

Quest for Political Inclusivity: Enablers and Barriers for Political Participation for Persons with Disabilities in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Political participation is a fundamental aspect of democratic governance, the rule of law, social inclusion and human rights approaches aimed at eliminating marginalization and discrimination. However, despite the opportunities offered by current political dispensation and legal framework for inclusive political participation, persons with disabilities still remain politically marginalised in many developing countries, including Tanzania. This paper examines enablers and barriers for political participation of persons with disabilities in Tanzania using the relational model of disability. The paper draws on empirical qualitative data collected through qualitative in-depth interviews and case stories in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro regions in Tanzania, and analysed through qualitative content analysis. The qualitative analysis shows the enablers for political participation included improving education levels, activism, community outreach interventions, changing community perceptions about persons with disabilities, advocacy drives, capacity building, increased advocacy by civil society organisations and enabling constitutional and legal framework. The barriers to effective political participation are lack of education, lack of motivation, lack of funding, lack of resources, faulty perceptions about political processes, disempowerment, faulty community perceptions about the health and mental ability of persons with disabilities, lack of community confidence in the ability of persons with disabilities and lack of support from political parties. These factors at personal, community and institutional levels interact with individual's health conditions, translating into a social pathology, thus, hindering their full and effective participation. It is concluded that most persons with disabilities are still vulnerable in personal, social and political spheres. Thus, there is a need for different actors to strengthen capacity building of persons with disabilities through mass media and advocacy campaigns to improve their political participation, and political parties should be challenged to mainstream disability in their constitutions, rules and regulations.

Keywords: Political participation, persons with disabilities, enablers, barriers, inclusivity.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Disability affects the lives of hundreds of millions across the world. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRD) describes persons with disabilities as those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others (United Nations, 2007). The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that more than a billion people live with some form of disability, which is about 15% of the world's population and rates of disability are increasing due to population ageing and increases in chronic health conditions, among other causes (WHO, 2011). Disability often triggers discriminatory behaviour against those who fall into the category of 'disabled' by the 'healthy'

others. Discrimination disempowers and stigmatizes persons with disabilities (PWDs) in a multitude of ways and in different areas of the social sphere (WHO, 2011; Mattila and Papagergio, 2017). Such discrimination reflects the wider social, economic and political exclusion of disabled people within household, community and state (Yeo and Moore, 2003). Excluded from mainstream social, economic and political opportunities throughout their lives and facing significant financial costs related to their impairments, PWDs and their households are frequently dragged further into poverty (Yeo and Moore, 2003).

Political participation is a fundamental aspect of democratic governance, the rule of law, social inclusion and human rights approaches aimed at eliminating marginalisation and discrimination (United Nations, 2007; Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). There are several well-worn arguments for the inclusion of PWDs in all aspects of life, including as representatives in the political, economic and social spheres. These arguments are similar to those made regarding inclusion of other 'underrepresented and vulnerable groups'- women, people from certain religions, ethnic groups, castes or tribes (Yeo and Moore, 2003). Increasing the access of marginalized and vulnerable populations towards larger political participation is important for democratic sections of the population often has a conflict-prevention effect and strengthens democratic structures. Further, an inclusive approach is argued to result into tangible gains for democracy, including greater responsiveness to citizen needs, increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and more sustainable peace (TCD, 2014). This is particularly so because exclusion from political participation directly affects the health of democratic representation. Without opportunity to participate in politics, an individual is effectively denied citizenship and potentially rendered inconsequential to those who hold power (Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). Consequently, groups and individuals absent from political life are unable to express directly their preferences to political elites (Schur *et al.*, 2002).

Tanzania's democratic governance has deepened since the return to multiparty rule in 1992. In order to ensure inclusive political participation and other rights of PWDs, Tanzania ratified the UNCRPD in 2008. Article 29 of the convention focuses on participation in political and public life, calling states to ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on equal basis with others (United Nations, 2007). The UNCRPD recognizes that disability and rights of PWDs are a function of the social environment in which they live (Foundation for Civil Society, 2017). In 2010, Tanzania passed the Persons with Disabilities Act, which contains an article on political participation, stating that all persons with disability aged 18 years and older are entitled to vote, hold public office and otherwise participate in the political rights and opportunities without any form of discrimination (URT, 2010). However, despite the opportunities offered by this political dispensation and legal framework, PWDs still remain politically marginalised.

