ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE ETHIOPIAN UNIVERSITIES

Department of Special Needs Education

College of Education and Behavioral Studies

Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

October, 2014

Research Team

TirussewTeferra, Laureate Professor…………………Lead Researcher

Daniel Desta, Asst.Prof.……………………...............Researcher

Alemayehu T/Mariam, Asst.Prof.……………………...Researcher

Fantahun Admas, Asst.Prof.……………………….……Researcher

Sewalem Tsega, Asst.Prof.…………………………….Researcher

Tilahun Achaw, Asst.Prof.…………………………..Researcher

Yirgashewa Bekele, Asst.Prof.…………………..……Researcher

Yeshitila Mulat, MA……………………………....Assistant Administrator

Table of Contents   **Page**

List of Tables

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is one of the fundamental human rights that every human being should have access. It is a pathway to a successful life and career and this applies to everyone including persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities, as members of a given society and by virtue of being human beings, are entitled to educational service provisions. Hence, the issue of equal access and opportunities for students with disabilities at different levels of education draws attention of different stakeholders. Access to higher education, which is the focus in this research, should be crafted in line with the needs of persons with disabilities.

The question for equal and fair access is growing voice among students with disabilities, who successfully completed secondary education (Barnes, 2004). As noted in Putnam (2003), although access of persons with disabilities to higher education is slowly gaining momentum from time to time and from place to place, equality with regard to access has remained unattainable in most countries of the world including Ethiopia. The traditional barriers for inaccessibility of higher education for those with disabilities might arise from variety of circumstances, particularly from two false premises: the one is their needs/demands are assumed to be expensive to cover, and the second is persons with disabilities are under rated that cannot perform required qualification criteria for higher education. Some also argue that university faculties are not free from traditional stereotypes of inabilities regarding students with disabilities (Willeh, 2002). Some have questions whether students with disabilities can cope with the required academic challenges or question their own doubts of abilities how effectively they can teach students with disabilities (Mckenzie& Schweitzer, 2001). These negative attitudes acted as barriers on students' study choices now and then. Regarding undermining attitude in the Ethiopian context, Tirussew (2005, p.3) indicated "in Ethiopia, persons with disabilities are perceived as " weak", "hopeless", " dependent", and "unable to learn" and "subject of charity". The misconceptions of causal attribution added to the misunderstandings of the capabilities of persons with disabilities have contributed to the low social and economic statues of persons with disabilities (PwDs).

Nevertheless, how strong those attitudes are, the question of higher education access for students with disabilities overrun traditions once was invincible hurdle (Fuller *et al*., 2004). Hence, research plays a pivotal role to examine the situations of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions. By assessing and revealing the conditions, challenges as well as by suggesting recommendations, the situation of students with disabilities could be improved. To open fair educational opportunities for students with disabilities and to create welcoming and enabling conditions, investigation of practices and suitability of situations to students needs are priority actions. Negative attitude might be barrier to students with disabilities in their social interaction as well as their academic life. University faculties may be susceptible to traditional stereotypes of inabilities regarding students with disabilities, which may in turn be a barrier for students' study choices (Willeh, 2002).

When it comes to the education of persons with disabilities especially in the higher learning institutes, barriers and difficulties are numerous. Literature shows that students with disabilities often faced additional challenges in their educational environment. With regard to higher education accessibility for students with disabilities, barriers are sufficiently documented. These barriers include physical, architectural, service deliveries, provisions of learning materials and equipment, attitudinal and cultural influences. Apart from the multitude of barriers that affect the education of students with disabilities, physical barriers are visibly challenging these students. Free movement in the university campuses is assumed to be the right (IDEA, 1997). Accessible classrooms, dormitories, halls, dining rooms, recreational areas, library, service delivery units, dormitories, exit passageways in emergency situations are all elements of physical accessibility, however these basic conditions are not adequately met (Tirussew,1994; Tirussew & Ellena, 2000). Studies conducted elsewhere also confirmed that students with disabilities often encounter physical barriers in university environment. In the case of Ethiopia, major educational challenges faced by students with disabilities (SwDs) are lack of adequate educational background, shortage of instructional materials, text and reference books (written in Braille or recorded cassettes) (Tirussew 1989). Failure to fulfill those provisions might hinder their success (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004). Kenny, 2004; IDEA, 1997).

Lack of appropriate services and convenient suiting programs are common challenges facing students with disabilities. Dormitories, dining halls, libraries, and classroom buildings are all

important buildings that should be accessible to all students to live, to learn and to work. Conversely, the literature disclosed that lack of professionals working on service areas that have good awareness about disabilities and students' needs, lack of assistive materials, old restrictive classrooms and living in dormitories prepared for able-bodied students as well inaccessible recreational areas are some of major challenges. Though there are some changes in the new buildings, in Addis Ababa University (AAU) students with disabilities have problems due to lack of special arrangement made to accommodate their needs (Tirussew, 1994; Misrak, 2005; Rimmerman, 2005; Kenny, 2004).

 A warm interpersonal teacher-student relationship enriches and promotes the learning teaching processes. Better courses, better coverage, better teaching machines will never resolve our dilemma in a basic way. Only persons acting like persons in their relationships with their students can even being to make a dent on this most urgent problem of modern education Garwood (1983). It is particularly critical to work effectively with students of different abilities and satisfy their special educational needs. However, the AAU experience reveals a limited instructor –student interaction both inside and outside the classroom. Unlike non-disabled students, students with disabilities have serious problem to have contact with their instructors because of the physical barriers to get access to their offices. As a result, most of them are forced to miss important consultation hours with their teachers. Generally, appreciating the assets and recognizing the liabilities of the learners on the part of the instructors usually makes the students to feel at ease, be interactive and comfortable (Tirussew, 1994).

Fichten, Robillard, Judd, and Amsel (1989) suggest college students without disabilities are more uncomfortable interacting with peers with disabilities than with peers without disabilities, and students with disabilities are more comfortable interacting with peers with similar disabilities. With regard to the peer relationship Ethiopian experiences is similar with rest of the world. As Tirussew's (1994) description, student-student relationship at AAU, found mixed feelings, both positive and negative -s*ome SwDs   declared that no-disabled students are friendly, considerate, and helpful for them. Whereas, others confess that they do not have any sort of relationship with non-disabled students.*

With all the challenges, the improvement of educational participation of students with disabilities is a vital issue (Jorgensen, S, Fitchen, 2005). To increase participation of students with

disabilities in the higher institutes, funding, long term planning, opening and widening study options are to be considered to mention a few (McKenzie & Schweitez, 2001).

Claesson, 1995; Evans, 1998), description about educational setting emphasized on the task of institutions providing educational services to make sure that the educational settings were adjusted to accommodate the special educational needs, due to that higher education institutions were trying to make the children with disabilities fit into the given educational setting. (Bretz, 2000), furthermore stated the necessity of ensuring students with disabilities, by means of assistive learning materials as contributory factor to accessibility of education for those enrolled in higher education institutions. The materials include textbooks, modules, digital materials, audio and video materials; Braille texts, computers and accessories and the like materials are supportive to learn alongside their peers at colleges (IDEA, 2006; Tetzel, 2001).

Generally, higher education undergoes change in response to modifications in the perceived needs of the society, legislative policies, and social attitudes. Reformulation of policy, change of attitude against differential treatment of educational services based on differences in people will likely be seen in a positive perspective.

As Evans (1998), noted accessibility is shift services from simply trying to fit the child into "normal settings"; it is a supplemental support for their disabilities or special needs and promotes the child's overall development in an optimal setting.

Putnam, Geenen, (2003) defined accessibility as Inclusive, that respect of difference and celebration of diversity. Their focuses are creating environments responsive to the differing developmental capacities, needs, and potentials of all students. It is also adjustments and accommodations that incorporate creative solutions.

Some fertile grounds are laid in the form of laws, legislations and policies regarding the education of persons with disabilities so that the increment of the number of students with disabilities could be realized in Ethiopian universities. The Education and Training Policy is a basic reference and directive of education in the country. The document provides due attention to accessibility of education. The overall and specific objectives of the policy state opportunities and conditions that help to promote accessibility of education to all citizens. Those statements in

the policy document outline important provisions such as basic education, respecting human rights, avoiding harmful practices and use of technology in education, and making education serve societal needs (TGE, 1994).

Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 article 40 incorporates four sub articles on accessibility issues that encompass: 1) provision of facilities and programs amendable to students with disabilities (40.1), 2) resource allocations, relocation of classes, development of alternative testing procedures, provisions of auxiliary aids to the interest of students with disabilities (40.2), 3) making suitable building designs, campus physical landscapes, and other infrastructures of institutions (40.3), and 4) special supports like academic assistance, including tutorial sessions, exam time extensions and deadline extensions (40.4). Like the education policy, the higher education legislation supports the promotion of educational accessibility, and encourages HEIs to work in accordance with the stated article 40 and subordinate four sub articles.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In this particular study, examination of the situation of educational accessibility in Ethiopian higher education institutions focuses on exploring conduciveness or challenges related to physical, curricular, service deliveries and social circumstances of students with disabilities. However, access is a wider term that includes enrollments, retentions and fulfillment of needs during students' stay in universities until graduation and beyond. To this regard, this study investigates the situations of educational and service accessibilities to students with disabilities in higher education institutions particularly in Ethiopia. This study, however, focuses on students with hearing, visual and physical impairments in the Ethiopian higher learning institutes. This is due to the fact that these are the group of students with disabilities admitted in the Ethiopian universities with the visible disabilities.

 Over the last few years, higher educational institutions in Ethiopia increased from 11 to 32 universities and enrollment rate also reached to 100,000 per annum. However, the number of students with disabilities in the universities is still low. Those who joined the universities have experienced challenges of different type ranging from academic to social. To be more specific, physical barriers, absence of assistive technologies and devices, rigid curricular issues, absence

of diversity management strategies, limitations of services provisions and unequal opportunities are expected to be challenges students with disabilities experience in higher institutions of Ethiopia.

