

Structural Inclusion Policies and Disability Mainstreaming in Turkana Central Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

Persons with Disabilities are faced with myriad of challenges in our communities that are linked to social, economic and political exclusion, thus affecting equal participation of PWDs compared to other members of the society, further derailing empowerment efforts for PWDs. The study objectives focused on structural inclusion policies on employment, assistive devices and technology and physical infrastructure and their effects on disability mainstreaming. It draws from the social model of disability theory that implies that communities have failed to incorporate PWDs into the society. Lack of equal opportunities for PWDs was revealed by the study, which also recommends that public and private actors should embrace participatory process in policy formulation that is designed to achieve equal opportunities in work, in provision of assistive technologies/devices and to ensure proper access to public infrastructure for PWDs.

Key Words: Structural Inclusion, public Policy, Persons with disability, Disability mainstreaming

1. Introduction

Globally, it is approximated that about 15% of the world's population that accounts for 650 million people, are faced with one or more domains of disability which continues to impede their equal or full participation and inclusion in the society like others in the society. This has slowed the empowerment efforts for persons with disability through community-based interventions as many of them experience structural as well as social and economic exclusion resulting from their disability conditions. Regarding the rights for PWDs (European Disability Forum, 2006), in their advocacy for disability rights in Europe, reiterated that among many European Countries such as Portugal there has been much discrimination with less access to rights among the PWDs.

This study was drawn on the basis for the need to provide PWDs with structural inclusive policy environment and social-economic rights, thereby mainstreaming disability in all spheres of life and development in the society. However, various studies on issues surrounding any form of disabilities have not been integrated into the mainstream infrastructural development. Lwanga-Ntale (2003) argues that as far as the republic of Kenya has given various provisions to persons with disabilities whereby, PWDs act of 2003 was established and it brought into existence the National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPWD) which is charged with the overseeing of disability mainstreaming in all forms of social, cultural, economic and political development. Structural inclusion policy matters, related to employment, assistive devices and technologies and physical infrastructure, should be of great concern as stipulated in Section 23 of the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2003, equality and inclusion of PWDs should be based on structural inclusion policies improvements, and it requires a multi-stakeholder collaboration, building of partnerships and linkages to make it possible for PWDs well-being in Kenya. All these challenges and concerns are not different from what PWDs are facing in Turkana central sub-county, Turkana County in Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem.

Disability mainstreaming remains a study area that has not been explored by many researchers, and specifically on areas touching on structural inclusion policies, specifically on areas of employment policies, assistive devices/technologies and physical infrastructural policies that directly affect disability mainstreaming as a process towards attaining equality and inclusion of PWDs in Kenya.

This research study examines and critically analyses how structural inclusion on employment, assistive technology and devices and physical infrastructure affect disability mainstreaming in Turkana County of Kenya. However, persons with disability in Turkana County are still faced with the challenges of accessing employment, assistive technology/devices and inaccessibility of public infrastructures. The efforts to improve infrastructure, accessibility and socio-economic wellbeing of PWDs by the state agencies in Kenya, INGOs and well-wishers has become unsuccessful since demand exceeds existing resources (Olubandwa et al, 2011). It is based on the identified research gap that the researcher took an interest to study how structural inclusion policies related to employment, assistive technology and devices and physical infrastructure in Kenya impacts on disability mainstreaming specifically in Turkana central, Turkana County of Kenya.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the disability social model which suggests that society has completely failed to make efforts incorporating people with disabilities into the society. However, Grant (2009) argues that the way people view PWDs in the society is what has led to their discrimination to them as opposed to impairment. This social model also focuses on attitude, environmental and organizational barriers which hinder persons with disability from enjoying equal opportunity in accessing education, employment opportunities, accessible infrastructure, accessible transport facilities and recreational facilities that are user friendly to them. Thus, this model supports the need of PWDs to be given the opportunity in order to maximize and showcase their potentials through partaking and involvement in societal matters. The model also views disability in terms of the barriers associated to it, which include structural, environmental and attitudinal barriers within the society, French (2004 b). PWDs discrimination is seen not only in deliberate seclusion, but also in the physical infrastructure and in other planned social activities that restrict their equal participation or be labelled as having disability (Wasserman .et.al, 2011). This study therefore adopted the Social model of disability since the ultimate goal of disability mainstreaming is to have everyone equally participate in sustainable personal and national development within their ability, without any form of discrimination. Based on the above arguments by different scholars, this study was therefore based on the social model of disability.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Structural inclusion policy on employment and Disability Mainstreaming