Demographically, the 2012 national population and housing showed that Tanzania had a disability prevalence rate of 7.6% (3.5 million people), with prevalence rate for Mainland and Zanzibar, respectively, standing at 7.8% and 5.9%. The overall percentage of households with at least one member with disability was 13.2% (13.3% in Mainland and 9.3% in Zanzibar) (URT,

2013). Although the data and evidence for PWDs in Tanzanian politics are limited and anecdotal, the level of political participation of PWDs through the political parties is minimal. For example, a baseline survey carried out by Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD) in 2014 found that in 68% of the mapped areas, PWDs were not found in leadership positions. It was learned that PWDs face discrimination and exclusion at different stages of their lives (TCD, 2014). In the 2015 general elections, only 10 councillors were directly elected from constituencies in Tanzania compared to less than five in 2010. There were six PWDs elected as parliamentarians, including one male parliamentarian elected directly from his constituency and five female parliamentarians elected through the special seats' arrangement (Foundation for Civil Society, 2017).

This is not surprising because PWDs are generally stigmatized across sectors and 90% of them do not attend schools due to a combination of stigmatization, inappropriate infrastructure and poverty. The illiteracy rate among PWDs stands at 47.6% compared to 25.3% of the people without disabilities (LHRC, 2016). A recent study by the Tanzania Federation of Disabled Peoples Organisations (SHIVYAWATA) shows that PWDs still constitute one of the poorest, most marginalised and social excluded groups. PWDs, irrespective of where they live and their gender status, are more likely to be unemployed, illiterate, to have less formal education and to have less developed support networks and social capital than their able-bodied counterparts (SHIVYAWATA, 2016). Studies also show that while Tanzania has made rapid strides in strengthening welfare policies, the political and legislative environment has not been favourable to PWDs and other vulnerable groups. Political participation and leadership remain male dominated while women, youth and PWDs continue to remain under-represented (LHRC, 2016; TCD, 2014; Makulilo, 2014; Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). According to CCBRT (2010), many PWDs are unable to enjoy their political and constitutional rights including effective participation in the whole election process. Also, as noted in the TCD study, PWD aspirants and nominees are often subjected to discrimination and stigmatization by fellow nominees (TCD, 2014). The discrimination and stigmatization of PWDs stand in contrast to the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2010, which incriminates all forms of discrimination and mistreatment against persons with disability (URT, 2010).

Although participation of PWDs in political processes is increasingly recognized as a human right issue, recent studies on disability in Tanzania have focused mostly on other aspects including the legal framework (e.g. Foundation for Civil Society, 2017) and access to social services for PWDs (CCBRT, 2010; SHIVYAWATA, 2016). The few studies focusing on political participation have also tended to discuss PWDs within the broader category of marginalised groups without paying attention to the specific needs and factors constraining them (e.g. Makulilo, 2014; Kilian, 2014). Thus, the enablers, barriers and effect of disability-based discrimination on political participation have received little scholarly attention in Tanzania. This paper contributes to this limited body of knowledge by examining political participation of persons with disabilities in Tanzania. The specific objectives of the paper are twofold: (i) to identify the enabling factors for political participation for persons with disabilities, and (ii) to examine the barriers to political participation among persons with disabilities. The following section positions the study into the

broader theoretical framework by operationalizing the two main concepts used in this paper: disability and political participation.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Disability is a complex phenomenon which is hard to define. A variety of theoretical models exist that attempt to describe what exactly is disability, conceptualizing it through nuanced lenses that are influenced by factors such as geographical location, religion, culture, medical knowledge and welfare policy (Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). This paper adopts the United Nations' definition of disability as 'an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between a person with impairment and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (United Nations, 2007). This definition partly draws on the social model of disability which holds that while a person may have a physical or sensory impairment, he or she is not actually a disabled until the person is excluded from full participation in society as a result of barriers created by society (Gilson and Depoy, 2000; Sackey *et al.*, 2015).

Contrary to the medical model of disability, which emphasizes a person's physical or sensory impairment (Gilson and Depoy, 2000), the social conception puts more emphasis on the limitations placed on a person with impairment, through their interaction with society (Sackey *et al.*, 2015). In other words, disability is a social construction that translates a health condition into a social pathology that may constrain persons from functioning effectively in their society (Mattila and Papagergio, 2017). In part, this definition draws on the relational model of disability which describes the complex interaction between an individual's impairments and the environment in which they live. The approach identifies the mismatch between an individual's impairment and the prevailing environment as a dynamic interaction that results in a disability that hinders their full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others (United Nations, 2007; Foundation for Civil Society, 2017; Hall and Alvarez, 2012; Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018).