However, the situation of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions is hardly investigated the diversity management problems. It seems that students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions face challenges of different type that affect their academic and social life during their study period. Therefore, it is expected that the students get special support from their respective universities to successfully engage in learning activities and complete their studies.

Thus, this study attempts to investigate the situations of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutes. The study predominantly focuses on challenges of accessibilities, in particular about common and specific physical barriers, services provisions, participation rates and related issues. The overall intention of this study is to identify challenges students with hearing, visual and physical impairments face and the provisions made to support their studies in the universities. The findings of the study will also be used to initiate dialogue and networking among universities as well as serve as input in the preparation of *Basic Manual for the Service of Students with Disabilities* in higher education institutions in the country. In a bid to fully understand the situation of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher learning institutions, the present study tries to address the following questions:

1. What are the barriers to higher education for students with disabilities?
2. What are the challenges for students with disabilities in their respective universities?
3. What services are provided for students with disabilities in Ethiopian universities?
4. How do students with disabilities perceive their university experiences/education?
5. What is the academic achievement of students with disabilities?
6. What strategies can be employed to improve education and life of students in higher education institutions?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

To assess the situation of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions with reference to the challenges/barriers they face and service provision to them. Assessing accessibility of higher education to students with disabilities with regards to improving the situation and thereby contributes to poverty reduction strategy of the government of Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- Identify barriers and challenge related to access to higher education for students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions.

- Assess the service provision for students with disabilities in the Ethiopian higher education institutions.

- Examine the academic achievement of students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions.

- Explore strategies to improve accessibility of higher education institutions to students with disabilities.

1.4 Significance of the study

The present study has enormous implications in identifying challenges/barriers of and service provisions for students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutions. In addition, it contributes a lot to increase the awareness and insight of university administrators about the situation of these segments of students in order to address their needs and improve service provisions.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Design of the Study

A mixed research design was employed in this research. It comprised both quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the situation of students with disabilities in Ethiopian universities. The quantitative design was employed to survey and describe the general trends of universities in participating and serving students with disabilities and to quantify the availability of services in the participant universities. Qualitative approach, in addition to quantitative, was used to fully understand and describe the situation of students with disabilities from the perspectives of the students themselves, university officials and direct service providers.

2.2. Data Sources and Sampling Technique

2.2.1 Universities covered by the study

In this study, 11 government universities were purposefully identified in order to make them representatives of Ethiopian universities based on location (North, West, Center , South and East) and years of service (old and new). The locations of the universities were identified during the initial phase of this joint project. The universities were: Adama Science and Technology University, Addis Ababa University, Aksum University, Bahir Dar University, Dilla University, Jigjiga University, Haromaya University, Hawassa University, Mekelle University, Gondar University and Samara University.

2.2.2   Participants

Participants of this study were students with disabilities (availability sampling), Academic vice presidents (purposive sampling) and Dean of students (purposive sampling) of the sample universities.

A total of 422 Students with disabilities filled in questionnaires. Among these 318 were males and 104 were females. A group of students with disabilities were also involved in focus group discussion whereas senior officials, deans of students and special needs support officers were interviewed.

Table 1: Study sites by number of participants

Universities	Geographical Locations	Number of Students with disabilities
Addis Ababa University	Central	70
Adama university	Central	37
Bahir Dar University	North West	70
Mekelle University	North	59
Axum University	North	26
Hwassa University	South	33
Dilla University	South	34
Jigjiga University	East	22
Semera University	East	16
Haromaya University	East	20
Gondar University	North West	35
Total	11	422

2.3. Data Collection Instruments

2.3.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire which contained close and open ended questions was developed for students with disabilities. The questionnaire solicited information from students with disabilities about their demographic data, educational challenges during their university studies, and service provisions and modifications in their respective universities.

2.3.2   Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussion was held among students with disabilities on accommodation in their universities, challenges they have experienced during their stay in their universities and measures taken by their respective universities in order to minimize the problems they have faced, and their suggestion of measures to be taken by their respective universities.

2.3.3   Interviews

Interview was also held with higher officials of the universities with regard to the services students with disabilities receive under their leadership. Academic vice presidents, dean of students and special needs support officers were interviewed about accommodating students with disabilities, university legislation and related policies, service provisions, environmental accessibility, instructional modifications, barriers to accommodation and challenges students with disabilities have faced. They were also interviewed about what has been done and what has been planned to accommodate students with disabilities in their respective universities. In short, the major points discussed were accommodation, legislation, barriers, challenges and opportunities with regard to the education of students with disabilities.

2.4 Procedures

The 11 universities involved in this study were selected purposely as mentioned in the sampling methods section. After having the participant universities identified, the coordinators and data collectors were selected from respective universities based on the relevance of their training and work experience with the education of students with disabilities. Those who were hired as coordinators and data collectors were selected based on their relevance to job they were supposed to do. Persons with disabilities and special needs education professionals were given priority in both coordination and data collection. In almost all of the universities, persons with disabilities (Gondar and Dilla Universities) and special needs education professionals (Aksum, Mekelle, Gondar, Dilla, Adama, Addis Ababa, Bahr Dar, Haromaya universities) were involved. Coordinators of Hawassa, Jigjiga and Samara universities were educators and psychologists due to the absence of special needs education professionals.

These coordinators and data collectors successfully completed their tasks and sent the data to the research team members of the project. Every team member of the project was responsible for two universities in terms of supervising the coordination and data collection.

2.5 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses techniques were employed. As to the quantitative data, descriptive statistics was used. Frequency, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the participant universities and students with disabilities and the information collected from them.

The qualitative data were also analyzed by creating themes on accommodation, service provision, barriers to accommodation and challenges of students with disabilities in their university study.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

Participation in this study was completely voluntary. Students with disabilities were told about the purpose of the study and were asked their consent. The same was true for university officials. No one was involved in this study against his/her will. Oral consent was obtained before the questionnaire was given to the respondent and the interview was held with the interviewee. Participants were also assured that their response will remain strictly confidential and personal details will be kept anonymous.

3. RESULTS

This study focuses on the situation of students with disabilities in the Ethiopian higher education institutions. It attempts to describe the situation of students with disabilities in terms of barriers and challenges in higher education institutes, service provisions and educational experiences in the universities. More specifically, the availability of services, the challenges they face on the campus and due to the teaching-learning process, barriers and the measures taken by the university officials in order for the students with disabilities to provide accessible environment were addressed in this study.

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

 In this research endeavor, about 422 students with disabilities participated and informed this study. With regard to the participants' demographic data, interesting results emerged and that could help readers understand the nature of students with disabilities in higher education institutions. By disability type, only students with visual impairment, hearing impairment and physical disability were involved. Among the three disability types included in this study, 34.6 % (n=134) were with students with visual impairment, 9.8% (n=38) were with hearing impairment, and 55.6% (n=215) were with physical disability. The number of students with physical disability is much higher than the students with visual and hearing impairments. It seemed that persons with physical disabilities accessed schools than others with visual and hearing impairment although it is not known that whether they are evenly distributed in the society.

The respondents' age was also asked in this study in order to understand the age distribution of students with disabilities and whether they start schooling at the right time. Over 72% of the participants were between the age ranges of 21-25 years. The average age for this group is 22.66 years. This trend is almost similar to the three types of disabilities. This age seemed to be appropriate for higher education. It is indicative of the fact that students with disabilities did not as such waste their time to start schooling. Although the majority of the students with disabilities were in the expected age rage, we also observed students who were as old as 40 years at undergraduate level study as some start schooling very late due to their disability. This indicates that some of the students with disabilities joined schools or universities with relatively older age.

Gender wise, among students with disabilities, only less than one-fourth of them were females. Although the number of males and females with disabilities in the society are assumed to be equal, female students with disabilities were underrepresented in the Ethiopian universities. Gender disparity is very much visible in students with disabilities. Male and female students in Ethiopian universities are not in equal number with the larger the number of males, a ratio of 3:1 where 75.4% of males and 24.6% females with disabilities attended Ethiopian universities. This disparity is alarming that education of female students with disabilities should be encouraged at school and university levels.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of university students with disabilities

Variable	Category	Disability type						Total	%
		Visual	%	Hearing	%	Motor	%		
Number	Type	134	34.6	38	9.8	215	55.6	387	100
Age	18-20	21	15.7	4	10.5	43	20	68	17.7
	21-25	99	73.8	24	63.2	157	73	280	72.9
	>26	14	10.5	10	26.3	15	7	39	9.4
	Total	134	100	38	100	215	100	387	100
Gender	Male	94	71.2	29	76.3	163	77.6	286	75.3
	Female	38	28.8	9	23.7	47	22.4	94	24.7
	Total	132	100	38	100	210	100	380	100
Region	Amhara	49	36.8	3	2.2	81	66.2	133	34.8
	Oromia	22	26.5	9	10.8	52	62.6	83	21.7
	Tigray	22	32.4	6	8.8	40	58.8	68	17.8
	SNNP*	18	40.9	5	11.3	21	47.7	44	11.5
	AA	21	48.8	11	25.6	11	25.6	43	11.2
	Others	2	18.2	3	27.3	6	54.5	11	3.0
	Total	134	35.2	37	9.6	211	55.2	382	100
Level of severity	Mild	21	32.8	6	9.4	37	57.8	64	17.2
	Moderate	37	24.4	6	3.9	109	71.7	152	40.6
	Severe	42	42	14	14	44	44	100	26.7
	Profound	28	48.3	13	22.4	17	29.3	58	15.5

