

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

College of Education and Behavioral studies

Department of Special Needs Education



Employability of Graduates with Disabilities in Ethiopia study

Research conference Proceeding

ADDIS ABABA

Feb/2014

ACCRONUMS

MOE: Ministry of Education

MOJ: Ministry of Justice

MOLSA: Ministry of labor and social Affairs

RESPOND-HER

AAU: Addis Ababa University

FBE: Faculty of Business and Economic

GO: Government organizations

NGO: Non Governmental organizations

ECDD

ENAB: Ethiopian National Association of Blinds

ENAID : Ethiopian National Association Intellectual Disabilities

Introduction

RESPOND-HER is a project focus on poverty alleviation through higher education and research. It is part of Austrian Development Agency funded program signed for three years. The project in Ethiopia is working with AAU Department of Special needs Education, on staff exchange, joint research disseminations and researches. One is on employability of graduates with disabilities and the second is on accessibility of higher education for students with disabilities.

This proceeding focuses on research dissemination conference made on Feb13/2014 at Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE). The research entitled “Employability of Graduate students with Disability in Ethiopia” conducted by Department of Special Needs Education staffs taking major project sites from Regional states (Addis Ababa, Oromiya, Southern Nations and Nationalities, Amhara and Tegray) presumed hire more numbers of graduates with disabilities comparably than other regions.

The research emphasizes on, citizens who are excluded from most of life in all sectors including employments. Hence it shades light by reveling the overall status of employment conditions of graduates’ persons with disabilities in Ethiopia.

Beyond the disclosing the current status of employability of graduates in the country, the research serve furtherer to empower persons with disabilities, realize their rights as well as aware employers know benefits/advantages of hiring persons with disabilities.

More over it has positive contributions to poverty reduction strategy of the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia.

Conference proceeding

From 8.30 Am to 9.15AM invited organizations representatives and participants registered. About 60 participants from Federal Governmental institutions, Nongovernmental organizations, private voluntaries and graduate students from AAU attended the conference.

Subsequently Dr Yergashewa Bekele (staff and research conference manager) made brief well coming speech, and invited Professor Tirusew Teferra to made opening speech.

Next Professor Tirusew Teferra made brief note on RESPOND-HER project, contribution of Austrian Development Fund, major activities of the project, its objectives, and actions accomplished. He concluded his opening remark by thanking staffs of Vienna University, local RESPOND-HER research team, those who have participated in research work, and participants, attended the conference.

Research Presentation

Professor Tirusew Teferra begins his presentation, by stating project starting time, time span, and funder agency. As to his explanation the objective of the project is staff development, staff exchange and research works.

Proceeding to research component his presentation follows: introduction, method, project site, results and finally reflections. In his introduction he indicated that the objective of the conference is to investigate the problem and to show direction what to be done next.

Data collection tools, project sites, organizations from where data is obtained, Graduates impairments category, study areas, numbers of graduates, employed in GOs, NGOs, and private organizations and major employers are stated using power point slides.

Employment conditions, working experiences, equity of payment in working settings, treatments of colleagues, employers' satisfactions and job performances analysis are discussed.

Finally the research reflection presented in two categories one is on general employments and on graduating persons with disabilities. Specifically

1 Regarding higher education Institutions awareness and placements are specific reflections made on higher education institutions.

2 Regarding subject selection it is suggested to accept students' interest and to provide technological options in examination and the like.

Later to the presentation the facilitator Dr Daneal Desta recapitulate the presentation and invited participants to reflect their view and ask if they have questions.

Audience Reflection

UNICIEF representative: Suggested the following major points;

- To use the word “special challenged” rather than using the word disability.
- The current prevalence of disability percentage is 17% which was previously 10% stated by WHO.
- One reason for higher education access is low is due to physical barrier
- Policy cannot be implemented at grass root level.

MOE representative suggestions include:

- Much effort might be exerted to change charity attitude to right based approach
- The presences of old criteria in different directives are still barriers to persons with disabilities perform their potentials.
- The mismatch of some professional studies with employment market

- Lack of linkage between TVET training and micro-enterprise

MOJ representative

- Higher education departments shall provide better attention to enable and make them competitive in employment market
- The new lawyer law demands 3.25 GPA and above that has implication on higher education training.

ENAB

- The study conducted provide tangible evidence about the situation in Ethiopia
- There are good laws how ever there are serious problems regarding employment
- now governmental institutions are major employers of persons with disabilities similar initiatives is not seen in NGOs
- Higher education institutions are responsible to prepare professionals but still need to widen the scope of study fields.

PHD student

- I like to appreciate those who have involved in the study. This conference is historic but I see no media coverage

- As part of data collector I saw strong negative attitudinal challenges which still demand awareness should be done aggressively.

