate world and international community. The past decade characterized by economic and political chaos resulted in reduced support for students with disabilities.

Table 4.2.8 Mainstreaming of students with disabilities in HIV and AIDS, Peer Counseling Services

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No	4	100.0
Yes	0	0.0
Total	4	100.0

Study findings reveal that all institutions of higher learning are not mainstreaming HIV and AIDS issues in programmes for students with disabilities. There is lack of peer counseling, lack of HIV and AIDS awareness material available in a format accessible to various categories of students with disabilities.

Other Comments

In all Institutions the majority if not all lecturers in post have no formal training in handling students with disabilities. This gives rise to negative attitudes towards enrolment of students with disabilities.

4.1.0 INTERVIEWS

4.1.1 VISUALLY IMPAIRED CATEGORY

4.1.1.1 Inclusive Education

Regarding whether there should be inclusive education, the fifteen students with visual impairment agreed that inclusive education is the best practice as it offers the following:

- Reduce discrimination;
- Able bodied will have a better understanding of students with disabilities;
- They are able to share information which they have limited access to;
- Helpers are needed for smooth integration;
- However two of the students noted exclusivity can bring over dependence of the visually impaired impacting negatively in the live of student with visual impairment.

4.1.1.2. Attitudes of institutions office bearers.

Asked if they felt welcomed at their institutions all the participants agreed that yes to a certain extent they were welcome. However some negative attitudes displayed by lecturers, administrators were a course of concern.

4.1.1.2. Access to information

Nine totally blind students expressed their limited access to information and the partially sighted expressed concerns which are

- Non – availability of large print copies of notices, books in Braille and large print and
- Lack of knowledge on using the computer and internet

4.1.1.3 Mobility in the institution's environment

The totally blind students faced problem of construction work (trenches dug up everywhere, parked cars, water puddles etc. However the partially sighted said at least they could navigate their environments, however face difficulties in new paths.

4.1.1.3 Notices

All the students agreed that they felt left out by the way institutions' communication system. Notices were written and pasted on notice boards of departments, faculties' administration offices in print. No effort is made to inform students with visual important what is on the notices. This at times affected the students to miss on changed times of programmes courses.

4.1.1.4 Technology

Of the fifteen visual impaired students only five were computer literate. The four could use a PacMate Machine. Also four other of the students used a slate aid the rest Perkins Braille Machine. The participants attributed to low intake of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) due to:

- Difficulties accessing screen reader software;
- Lack of appropriate software;
- Lack of trained staff to teach the students;
- Negative attitude towards technology by some students with disabilities.

4.1.1.5 Suggestions to improve the welfare and academic support of students with disabilities on technology

Set up a revolving fund. The institutions buy a full set of equipment needed such as laptops / computers loaded with screen reader such as Jaws software Programme

- Have trained manpower in ICT's
- Adhere to set ICT standards of institution such as that one has to have a qualification in ICTs
- Government / Institutions fund projects for students with disabilities.

4.1.1.6 Sports for People with Visual Impairment

All the students with visual impairment expressed lack of adequate sporting facilities, equipment and trained manpower. Games were limited to athletics, goal ball, soccer and chess.

4.1.2 Physically Challenged

4.1.2.1 Accessibility

Ten students were interviewed. They all expressed lack of access to building and terrain. Students expressed concern of accessibility of lecture room and hostels. Some on crutches or wheelchairs have

been allocated rooms or have lectures in upper floors. Toilets are not suitable to the physically challenged and they find it difficult to use them. Also laboratories lack rails to aid the physically challenged.

4.1.2.2 Lack of consideration of their Disability

All the students agreed that their disability is not considered. They are made to stand in queues. Also at times the able bodied show hostility when they try to jump queues.

4.1.2.3 Sports

All the students expressed lack of full participation in sports, due to:

- The disabled cannot constitute a team at institutions on games such as wheelchair basket ball;
- Even where the physically train with able-bodied, they are left out when its competition;
- Lack of equipment such as wheelchair races, wheelchair tennis and
- Lack of trained staff.

4.2.3 Students with other Conditions

4.2.3.1 Lack of consideration of students with sight problems

Five students were interviewed, they all expressed that they were not being considered as persons with eye-sight problems. It was noted that:

- Lecturers did not place them in front;
- Chalkboard work was not being dictated to them;
- Notices were not put in large bold print.