	Total	128	34.2	38	10.2	208	55.6	374	100

Onset of disability	Before	11	36.7	7	23.3	12	40	30	7.8
	During	11	39.3	5	17.8	12	42.9	28	7.3
	After	109	33.6	26	8.0	189	49.5	324	84.9
	Total	131	34.3	38	9.9	213	55.8	382	100
Paternal education	Illiterate	63	38.4	12	7.3	89	54.3	164	53.1
	Primary	29	37.2	11	14.1	38	48.7	78	25.2
	Secondary	10	32.2	5	16.1	16	51.7	31	10
	Tertiary	10	27.8	2	5.5	24	66.7	36	117
	Total	112	36.2	30	9.7	167	54.1	309	100
Maternal education	Illiterate	76	37.4	17	8.4	110	54.2	203	66.8
	Primary	20	32.3	9	14.5	33	53.2	62	20.4
	Secondary	6	30	3	15	11	55	20	6.6
	Tertiary	7	36.8	2	10.6	10	52.6	19	6.2
	Total	109	35.8	31	10.2	164	54	304	100
Paternal job	Farming	88	39.3	15	6.7	121	54	224	66.8
	Business	20	36.4	8	14.5	27	49.1	55	16.4
	Professional	14	25	6	10.7	36	64.3	56	16.8
	Total	123	36.6	29	8.6	184	54..8	336	100
Maternal job	Housewife	104	36.2	25	8.7	158	55.1	287	85.2
	Business	7	21.8	3	9.4	22	68.8	32	9.5
	Professional	7	38.9	3	16.7	9	50	19	56.4
	Total	118	34.9	31	9.2	189	55.9	338	100

Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

Thirty four percent (n=134) of the students with disabilities were from Amhara regional state followed by 21.7% (n=86) from Oromia regional state and 17.4% (69) from Tigray regional state. Almost equal number of students with disabilities were from SNNP, 11.4% (n=45), and from Addis Ababa11% (43). A close inspection of their region and university leads to conclude that the majority of students are assigned in the universities within their region. This might minimize their transportation cost and they might also get support from their parents so long as they are close by.

Students were also asked the level of severity of their disabilities. In terms of severity, 18.2% of the respondents reported to have mild disabilities while 40.3% have moderate, 26.8% have severe and 14.7% have profound disabilities. In a similar manner, students with disabilities were asked to report the time of onset of their disabilities. In response, students with disabilities reported the time of onset of disability in this study. Surprisingly, 85.6% percent of them reported that the onset of disability was '*after birth*' whereas only 7.4 and 7 percent of the students with disabilities reported the onset as '*before birth*' and '*during birth*' respectively.

In order to understand the parental background of students with disabilities, participants were asked about their paternal and maternal educational level. As it was expected, the majority of parents of students with disabilities were illiterate. Sixty percent of fathers and 75% of mothers of students with disabilities were illiterate while only 19.7% of fathers and 14.6% of mothers have primary education and only 8% fathers and 5.6% mothers have secondary level education. Those who have tertiary level are 9.3% fathers and 4.5% mothers. When it comes to the job type of parents, the majority of fathers were famers and the majority of mothers were housewives.

As described above, sixty eight per cent of fathers of students with disabilities were farmers where only 15.8% and 16.2% were business owners and professional of some kind respectively. In a very similar manner, 85.1% of mothers of students with disabilities were housewives and 9.5% and 5.4% were business owners and professionals respectively. One can guess that students with disabilities had a poor background that might complicate their education in the lower and higher levels of their education experience.

University students in the Ethiopian context are dependent on their parents for their economic needs. Having poor parents, disability and being a university student might make the challenges students with disabilities face complex.

Table 3: Distribution of participating students by type of disability and university

Name of University	Disability type			Total
	Visual	Hearing	Motor	
Haromaya University	6	3	10	19
Jigjiga University	3	0	14	17
Semera University	0	0	16	16
Axum University	5	3	18	26
Addis Ababa University	22	23	23	68
Mekelle University	26	2	17	45
Bahir Dar University	24	2	41	67
Hawassa University	15	1	14	30
Gondar University	8	1	21	30
Adama University	5	3	27	35
Dilla University	20	0	14	34
Total	134	38	213	387

A close examination of students' diversity by university showed that majority of students with hearing impairment, apart from their limited number, were admitted into Addis Ababa University (23 out of 35) to Sign Language and Deaf Culture program. No deaf student was admitted in three universities (Jigjiga, Samara, and Dilla). The rest had one to three students with hearing impairment. Students with visual and motor disabilities were admitted to a variety of field of studies. Majority of blind students were admitted to languages, social sciences and law. Others were studying social sciences, engineering and law. It is evident that students with disabilities were distributed to different filed of studies as per their own choice.

A trend can be seen that students with disabilities are placed in almost all universities in Ethiopian. However, newly opened universities are only admitting some disability categories and concentration of students with disabilities is observed in old universities. For example, the

majority (about 66%) of the students with hearing impairment were from Addis Ababa University. The rest of the universities had either few (1-3 students) or had no students in this category. Students with visual impairment concentrate mainly at five universities namely Addis Ababa, Mekelle, Bahir Dar, Hawassa and Dilla universities. Students with motor problems appeared to be fairly distributed across all universities with the exception of Bahir Dar University where there are relatively higher in number. Opening of more universities in the country has opened a window of opportunities to students in different categories of disabilities. The admission of students with disabilities in the universities, however, might not suffice as they need special support compared to other university students to succeed in their education.

3.2 Internal and External Challenges of Students with Disabilities

University students with disabilities face several problems: internal and external. Among the challenges they face is financial challenges. As they have disabilities, they might need extra money for their academic such as photocopying, transcription, exam reader, sanitation and others.

It seems that majority of students with disabilities come from low income families. Monthly income of parents of students with disabilities was surveyed and majority of parents, that is 35%, earned less than 1000 ETB while 14.5% earned between 1000 and 2000 and only 5.6% earned between 2000 and 3000 ETB. However, it should be noted that 40% did not estimate their parents' income. Taking only the students who provided the monthly income of their parents, over 60% of them had 1000 or less ETB. This might be indicative of the financial problems students with disabilities might experience during their university studies. Among the 257 respondents, only 11(4.3%) had a family with a monthly income of over 4000 ETB.

Table 4: Income of parents of students with disabilities

Variable	Category in ETB*	N	%
Parental Income	0-500	78	30.4
	501-1000	78	30.4
	1001-2000	60	23.3
	2001-3000	23	8.9
	3001-4000	7	2.7
	4001-5000	4	1.6
	5000-10,000	7	2.7
	Total	257**	100
Income comparison	Better than neighbors	50	12.8
	Same than neighbors	233	59.6
	worse than neighbors	108	27.6
	Total	391	100

*20 ETB is roughly equivalent to $1.**159 students did not provide data on their parents' income*

Close to 85% of the respondents' parents earned 2000 or less ETB a month. Taking into account the current price hike in almost every area, it might be difficult for parents to support their sons and daughters with disabilities who are studying at different universities away from them and this might lead these students to face financial challenges.

University students with disabilities were also asked to compare parental income to their neighborhood. Close to 60% students with disabilities disclosed that their parents' income had been similar to other households in their neighborhood. Students with disabilities were also asked to rate their parents income in comparison with their neighbors as worse, same or better than households in their community. As a result, 12.8 % rated their parents' income was worse than the other households in the community, 59.6 % rated the same and 27.6% rated better than the other households in the neighborhood.

Although their parents are like any other Ethiopians, one can pose a question that how many Ethiopians could send their children to the universities with full financial support? If disability and financial challenge come together, the problem could be worse.

Challenges could not be limited to finance only. Students with disabilities also reported problems in areas like support service in the universities, administration, exam taking, teaching-learning and the like.

3.3 Service Provision for Students with Disabilities

Ethiopian universities are admitting students in hundred thousand and among these are students with disabilities. The enrollment opportunities brought about the rapid higher education expansion in the country. The focus of this study is on the availability and accessibility of resources, facilities and services. It might be true that as the number of students increases, scarcity of resources and competitive placement might affect the education of students with disabilities. Below is a self-report by students with disabilities whether disability specific provisions were provided or not.

Table 5: Disability specific support services to students with disabilities by university

Name of the University	Availability of Disability specific provisions		Total
	Yes	No	
Haramaya University	11	7	18
Jigjiga University	6	14	20
Semera University	0	16	16
Axum University	12	14	26
Addis Ababa University	60	7	67
Mekelle University	44	10	54
Bahir Dar University	35	35	70
Hawassa University	26	1	27
Gondar University	16	15	31
Adama University	10	27	37
Dilla University	21	13	34
Total	241	159	422

The service provisions for students with disabilities were surveyed in this study. With the exceptions of Jigjiga, Semera and Adama universities, most of the students in the rest of the eight universities reported that there are disability specific services at their respective universities. At Bahir Dar University, half of the students with disabilities reported that there was no disability specific service provision. Nonetheless, a notable number of students nearly in all universities do not agree with this view. Students that held contrary view do not believe that there are disability specific support services in their respective universities. Most importantly, students with disabilities were asked about the provision of disability specific services.

Generally, 61.2% of students with disabilities indicated that they had disability specific service provisions while 38.2% had not. Although the majority of students with disabilities were getting the services, considerable number of students did not get the services. Students with disabilities were asked whether they were receiving differential treatment. The majority students with disabilities, 66.1%, did not receive differential treatments as they deserve. Disability specific service provisions for students with disabilities in Ethiopian higher education institutes were surveyed in this study.

Table 6: Disability specific provision by disability category

Disability type	Availability of disability specific provisions				Total
	Yes	%	No	%	
Visual	108	81	24	19	132
Hearing	28	75	9	25	37
Motor	91	45.5	109	54.5	200
Total	227	61.5	142	38.5	369

Disability specific provisions were examined across universities and some universities such as Semera and Jigjiga had no service provisions provided to their students with disabilities according to the report of students themselves. When analysis was made on disability categories, interesting results emerged. Among the three disability categories involved in this study, 81% of students with visual impairment enjoyed proper service provisions followed by student with hearing impairment with 75% coverage. However, students with motor disability seem to have got limited services. Only 45.5% percent of students with motor disorders reported to have got service provisions whereas 54.5% did not have.