Handicap National Representative

- I appreciate the study it would be good if it goes to grass root level
- I call for coordinated work among stake holders working in the areas of disabilities.
- I see no job matching analysis in the research that I was eager to hear

Handicap International

- Representatives from all national disabilities associations are invited but I see no sign language interpreter
- The new prevalence rate is 17% but the study use the old data that need to be corrected.

AAU college of Education participant

- Respondents suggested as they have competency problems but job satisfaction data indicate 52% positive is this error or what?

RESPONSES FROM THE PLATFORM

- All suggested are well taken and we use them as input of the research

- We use the term disability rather than “special need challenged” because the study was focused on three categories, not holistic to include other categories
- Assisting students with disability shall begin from the foundation (primary grades) how ever focus shall be given to right based approach than excusive approach.
- As it is suggested we strive to reach grass root level for those who implement the findings of the research.

PART TWO (MANUAL OF EMPLOYMENT PRESENTATION)

Employment manual is quick reference prepared for employer organizations as well as it is information providers for job seekers with disabilities. It has double importance for both. The manual prepared by AAU RESPOND-HER research team is original manual prepared based on the research findings.

The objectives, importance, contents contribution of the manual to facilitate employment of graduates with disabilities are briefly presented by Dr Tilahun Achaw head of special needs education department and RESPOND-HER local team member.

His presentation included:

- Legal and policy issues regarding employment of PWD.
- Disability awareness for employers
- Accessibility of vacancy announcements
- Accessibility of work place
- management of employee with disability
- Opportunities and benefits of hiring persons with disabilities.
- Tips for employers and what is to be done.

After the presentation Dr Fantahun made summary and pinpoint major ideas and call for plenary discussions. Main points and suggestions forwarded from participants were:

ENAIID representative:

- You have conducted good study and workable manual but I heard no words about persons with intellectual disabilities. Besides that the manual has to say something about quota system regarding employment opportunities because there are some categories which cannot compete with non disabled candidates.

AAU PHD student

- I liked the manual; it is useful to all social groups too. Importance of awareness shall be given much emphasis. Some employees with disabilities might demand additional cost than non disabled employee, such costs might be the reason to retreat employers to hire persons with disabilities, such issues shall be treated in the manual
- The Department of Special Needs education office is not accessible for the students with disabilities; and so the change has to begin from the department itself.

MOJ representative

- Discrimination is everywhere but it is worst in employment. work announcements are cancelled if competitors are persons with disabilities, or fail during interview or make any reason to cancel the employment

- Some organizations though they have employees with disabilities will never empower them to promote their skills.

AAU student with disability

- This research really touches very sensitive issues some do not want to hear. The society should believe we (persons with disabilities) have to be measured by our mental capability but not physical fitness.
- The manual is so condensed that lack particulars, I prefer if it is detailed.
- As to me the approach might be better if it is presented more moral responsibility than make it obligatory, as well as make it flexible.

A/A education bureau

- There are new construction regulations drawn by the government the problem is not the law rather the implementation.

MOLSA

- We have laws and regulations issued by MOLSA
- No one know we have the law and those who are victimized do not come to us, there is serious miscommunication.
- I suggest the manual that is presented now shall incorporate the laws and regulations. It should be good if it incorporate accountability as well.

ECDD

- The data you use is outdated it is better to use the current WHO report which is 17%.
- The manual shall indicate some points what benefits employers shall get by hiring persons with disabilities.

Handicap International

- I suggest the manual should be rewrite again by incorporating all forwarded suggestions.
- It should be supported by other references, and incorporate construction codes, national assessments, etc

Major comments on manual

- The manual shall reveal the gaps regarding employment to draw attention what should be done in the future.
- It has to incorporate major laws, regulations, codes and the like references.
- has to indicate new options to disseminate information ,like Braille notice for blinds
- it should be written in local languages
- The approach shall be better using friendly than make it obligatory.
- Make it simple, readable, and detailed.

- It should indicate what the employers have to do beyond awareness.
- It seems prepared for formal institutions better to include non formal sectors too, like micro enterprises

Concluding Remark

Professor Tirusew Teferra in his conclusion remark highlighted the following points:

- All forwarded comments and suggestions will be used to finalize the documents.
- All stake holders have attended the conference and we will arrange the concerned persons from stake holders to amend the manual.
- All suggestions will be incorporated.
- We will make self evaluation about the accessibility of the department with concerned administration officials of the University.
- We will make press release after the amendment of the manual.

Lastly he windup the conference by sincere thank all who participate in the study and who attend the conference.

Annex 1(Research PPT)

Annex 2 (manual PPT)

Annex 3 attendance list

Annex 4 schedule