Randall and Harris (2012) in their work titled 'No rights without responsibilities' elaborate why the aspect of participation and inclusivity of PWDs in labour markets is important. Through their analysis in the United Kingdom, the two authors observed that the reasons for the low employment status of PWDs include working in unsecured work positions, low levels of qualifications, and that work and employment is viewed in a limited sense as consisting of wage labour, this is to say that, employment is seen to only focus on the maximization of profit for the employer and competition between the individuals employed to work. It is difficult for most PWDs to benefit from planned development programmes and escape from poverty, Thomas (2010) this is attributed to continued perceptions, attitudes and discriminatory acts in employment, difficulty in accessing physical infrastructure, transportation facilities, and limited access to resources that may in the long run lead to promotion of socio-economic development, livelihoods diversification and self-employment and livelihood activities, Coleridge (2005).

2.2 Structural Inclusion Policy on Assistive devices and technologies and Disability Mainstreaming.

Li-Hua (2006) in the study of effectiveness of assistive technology transfer in China, indicates that promotion of technology will not occur without proper knowledge and skills transfer, since knowledge is essential in order for one to control and understand technology. The application of appropriate technological transfer contributes to skills, resources and creates jobs to rise on the production capacity of any community Vergragt (2006). (Jededo and Dewitte,2002), reiterated that, there is need for appropriate technologies and devices to be promoted for use by PWDs, and they should be once that people can easily adapt to them, and not the other way round. The researcher in this study viewed the use of assistive devices and technology as an important consideration in disability mainstreaming when dealing with physical infrastructure designs.

2.3 Structural Inclusion policies on Physical infrastructure and Disability Mainstreaming.

According to a study by Sawyer and Bright (2007), the built environment does present barriers for the accessibility of building infrastructure especially for persons with physical disability or People with Mobility Limitations (PWDs). In their study, Sendi and Kerbler-Kefo (2009) observed an increase in the accessibility of buildings in Slovenia by physically handicapped persons. They also noted that the renovation of old buildings to install ramps, grab rails in toilets, automatic main entrance doors and the creation of access routes did make buildings more accessible for PWDs.

Similarly, in his study Tungaraza (2010) noted that features in the built environment such as; steep stairways, slippery floors and a limited number of ramps were major barriers to the accessibility to building infrastructure in a public university by PWDs students. Further, he demonstrated how narrow aisles in lecture halls limited accessibility of wheelchair users, the distance of the lavatories limited accessibility by crutch users and the absence of elevators made it difficult for this group of students to access the upper floors of libraries and lecture halls (Tungaraza, 2010).

3. Methodology

The target population of this study was 320 respondents, which included 200 NCPWD registered members, 20 Turkana County public service board members, 30 County executive committee members, 40 Consultants (architects, structural engineers, inspectors, and quantity surveyors) and 30 Persons with disability organizations, who were selected based on their involvement on PWDs and disability mainstreaming agenda. Simple random sampling was used to select 82 respondents that were involved in the study. The study utilized structured questionnaires and interviews during data collection, and the instruments were tested for validity and reliability during pilot phase for the study. Analysis of Quantitative data was done using descriptive statistics where the findings were represented in frequency and percentages, while the qualitative data was analysed through content analysis.

3.1 Results and Discussion.

A total of 82 respondents comprising of 60 PWDs registered members with NCPWD, 2 Turkana County Public service board members, 9 County executive committee members, 8 infrastructural consultants and 3 persons with disabilities organizations were given questionnaires and were interviewed. The entire targeted sample population of 82 responded and gave responses that on evaluation were considered adequate for the study and therefore achieved a response rate of 100% as shown in Table 1. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50 % is adequate for analysis and reporting, a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is rated very good. The success of the response rate was attributed to timely, proper field organization, follow ups, willingness and commitment of the research team to take part in the study (*See Table 1 page 3*)

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Sample size	Response	Percentages
NCPWD registered PWDs	60	60	73
TCPSB	2	2	2
CECMs	9	9	11
Construction Consultants	8	8	10
PWDOs	3	3	4
	82	82	100%

3.1.1 Distribution by level of education

The results show that most of the respondents (25) are diploma holders who constitute 30.49 % of the total respondents. This is followed by undergraduate degree holders (21) who constituted 26 %, higher diploma holders (17) constituting 21 %, and the least are master’s degree holders (4) which represents 4%. This was important because, the level of education determines the degree of understanding and awareness, thus influencing access to information and the quality of the responses on structural inclusion policies and disability mainstreaming. Generally, this showed that the composition of the respondents had adequate education that allowed them to interpret policy statements, make further contributions to the study (*See Figure 1 Page 3*)