Political participation, as used in this paper, refers to the actions by which citizens seek to influence government and politics. It involves the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs through voting, the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government (Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). This level of political participation goes beyond the passive or indirect involvement in decision-making or political process as voters (Sackey *et al.*, 2015). This clarification is relevant in the context of this study because discussion on participation of PWDs in politics is often centred around the extent to which they participate in electoral politics as voters (Schur *et al.*, 2002; CCBRT, 2010; Hall and Alvarez, 2012). However, such conceptualization is limited since PWDs could also engage in other forms of political activities beyond registration and casting of votes, thus, the need to broaden the definition of political participation to include other forms. Viewed from this perspective, this study looks at political participation in terms contesting for political positions mostly as ward councillors or parliamentarians and as nominees in the election process.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The present paper draws on empirical qualitative data obtained from a field study in the regions of Dar es Salaam and Morogoro in Tanzania during March and April 2017. The two regions were purposively selected for the study because of the presence of many civil society organisations (CSOs) that were involved in capacity building and empowering of PWDs on various issues, including political participation. Through these organisations, it was possible to identify and sample the PWDs who participated in this study. A qualitative approach was adopted because of the nature of the study which called for in-depth analysis of the enablers and barriers to political participation among PWDs in a specific context. Qualitative methods are important in obtaining deep insights of the study issue through words, text and illustrations, which helps to identify real versus ideal behaviour and explore sensitive topics (Patton, 2002; Axinn and Pearce, 2006).

Data were collected from 32 PWDs who participated in the 2015 general elections at different stages as either as aspirants or nominees. These respondents were purposively selected as identified through organisations that were involved in sensitization, capacity building and training of marginalised groups including women, youth and PWDs to encourage them to participate in the 2015 general elections. Three categories of PWDs aspirants were interviewed: PWD aspirants who were trained and were nominated by their political parties as contestants; PWDs aspirants who were trained but were not nominated by their political parties; and PWD aspirants who were not trained, but were nominated by their political parties. Four types of disabilities were represented in the study: physical impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment and albinism. Out of the 32 PWDs, 20 were males and 12 were females. In addition, seven officials, including two from political parties, three from organisations involved in capacity building of marginalised groups and two from SHIVYAWATA, were interviewed as key informants.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, which aimed at pooling together qualitative insights and experiences of the respondents to develop narratives. In-depth interviews are popularly used for gauging respondent's views and perceptions on key aspects of the intervention. Axinn and Pearce (2006) view in-depth or less structured interviews as critical in qualitative research because of their flexibility, which allows interaction between the researcher and respondents. In this type of interviews, respondents can change the course of the conversation and bring up new issues the researcher might not have thought of. Kumar (2005) calls this flexibility 'complete freedom' in content and structure because questions can be formulated in different ways, the researcher can use different wording to explain questions, and interviews can be ordered in any sequence.

In-depth interviews' field notes were transcribed and qualitatively analysed using content analysis to provide narratives, key learning, and case stories. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as subjective interpretation of the content of text data through systematic classification and identifying themes or patterns. It is one of the commonly used methods to analyse text data such as verbal, print or electronic that might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, FGDs and observations. The goal of qualitative content analysis is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study by focusing on the underlying meanings or the content of the words (Patton, 2002; Hsieh

and Shannon, 2005). The use of qualitative content analysis in this study helped to interpret and construct meanings from the text as presented and discussed in the next section, which focuses on the enablers and barriers for political participation of PWDs.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, the specific objectives of this paper were to identify the enabling factors, and examine the barriers to political participation among persons with disabilities. In turn, the enabling factors and barriers to political participation of PWDs were examined at three levels: personal, community and institutional. The personal circle of concern was defined to encompass all those factors that affect PWDs at personal levels. The community level circle of concern of PWDs related to factors which directly or indirectly contribute as catalyzers or barriers to PWD's political participation and leadership at the social level. An institutional circle of concern included all those factors that affect PWDs at the infrastructural and systems levels. Figure 1 summarizes the findings on the key enablers and barriers at these levels, which are further discussed in the subsequent sub-sections.