Table7**:** Support services to students with Visual Impairment

Disability Type	Service Type	% Available	% Not available
Visual Impairment			
	Braille	77	23
	Slate and styles	68.9	31.1
	Braille library service	40.5	59.5
	Textbooks in Braille	9.6	90.4
	Tape recorder	67.3	32.7
	Digital voice recorder	36.9	63.1
	Audio Cassettes	37.7	62.3
	Audio Books	1.8	98.2
	Battery for tape recorder	55.7	44.3
	Stationery materials	18.6	81.4
	Computer with JAWS	53.4	46.6
	Internet services	54.2	45.8
	Braille printing/Embosser	3.5	96.5
	Scanning services	7	93
	Exam reader/Scribe	33.9	66.1
	Volunteer reading service	62.4	37.6
	Volunteer recording services	53	47
	Counseling services	27.7	73.7

White cane	67.5	32.5
Training services on life skills	28	72
Training services on study skills	18	82
HIV/AIDS prevention	36.8	63.2
Sex and reproductive health	30.4	69.6
Disability rights and advocacy	24.8	75.2
Job hunting skills	8.3	91.7
Entrepreneur skill	14.7	85.3
Computer usage skill	37.5	62.5

Students with visual impairment reported the presence or absence of the services in their respective universities. As can be seen from Table 7, major areas of service provision for students with visual impairment were writing and reading devices, stationery materials, recording and playing materials, computer and computer based services, volunteer services, counseling services and training services. These services are categorized based on their presence and absence for students.

The service provisions which were available for students with visual impairment were Braille (77%), slate and stylus (68.9%), tape recorder (67.3%), battery for tape recorder (55.7%), computer with jaws (53.4%), internet services (54.2%), voluntary reading services (624%), voluntary recording services (53%) and provision of white cane (67.5%). In these areas, more than 50 percent of the students with visual impairment were receiving services. However, several other important areas of services for the academic and later life of students with visual impairment were either very low or non-existent. Most of the students with visual impairment in the universities covered by the study reported that they have got Braille papers, slate and stylus and tape recorders for taking notes.

Table 8: Support services to students with Hearing Impairment

Disability Type	Service Type	% Available	% Not available
Hearing Impairment	Sign language interpreter	Limited respondents	
	Audiometric assessment	54.5	45.5
	Announcements through mobile phones	14.7	85.3
	Computer usage training	20.6	79.4
	Life skill training	35.3	64.7
	Study skill training	45.5	54.5
	HIV/AIDS prevention	36.4	63.6
	Sex education and reproductive health	41.2	58.8
	Counseling services	35.3	64.7
	Disability rights and advocacy	38.2	61.8
	Job hunting	50	50
	Entrepreneur	32.4	67.6
	Printing and copy services	17.6	82.4
	Assistive devices	58.8	41.2

Students with hearing impairment also reported the presence or absence of the services specific to their needs in their respective universities. As can be seen from Table 8, major areas of service provisions for students with hearing impairment were audiometric assessment, computer skills, life skill training, communication styles, counseling services, assistive devices, stationery materials, computer based services, etc. These services are categorized based on their presence and absence for students.

The service provisions which were available for students with hearing impairment were audiometric assessment (54.5%), assistive devices (58.8%), and job hunting skills (50%). The other areas are reported to be low or limited. Among the students with hearing impairment, 85%

reported that mobile phones were not used for announcement purpose. Similarly, 79.4% of them reported the absence of computer users training for students with hearing impairment.

Table 9: Support services to students with Motor Impairment

Disability Type	Service Type	% Available	% Not available
Motor Impairment			
	Artificial prosthesis	6.7	93.3
	Brace	8.7	91.3
	Crutch	16.9	83.1
	Rubber tip	27.8	72.2
	Wheelchair	17.5	82.5
	Innersole	17.2	82.8
	Walking stick	8.7	91.3
	Computer usage	15.6	84.4
	Counseling	28.7	71.3
	Life skill training	38.9	61.1
	Study skill	41.1	58.9
	HIV/AIDS prevention	36.4	63.6
	Sex education and reproductive health	48.3	51.7
	Disability rights and advocacy	27.9	71.1
	Job hunting	33.3	66.7
	Entrepreneur	19	81
	Ramps	25.7	74.3
	Elevators	28.5	71.5
	Renovation of toilets and shower	10.3	89.7

Students with motor impairment also reported the presence or absence of some service types specific to their needs in their respective universities. As can be seen from Table 9, major areas of service provision for students with motor impairment were artificial prosthesis, brace

crutch, wheelchair, computer skills, life skill training, counseling services, computer based services, etc. These services are categorized based on their presence and absence for students.

The service provisions which were partly available for students with motor impairment were study skill (41%) and reproductive health (48.3%). The other service areas are in extremely low state and students with disabilities seem to have been at a disadvantage at their respective universities (*see* Table 9). For example, braces, crutches, walking sticks and artificial appliances are hardly available for students. The other areas are also reported to be low or limited. Among the students with motor impairment about 90 % reported that toilets and shower rooms were not renovated to be accessed by them. Similarly, over 70% of them reported that ramps and elevators are not available in their universities. Therefore, several other important areas of services for the academic and later life of students with motor impairment are still either very low or non-existent.

Table 10: Students' orientation about university life

Name of the University	Orientation about university life and education		Total
	Yes	No	
Haromaya University	13	6	19
Jigjiga University	4	17	21
Semera University	7	9	16
Axum University	16	10	26
Addis Ababa University	35	34	69
Mekelle University	35	24	59
Bahir Dar University	27	41	68
Hawassa University	25	8	33
Gondar University	22	11	33
Adama University	27	10	37
Dilla University	8	26	34
Total	219	196	415

Another important finding in this study was orientation about university life as a whole: academic and non-academic. To this issue, 52.2% of students with disabilities have got orientation while 47.8% did not get. Almost half of the students with disabilities did not get this orientation. Orientation about university life is very helpful and all shall get this training so that they can succeed in their academic and non-academic activities.

Furthermore dissatisfaction was observed in connection to orientation programs organized for new students. In half of the universities, over 50% students in five universities reported that they were not given orientation upon entry to their respective universities. In fact, notable size of students in all participating universities was not given orientation. Possible contributing factors to irregularities   could be schedule (time and place), communication (mode, time given), lack of support guiding students to orientation venues, inadequacy of coverage in contents of orientations and difference among persons involved in the orientation program; some may do it well while others not.

3.4 Issues Related to Placement and Field of Study

University experience of students with disabilities was also surveyed in this study.   The placement process in relation to choice of students with disabilities was examined. The majority of students with disabilities (73.4%) reported that they were placed to their respective universities by the Ministry of Education as per their first choice.   The remaining 26.6% of students did not get their first choice university.

Table 11: Placement procedures for students with disabilities to universities

Placement	N	%
Direct by ministry of Education	372	91.9
Transferred from other universities	24	5.9
Others	9	2.2
Total	405	100.0

In addition to choice of university, students with disabilities were asked whether the Ministry of Education directly placed them or some transfer was made. In response, close to 92%

of students with disabilities reported that the ministry directly placed them to the universities they chose as per their first choice. The rest were either transferred (6.1%) or place by some other form to the university they are enrolled.

It seems evident that the Ministry of Education considered the first choice university for students with disabilities and directly placed them to the universities they chose. It should be noted that while filling the form for placement, students are required to provide information about disability status and the Ministry might use this information for placement purpose for students with disabilities.

Table 12: Students' choices of universities& placement decisions

Name of the University	Placement on the basis of first choice				Total
	Yes	%	No	%	
Haramaya University	15	78.9	4	21.1	19
Jigjiga University	12	63.2	7	36.8	19
Semera University	11	68.7	5	31.3	16
Axum University	19	73.1	7	26.9	26
Addis Ababa University	50	72.5	19	26.5	69
Mekelle University	44	78.6	12	21.4	56
Bahir Dar University	47	67	23	33	70
Hawassa University	26	81.2	6	18.8	32
Gondar University	23	69.7	10	30.3	33
Adama University	21	65.6	11	34.4	32
Dilla University	30	88.2	4	11.8	34
Total	298	73.4%	108	26.6%	406

A close university by university inspection revealed that Addis Ababa, Bahr Dar and Mekelle universities were the most chosen universities by students with disabilities where close to 50% of the participant students were placed. This might be due to the service provision available for students with disabilities. Semera, Axum and Haromaya universities are universities where students with disabilities were placed in low numbers.

Disability Type versus Choice of Field of Studies

If we see specific field of studies, it is possible to find students in almost all fields of studies as one or two were registered. However, considerable number of students was in the departments of law, sociology, Amharic and civics. Many students with visual impairment concentrated in disciplines such as law, sociology and civics and Amharic language. Most of the students with hearing impairment were enrolled in Sign Language Program unit. Unlike students with visual and hearing impairment, students with physical disabilities study a variety of field in social and natural sciences.

Table 13: Field of study by disability

Field of study	Disability type			Total	%
	Visual	Hearing	Motor		
FBE	3	1	10	14	
Language studies	20	10	3	27	
Natural sciences	2	2	9	13	
Social Sciences	35	3	29	67	
Education	7	1	1	9	
Engineering	3	7	28	38	
Law	23	2	14	39	
Governance	8	-	5	13	
Total	101	26	99	234	

Students with disabilities are distributed to all areas of field of studies. Although students with visual and hearing impairments are concentrated in some areas of studies, students with motor disabilities are studying diverse field of studies. As can be seen from Table 11, students with visual impairment are highly concentrated in areas like language studies, social sciences and law. Students with hearing impairment are also concentrated in Ethiopian Sign language and Deaf Culture department whereas students with motor impairment are distributed almost all areas of studies.

