



## EVALUATION OF THE CHALLENGES OF INCLUSION AMONG STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN UNIVERSITY SPORTS: THE CASE OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, UGANDA

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### Abstract:

Sport can provide a variety of mainstream and disability-specific opportunities across the inclusion spectrum for persons with disabilities. This study described the status of disability mainstreaming at Makerere University, Kampala, Central Uganda. In particular, the study described the challenges faced and how students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes. The study used a cross-sectional survey design using the quantitative and qualitative approaches on a sample size of 54 respondents. Data was collected by the use of self-administered questionnaires and an interview guide. The data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data analysis involved the calculation of descriptive statistics namely, frequencies, percentages and means for analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. The study found that challenges faced when including students with disabilities in sports were: materials (not sufficiently) adjusted or available, facilities not (sufficiently) adjusted, lack of financial support, inferiority complex among the student with disability, lack of confidence, discrimination and stereotype in the population, lack of inspiration, lack of modified sports according to different disabilities, expensive adopted sports equipment. Ways students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes included: identification of students with disabilities and acceptance, avail specific equipment, introduce fitting sport for different disabilities, provision of special coaches/ specialist for the disabled, design facilities (sufficiently) adjusted, sensitization for support from the environment, ensure safety for the disabled athletes, give bursaries to disabled talented students in sports, collaboration

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with NGO's for financial support, exposure to role models, need for protective gears for students with disabilities, increase incentives for the coaches, introduce adapted sports galas for the disabled, increasing the disability opportunity into university entry scheme, provide incentives to the disabled sport's participants and the need for the disabled administrator to work as a role model. This study recommended that policymakers should ensure that students with disabilities are empowered in sports to give them the freedom to sports participation at home, in institutions, in workplaces and in the field. Managers of sports should ensure players attain full security of the players, provide protective gear and adopt tactics that reduce fear of injuries. Management of sports organisations that involve students with disabilities should provide quality playing fields, and modified equipment, introduce more games, provide players adequate attention and advocate the full implementation of counselling students with disabilities. Management of organisations of sports teams should engage students with disabilities in sports jobs in the sports associations, connect them outside sports and collaborate with non-governmental organizations that support disability-based activities and provide incentives for athletes with disabilities.

**Keywords:** inclusion, disability, mainstreaming, sport, challenges

### **Operational Definition of Terms**

**Disability** is defined as a condition or function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual or group functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment mental illness (Disability World, 2022).

**Mainstreaming**, in the context of education, is the practice of educating children with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers to foster understanding and tolerance, better preparing students of all abilities to function in the world beyond school (Hettiaarachi, 2018).

**Sport** is an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess and often of a competitive nature, as racing, baseball, tennis, golf, bowling, wrestling, boxing, hunting, fishing, etc. (Cieza et al., 2011).

## **1. Introduction**

Disability inclusion is an important prerequisite for equitable, sustainable and just development. According to the McClain-Nhlapo (2019), about one billion individuals in the world's population experience disability at some point in their lifetime and, of those, approximately one-fifth experience a disability that significantly impacts their everyday functioning. This corresponds to about 15% of the world's population, with up to 190 million (3.8%) people aged 15 years and older having significant difficulties in functioning, often requiring health care services (WHO, 2021).

Physical activity and competitive sports can improve opportunities for people with disabilities to access appropriate activities in their local community. However, they do not always have the possibility to choose which sport to practice, due to structural

deficiencies, lack of professional figures or economic possibilities. Barriers within society and the type of disability appear to prevent people with physical disabilities from participating in social areas, such as leisure activities (Sara Aliberti, 2022). Different authors have identified different barriers facing inclusive sports (Haudenhuyse, 2017; Kiuppis, 2018). These barriers include those related to lack of time and/or money, support ratios, adequacy of infrastructure, transport, equipment, persisting stigma and prejudice, lack of confidence and self-esteem, communication challenges, lack of awareness of opportunities and lack of realistic role models. Although sports participation is a basic human right, many people with disabilities still have limited access to sports activities. They are less likely to participate than able bodied individuals or people without disabilities. Joint competitions between people with and without disabilities are a rather rare phenomenon in Germany (Greve & Bechthold, 2019). In order to enable equal participation in such events, it is a basic prerequisite to recognize people with disabilities as athletes (Kiuppis, 2018). Despite inclusiveness being foundational to processing learning, its inclusivity with respect to individuals experiencing disability and other marginalized groups (e.g., indigenous peoples) has been questioned (Dudley et al. 2017; Pushkarenko et al., 2020). Analyses exploring the enactment of integrative, disability-inclusive policies related to programming in Canada (as opposed to events) are scarce (Athamanah et al., 2020). More fundamentally, others have questioned why the promotion of inclusion with non-disabled persons should be valued over building social networks among people with similar disabilities when this has been the basis for marginalized groups to advocate and attain societal rights (Cummins and Lau, 2003; Kiuppis, 2018). As such there are increasing calls for new insights into what stimulates or prevents disabled people's participation in sport, exercise and physical activity (Ives et al., 2021; Jaarsma and Smith, 2018; Public Health England, 2018).