4.1 Enablers for Political Participation for PWDs

The findings from the in-depth interviews show that at personal level, the key factor reported as an enabler that catalyses political participation of PWDs was improving education levels (Figure 1). Interviewed officials from CSOs, political parties and SHIVYAWATA, alike, stated that PWDs with higher education qualifications had a higher likelihood of contesting for political leadership and winning the elections. Conversely, limited education qualifications among PWDs, and especially on their political and constitutional rights, and the community on the ability of PWDs as leaders was said to act as a barrier to active political engagement. One interviewee said that: *"PWDs participation in leadership and politics is still a challenge. Because many PWDs have low education levels, they are deemed incapable of leading"*. Another added: *"the education level for most PWDs is very low. It is difficult for them to make representation in councils and parliament. People ask, what are you going to do there"*. These findings mirror observations from other studies which view education as a resource for political participation since high levels of education foster involvement in politics (Sackey, 2015; Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). This is based on the premise that educated persons participate in politics at higher rates because education provides both the skills necessary to become politically engaged and the knowledge to understand and accept democratic principles (Mattila and Papageorgiou, 2017). Based on a study in Ghana, Sackey (2015), however, maintains that not just any education, but a civic education is what endows citizens, including PWDs, with the capacity to appreciate and participate more in politics, as compared to those without education. Seen from the relational model of disability perspective, it can be argued that individual's impairments interacted with the prevailing environment in terms of limited education attainment to promote or hinder PWDs full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others (Hall and Alvarez, 2012).

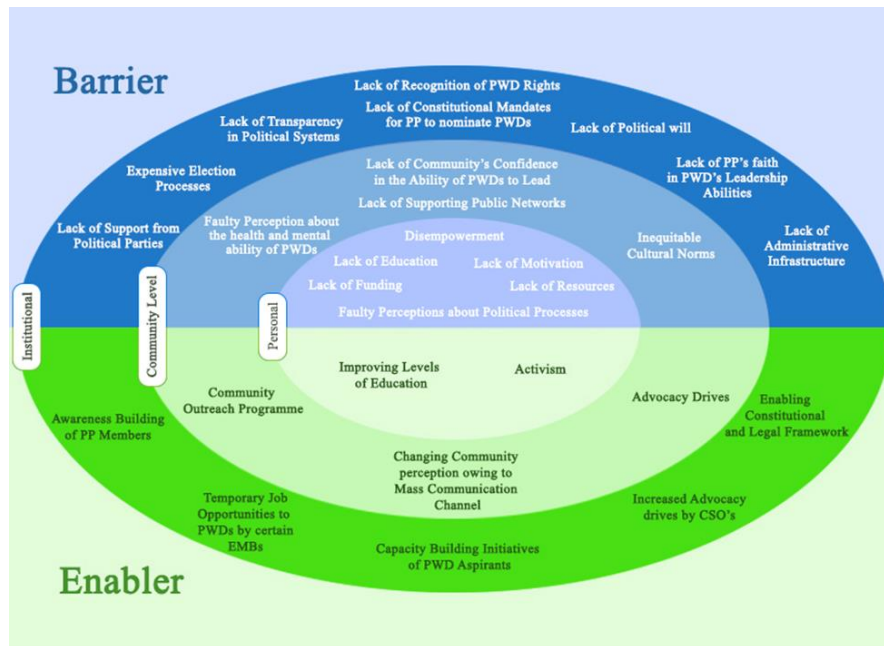


Figure 1: Enabler-barrier analysis for PWDs political participation

Community level enablers identified included, community outreach interventions, changing community perceptions about PWDs owing to mass communication and advocacy drives (Figure 1). It was reported that prior to the 2015 general elections, various interventions mainly by CSOs were carried out in the study regions and others to sensitize and create awareness among PWDs on the political and constitutional rights related to political engagement. Such community engagement aimed at community sensitization through community radio, televisions and other media. One interviewee from a CSO mentioned that the key messages were: *“PWDs have the right to vote and to be elected as leaders; PWDs should come out to register, aspire for leadership positions, and vote”*. One SHIVYAWATA leader said that the federation also held joint meetings with political parties, and *“challenged political parties to mainstream disability in their rules, guidelines and operations, including electoral processes”*. Another interviewee told us that: *“There has been more sensitization of the PWDs, and the political party leaders are becoming more receptive to them. The political parties are now reviewing their perceptions/structures to be more accommodating. They are reviewing their own guidelines, and themselves are trying to build the capacity from within their parties”*. Partly because of this, most of the interviewees reported increased political participation of PWDs in the 2015 elections compared to previous elections. This was supported by anecdotal data obtained from SHIVYAWATA, which revealed that PWDs who registered as voters increased from 87% to 94% and those who voted increased from 85% to 87% from 2010 to 2015, respectively. Further, in the 2015 general elections, there were 156 PWDs political aspirants from 13 regions (27% men and 73% women). Out of them, 11 were nominated as candidates for councillorship and five as parliamentarians' candidates.