3.5 Academic Achievement of Students with Disabilities

Following the expansion of universities in Ethiopian, students have been joining universities in hundreds of thousands. Hundreds of students with disabilities have been joining the universities alike. They have been studying at an undergraduate and graduate level. Academic achievement of students with disabilities was also surveyed in this study. Although it was reported by the students themselves, majority students with disabilities have showed better performance in their achievement.

Table 14: Students self-report on their academic status

Name of the University	Academic status			Total
	below average	average	above average	
Haromaya University	1	8	10	19
Jigjiga University	2	12	8	22
Semera University	1	5	10	16
Axum University	7	10	9	26
Addis Ababa University	2	42	26	70
Mekelle University	2	45	12	59
Bahir Dar University	2	48	20	70
Hawassa University	2	26	5	33
Gondar University	2	26	7	35
Adama University	4	23	10	37
Dilla University	0	5	29	34
Total	25	250	146	421

Students with disabilities were asked about their academic status as below average, average and above average. They reported that 4.6% of them had below average, 60.8% average and 34.7% above average status. This is promising that students with disabilities are performing well in the universities. However, this is a self-report data and students may fail to disclose their academic weakness. With the exception of a few universities (e.g. Samara and Della Universities), the data obtained from students show that the academic status of students in most universities was average.

Most of the students in the two exceptional universities (Dilla and Samara) reported that their academic status is above average. This, however, is questioned as these two universities are among the newly established ones.

3.6**. Analysis of qualitative data**

This section presents and discusses qualitative data obtained through interviews and focus group discussions on the general provisions made available for students with disabilities by higher education institutions. Issues related to university policies, orientation and training programs, awareness of university communities on disability issues, physical environment as well as facilities made available in the form of general support are analyzed and discussed.

3.6.6. Legislations and guidelines

University legislations and guidelines on disability issues were examined using the data obtained through interviews with university leadership including presidents, vice presidents and deans of students as well as focus group discussions with students with disabilities. The data obtained from the leadership show a different perspective from that of students.

Box 1: Views of the leadership

> ☛ Our legislation is adopted from higher institution proclamation. It has some articles meant for special needs students. However, we don't have a special policy or regulation for implementation.
>
> ☛ ….there are different articles in the existing as well as the revised legislation that deal with the rights of SWDs in the university as well as services they should get.
>
> ☛ …the university has paid due attention to students with disabilities and has been addressing their issues in top administrative and academic management meetings making decisions supporting them.

The views presented in box 1 are typical to all universities covered in the study. It looks the leadership in all universities has made provisions at least in the senate legislations. This, however, does not mean that they are also alike in issuing specific policies and guidelines. The implementation of the provisions made in the legislative and policy documents varies from one university to the other.

The data obtained from students reflect two different views concerning legislations, policies and guidelines of participating universities on provisions regarding disability. Some of the students were critical about the contents of the legislations, policies and guidelines in their respective universities. This group of students appears to have accessed the documents and thus have knowledge about the provisions made. Some of them reported that the legislative and policy documents in their universities have no provisions for students with disability *just by implications. Some of the participating students further compared their assessment of university provisions for students with disabilities with attention given to gender issues.*

Regarding the legislative and policy provisions, students argued contrary to the officials indicating that they do not know anything about the provisions. They stressed that policies might be there but they are not implemented.

Box2: Students' views

Perception about the existing legislative/policy provisions

☛ *I don't believe that there are directives on students with disabilities. Everything depends on personal willingness of authorities. Whenever the president or students' Dean wants to do something you will get the service. Service provision is not guided and supported by pre-established policies or guidelines. If there were such policies and laws we would have a power to insist the university to provide us with the required services (Addis Ababa University).*

☛ *, ... rules and regulations issued by the University are exclusive, which means they don't consider that there are diverse group of learners in the campus. The issue of disability should be given fair weight like that of female students in terms of issuing inclusive policies and legal document (Dilla University).*

☛ *...regulations, policies and guidelines do not take in to account the special needs and interests of the students with disability. For instance, we do not know when to apply for registration, transfer, withdrawal and admission. Dilla University).*

☛ *I don't think there is a single paragraph or chapter about us in the University's legislation and related policies. This [refers to the interview] is the first of its kind even to talk about disability in Samara University. Thank you for remembering us...the university avoids and isolates students with disability (Semera university)*

Views focusing on limitations in dissemination of information

☛ *...I am a 3rd year student. I have been here for about four years, but* I haven't got the chance either to talk or to read about special needs students in this *university (*Semera University).

☛ We are not confident to say there is or there is not because we have no awareness about the existence of such regulations (Hawassa University).

The views reported by the second group of students look to reflect the reality. Although some of the new universities may not have adequate provisions in their legislations on disability support services, most universities have such provisions in their senate legislations. Hence, the problem

lies mainly in failure of most universities in disseminating the available legislative and policy provisions.

3.6.7. Admission and placement Issues

The data obtained from the leadership and students with disabilities in the selected universities indicate prevalence of issues pertaining to students' placement. Students who pass the national examination administered to students that successfully complete the two years preparatory study after grade ten are *placed in broad fields of study (e.g. natural sciences, social studies, etc.,) in government owned higher education institutions by the Ministry of Education.*

Box 3: Views on admission and placement of SWDs

Views of the leadership	Students views
☞ *We do not have any special admission policy for SWDs because the students are assigned by the Ministry of Education… once the students arrived to the University there are rules and regulations developed in line with national policies to accommodate students with disabilities. For example, rules regarding department selection, keeping the primary choices of the students and dormitory placement. (Axum University)* ☞ *The university admits students not based on its plan and preparations… students are placed by the Ministry of Education. After admission however, the university tries its level best to accommodate and support them by giving them priorities within the frame of available resources(Haromaya university)* ☞ *"I don't think we have a mandate to do that [give priority to SWDs). For instance, a*	☞ *…Some of the students attributed the placement decisions to their interests and capabilities while others complained their placement was not based on their preferred field of study (Adama university)* ☞ *Once students are placed in to a certain department it is almost impossible to change to other fields of study. Students use their association to influence change in their study areas, but possibility for success is rare. A student stated his feeling" Ye wuha lay kubet semi yelewm." (Adama Science and Technology University).* ☞ *Departments place students only based on grade points without considering students' disability; as a result, most of the times, students are placed in the departments which are not their primary choice (Axum University).*

35

student was forced to change his preferred department medicine to Law. We have tried to discuss with the concerned bodies but were not successful" (*Adama university*).	*"…I was interested and selected to study civil engineering but I was placed in computational sciences department to study mathematics; it is really disappointing."* (*Adama University*).

It appears universities have no say on students' placement at this level. However, the universities make decisions regarding department level placement. Students' complaints are in the main at this level. Although the management bodies claim to have considered interests of students during placement decisions, students tell a different story. Students say most of the times; they are placed in the departments which are not their primary choice. Correcting these decisions is almost impossible in most cases.

3.6.8. Orientation programs

When students are coming to the University for the first time, it is clear that there is pressing need of orientation so as to familiarize, adjust and successfully cope with the new environment (university life and education). According to the data obtained from the leadership and the students, universities provide two types of orientation: general orientation for all students and special orientation for students with disabilities. Students are given orientation on general topics such as (e.g. university rules, students' discipline, student-teacher relationships, grading system, resources and services available (library, cafeteria, dormitory, internet, etc). Orientations were also focused on social relationships which include: Peer relationships, interaction with teachers and other school university community members.

Special orientation is given to students with disabilities on accommodations, infrastructures, academic services and environmental orientation. Some universities, however, do not have experience in organizing special orientations. A dean of the students' affairs (Adama) reflected "I think I have a mixed feeling about university entrance orientation. Without doubt, in every year, when students are coming to the university there are orientations but, to tell the truth, we do not have a separate orientation to SWDs".

Box 4. Experience of Axum University regarding students' orientation

The experience of Axum University gives a holistic picture on the contents and approaches emphasized during orientation. During the FGD some students pointed out that orientations were given two times; during department selection (to all students). In this orientation the nature of departments, the courses given, the challenges and opportunities in each department, job opportunities, and the procedures and requirements of department placement are explained. The second orientation is given after the department placement, at the beginning of the academic year by the Gender and Special Needs Affair. The major areas of this orientation are summarized below:

- How to establish good relationship with teachers
- How to live with other students who came from different cultural backgrounds
- Conditions (challenges) in the University and how to handle them
- Study skill
- How to use time properly
- Gender and HIV/AIDS issues

However, the students stressed that both orientations are not disability specific. Especially the second orientation, because it is given by the Gender and Special Needs office, it is not disability specific rather mainly prepared for female students even if SWDs are participating. As a result the students revealed that the orientations are not helping them to cope with the academic, social and psychological challenges of the University. Some of the students have doubt about the relevance of the orientations.

Students' views on benefits of orientations

Students with disabilities that were involved in focus group discussions at the participating universities reported that the orientations given were relevant and helped them in many ways. In the views of the student, the orientations given were helpful in:

◈ *creating awareness about the university environment;*

◈ *understanding and communicating with the university community;*

37

- *understanding the physical setup and landscape of the university campuses*
- *promoting positive relationship with the university community;*
- *understanding the support available for SwDs);*
- *developing self-confidence;*
- *preventing frustrations;*
- *enhancing academic performance;*
- *adjust and become conscious of campus life.*
- *reduced tensions;*
- *managing time; and*
- *develop the culture of tolerance on diversity.*

Some of the FGD participating students held a different view about the orientation programs. This group of students in different universities (e.g. Addis Ababa University, Dilla, Haromaya, Adama) reflected that there is mismatch between what has been told in the orientation and the services delivered. The students noted that the orientations were inadequate; hence ineffective in helping students with disabilities understand university life and education. Some of the students indicated that they did not receive any kind of orientation.