In Africa, sport can provide a variety of mainstream and disability-specific opportunities across the inclusion spectrum for persons with disabilities. For 15% of the world's population with a disability, access to sporting activities can be limited (Harada, 2011). Additional barriers, such as accessibility issues, equipment, media, coaching, perceptual barriers, and so on, make the experience of people with disabilities much more emotionally draining. This is often due to barriers preventing participation, such as ill-designed equipment and discrimination built on cultural and social prejudices. Novak (2017) makes reference to 'disability divide' in international sport, where the increasing access to technology and sport assistance in the Global North largely benefits privileged elite disability athletes, whereas resource-constrained societies with significant economic and cultural barriers in Africa face major challenges in this respect.

Sport is an effective tool to overcome these barriers. Various scholars have noted that sport provides a context to highlight ability rather than disability. This increases the self-confidence of groups of women with disabilities as well as enables sports-based interventions aimed at challenging and changing the negative attitudes of society (Bantjes et al., 2019; Albrecht et al., 2019; de Cruz et al., 2019; Bantjes & Schwartz, 2018). When sport includes persons with disabilities, it becomes transformative not just for the

participants, but also for families, coaches, administrators, spectators and event or program sponsors. (Eli & Hums, 2020). Often progress in developing sports for individuals with a disability is beset with barriers that limit or impede their participation. On the supply side of sport, certain practices and procedures create additional barriers that limit participation. These include inaccessible facilities, inaccessible transport, unsuitable programme, inadequate planning, insufficient support (Darcy, et al., 2017), and outdated social perceptions held by both staff and wider stakeholders (Williams et al., 2019). Most policy attention to address these issues has focused on merging disability sports organizations and their participants into non-disabled sporting organizations through a process termed vertical integration or mainstreaming. Mainstreaming aims to include people with disabilities in all aspects of governance and operations. To create accessible and inclusive spaces, people with disabilities need to be offered a choice of participation options (Darcy, et al., 2017).

The recent National Household Survey 2005/2006 estimated that 7% of Uganda's population had a disability. Physical impairments accounted for the highest form of disability (34%), followed by visual impairments (22%) and hearing difficulties (15%). Other impairments include mental, speech and learning disabilities (Disabled World, 2022). People with disabilities have fewer opportunities than able people, and their employment rates and educational attainment remain lower (Cieza et al., 2011). Delivered in an adapted and inclusive way, sports programmes can help combat their marginalization and change the negative perceptions frequently associated with disability. Disability participation in every aspect of society, access to equal opportunities and control over resources for all persons regardless of ability are hallmarks of disability equity. These are premised on well-known human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality (Kabasarra, 2019). Kumar (2012) argued that able-bodied people tend to focus on a person's disability rather than on an individual's abilities or skills and this is a form of discrimination that keeps able-bodied persons from appreciating and experiencing the full potential of PWDs, further perpetuating the negative attitudes. Sports have the potential to break down these negative attitudes by changing the community's perceptions of PWDs' capabilities; participation contains not only articles about options of sporting activities for people with disabilities together with non-disabled peers and competitors (e.g., the papers from Valet and Meziani, 2016) but also contributions that emphasize disability sport in segregated settings. Sport can help eliminate obstacles and barriers in the environment, transportation, public facilities and services to ensure that people facing those barriers such as persons with disabilities can access sports and physical activities. However, opportunities to participate in athletics for students with disabilities are virtually non-existent (Lakowsik, 2011). Typical barriers for people with disabilities to participate in sport include a lack of awareness on the part of people without disabilities as to how to involve them in teams adequately; lack of opportunities and programmes for training and competition; too few accessible facilities due to physical barriers; and limited information on and access to resources (DePauw & Gavron 2005). Nevertheless, Uganda is a signatory to international and regional

frameworks that guarantee disability equity and nondiscrimination. These include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2015; the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and Optional Protocol, both ratified by Uganda on 25 September 2008. Uganda works to implement the Action Plan established for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, extended to December 2019. At a national level, Uganda has domesticated many of these frameworks into national laws and policies including the Uganda Constitution (1995); National Development Plan II (2015-2020); Local Government Act (1996); Education Act (2008); Employment Act (2006); National Policy on Disability (2006); and the Persons with Disabilities Act (2006). The central importance is attributed to the processes and mechanisms of inclusion that operate within sporting environments and to the question of either what happens or could happen to persons with disabilities who enter the playing field (Spaaij, Magee, & Jeanes 2014). For this reason, it can be understood that sports give persons with disabilities the opportunity to gain a sporting identity and at the same time serve to distance them from their worthless disabled identity (Bundon, 2019). Research has recommended that institutional policies and guidelines on support services for students with disabilities and special needs in higher education be developed, data on students with disabilities collected to help planning, and collaboration between Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPO's) strengthened to ensure disability inclusion and the establishment of disability support centres (Emong, 2016).