Impliedly, these interventions seem to have had an impact in changing community perceptions about PWDs, thus, creating an environment of acceptance and collectivity, a situation which could have contributed to bestowing cultural identity and belongingness of PWDs (Gilson and

Depoy, 2000). In turn, this contributed to motivating PWDs to participate in politics in different capacities, including those who participated as aspirants, nominees and voters. Use of community radio and television has also been reported in Cameroon, as a strategy for voter education to encourage PWDs to vote in presidential elections (Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). Viewed from the relational model of disability, it can be argued that these interventions at community level contributed to creating an enabling environment for PWDs to participate in political process (Hall and Alvarez, 2012; Vinendrakumar *et al.*, 2018).

Interviewees also identified enablers at institutional level, which were awareness building, temporary job opportunities for PWDs in some election management bodies such as National Electoral Commission, capacity building of PWDs aspirants, increased advocacy by CSOs and enabling constitutional and legal framework (Figure 1). According to the PWDs interviewed, the advocacy drives contributed significantly towards changing community perceptions, the capacity building initiatives by CSOs contributed towards increasing the level of awareness about rights and entitlements, increased consciousness about different issues, collective action and movement building. This suggests that such interventions also interacted with personal and community level factors to enhance what Sackey (2015) calls 'civic education' to empower PWDs to participate in political processes.

Partly because of this, most PWDs interviewed described their participation and contribution during the political party meetings as generally high. PWDs, especially women PWDs were also represented in the women wings within political parties, an indication that political parties as the main gate keepers were also progressively changing the rules and regulations to accommodate PWDs. PWD aspirants were also given consideration for special seats as aspirants or nominees. This suggests that such interventions at community and institutional level contributed to addressing both the individual and institutional perceived discrimination against PWDs (Mattila and Papageorgiou, 2017). A review by Virendrakumar *et al.* (2018) shows that majority of African countries have ratified important disability-focused legislation, including provisions for improved participation of people with disabilities in political institutions. Such legal instruments proclaim equal opportunities for people with disabilities to elect and be elected, and refer to specific measures, mainly personal assistance, accessible communication and prioritization at the polling stations. However, despite progressive policies and laws being in place, PWDs continue to suffer from discrimination and exclusion in many contexts. We turn to these issues in the next sub-section, where we examine the barriers to political participation.

4.2 Barriers for Political Participation for PWDs

As was the case with the enablers, the barriers to political participation were also analysed at the three levels as shown in Figure 1. The findings from the in-depth interviews show that the main personal level barriers for the PWDs political participation were identified as: lack of education, lack of motivation, lack of funding, lack of resources, faulty perceptions about political processes and disempowerment. In this study, one respondent said that: *"there is a lack of motivation among PWDs when it comes to political leadership"* stating that *"lack of motivation among PWDs discourages them from participating in political leadership as they see themselves unable to hold*

leadership positions". This reflects the findings by Mattila and Papageorgiou (2017) that PWDs evaluate their position in relation to others, and if they perceive their position as comparatively disadvantaged, they are not motivated to take part in political action.

Lack of resources was also cited as a major barrier e.g. *"during elections, PWDs are discounted because they do not have the funding/cash to give as others do, so they feel disempowered"*. It was further added that: *the issue of self-confidence among PWDs is something that puts them in a disadvantaged position*". Most interviewees opined that candidates with better access to funding had a better chance of being nominated within their political parties and getting elected in the elections than those with limited financial resources. It was stated that significant resources were required for mobilisation campaigns, which included television and radio advertisements, printing of banners and flyers, organizing meetings, and in some incidences for giving bribes. However, many PWDs could not meet such costs. Similar observations about limited access to financial resources to meet the expensive election campaigns were also reported by Virendrakumar *et al.* (2018) in Ghana. Again, this environmental related factor interacted with their impairment to constrain their participation in political processes.