3.6.9.   Special support for students with disabilities

Close observation of the common features among the universities in relation to special support they render to enhance life and education of students with disabilities shows important trends. Results of interviews and focus group discussions show newly emerging trends of positive thinking and understanding on the part of most higher education institutions concerning education of persons with disabilities. Most of the universities covered in the study provide special services presented in box 5 below.

Box 5: Special disability support services common to most universities

> ✓ Disability Resource Center services (Jaws program make available for students with visual impairment, Computer services, Internet and other services
>
> ✓ Financial support (pocket money Birr 120 up to 250, payments for readers)
> ✓ Setting up disability clubs

- ✓ Material support (e.g. battery, tape recorder, slate and stylus, crutches, stationery materials
- ✓ Braille converted books (limited) photocopy services
- ✓ Arranging for invigilators during exams
- ✓ *Participation of SWDs in extracurricular activities such as in Para-Olympic games*
- ✓ Arranging classrooms on ground floors

- ✓ Special consideration in dormitory allocations and cafeteria services
- ✓ Construction of ramps on the entry/exit of old buildings (e.g. classrooms, libraries, dormitories, cafeteria, etc.,)
- ✓ Provisions of crutches, wheel chair

The universities, however, vary in terms of the coverage and quality of the services presented provided to students with disabilities. Some of the Universities (e.g. Addis Ababa University, Bahir Dar University, and Mekelle Universities) provide relatively better services compared to others.

Results of interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the Addis Ababa University provides diverse facilities and services for students with disabilities. Special disability support services rendered by the University are presented in box 6below as an illustration encouraging and significant forward steps in the country's higher education system.

Box 6: Illustrations of special provisions: the case of Addis Ababa University

The following examples of provisions/services made available for students with disabilities at the Addis Ababa University

Establishment of Disability Support Office

- ➢ Disability resource center with various facilities and services
    - o Free computer and internet services in the center;

        Computer with JAWs software and internet service with JAWs software, Photocopy service
- ➢ Volunteer reading and recording services;
- ➢ Provision of appliances like , hearing aid, wheelchair, crutch, white cane, slate and stylus, Braille paper.,

> ➤ Braille library services, tape recorder, digital voice recorder, etc.
> ➤ Reading, recording and discussion rooms for visually impaired students at Kennedy Library
> ➤ Disabilities club- in which students with disabilities in the university organize themselves to carry out various self-empowerment activities for its members;
> ➤ Financial support of 120 birr pocket money per month for undergraduate students;
> ➤ Accommodations for SWDs who want to stay in campus during the summer vacation period;
> ➤ Scholarship award for top scoring students with disabilities;
> ➤ Different training and counseling services;
> ➤ Ramps and bridge worth .5 million birr were
> ➤ Organizing trip outside Addis Ababa
> ➤ Peer coaching for peer support
> ➤ Arrangement of dormitories in the ground floor;
> ➤ Sign Language interpreter services (at a limited scale),
> ➤ Award for top scoring students
> ➤ Awarding instructors who are highly supportive to students with special needs (e.g. An instructor who tape recorded his lecture)
> ➤ Research fund raising for students with disabilities

It needs to be noted that some of the other universities covered in the study were observed making notable progress along this line. It is also important to emphasize the importance of making more efforts to diversify the services and improve their quality.

3.6.5. Special Support services for the Deaf students with least provisions

Analysis of the data obtained interviews and focus group discussions reveal four important challenges experienced by deaf students in the Addis Ababa University which is the only university with an experience of enrolling such students. Each of these are briefly presented and discussed below.

- ✓ The interpreter services are very limited. There is no sign language interpreter in the disability resource centers. As a result deaf students find is difficult to cope with life and education in the universities.

- ✓ The available interpreters lack the required professional competence. They don't give complete interpretation of the context and messages to the deaf students. Therefore, deaf students are experiencing challenges in communicating their feelings and needs as well as in understanding others.

- ✓ *The results further show that in a class where interpreter is available the sitting arrangement of the classroom is not favorable for deaf students to see the interpreter clearly. Semi-circle (C- shape) classroom seat arrangement is recommended as it allows facial contact among students and instructors.*

Another issue that emerged in connection to special support for deaf students relates to service location. Whenever the interpreter *Services are available for the deaf students, they are restricted to either classrooms or resources rooms. Deaf students get no interpreter services whenever they go to different offices; they cannot communicate and convey their message to the concerned officials. Deaf students involved in the study indicated that they are often required to come with an interpreter which is difficult for the students.*

Students that use hearing aids reported that financial challenges they face as the battery lasts only for a short period (only about a week). They could not change the batteries regularly as they don't afford. As a result, they don't use the hearing aids.

3.6.6. Some misconceptions/controversies observed in service deliveries

The data obtained from some of the universities (e.g. Addis Ababa University, Gondar University, and Axum University) trigger questions such as "Who should be given financial support? Is appropriate to give financial support to all students with disabilities? Is it appropriate to allocate dormitories by disability type of students? During the FGD, some of the students at Axum University questioned the appropriateness of financial support to all students with disabilities. The students stressed that their chief problem is not financial constraints. They say *"The money can help those who have financial needs not all students with disabilities; whenever*

we take money from the office we feel that we are dependent. Financial support should be given to all students who are in need of it, not just to those with disabilities.

A visually impaired student (Addis Ababa University) says the following:

> *…one floor is allocated to all students with visual impairment (in both male and female dormitories). This has its own positive and negative impact on the social and academic life of the students. Such arrangement for students with disabilities alienates them from the social network. Along this line visually impaired student says "We have 99% of our body functional. What we have lost is 1% and in order to compensate this we have to live with other sighted society."*

Another visually impaired student added that: *allocation of dormitories creates a separate community of students with disabilities. Such practices are obstacles to effective social interactions…between the visually impaired and sighted students….*

Putting all students with visual impairment in one floor has its own impact on utilization and sanitation of toilet.

A hearing impaired student at the Addis Ababa University also shared his views on the practice of putting students with similar disability type together in separate dormitories upon request of the students.

> *…dormitories are given department wise. Students learning in the department of Sign Language and Deaf Culture are assigned all together and most of them are deaf. It was discovered that this way of placement is not appropriate in case of possible accidents. Last semester fire from electric shock started in our block and other students heard screaming and run out of their dormitories. But in our dorm we were all deaf and we didn't know what was going on. Nobody told us. We survived because of our deaf friend who was outside. She came and told us to run and escape. Otherwise it would have been tragic.*

In contrast to this idea, one deaf student mentioned he prefers to live with other deaf students in the same dorm because of having similar culture. He argued that culture conflict may occur when hearing and hearing impaired students live together.

3.6.7. Barriers affecting life and education of SWDs

Disability support services in most of the universities are organized in two major categories of support. In the first category, all students with disability are entitled to certain services and opportunities designed to all students. The data obtained from the universities show special services rendered to all students.

Box 7: Illustration of physical barriers

Dilla University

   o When I was first Year Sociology student, I did not learn practical computer application course because students were taking the course by travelling from   the new campus to the old campus. It takes 30 minutes with walk. I could not do that because I have severe physical challenge; I use two crutches. No one recognized me and my challenges. As a result, I decided to leave the institution for good. I was so depressed, lost courage and hated the World. It was after sometimes, with the help of the center for disability and some voluntary individuals that I have got somehow friendly learning environment which helped me carry out my studies. *(Female student with motor Impairment).*

Adama University

   o Since most students are from engineering department, they are expected to travel from dormitory to class then to another lab class which are extremely far apart. Under normal circumstance students wake up early in the morning, and take breakfast and go to class.   Since the roads/path ways are full of obstacles (like holes) students with disabilities find it difficult to arrive to their classes on time. When students reach class on time, classes could be on the second or third floor. Sometimes even the teacher may change the class which further worsens students' problem. In case students are late, we know what happens. Teachers get angry at late coming students without knowing their real cause for students' late arrival. Students are expected to overcome all these difficulties. Wheelchair users and blind students face the worst difficulty. With so many constraints SWD are still struggling to compete with other students without disability.

- *...I have never felt of my disability till I join the university. My elementary and secondary teachers were very positive and supportive. I have never thought my disability to be an obstacle to my education. Here [ASTU] no one even a janitor is willing to cooperate. It is common to see that teachers are not willing or aware of our problems. It is morally daunting that a university instructor is not willing to help. As you can see I am using crunch but our computer lab is in the third floor. I have never attended a lab class. When the course instructor refused to change the class location I went to the registrar, but no one was ready to answer even to listen the issue. I couldn't write lab reports as I didn't attend the lab class and my result is only from theoretical part which is half of the total mark. Imagine how I can compete with half of the marks missing. Even I am worried that I might end up with dismissal with no fault of mine.* A female student from computer science department stated her experience as follows.

Gondar University
- o The topography of the university compound is not accessible for students with physical disability especially who for those have problems on lower limbs and spinal cord. In addition to the topography, the buildings are not designed and constructed considering the needs of students with disabilities. There are no elevators, ramps, etc. Moreover, the classrooms …on the first and upper floors. Moreover, the library is not accessible for this group of students. Students with physical disability are segregated. They live alone on a separate building. As a result, the students miss opportunities for social interactions, sharing information and academic collaborations.

The challenges of physical barriers experienced by the three universities illustrate the situation in most other universities in the country. The experiences reported here often result in academic, social and emotional problems on the part of students with disabilities. Several meanings could be derived from these situations. The leadership contributes to the situation by its failure to facilitate and follow up education and life of students with disabilities. Instructors' lack of understanding the needs and challenges of the students is another problem. Another issue here is the practice of keeping students with motor problems in a separate building. The leadership should do to the best of its level to reverse such practice so that the students are not constrained in terms of educational and social interaction opportunities.