This study was informed by the Social Model Theory of Disability as developed by the Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS) in the 1970s (Shakespeare, Bickenbach, Pfeiffer, & Watson, 2006). The theory proposes to focus on building a professional understanding of the limitations of an individual with impairment to recognizing the external factors and barriers that are disabling an individual (Terzi, 2004). These factors include; self-advocacy and fostering changes in the environment and societal understandings of disability (Haegele & Hodge, 2017).

This theory suggests that certain Individuals with impairments are oppressed and constricted by the environment and social barriers in sports activities. These external factors restrict participation and can include ableism, disability prejudice, and lack of accessibility (Chatterjee et al., 2015; Oliver, 1996). By externalizing the source of functional limitations, disability in itself then becomes secondary to the capacity and accessibility of the environment and society to fully support the independence and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society including sports (Balcazar & Suarez-Balcazar, 2017). This theory was the basis for analyzing the challenges to the inclusion of the disabled in sports and how the challenges were solved. Challenges of including athletes with disabilities in sports are defined as the risk to achieve something that can be easy or hard to overcome (Eli, 2020). In this study, risks to achieve something was defined as challenges for the disabled inclusion in sports referring to; isolation, lack of fellow athletes, discrimination, lack of adjusted facilities, lack of adjusted equipment, lack of finance, insecurity/ injuries, inferior complex, limited specialist coaches and no care about the disabled involvement in sports. In respect to ways how students with

disabilities can be best included in sports programmes are defined as the range of opportunities that enable everyone in the diverse, community, regardless of gender, age race, culture, religion, and ability to afford participation (Peers, 2018). In this study, the range of opportunities are defined as ways in which students with disabilities can be best included in sports programmes referring to; identification of students with disabilities and acceptance, avail specific equipment, introduction fitting sport for different disabilities, provision of special coaches/ specialist for the disabled, design facilities sufficiently adjusted, sensitization for support from the environment, ensure safety for the disabled athletes, give bursaries to disabled talented students in sports, collaboration with NGO's for financial support and exposure to role models.

Makerere University, which was the context of this study, is a public University located in central Uganda. Makerere University is involved in a number of sports including sports for persons with disability (Kamukama, 2018). The university facilitates SWDs to participate in extracurricular activities and it is a personal decision for SWDS to participate in sports and leadership (Kabasarra, 2019). The sports disciplines for the athletes with disability at the University among others include; goal ball, athletics, Blind football, Netball, Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Wood ball, Chess, Swimming and Draft. The University organises internal competitions that include inter-hall and inter-campus competitions among students with disability (Eide et al., 2021). The University has participated in all National Inter-University games, East African University games, African Games and Paralympics games (Dehghansai et al., 2021). At Makerere University, the report showed that a number of players with a disability had registered challenges concerning the games they play, obtained from different sports seasons (Kamukama, 2018). The unanswered empirical questions were: what the challenges faced when including students with disability in sports were and in what ways students with disabilities should be best included in sports programmes at Makerere University, Uganda. Inclusive sports activities have long been used to foster education and have therefore been identified as a tool to advance those rights. Sport can encourage inclusion and the equal participation of women and girls, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable or underrepresented groups and individuals (Auxter, 2010). However, making sport inclusive affects the accessibility of facilities, funding, the media, policies, programs, organizations, sponsors and spectators, and at the same time changes the cultural values of the wider society, issues about competition access and eligibility for 'different' and technologically enhanced 'cyborg' bodies, and for those most socially disadvantaged (Jill, 2012). Tsai et al. (2005) identified inadequate facilities, inadequate equipment, lack of transportation and lack of coaches as major constraints to sports participation but also recognized that athletes experienced different constraints depending on their chosen sport. Blind athletes most often cited transportation as their major constraint whereas wheelchair athletes tended to have more equipment and/or financial constraints. Stodolska (2008) also identified other barriers such as lack of qualified coaches, limited availability of equipment, inadequate facilities, negative attitudes towards people with a disability and lack of financial resources as the major

determinants of sports participation or non-participation within a developing country context (International Paralympics Committee, IPC, 2020). These issues are not limited to Makerere University (Tann et al., 2019). Children with disabilities (CWDS) are a vital and valuable part of society, yet the most marginalized and vulnerable group of persons in Uganda (David, 2017). There is a wealth of evidence to support participation in sport and physical activity for people with disabilities concerning trends, barriers and benefits of participation. The National Disability Policy (NDP), identifies research as one of the interventions to improve the limited knowledge on aspects of persons with disabilities through a collection of comprehensive information on PWDs (Republic of Uganda, 2006). However, research that focuses on disability is still quite limited (Norad, 2012). If the problems of persons with disability are not addressed, the students with disability will be hindered from their full and effective participation in sports and society on an equal basis with others, own independence deprives them of the friendship of others, and eliminates the concept of the equality of opportunity in institutions and sports as a fraternity. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the status of disability mainstreaming in sports at Makerere University, challenges faced when including athletes with disabilities in sports and ways students with disabilities can be best included in sports programmes at Makerere University. The objectives of the study were to; (a) examine the challenges faced when including the athletes with a disability in sports at Makerere University (b) evaluate ways in which students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes.