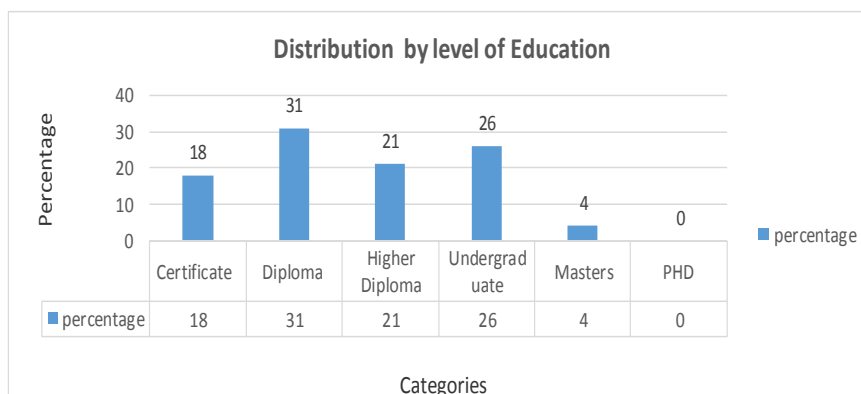


Figure 1: Distribution of level of education

3.1.2 Understanding of Disability Mainstreaming

Under this section, the study pursued to find out the extent to which the understanding of disability mainstreaming aspects and how it eventually affects the different structural inclusion policies in Turkana Central Sub-county. The findings are presented in (Figure 2 page 4)

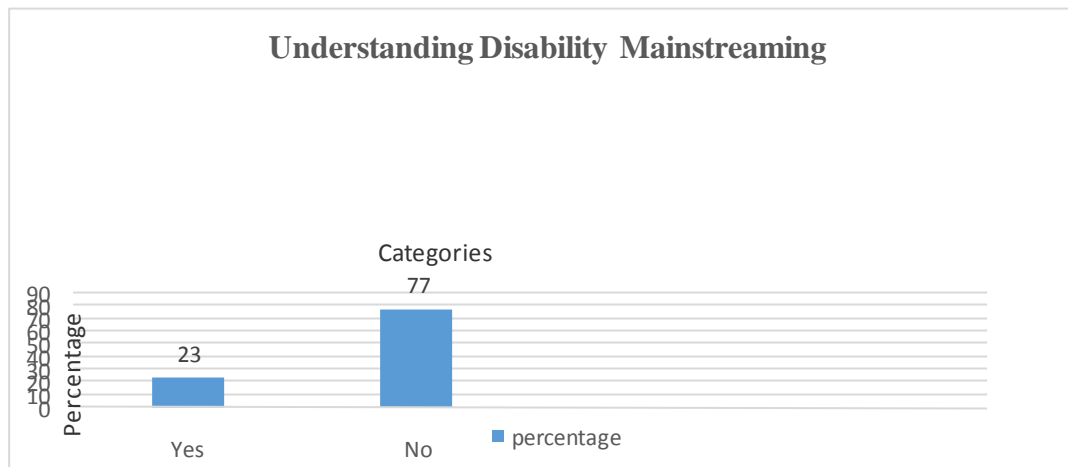


Figure 2: understanding of disability mainstreaming

From the total population sampled (n=82), 77% of the respondents (53) did not know the connotation of disability mainstreaming as a whole. The 23% (29 respondents) who understood the meaning disability mainstreaming were mainly officers who had a first degree or masters in their areas of study together with two diploma holders and two certificate holders that had more than 6 years of experience working for County and National governments agencies in Turkana County. As established by Lang and Murangira (2009), it is evident that lack of disability mainstreaming efforts by government departments affects the integration of PWDs issues in public service as illustrated by the majority government officers who work within the County and national government agencies. As indicated in the study, many public officers are not knowledgeable on issues of disabilities in relation to their needs and rights, and thus end up with little knowledge and appreciation of the persons with disabilities.

3.1.3 Understanding of the needs of the Persons with Disabilities and different types of disabilities.

The respondents in the study were asked if they understand the various needs of persons with disabilities. The results are as shown in (Table 2 page 4). The results from the study shows that (62) of the respondents (76%) do not know and do not recognize the different needs and challenges facing PWDs, this includes respondents who have certificate and Diploma holders. However, 24% of the respondents understand the needs for PWDs at the community and in the public service.