3.6.8. Awareness and attitudes related issues

Awareness and attitude determine the type of interaction students with disabilities would have with other members of the university community. Results show that students, teachers and service providers who have better awareness and positive attitudes treat students with disabilities equally with others and they have positive relationships. Results further show awareness and attitudes related challenges experienced by students with disabilities in the participating universities.

Box8: Perceptions on awareness and attitudes of instructors, peers and the leadership on disability

---

1)Teachers

- ☛ Have negative attitudes towards SWDs
- ☛ Do not appreciate and encourage SWDs
- ☛ Instructors don't permit us to record in class
- ☛ Teachers consider students with disability as incapable to learn
- ☛ There are some aggressive teachers who don't want to be recorded
- ☛ Consider SWDS as in capable to learn and dependent on others
- ☛ Do not understand special needs of students with disabilities.
- ☛ Not willing to change class locations to accommodate students with disabilities
- ☛ Change class schedule frequently
- ☛ *Not cooperative and ready to listen to your problems*
- ☛ *Not responsive to special needs of SWDs*
- ☛ Ignorant the needs of SWD
- ☛ Do not make instructional modification to address the needs of SWD
- ☛ Don't realize the presence of SWD in their classes
- ☛ Do nothing special to support SWDs

2) Peers (some; not the majority)

- ☛ Have negative attitude towards SWDs

  Illustrations:

    -I went to register in two different clubs which are run by students in the University but the non-disabled students were not willing to register me because I have motor disability. As a result I feel sad and depressed. Axum

    -My dorm mates are always angry at me because I speak loudly because of my hearing

---

3) Administrative staff

- ☞ Lack awareness about the disability rights and polices;
- ☞ Say bad words about SWDs;
- ☞ Consider SWDs us as problem makers.

4) Leadership

- ☞ lack of attention to disability issues
- ☞ There is no communication between teachers and administrators.
- ☞ Registrar officers are not ready to solve our problems.

Although there are differences among the universities, results show that teachers, students, administrative staff and the leadership in the universities do not engage in coordinated and collaborative activities in connection to rendering special services for students with disabilities. This situation affects quality of life and education of students with disabilities in higher education institutions in the country.

3.6.9. Psychosocial Problems experienced by students with disabilities

As a result of the challenges, some of the students with disabilities reported psychosocial problems they experience during their studies in their respective universities. Some of these problems were reported by the students as follows.

Box 9: Psychosocial problems experienced by SWDs

-I was depressed.

-I hate classes.

-I don't ask teachers.

-I had bad feelings about unfair grades.

-Because of my disability I am a little bit distant from social relationship.

-I am reserved [in terms of expressing views.

-I hate my teachers and the University.

-I have poor relationship with other students.

Some of the students with disabilities involved in the study reflected experiences psychological and social problems during their university studies. On the other hand, the modest support by the universities together with efforts of the students helped SWDs to develop positive thinking about their education and life in the universities. For instance,

-Peer group-student relationships emerged as an important source of psychosocial support and coping.

- SWDS hoped to continue their education and be successful; they feel they will do every effort to complete their education even with difficulties.

-Some have reported that they don't want to think any more about their disability as it doesn't bring any positive outcome.

- Some were very confident of their success and wished for themselves to become an engineer, a doctor, etc.

4. DISCUSSION

The higher education expansion and supportive education policy in the present Ethiopian context have opened a window of opportunity to increasing number of citizens with disabilities to benefit from higher education thus taking courageous move to tackle what Fuller *et al (*2004) call invincible hurdle of higher education. The type and quality special support higher education institutions offer to students with disabilities has equality important value both the learners and other stakeholders. The experiences and views of the higher education officials and students with disability were examined to understand the status services and the challenges manifested along this line. The study focused mainly on examining special support services for students with visual disability, hearing impairment and motor difficulties.

Results show encouraging developments and efforts on the one hand low level of efforts on the other. It is highly encouraging to see increasing number of students enrolled in higher education system which was a rare opportunity for most citizens a few decades ago. Another positive development is the enrollment of students with diverse disability categories including the visually impaired, hearing impaired and those with motor difficulties. Effort made by the higher education institutions to provide special services to students with disabilities is equally commendable trend. Results show a long list of special services rendered particularly for students with visual impairment. With some variations among universities, there are visible efforts in making use of the technology and innovations that enhance students' learning. Efforts are also made in availing special support for those with hearing impairment. The quality and scope of services, however, is very low. Results also show rethinking and restructuring initiative almost in all universities to remove physical barriers that hinder students' access to essential services.

Results, on the other hand, show terribly poor and limited quality of services in the universities covered in the study. Higher education accessibility barriers including physical, architectural, service deliveries, provisions of learning materials and equipment, attitudinal and cultural influences (IDEA, 1997; Kenny, 2004)) are widely prevalent in the universities covered in the present study to the extent students get in to psychological problems hating their classes, education and, in cases, life in general

Results revealed multiple of carriers and limitations in participating universities in connection to rendering special support to students with disabilities. Poor communication and information disseminations mechanisms, lack of clear guidelines on placement issues, inadequate and, in some cases, in appropriate special support services, low level of awareness and negative attitudes, for instance, as well as experiences of questioning the learning and coping abilities of students with disabilities (Mckenzie & Schweitzer, 2001; Willeh, 2002) were widely observed.

5.   Conclusions

The following conclusions are derived from the findings.

1) The existing policies and guidelines of the universities are not effectively communicated /disseminated to students with disabilities.

2) Students with disabilities in higher education experience serious challenges associated with lack of awareness and negative attitudes among university communities including instructors, the leadership, supportive staff and the peers.

3) There are visible and encouraging trends in higher education institution regarding provision of special support services to students with disabilities. The higher learning institutions are, however, diverse in many cases and there are serious limitations that hinder effective learning on the part of students with disabilities.

4) Higher education instructors do little or no modifications to accommodate students with disabilities in their instructional activities.

5) Physical and attitudinal barriers have strong negative impact on students' learning and achievement in higher education institutions. The need to improve the situation is urgent and requires attention of the leadership.

6. Recommendations

6.1. The university leadership to revisit the existing policy provisions and guidelines on disability

> 6.1.1. Each university needs to issue policy guidelines on matters such as placement, allocation of classrooms and dormitories, examination and minimum committed provisions (e.g. financial support) in relation to students with disabilities.
> 6.1.2. University Policies and guidelines on provisions for SWDs need to be effectively disseminated to all students with disabilities upon their entrance to respective universities.

6.2. Awareness raising

> 6.2.1. Organizing Training workshops and seminar involving the higher education leadership, Instructors and supportive staff and students would help to tackle the pressing problems related to lack of awareness and attitudes towards disabilities.
> 6.2.2. Leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc; would play important role in disseminating information and developments related to education of students with disabilities in higher education institutions

6.3. Improving facilities and support services

> 6.3.1. The university leadership bodies, through their appropriate office, should seriously work on minimizing and removing physical barriers the restrict students access to different service centers (e.g. classrooms, libraries, laboratories, cafeteria, administrative offices, toilets etc.)

> 6.3.2.. Universities should also consider organizing experience sharing opportunities to learn from developments in other universities and elsewhere.

> 6.3.3 There is a strong need to transform university communities (instructors, peer students, supportive service providers) in connection to developing sign language skills.

The universities need to identify mechanisms to avail sign language interpreter services for students with hearing impairment.

6.3.4. The university leadership should work on mechanisms to avail the budget essential for providing special services for students with disabilities.

6.3.5. Each university is expected to devise a mechanism that ensures a reliable mechanism to ensure that students with disabilities access all information issued and posted to university students by different bodies making the living and learning environment as inclusive as possible.

6.4. Instructional modifications

6.4.1. Instructional modifications like extended time during exam, large font print materials or magnifying glasses for students with low vision, alternative activities or tests for students with hearing problems, etc., should be made. Instructors should be supported and recognized in doing so.

6.4.2. Learning materials: all universities need to give special attention particularly to avail learning resource the technology to enhance quality of education among r students with disabilities

References

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 - ADA: Public Law 101-336. Washington, D.C.:

Government of the United States. Retrieved April 13, 2004,

Bretz, R., & Johnson, L. (2000). An innovative pedagogy for teaching and evaluating computer

literacy. *Information Technology and management,*

Barnes, C. (2004). Disability, disability studies and the academy. In J. Swain., S. French, C.

Barnes, & C. Thomas (Eds.), *Disabling barriers, enabling environments.* London: Sage.

Claesson, P. (1995). Towards Inclusive Education: The Vietnamese Experience. Rädda Barnen
and Irene López : KalmarSund Tryck.

Evans, J. L. (1998). Inclusive ECCD: A Fair Start for All Children. Coordinators' Notebook: An
International Resource for Early Childhood Development, No.22. New York: UNICEF,
the Consultative Group of Early Childhood Development.

Federal Negarit Gazeta (2003). Higher Education Proclamation No.351/2003. The Federal

Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa , Ethiopia.

Garwood, S.G. (1983).Educating Young Handicapped Children: A Developmental approach 2nd
(Ed.). Rockville, Maryland, an Aspen Publication.

Fuller, M., Healey, M., Bradley, A., Hall, T. (2004). Barriers to Learning: a systematic study of

the experience of disabled students in one university. *Studies in Higher Education*,

Fichten, C. S. (1988). Students with physical disabilities in higher education: Attitudes and
beliefs that affect integration. In H. E. Yuker (Ed.), Attitudes toward disabled persons
(pp. 171-186). New York: Springer.

Getzel, E., Stodden, R., & Brief, L. (2001). Pursuing postsecondary education opportunities for
individuals with disabilities. In P. Wehman (ed.), *Life beyond the classroom: Transition
strategies for young people with disabilities.* Baltimore, MD: Broodes Publishing.