## 2. Methods and Materials

This study adopted the cross-sectional design. The target population was 62 respondents comprising of 55 students with disabilities and 7 sports administrators and coaches. The study was carried out at Makerere University which is a public university located in central Uganda along its capital city Kampala. The sample size for the questionnaire survey was 49 respondents. The sample size for each category of respondents was determined by proportionate sampling (Amin, 2005). The sample for the interview guide included 5 sports administrators and coaches from the Makerere University Sports Department.

The study adopted two sampling methods, namely stratified random and purposive sampling. Stratified random sampling involved dividing the sample for the questionnaire survey into different subgroups according to their different games during the championship. Thereafter, the respondents were selected proportionally from the different subgroups. Only students with disabilities were involved in the study. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The two data collection instruments were; a self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) for the players and an interview guide for sports administrators and coaches. The SAQ formulated by the researcher was a closed-ended questionnaire with question items based nominal scale with appropriate alternatives given for section A on demographic characteristics of the

respondents and an ordinal scale based on the five-point Likert for sections B and C. Closed-ended questions were selected because they were easy to administer, easily coded and analysed, allow comparisons and quantification, and they were more likely to produce fully completed responses while avoiding irrelevant responses. At the end of each section of the SAQ, there was an open-ended question which allowed time and space for free-form responses that invited participants to share their understandings, experiences, opinions and interpretations. Overall, a combination of closed and open questions provided the survey write-up with quantifiable and in-depth results. Closed questions produced results that were easily summarised and clearly presented in quick-look summaries while open questions produce verbatim comments adding depth and meaning (Bird, 2009). Section A was on the main variables of the study namely: the demographic characteristics and section B was on the status of students with disability in sports. The SAQ-based questionnaire was also very suitable for the sampled respondents because they easily responded to the questions because of their proficiency in the English Language that was used in the questionnaire survey since they were university students. The SAQ was established by the researcher pending the relevant data needed according to the objectives of the study. An interview guide was used to interview sports administrators and coaches. The design interview guide was formulated by the researcher, an open-ended interview guide with structured items in terms of the wording of the questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009). The question items for the respondents were questions eliciting open-ended responses. The open-endedness of interview questions allowed the respondents to provide detailed information and allowed the asking of probing questions. The interview questions helped in obtaining in-depth data necessary for qualitative analysis from sports administrators and coaches of students with disabilities.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Challenges Faced when Including Students with Disability in Sports

Objective 1 examined challenges faced when including students with disabilities in sports. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Challenges faced when including the students with disability in sports

Challenges faced when including the students with disability in sports	F / %	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
No one cares about the disabled involvement in sports.	F % (30.6)	15 (30.6)	12 (24.5)	10 (20.4)	8 (16.3)	4 (8.2)	2.4694	1.30866
Isolation in sports due to the condition.	F % (30.6)	15 (30.6)	12 (24.5)	6 (12.2)	10 (20.4)	6 (12.2)	2.5918	1.42768
Lack of fellow athletes with a disability and could not find a fitting sport.	F % (22.4)	11 (22.4)	12 (24.5)	6 (12.2)	9 (18.4)	11 (22.4)	2.9388	1.50566
Facilities not (sufficiently) adjusted.	F % (14.3)	7 (14.3)	5 (10.2)	6 (12.2)	17 (34.7)	14 (28.6)	3.5306	1.38597



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Materials not (sufficiently) adjusted or available.	F %	6 (12.2)	6 (12.2)	9 (18.4)	16 (32.7)	12 (24.5)	3.4490	1.32384
No disabled students who need the service.	F %	18 (36.7)	17 (34.7)	6 (12.2)	5 (10.2)	3 (6.1)	2.1429	1.20761
Fear of injuries / Insecurity.	F %	9 (18.4)	13 (26.5)	5 (10.2)	16 (32.7)	6 (12.2)	2.9388	1.36027
No special coach / specialist for the disabled athletes.	F %	16 (32.7)	9 (18.4)	6 (12.2)	12 (24.5)	6 (12.2)	2.6531	1.46559
Lack of financial support.	F %	8 (16.3)	4 (8.2)	2 (4.1)	16 (32.7)	19 (38.8)	3.6939	1.47485
Inferior complex among the disabled students.	F %	7 (14.3)	7 (14.3)	10 (20.4)	12 (24.5)	13 (26.5)	4.4286	.61237

The results in Table 1 on whether *inferior complex among disabled students* was a challenge cumulatively 51% agreed with 28.6% disagreeing. The mean = 4.43 indicated that respondents agreed. This implies that an *inferior complex among disabled students* was a great challenge. This is in line with David (2017) who sighted that, children with disabilities (CWDS) are a vital and valuable part of society, yet the most marginalized and vulnerable group of persons in Uganda. From open-ended questions, St<sub>14</sub> stated that “*I am not aware sports for the disabled or not. I mind about my studies and people who support me*”. From the interviews, So<sub>2</sub> commented that, “*some students are not free to be part of the sports fraternity. They lack confidence and shy off whenever called upon*” and Co<sub>3</sub> explained that, “*some students whenever training over sympathise with their condition fore- going the learning of the skills taught*”. Others are so sensitive to comments relating them to their conditions.

