

Social and Health Care Issues of Persons with Disabilities: A Medical Sociological Study based on Maritimpattu Divisional Secretariat

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Abstract

Social and health care issues of persons with disabilities (PWDs) are alarming contemporary social and health issues. Overall objective of this medical sociological study is to assess the social and health care issues of PWDs in the Maritimpattu Divisional Secretariat in Mullaitivu District. Mixed method was employed in this study. Based on the stratified random sampling technique, 120 PWDs were selected for this community based study. Research ethics was strictly followed throughout this research study. Interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. Quantitative data was analysed by using descriptive statistical method with the support of SPSS version 21. Qualitative data collected through case study method and key informant interviews were analysed thematically. Results of this study reveal that majority (70%) of the PWDs were males. War was the major cause of disabilities and amputation was the major type of disabilities prevalent in the study area. Prevalent of unemployment was 49% among PWDs. It is reported that 47% of PWDs were dissatisfied with the health care facilities and 28.4% of PWDs with disabilities stated that health care service providing institutions are located at high distance from their residence. Moreover, 12.7% of PWDs encountered the poor affordability to access the health care services. Among the study population, 10.2% of PWDs suffered from pressure ulcers (bedsore) and 20.2% of them suffered from non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Accessibility was also important issues of PWDs. Further, PWDs have encountered physiotherapy and orthopedic surgery related issues. Only 45% of PWDs stated that they used coping mechanisms to manage their social and health care related issues. This study strongly recommends that community based medical and social rehabilitation programs should be introduced to enhance the quality of life and well-being of PWDs.

Keywords: accessibility, amputation, community based rehabilitation, health care, stigma