Jorgensen, S., Fitchen, C. S., Havel, A., Lamb, D., James, C., & Barile, M. (2005).

Academic performance of college students with and without disabilities: An

Archival Study. *Canadian Journal of Counseling*

Kenny, M. (2004). Postsecondary students with disabilities and perception of faculty members. *The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), (1997). Retrieved on November, 2008,

Johnson, A. L. (2006). Students with disabilities in postsecondary education: Barriers to Success

and implication to professionals.

McKenzie, K., & Schweitzer, R., (2001). Who succeeds at university? Factors predicting

academic performance in first year Australian University students. *Higher Education Research & Development*, .

Misrak Tarekegn (2006), Challenges and opportunities of access and mobility in Addis Ababa;

the case of people, With motor and visual impairments, Publisher Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Putnam, M., Geenen, S., Powers, L., Saxton, M., Finney, S., & Dautel, P. (2003). Health and

wellness: People with disabilities discuss barriers and facilitators to well being. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 69*(1), 37-45.

Rimmerman, A., & Araten-Bergman, T. (2005). Legislation of handicapped rights and its

implementation in Israel — Trends and future directions. *Social Security Journal*

Shevlin, M., Kenny, M., & McNeela, E. (2004). Participation in higher education for students

with disabilities: an Irish perspective. *Disability & Society, .*

Tirussew Teferra, & Elina Lehtomaki. (2000). Towards Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment for Students with Disabilities : Perspectives of Addis Ababa University

Tirussew Teferra, Savolainen H., Agdew R. & Daneil D. (1995). Base Line Survey of Disabilities in Ethiopia. Institute of Educational Research, Addis Ababa University. Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Enterprise.

Tirussew Teferra (2005). Disability in Ethiopia: Issues, Insights and Implications. Addis Ababa University Printing Press.

Tirussew Teferra (1994). Psychosocial and Educational Problems of Students with Disabilities in Addis

   Ababa University. Ethiopian Journal of Health Development Vo.8, No.1, 1994.

Tirussew Teferra (1989). The Psychosocial and Educational Problems of Handicapped Students in Addis Ababa University (mimeographed).Institute of Educational Research ,Addis Ababa University.

Willett, T. (2002). Gavilan College Campus Diversity Climate Survey Project.

Appendices

Department of Special Needs Education

Baseline Survey on the Situation of Students with Disabilities at Higher Learning Institutes of Ethiopia

Dear Participant;

This project is initiated by Addis Ababa University and University of Vienna of Austria. The purpose of this study is to examine the situation of university students with disabilities in terms of service provisions and teaching learning process. Furthermore, it tries to identify the barriers to higher education for students with disabilities entry, disability services in higher education institutes and improvement of accessibilities and equal opportunities.

So as to solicit the required information for the study, you are selected to be one of the participants in this study. Your participation, however, is on a voluntary basis. This study is purely professional and in no way affects you personally or your University. We assure you that your response will remain strictly confidential and personal details will be kept anonymous. We, therefore, seek your genuine opinion for all questions.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation!

Questionnaire: University Students with Disabilities

Purpose: **The aim of this questionnaire is to explore the accessibility and learning conditions of university students with disabilities in eleven universities in Ethiopia.**

Part I. Personal Data:

1. Sex: O female   O male
2. Age: _____ (in years)
3. Place of birth: _____
4. Ethnic origin(optional): _____
5. Mother tongue: _____
6. Religion/Denomination (optional):

    O Orthodox Christian   O Protestant   O Muslim

    O Other: _____
7. Marital status:

    O single   O married   O other: _____

    O widowed   O divorced
8. In which region and woreda did you complete your high school education?

    8.1.   Regional state _____

    8.2.   Woreda   _____

    8.3.   Name of high school _____

9. What kind of disability/impairment are you with?

    a) Visual

    b) Hearing

    c) Motor

    d) Other (Please specify): _____
10. Could you please indicate the severity of your disability /impairment:

    a. Mild

    b. Moderate

      c. Severe

      d. Profound

11. Please indicate the onset of your disability /impairment

      a. Before birth,

      b. During birth,

      c. After birth, late childhood or youth _____

12. Please describe if any of your family member(s) has/have any disability/impairment which is similar or different from yours: _____

13. Could you please indicate the highest educational attainment of your father and mother? Father _____   Mother _____

14. Could you please indicate the occupation of your father and mother? respectively Father _____   Mother _____

15. Could you please indicate the total estimated monthly income (in Birr) of your father, mother and any income generating member of your family in the household? _____

16. If you compare the income of your family with most families in your community, what is your family's status?

      a. Better than most families in my community

      b. Same as most families in my community

      c. Worse than most families in my community

Part II. Educational background:

   1. Primary and secondary education

17. Type of school you were in during your primary education

      a. Regular school in regular class

b. Regular school in special class

c. Special day school

d. Residential school

   please write the name of the school

   _____

18. Would you please indicate the challenges you encountered during your primary and secondary school studies?

Challenges during primary schooling   Challenges during secondary schooling

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

(if you need more space, please use the back of this page)

19. Could you please indicate the factors that facilitated "your primary and secondary education?

Facilitators during primary schooling   Facilitators during secondary schooling

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

(if you need more space, please use the back of this page)

2. University education

20. Name and place of your University: _____

21. How were you placed at this University?

a. Direct placement by Ministry of Education

b. Transfer from another University

c. Other….., Please specify _____

22. When did you join this University? _____EC _____GC

23. Name of the department you are enrolled in? _____

24. Please specify your field of study: _____ Was this field of study your primary choice? Yes _____ No _____

25. Please indicate your program and year

25.1. Undergraduate 2nd year ……. 3rd year ……. 4th year ………..

25.2. Graduate MA/MSc ………………… PhD ………………….

26. How do you evaluate your academic status?

a. Below average

b. Average

c. Above average

27. Did you get orientations about University life and education at entry point?

YES..... No ....,

if yes,

27.1. could you please describe the contents of the orientations?

_____
_____
_____
_____

28.2 how do you evaluate the adequacy of the orientations in helping you better adjust to university life?

_____
_____
_____
_____

If No,

28.3 How do you see the importance of such orientations for University success?

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. Do you think your current training /field of study is what you "preferred" to study ?

If Yes,

Why?

_____

_____

_____

If No,

Why not?

_____

_____

_____

29. Would you please indicate the challenges you have faced in your higher education studies?

_____

_____

_____

(If you need more space, please use the back of this page)

23.1How have you tried to handle the challenges you have faced?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(If you need more space, please use the back of the consecutive pages writing the question number)

30. Could you please indicate the factors that facilitated "your higher education studies?"

_____

_____

_____

_____

(if you need more space, please use the back of the consecutive pages writing the question number)

31. Are disability specific provisions made available at your University?

Yes .... No...........

32.1 if yes, which among the following are existing,

(just put a mark under each column depending on each component's presence or absence.)

If you are a student with visual impairment

S.No.	Provisions and modifications	Available	Not available
	Braille paper		
	Slate and styles		
	Braille Library services		
	Text books written in Braille		
	Tape recorder		
	Digital voice recorder		
	Audio cassettes		
	Audio books		
	Battery for tape recorder		
	Stationary materials		
	Computers with JAWs software		
	Internet services with JAWs software		
	Braille printing services/embosser		
	Scanning services		
	exam reader and scribe		
	Volunteer reading services		
	Volunteer recording services		
	Counseling services		
	White cane		
	Training services on life skills (assertiveness, communication, safety skills)		

Training services on study skills		
Training services on HIV/AIDS prevention		
Training services on sex education and reproductive health		
Training services on disability rights and advocacy		
Training services on job hunting skills		
Training on entrepreneur skills		
Training on how to use computer		

If you are a Deaf/hard of hearing student

Sign language interpreter		
audiometric assessment		
Announcements given through personal mobile phones		
Training on how to use computer		
Training services on life skills (assertiveness, communication, safety skills)		
Training services on study skills		
Training services on HIV/AIDS prevention		
Training services on sex education and reproductive health		

Counseling services		
Training services on disability rights and advocacy		
Training services on job hunting skills		
Training on entrepreneur skills		
Printing and copy services		
Assistive devices like hearing aids and others		

If you are a student Motor disability

	Artificial prosthesis		
	Brace		
	Crutch		
	Rubber tip		
	Wheel chair		
	Innersole		
	Stick /kezera		
	Training on how to use computer		
	Counseling services		
	Training services on life skills (assertiveness, communication, safety skills)		
	Training services on study skills		
	Training services on HIV /AIDS prevention		
	Training services on sex education and reproductive health		

	Training services on disability rights and advocacy		
	Training services on job hunting skills		
	Training on entrepreneur skills		
	Ramps		
	Elevators		
	Renovations of toilets and shower rooms		

32. Do you think students with disabilities are **differentially treated** during their stay in the University (i.e., both positive and negative discrimination)? Yes....... No......
    If yes, please describe how?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

Thank you very much for your time and invaluable ideas!!

FGD guide for University students with disabilities

1. How accommodating is your university for students with disabilities?

    - University legislation and related policies

    - Provisions

    - Environmental accessibility

    - Instructional modifications

2. What challenges do students with disabilities have?

3. What measures has your university taken to create an accommodating learning environment for students with disabilities?

4. What measures, do you think, your university should put in place to create an accommodating learning environment?

Interview guide for University officials

1. How accommodating is your university for students with disabilities?

    Probe 1:
    - University legislation and related policies

    - Provisions

    - Environmental accessibility

    - Instructional modifications

    Probe 2: barriers to creating accommodating learning environment

    Probe 3: challenges that students with disabilities encounter in the institution

2. What has your university done to create an accommodating learning environment for students with disabilities?

3. What plans does your university have to create accommodating learning environment for students with disabilities?