About *lack of financial support* cumulatively 71.5% agreed with 24.5% disagreeing. The mean = 3.69 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, the *lack of financial support* was a challenge for students with disabilities in sports. This is in agreement with Stodolska (2008) who stated that blind athletes most often cited transportation as their major constraint whereas wheelchair athletes tended to have more equipment and/or financial constraints. From the interviews, So<sub>1</sub> pointed out that “*the budget allocation is always not sufficient yet these sports have expensive equipment and students need special care*” and Co<sub>1</sub> stated that “*the sports requirements for the disabled are too costly and demanding which makes it hard to meet their needs*”. From open-ended questions, St<sub>12</sub> explained that “*nearly everything we do in sports needs money mostly transport, feeding and equipment which parents cannot afford all the time*”.

About *facilities not (sufficiently) adjusted* showed that the majority 63.3% agreed with 24.5% disagreeing. The mean = 3.53 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, this implied that *facilities (not sufficiently) adjusted* were a great challenge. This is in line with (Mubajje, 2017), who reported that standard sports facilities for persons with disability is not common. Accessing a facility for the sports events of the disability sports costs them between Shs100,000 and Shs500,000 per day, this is considered too expensive for a group that neither receives public funding nor attracts private partnerships. From the interviews Co<sub>3</sub> narrated that, “*we train the students with disability*”.

from the same field of the able students with hope of the university to get money and construct the modified ones” and So<sub>2</sub> stated that, “the issue of modified facility is a serious one. We hope to have them when the money favors us.” St<sub>15</sub> declared “we train and play with able students on the same field with hardship for the sake of learning the skill, who sometimes handle us roughly.”

In regard to *materials not (sufficiently) adjusted or available*, the majority 57.2% agreed while 24.4% disagreed. The mean = 3.45 suggested that the respondents agreed. This means that *materials (not sufficiently) adjusted or available* was a challenge in sports. This is in agreement with Adam & Morgan (2018) who stated that a lack of basic facilities and equipment prevents disabled people from taking part in sport, campaigners have said. From the interviews, Co<sub>3</sub> stated that “equipment adapted to sports are very expensive compared to those of able sports” and similarly, So<sub>2</sub> commented that, “the sports equipment for the students with disability are so expensive compared to those of able students. Sometimes we have to order for them since the disability condition is not the same which makes it costlier”. From open-ended questions St<sub>40</sub> stated that, “we train with very few or improvised modified equipment which does not favor us to learn the skill faster”.

As regards to whether *lack of fellow athletes with a disability who could not find a fitting sport*, cumulatively the majority 46.9% disagreed with 40.8% agreeing. The mean = 2.94 indicated that the respondents were not sure. Therefore, *lack of fellow athletes with a disability and that could not find a fitting sport* was moderate. This contradicted other scholars for instance, Rocha et al., (2021) who established that the reasons for lower levels of participation in physical activity among children with disability are complex and multifactorial. From open ended questions St<sub>1</sub> identified “non-adjustable sports according to different disabilities.” From the interviews So<sub>2</sub> stated that, “sometimes students appear very few to register for a specific team sport leaving the team incomplete” and Co<sub>2</sub> pointed out that, “some students come to train interested in the sports which does not favour their condition which causes them to feel rejected. They also lack inspiration and counseling”.

Concerning *fear of injuries/ insecurity*, the majority 44.9% disagreed while 44.9% agreed. The mean = 2.94 indicated that respondents were not sure. This, therefore, means that the *fear of injuries/ insecurity* was moderate. This is in agreement with Semugabi in the Monitor (2022) who narrated that, at school, physical education (PE) was compulsory for all learners but Aida Katushabe was excluded because both her legs were disabled, the teachers didn’t know what to do for her; likewise, she had no idea how to engage in PE activities without hurting her fragile limbs. Further responses from open ended questions by St<sub>15</sub> explained that, “we always feel insecure in most of the activities being prone to falling or knocked down that lead to injuries”. From the interviews So<sub>1</sub> discussed that “parents are always inquisitive about the security of their children”; Co<sub>2</sub> said that “students are prone to injuries on the court and always need support around them though injury issues have not been common with us”.

With respect to *no special coach/ specialist for disabled athletes*, cumulatively the larger percentage 51.2% disagreed while 36.7% agreed. The mean = 2.65 indicated that the respondents were not sure. This, therefore, means that the issue of no special coach/ specialist for disabled athletes was moderate. This is in agreement with (Katongole, 2022)

who sighted that there have been challenges in managing such athletes as some have mild conditions and others have multiple complexions. From open-ended questions St<sub>1</sub> explained that *“the coaches available are specialists but not for all kinds of disabilities, for example, there is one coach who knows sign language but once absent, the rest have to forge the language; we also don't have a female coach for the disabled”*. From the interviews Co<sub>1</sub> commented that, *“we need a female counselor well trained in sports for the disabilities to handle girls who have mood swings”* and So<sub>1</sub> also explained that *“we do not deal with many specialist coaches because the budget is limited and the players are not very many yet the disabilities are different”*.