Table 2: Understanding the needs of PWDs

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	24
No	62	76
Total	82	100

The respondents were asked if they understand the different types and manifestations of disabilities they have come across and interacted with them both at the community and at the public service and other places of work. (Figure 3 Page 5)

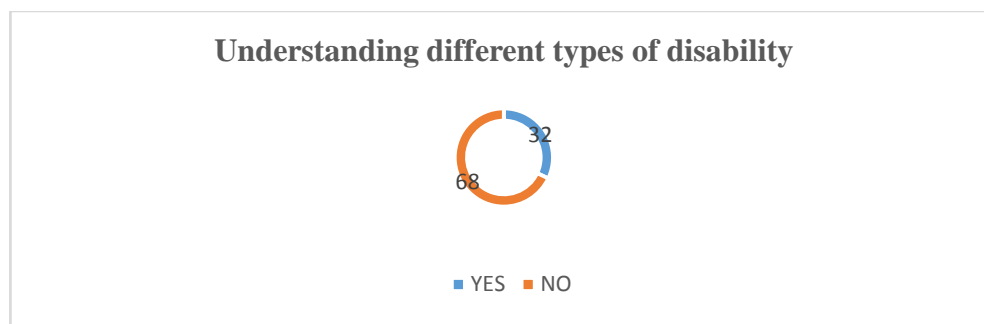


Figure 3: understanding different types of disabilities

Based on the study findings, it deduced that 32 % of the respondents have an understanding of different types of disabilities. A larger percentage of 68% respondents interviewed during the study were unable to clearly identify and distinguish the different types of disabilities. It was also observed that, most of the officers working in Turkana County executive and County public works offices do not have an understanding of different types of disability, some of them lacked information on the mobility aides/assistive devices that can facilitate persons with disabilities at the work place.

3.1.4 Equal access to Employment Opportunities by PWDs.

During the study the respondents were asked to rank their opinions on whether or not PWD have been equally accessing employment opportunities like able bodied persons in their areas of work (*Table 3 Page 5*).

Table 3: Equal access to Employment by PWDs.

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	35	43
Disagree	28	34
Neutral	7	8
Agree	8	10
Strongly agree	4	5
Total	82	100

It was found that 43% technical officers in Turkana County directorates felt that persons with disability did not have equal access to employment like all other able bodied persons. Only 10% of the officers either agreed or 8% were not sure about the situation. Observation during the study revealed that engagement of PWDs in meaningful employment across the Sub-county was very minimal. This result agrees with the World Bank Report (2011) that showed that the Persons with disabilities were significantly left out of many opportunities, including employment and other endeavors. It further recommends that there is need to step up efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities issues are mainstreamed into programmes, public service and in other opportunities that seek to empower them. The Kenyan Persons with Disabilities Act No. 14 was passed in 2003 with the purpose of ensuring availability of equal opportunities for PWDs to participate in nation building, development and the society at large, including ensuring access to education, health and employment opportunities.

3.1.5 Capacity building and Trainings on Disability Mainstreaming

This section sought to establish if public servants and officers have attended or benefitted in any organized disability mainstreaming or PWDs related training, workshop or involved in capacity building programmes aimed at empowerment of PWDs in Turkana Central Sub-county (*Table 4 page 5*)

Table 4: Capacity building and trainings on disability mainstreaming

Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	24	29
No	58	71
Total	82	100

Only 29 % of the officers sampled had at any given point been trained or sensitized on disability mainstreaming and these were officers at NCPWD Turkana County office, state department for Gender, PWDOs officials, and Turkana County government department for social protection. 71 % of the officials interviewed during the study have never

attended any training or workshop on disability mainstreaming or been involved on any PWDs empowerment or capacity building programme. In order to embrace the need for inclusivity and necessary support services for persons with disabilities (including social economic growth programmes aimed at empowerment of PWDs), organized capacity building programmes need to be done on the perspectives of structural inclusion policies.

3.1.6 Assistive Technologies and Devices Developed, Adopted and Disseminated.

The identified technical officers were asked whether the County government or private sector entities in Turkana Central Sub-county, offer their support in the development and provision of assistive devices and technologies for use by PWDs in Turkana Central sub-county and how it promotes the integration of disability mainstreaming (*Table 5 page. 6*)

Table 5: Appropriate technologies developed and disseminated.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	76	93
No	6	7
Total	82	100

About 93% of the officers in both public and private sectors interviewed indicated that there were no assistive technologies developed by their offices designed for use by persons with disability while 7% of them affirmed the existence of such technologies. The respondents also reported that no technologies have been developed to support PWDs workers that will enable easy access and productivity at work and access to public and private infrastructures had been identified and documented for use by the entities in Turkana central sub-county.

