ASSESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS FACING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES IN ACCESSING EMPLOYMENT IN KIBERA SLUMS, NAIROBI COUNTY

BY

Linet JeptumTanui

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ABSTRACT

The situation of unemployment in Kenya is difficult for all youth. According to (KNBS, 2012), the rate of unemployment in Kenya was at 40 % in 2011. The situation is likely to be worse for youth in slums, and especially those who have disabilities. According to KNSPWD (2008), 68%of youth with disabilities living in slums were unemployed in 2008.For youth with disabilities this situation is largely attributed to the socio- economic barriers facing them in accessing employment. Therefore the aim of the study was to assess the socio-economic barriers facing youth with disabilities in accessing employment in Kibera Slums, Nairobi County. Specifically the study focused on: the nature and magnitude of socio- economic barriers to employment facing youth with disabilities in Kibera slums; the measures or support systems in place seeking to address barriers to employment facing youth with disabilities in Kibera slums; and the effect of the measures or support systems in place to address barriers to employment facing youth with disabilities in Kibera slums. The study used a descriptive research design where qualitative data was collected. Interview schedules were used to collect data from the youth with disabilities and other key informants who were sampled purposively. The target population for the study was the youth with disabilities and service providers. Specifically a total of 46respondents were reached. Of these forty six, forty two were youth with disabilities. They were surveyed in the study since it was a sample of less than 100. Content analysis method was used to analyze the primary data from open ended items. The analyzed data was presented qualitatively in a narrative form. Data obtained from closed-ended items were analyzed and presented quantitatively through frequency tables and percentages. Some of the key findings of the study included: that Kibera slums has two public primary schools offering inclusive education programs(Joseph Kangethe and Mbagathi Primary schools),which cannot cater for the numbers and other categories of disabilities that require inclusive education; that negative attitudes, discrimination and stigma against persons with disabilities is still rampant in Kibera slums despite awareness raising being rated highly at 88 %; socio-economic barriers to employment for youth with disabilities in Kibera slums included; stigma, discrimination, lack/inappropriate assistive devices, limited access to micro finance credits, poor terrain, limited appropriate jobs for YWDS and communication difficulties for sign language users; these socio-economic barriers to employment lead to cycle of poverty, low self-esteem, further stigma and isolation, additional medical complications and lack of acceptance from family and community members. The study further offers recommendations, some of which include; The implementation of The Special Needs Education policy 2009 which has comprehensive provisions for inclusive education at different levels of education by the Ministry of Education; awareness campaigns should be informed by the values and cultural practices of different communities in Kibera that cause stigma, negative attitudes and discrimination of YWDs,so as to target the causes of the problem in order to eradicate it; that the government of Kenya and other stakeholders who work to create employment for YWDs in Kibera slums must identify the unique needs of this group in order to give them a chance at employment, and the NCPWDs should promote; advice and support the implementation of policies that mainstream disability in employment. Finally the government through its departments in Kibera should mainstream programs for YWDs for sustainability and continuity. The recommendations are aimed at eradicating the socio-economic barriers facing youth with disabilities in accessing employment in Kibera slums.

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