With regard to *isolation in sports* due to the condition, cumulatively the majority percentage 55.1% disagreed with 32.6% agreeing. The mean = 2.59 meant that the respondents were not sure. Therefore, *isolation in sports* due to the condition was a moderate challenge. This is in agreement with some scholars, for instance, Kumar (2012), argued that able-bodied people tend to focus on a person's disability rather than on an individual's abilities or skills is a form of discrimination that keeps able-bodied persons from appreciating and experiencing the full potential of PWDs. From open-ended questions, St<sub>44</sub> stated that *“discrimination and stereotype in the population are common but we are used to it”*. From the interviews, So<sub>2</sub> stated that *“some students feel shy to come and participate in sports due to their condition hence keep off the business”* and Co<sub>3</sub> explained that, *“some students with disabilities are sometimes undermined on the court, especially when playing with able students but others are free and relate well with able students in sports”*.

Regarding to whether *no one cared about the disabled involvement in sports* cumulatively 55.1% disagreed with 24.5% agreeing. The mean = 2.47 meant that the respondents were not sure. Therefore, the issue of no one caring about the disabled involvement in sports was moderate. This is in agreement with (Legg et al., 2015) which identified negative attitudes towards people with a disability as the major determinant of sports participation or non-participation within a developing country context. From open-ended questions, St<sub>34</sub> stated that *“the university has no sports for the students with disabilities while St<sub>35</sub> said that, it has not done enough to pitch sports for the disabled”*. From the interviews, So<sub>1</sub> commented that *“some students with disabilities do not care about sports at the university yet we consider those who show up”* and Co<sub>1</sub> explained that *“we take up students who show interest in sports”*.

Concerning *students with disability who needed the service* cumulatively, the majority percentage 71.4% disagreed with 16.3% agreeing. The mean = 2.14 meant that the respondents were not sure. Therefore, the issue of no disabled students who needed the service was minimal. This was in contradiction with Kumar (2018) who established that a student with a disability, for example, might be strong and sporty despite her disability but in most cases, institutions fail to recognize these individual strengths and provide the disabled student proper opportunity to develop on her strengths. St<sub>2</sub> pointed out that, *“the University has not done enough to pitch sports for the disabled”*. From the interviews So<sub>1</sub> said that *“the university has many students with disability who don't show up in sports”* and Co<sub>3</sub> added that *“some students with disabilities do not want to know about sports”*.

The results from the interviews with the sports administrators of the universities and coaches and open responses from the questionnaires revealed that the challenges faced when involving students with disabilities in sports are: *non-adjustable materials or available, facilities not modified, lack of financial support, inferiority complex among the study participants, lack of confidence, discrimination and stereotyping of the population, lack of inspiration, lack of adapted sports according to different disabilities and expensive adapted sports equipment.*

### 3. Ways How Students with Disabilities Can Be Best Included in Makerere University Sports Programmes

Objective 2 evaluated ways of including students with disabilities in Makerere University sports programmes. The results are as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Ways how students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes

Ways how students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes	F / %	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Identification of students with disabilities and acceptance	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	3 (6.1)	22 (44.9)	24 (49.0)	4.4286	.61237
Avail specific equipment	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	2 (4.1)	22 (44.0)	25 (51.0)	4.4694	.58102
Introduce fitting sport for different disabilities	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	26 (53.1)	22 (44.9)	4.4286	.54006
Provision of special coaches/ specialist for the disabled	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	00 (00)	21 (42.1)	28 (57.1)	4.5714	.50000
Design facilities (sufficiently) adjusted	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	29 (59.2)	19 (38.8)	4.3673	.52812
Sensitization for support from the environment	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	2 (4.1)	23 (46.9)	24 (49.0)	4.4490	.57956
Ensure safety for the disabled athletes	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	12 (24.5)	36 (73.5)	4.7143	.50000
Give bursaries to disabled talented students in sports	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	17 (34.7)	31 (63.3)	4.6122	.53293
Collaboration with NGO's for financial support	F %	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	20 (40.8)	27 (55.1)	4.4898	.64944
Exposure to role models	F %	00 (00)	00 (00)	1 (2.0)	26 (53.1)	22 (44.9)	4.4286	.54006

The results in Table 2 on whether to *ensure safety for disabled athletes* showed that cumulatively, 98% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.71 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, this implied the need for safety for students with disabilities. These results are in line with other scholars, for instance, Carrera (2021). Athletes with disabilities are predisposed to medical conditions and have a higher prevalence than that of non-disabled individuals so, understanding these conditions is vital to the proper prevention, care, and return to activity for these athletes. From open-ended questions, St<sub>6</sub> stated that *"we really need enough security to ensure that we are safe both on the court and on the road"*. From the interviews So<sub>2</sub> explained that *"we try to ensure the safety of the participants wherever we go with them"* and Co<sub>3</sub> stated, *"I check the field of play and the condition of the equipment before training to ensure the safety of the players. There is also needed for protective gears for students with disabilities"*.