4.2.3.2 Welfare of students with Albinism

The students noted that they encountered the following problems:

- Lack of creams, which they cannot afford to buy for themselves;
- Usually taken as 'normal' when they cannot stand traveling in the sun;
- Need for campus accommodation to reduce exposure to the sun and night blindness.

4.2.4. Trainee Teachers in Special Education

A group of forty five students were interviewed in break up of fifteen per group. The students highlighted the following issues

- The curricula they have lack sports training for people with disabilities;
- Lack of incentives to join the course due to regulations such as half payment for the period one is training which is a year and four months;
- One of the lecturers living with HIV said that HIV and AIDS must be considered as a disability;
- Teaching of HIV and AIDS across the curriculum is lacking.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

5.1 Introduction

This study unearthed a number of challenges, threats and opportunities that are being faced by students with disabilities in the various tertiary institutions and Universities in Zimbabwe. The study revealed that very few students with disabilities were enrolled in commercial and natural science programmes. The study also noted that there were no students with hard of hearing who had been enrolled in any of the institutions that were visited by the researchers. Data analysis indicated that most lecturers lacked special training in handling students with disabilities. However, participation of students with disabilities in class was rated fair by lecturers who took part in this study. The analysis of the study showed that students with disabilities received no special treatment as far as marking of their assignments and examinations were concerned. One of the major challenges, unearthed by this study is that universities could be or might not be granting other privileges such as waiver of fees and provision of accommodation to students with disabilities besides Government sponsorship. Of the universities and colleges visited, only the UZ offers free accommodation, food and exemption of tuition fees to students with disabilities. Additionally, the majority of the administrators admitted that, currently there is no policy which mandates them to grant students with disabilities such privileges.

Most of the institutions under study provide sporting facilities to students with disabilities, yet, there are no qualified sports instructors for them to develop their sports talents. While all the administrators who took part in this study indicated that the buildings at their institutions were accessible to students with disabilities, the interview results from the students who took part in this study as well as the observations made, showed that the physical infrastructure of most institutions visited, particularly most of the lecture rooms and administrators' offices, were not user-friendly to wheel-chair users and the physically challenged who used crutches. Results of the findings reflected that only the category of the students with visual impairment enjoys extra examination time of up to 60%, while, those who had other forms of disabilities were not given any extra time. Additionally, interview responses revealed that there is no stipulated policy on the official time that should be given to students with disabilities during examination time. The quality of educational equipment used by students with disabilities was found to be absolute while learning materials were found to be inadequate.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that:

- ☐ The authorities of the institutions of higher learning should ensure that written college and university policy statements regarding services for students with disabilities are consistent with the mission of the institution;
- ☐ Institutions of higher learning should make notices and statements in alternative formats for students with disabilities;
- ☐ The institutions should also consider housing the office for disability services in academic affairs or a similar administrative office for effective reporting and support;

- ❑ Institutions should ensure confidentiality of student information to avoid stigmatization;
- ❑ They should develop written policies and procedures, including the appeal processes, regarding students with disabilities in the areas of admission, documentation academic accommodations and curriculum adjustments;
- ❑ Institutions must make policies and procedures available to the entire campus community via student hand books catalogues and schedules in alternative formats to the disabled;
- ❑ There should be establishment of mechanisms for dissemination of information about learning disabilities to students, administration, faculty and service professionals;
- ❑ Institutions must disseminate information to the campus community about available services;
- ❑ There should be familiarization of faculty, staff, administration and students with laws governing accommodations for students with disabilities;
- ❑ Institutions of higher learning should build campus expertise through collaboration and consultation;
- ❑ The institutions should also establish a team of service providers and faculty members for decision making in regards to admission, documentation, academic adjustments and program accommodations for students with disabilities;
- ❑ Institutions should remain abreast with current disability issues and provide cost effective reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

In this way the institutions will ensure that the education of students with disabilities becomes a campus wide responsibility.

There is need for carrying out further researches on a wider scale so as to address the identified challenges, threats and opportunities. In doing a further research, there could more challenges, threats, and opportunities that could be discovered which may not have been identified in this research.

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