In the community level of concern, three barriers were prominent from the interviews: faulty perceptions about the health and mental ability of PWDs, lack of community confidence in the ability of PWDs to lead and inequitable cultural norms (Figure 1). One interviewee told us that: *"There is low community awareness about PWDs. Communities think that PWDs are incapable of holding leadership positions and stigmatize them. We have been called all kinds of names to show that they are unable to vie for and hold leadership positions. For example, in the 2010 general elections, one of the MP candidates told voters that they should not elect a PWD because his mental ability changes with time due to his disability. Unfortunately, responsible organs did not intervene to stop such stigmatization and use of abusive language"*. A key informant from a CSO that was involved in capacity building of PWDs commented that: *"PWDs are by far the most marginalized group as the community and party members do not feel they can lead at all"*. Another interviewee said that: *"PWDs participation in leadership and politics is still a challenge because they are deemed incapable of leading"*. In another interview, it was emphasized that: *"Peoples' attitudes about PWDs are wrong. Many people sympathize with PWDs instead of empathizing and empowering them. In fact, people need to know that disability is not inability, but different abilities"*. Inequitable religious and cultural norms were attributed as major causes for such perceptions. As a result, *"cultural norms lead people to believe that a PWD cannot lead us"*, said one interviewee. This reflects the social conception of disability, which premises that the negative attitudes about disability are rooted in cultural and social norms. Such negative attitudes often pervade all sections of society, including people involved in election processes as well as the general population (Virendrakumar *et al.*, 2018). As a consequence, people tend to rationalize the exclusion and ostracism of PWDs families in many different ways, including their engagement in political processes (Yeo and Moore, 2003; WHO, 2011).

The most cited barrier at institutional level was the lack of support from political parties, which manifested itself in various ways, including lack of transparency in political systems and processes, lack of political will and lack of faith in PWDs (Figure 1). It was established that

political parties act as gate keepers to prevent PWDs aspirants from being nominated, particularly in political parties with stiff intra-party competitions. One interviewee said that: *“Even now, the participation of PWDs is very low. The political parties are not very democratic in nature internally, they are often single leader based and very autocratic”*. Another added: *“The parties do no longer accept the incorporation of PWDs in leadership sphere due to the selfishness of top leaders who do not believe that PWDs are capable just like other contesters”*. An interviewee from the election management body told us that: *“Although political parties have internal selection and nomination systems, such systems greatly discourage the PWDs aspirants have limited chances of being nominated”*. One SHIVYAWATA official noted that: *“in the course of mapping and identifying PWDs who would vie for leadership positions in the 2015 elections, we realized that many of the PWDs were not members of any political parties, partly because political parties were not accessible to PWDs. Thus, they could not be nominated as candidates as party membership is one of the qualifications*. Partly because of this observation, other interviewees suggested that *“political parties should be sensitized and challenged to mainstream disability in their constitutions, rules and regulations, which would among other things require them to include PWDs in their nomination lists”*. Interviewees from the CSOs opined that this problem was aggravated by the fact that the national electoral commission and other responsible organs had no legal mechanisms to task political parties to include PWDs in their nomination lists. This mirrors Virendrakumar *et al.* (2018)’s observations that political parties were inaccessible to many PWDs in many African countries.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has examined political participation of persons with disabilities in Tanzania using the relational model of disability. Based on the qualitative findings of the study, the following of key conclusions can be drawn. First, the factors that act as enablers to catalyse PWDs political participation include improving education levels, activism, community outreach interventions, changing community perceptions about PWDs, advocacy drives, capacity building, increased advocacy by CSOs and enabling constitutional and legal framework. Second, despite increased levels of PWDs’ political participation, a number of barriers are still constraining their effective participation. These include lack of education, lack of motivation, lack of funding, lack of resources, faulty perceptions about political processes, disempowerment, faulty community perceptions about the health and mental ability of PWDs, lack of community confidence in the ability of PWDs and lack of support from political parties. These factors at personal, community and institutional levels interact with individual’s health conditions, translating into a social pathology, thus, hindering their full and effective participation on equal basis with others. Generally, most PWDs are still vulnerable in the personal, social and political spheres. It is recommended that capacity building and training of PWDs political aspirants should be strengthened by different actors to improve their participation in political processes. Mass media and advocacy campaigns, which have shown to be effective in changing community perceptions about PWDs be strengthened. Additionally, deliberate efforts are needed to sensitize and challenge political parties to mainstream disability in their constitutions, rules and regulations, which should among other things require them to include PWDs in their nomination lists.

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