Concerning *giving bursaries to disabled talented students in sports*, cumulatively, 98% agreed while 0.0% disagreed. The mean = 4.61 indicates that the respondents agreed. Therefore, giving bursaries to students with disabilities makes a better solution. These results are in line with Sabrina Collier (2022) who stated that there are many disability scholarships available worldwide, providing financial assistance to children with physical, sensory, learning disabilities or mental health condition. From interviews, So<sub>2</sub> commented that, *"we are lobbying from non-governmental organizations for funds to at least sponsor the talented students and sustain them on the university team and Increasing the disability opportunity into university entry scheme"* and Co<sub>1</sub> pointed out that, *"the best students need financial support to keep them stable on the team"*. From the open-ended questions St<sub>12</sub> stated that *"some parents cannot afford tuition and support for sports for their talented children. If these students are sponsored, they will be motivated to remain in school and perform better in sports"*.

About *provision of special coaches/specialists for the disabled*, cumulatively the majority 99.2% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.57 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, there is a need for the provision of special coaches/specialists for the disabled. This is in line with Carrera (2021) who suggested that *"coaches need to gain knowledge and experiences through many different means like learning from other coaches, attending clinics and conferences, and asking peers for advice and assistance on the best ways of handling athletes with disabilities"*. From open-ended questions, St<sub>18</sub> suggested that *"we need to have more specialized coaches who can handle different disabilities"*. From the interviews Co<sub>2</sub> explained that *"we need more coaches and counselors on the coaching team of the students with disabilities and increase on their incentives"* and So<sub>1</sub> commented that *"we are planning to recruit more specialized coaches for different disabilities"*.

With regard to *collaboration with NGO's for financial support*, cumulatively the majority percentage 95.9% agreed with 2.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.49 indicated that the respondents agreed. Therefore, *collaboration with NGO's* for financial support is vital. This is in agreement with Jahanzaib et al., (2021) who sighted a number of NGO's in India dedicated to helping those with disabilities to live with dignity and equal opportunity. From the interviews, So<sub>2</sub> stated that *"we are working with NUDIPU and Uganda Paralympics"*

Office to support the sports for the students with disabilities” and Co<sub>2</sub> suggested that “there is a need to lobby for money to support sports for the disabled”. From open-ended questions, St<sub>12</sub> stated that “the university needs to collaborate with Non-Governmental Organizations to solicit money to boost sports for students with disabilities”.

Concerning whether *providing specific and modified equipment would make a better solution*, cumulatively the majority percentage 95.0% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.47 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, there is a need to provide specific and modified equipment. This was in agreement with (Department of Education and Training, Melbourne, 2019) which explained that the Equipment Boost for Schools initiative responds to calls to strengthen inclusive education practices to provide better support for students with disabilities and additional needs by providing all Victorian government schools with access to funding to purchase new equipment and assistive technology to support students with disabilities or additional learning needs to participate, experience, learn and achieve on the same basis as their peers and, support to identify their needs and utilize equipment and assistive technology to implement effective, evidence-based interventions (including through the provision of training). From open-ended questions, St<sub>6</sub> stated that “the university needs to buy modified equipment for different sports”. From the interviews, So<sub>2</sub> reported that “we have the plan to buy a variety of modified equipment for sports for the disabilities according to different disabilities” and Co<sub>2</sub> discussed that “there is a need to have a variety of sports equipment for students with disabilities”.

With respect to *sensitization for support from the environment*, cumulatively, the larger percentage 95.9% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.45 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, *sensitization to support from the environment* would help make students with disabilities get involved in sports. These results are in agreement with Haegele & Hodge (2016) who sighted focusing on building self-advocacy and fostering changes in the environment and societal understandings of disability. From the interviews, So<sub>1</sub> suggested that “people with disability need to be shown love in the community they live in, study and socialize”.

With regard to *identification of students with disabilities and acceptance*, cumulatively, the larger percentage 93.9% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.43 meant that the respondents agreed. Therefore, *identification of students with disabilities and acceptance* makes a better improvement. This is in agreement with Bundon (2019) who reported that, it can be understood that sports give disabled individuals the opportunity to gain a sportive identity and at the same time serve to distance them from their worthless disabled identity. From the interviews, Co<sub>2</sub> suggested that “there is a need to provide incentives to the disabled sport’s participants to encourage them” and So<sub>1</sub> stated that “we need to address students with disabilities and sensitize them on different sports during orientation”. From open-ended questions, St<sub>11</sub> suggested that “the university needs to encourage all the students with disabilities to participate in sports and cater for their different abilities”.