3.1.7 Assistive Technologies and Devices Adopted

As indicated in Table 6 above, 93% of the respondents indicated that there were no assistive technologies and devices that were adopted by the public and private offices to support structural inclusion and access for Persons with disabilities in Turkana Central that tends to promote disability mainstreaming. Only 7% of the respondents affirmed that Turkana County government department for social protection and NCPWD have been at the forefront in the provision, capacity building of PWDs on assistive devices to persons with disability in Turkana Central sub-county.

There was need for PWDs through advocacy efforts of PWDOs and other government departments like NCPWD to adopt more technologies that will allow for reasonable accommodation of all PWDs in the changing technological times and the challenging physical environment.

3.1.8 Dissemination of County Information including Policies and Legislative Frameworks in Braille.

The respondents were asked to rank their opinions on whether or not they package and disseminate information to people with disability in form of Braille presentations (*Figure 4 page 6*)

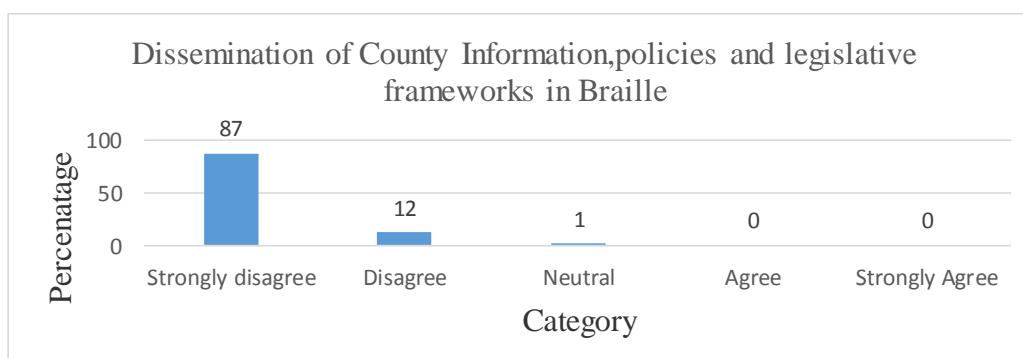


Figure 4: Dissemination of County information, Policies and Legislative Frameworks in Braille.

The results above indicate that, majority (87%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that information dissemination in their offices and stations are provided in Braille and the rest (12%) equally disagreed, and 1% of the respondents were neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

The study results indicated that, all the respondents affirmed the fact that, there was no provision for disseminating of County information, documents, reports, policy and legislative documents in Braille as a required by law. All the

respondents acknowledged that to achieve the production of information and other important reports in Braille would take longer period of time and requires adequate training from the experts and resources to achieve it. As stipulated in Article 2 of the UNCRPD (2006), it therefore expounds communication as a process that involves use of dialects, text, use of Braille machines, and use of tactile and large prints. Others include the use of available programme formats as well as written, auditory, ordinary-languages, human reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats, which necessitate availability of information use of communication technologies. Article 21 of the UNCRPD call for States to take all necessary measures to ensure that PWDs can exercise their right to freedom of speech and expression of opinions, including the independence to seek, obtain and convey information and ideas on an equal basis with others by use of all forms of communication of their preference.

3.1.9 Deployment of sign language interpreters as a requirement

As stipulated in *Table 6, page 7*, during the study 94 % of officers interviewed denied the existence and deployment of sign language interpreters at the workplaces. Most of the officers agreed to have received clients with hearing impairments in their offices and it has been a difficult task to serve them better. Some officers interviewed revealed that, at times they are forced to converse with persons with visual impairment by writing on paper and replying on the same. A few officers (6%) in select offices of NCPWD and County social protection directorate who participated in the study alluded the existence of only two sign language interpreters who are engaged on need basis. Officers reiterated the fact that sign language is a specialist skill most public servants need to have to enhance service delivery to the persons with hearing impairment. This is also supported by KNCHR, (2014) report dubbed “from norm to practice, a status report on implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities” which recommended that, Information access is a monumental human right issue as stipulated in the Constitution of Kenya, (Article 35).

Table 6: Deployment of sign language interpreters as a requirement.

