INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY (CHURCH)

BY

ISAAC AMANQUARNOR
BSC.OT, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
PROBLEM STATEMENT

• Gordon et al, (2002) indicated that persons with disability and families of persons with disability cope with disability through their religious faith.
• Persons with disability gain strength and comfort from their spiritual believes through support from their religious community (Pargament & Brant 1998).
• The inaccessible nature of some churches prevent persons with disability from joining a church and engaging in their activities (Yong, 2010).
• Discrimination and stigmatization are the norm for persons with disability in the church and the society at large (Brown, 2005).
• In Ghana full inclusion of persons with disability in various aspects of life is a major challenge (Owusu & Owusu-Ansah, 2011).
AIMS/OBJECTIVES

• The aim of this study is to determine the Christian community’s efforts towards inclusion of persons with disability.

• Objectives:
  • To assess the accessibility of the church to persons with disability.
  • To assess the members’ knowledge of barriers faced by persons with disability in the Christian community
  • To assess church members attitude and doctrinal beliefs towards disability in the church.
  • To assess the activity participation of persons with disability in the church
METHODOLOGY

• A cross sectional survey study design was used.
• The convenience and purposive sampling methods were employed.
• Estimated sample was 400 but 313 participant was obtain from ten churches for the study.
• The study included selected church premises that meet the inclusion criteria of the study.
• Data was collected using a modified questionnaire.
• Total responses for each item was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 and Microsoft Excel 2010.
FINDINGS

Age
- 16-20 yrs: 41.1%
- 21-24 yrs: 35.7%
- 25-34 yrs: 9.9%
- 35-44 yrs: 6.7%
- 45-54 yrs: 4.2%
- 55-64 yrs: 1.9%
- 65-74 yrs: 0.3%

Gender
- Male: 45.7%
- Female: 54.3%

Disabled
- Yes: 0.6%
- No: 99.4%
FINDINGS CONT’D

• Participant response to most accessibility questions was a “NO” response indicating the churches were not accessible. 68.4% indicated that PWD are allowed to participate in church activities.

• Two hundred and fifty one (80.2%) of them acknowledged that architecture could be a hindrance to participation of people with disability followed by communication 126 (40.3), attitudes 45 (14.4%), policies 22 (7%) and publicity 13 (4.2%).

• Participant response to attitude questions indicated that they have positive attitude toward persons with disability.

• Most participant indicated that they have no negative doctrines concerning disability.
LIMITATIONS

• Only ten churches were included in the study which makes it not generalizable to the whole population of the Christian community.

• Researcher unable to assess the accessibility of the church by himself

• This study did not include all religious communities.
CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

• The study findings indicate that the Christian community have no inclusive framework in relation to persons with disability but have a positive attitude towards persons with disability.

• Occupational therapist must collaborate with other professionals and governmental agencies to build a framework for churches on how to include persons with disability in their activities.

• Future research must include other religious communities.
REFERENCES


Email:
isaackreed@yahoo.com
isaackreed12@gmail.com