In regard to *introduction of fitting sport for different disabilities*, the majority 98.0% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean =4.43 suggested that the respondents agreed.

Therefore, the *introduction of fitting sports for different disabilities* would encourage them to participate more. This is in line with (Balcazar & Suarez-Balcazar, 2017) who suggested accessibility of the environment and society to fully support the independence and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society. From the interviews, Co<sub>3</sub> suggested that *“Introduction of adapted sports gala for the disabled”* and So<sub>1</sub> reported that *“we are planning to introduce more sports for the students with disabilities to cater for those who did not have”*. From open-ended questions, St<sub>11</sub> suggested that *“there is a need of the university to introduce a variety of sports for students with disabilities”*.

As to whether *exposure to role models*, cumulatively the larger percentage 98.0% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.43 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, *exposure to role models* will encourage students with disabilities to participate in sports. This is in agreement with (Sandford et al., 2020) which identified encouraging children with disabilities to feel legitimate to practice sports and to make them aware of their potential. From open-ended questions, St<sub>13</sub> suggested that *“there is a need for the disabled administrator to work as a role model”*. From the interviews So<sub>2</sub> reported that *“we plan to invite the skilled students who have moved heights in sports to talk to our students with disabilities about sports participation and performance”* and Co<sub>12</sub> suggested that *“we need to expose our students with disabilities to Paralympics games to motivate them to participate in sports”*.

About *designing facilities modification and adjustment to disability type*, cumulatively the majority percentage 98.0% agreed with 0.0% disagreeing. The mean = 4.37 suggested that the respondents agreed. Therefore, *designing modified and adjusted facilities* was a better solution. This is in agreement with Darcy, et al., (2017) who suggested the creation of accessible and inclusive spaces because people with disabilities need to be offered a choice of participation options. From the interviews, So<sub>2</sub> reported that *“we already have a work plan for the modified facilities for the students with disabilities”* and Co<sub>3</sub> advised that *“modified facilities for the students with disabilities are really needed”*. From open-ended questions, St<sub>22</sub> suggested that *“the university needs to consider the construction of special facilities for sports for the students with different facilities”*.

The results from the interviews with the sports administrators of the universities and coaches and open responses from the questionnaires revealed that the ways of overcoming the challenges faced when involving students with disabilities in sports include: *identification of students with disabilities and acceptance, avail specific equipment, introduce fitting sport for different disabilities, provision of special coaches/ specialist for the disabled, design of modified and adjustable facilities, sensitization for support from the environment, ensure safety for the disabled athletes, awarding of bursaries to disabled talented students in sports, collaboration with NGO's for financial support, exposure to role models, need for protective gears for students with disabilities, increase of incentives for the coaches, introduction of adapted sports gala for the disabled, increasing the disability opportunity into university entry scheme, provide incentives to the disabled sports participants, the need for the disabled administrator to work as a role model.*

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

The challenges faced by women who participate in sports were: *materials not sufficiently adjusted or available, facilities not modified, lack of financial support, inferiority complex among disabled students, a tight academic timetable that leaves no time for sports, lack of confidence, discrimination and stereotype in the population, lack of inspiration, lack of modified sports according to different disabilities, lack of role models, fear of injuries, expensive adapted sports equipment.*

Ways how students with disabilities can be best included in Makerere University sports programmes include: *identification of students with disabilities and acceptance, avail specific equipment, introduction fitting sport for different disabilities, provision of special coaches/specialists for the disabled, design modified facilities sufficiently adjusted, sensitization for support from the environment, ensure safety for the disabled athletes, give bursaries to disabled talented students in sports, collaboration with NGO,s for financial support, exposure to role models, need for protective gears for students with disabilities; increase incentives for the coaches, introduce adapted sports gala for the disabled, increasing the disability opportunity into university entry scheme, provide incentives to the disabled sport's participants, the need for the disabled administrator to work as a role model.*

### 4.2 Recommendations

The conclusions of this study on the assessment of disability mainstreaming in sports led to the making of the following recommendations; policymakers should ensure that students with disabilities are empowered in sports to give them the freedom to sports participation both at home, institutions, and workplaces and in the field. This is because inferiority complexes among disabled students, lack of confidence, discrimination and stereotype in the population have affected the students' self-esteem. Managers of sports should ensure players attain full security of the players, provide protective gear and adopt tactics that reduce fear of injuries. This is because fear of injuries has been a challenge since students with disabilities are prone to falls. Management of sports organisations that involve students with disabilities should provide quality playing fields, and modified equipment, introduce a variety of sports for different disabilities, provide players adequate attention and advocate the full implementation of counselling for students with disabilities. This is because materials are not adaptable and adjusted or available, facilities not modified and equipment for adopted sports are very expensive. Management of organisations of sports teams should engage students with disabilities in sports jobs in the sports associations connect them outside sports and collaborate with non-governmental organizations that support disability-based activities and provide incentives for athletes with disabilities. This is because a lack of finance and lack of inspiration was a challenge.



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### **Statement of Conflict of Interest**

Authors have declared no competing conflict of interests in this study.

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