Category	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	5	6
No	77	94
Total	82	100

3.1.10 Information Dissemination (Audio, Visual) in the County Offices

The results in *Table 7 page 7* revealed that, 98 % of the public officers interviewed disagreed that most of the publicity, reports and other information in public offices are disseminated and presented in both audio and visual formats. The respondents also indicated that none of the information is packaged for purposes of structural inclusion i.e. employment purposes for PWDs, to promote the use of assistive technology and devices and for public infrastructure projects or for construction consultant's purposes for use by PWD group. Only a few officials interviewed 2% agreed to be disseminating part of documentation, communication and information in their offices in audio and visual formats.

Table 7: Information Dissemination in Audio-Visual formats in the County Offices

Category	Frequency	Percentage
No	80	98
Yes	2	2
Total	82	100

3.1.11 Accessibility to Physical Infrastructure across the County Offices

In order to find out the ease of accessibility to physical infrastructure and buildings by PWDs, the respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement with the current status of their office buildings in relation to ramps (*Table 8 page 7*).

Table 8: Provision of Ramps in the Office Designs

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	72	88
Disagree	8	10
Neutral	0	0
Agree	2	2
Strongly agree	0	0
Total	82	100

The results in Table 8 revealed that, of all the offices visited only 2% had a ramp for use by persons with disability. 88% of the officers interviewed strongly disagreed that their offices design had provision for ramps, this was also reinforced by another 10% of officers who also disagreed on the same. During the study visit to one of the County offices, one of the directors revealed that most of the buildings were very old colonial buildings, where the provision for ramps was never considered at the time of construction. The findings above are also supported by UNCRPD (2006), which urges state parties to ensure PWDs are self-reliant and are able to partake in activities of daily living. This provision is supported in section 21 of the Kenya PWDs Act (2003) which warrants PWDs to a barrier free and friendly environment.

3.1.12 Clear Entitlements for PWDs in the Service Delivery Charters

The respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement with the status of entitlements of the people with disability in their infrastructure service Delivery Charters (Table 9 page. 8)

Table 9: Entitlements of PWDs in the service delivery charters

Category	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly disagree	58	71
Disagree	12	15
Neutral	0	0
Agree	5	6
Strongly agree	7	8
Total	82	100

During the study it was observed that most of the offices did not have clearly spelt out entitlement and provisions for persons with disability in the service delivery charters. This was further confirmed by 71 % of the officers who strongly disagreed that people with disability have clear entitlements in the various service delivery charters prepared by government entities to ease service delivery. Another 15% of the officers interviewed disagreed on the same. Only 8% felt there was adequate provision for such entitlements in the service charter as provided by their offices. Only 6% agreed to have service delivery charters mounted in their offices, which eased their working relations and delivery of services to persons with disabilities in the public sector.

4. Conclusions

The PWDs act (2003) and Constitution of Kenya (2010), clearly stipulate the need for the government to address some of the glaring structural inclusion policy challenges and integration of disability mainstreaming in all the sectors and development aspects thereof, that will allow equality and inclusion of all PWDs. Momentous challenges in access to work and employment, assistive technologies/devices, physical infrastructure, education, and public participation among others are unadorned realities that PWDs continue to struggle with. Despite the existence of international and national legal frameworks concerned with protection of the rights of PWDs, the findings of the study revealed that access to employment and work remains a greater challenge for most PWDs to achieve due to inequalities and discrimination. Accessibility to important assistive devices and technologies such as wheelchairs, tri-cycle, Braille machines and equipment's and hearing aids, has been a difficult for persons with disabilities to acquire. From the present research findings, one can conclude that both the National and County governments do not lay much emphasis on structural inclusion policies, especially on the importance of these accessibility features that adversely affect the accessibility of building infrastructure by person with disability in Turkana Central sub-county.

5. Recommendations.

The study recommends that; County and National government institutions and premises should embrace public participatory process in the formulation of measures designed to achieve equal opportunities in work and employment for PWDs ; Governments should ensure compliance of the 5% threshold of employment of persons with disabilities in public offices and implementation of Kenya's Public service Disability Mainstreaming code (2010); Government entities should prioritize provision of assistive technologies and devices and to ease acquisition and maintenance of assistive technologies and devices, including access to information in formats that can be accessed by PWDs. The Counties should utilize building technical experts and construction consultants to review accessibility of public office buildings and facilities, so as to recommend on how to increase accessibility by PWDs, including conducting regular accessibility audits in collaboration with NCPWD.

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