

SOCIAL SCIENCES

ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES AND INTERVENTION MODELS IN SOCIAL WORK WITH PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

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Abstract

Disability is one or more impairments a person possesses at birth or later in life. People might face disability at any stage of life, and it could impact their social life tremendously. In this analysis, the research was conducted with 15 disabled individuals employing the in-depth interview methodology within the framework of qualitative methodology in Baku (Azerbaijan), and they were suggested solutions that they preferred for their predicaments.

Due to this research, accessibility problems of disabled people over fifty were investigated. The outcomes of this assessment can be utilized in governmental and non-governmental organizations when developing intervention models. Additionally, these abilities impact the formation of social workers' approach methods to this process. Concomitantly, this research is valuable for the literature regarding disabled individuals.

Keywords: disability; physical impediment; accessibility problems; Azerbaijan; in-depth interview method

Introduction

Every individual is in possession of equal rights with others in either social or physical life. However, there are some disadvantageous groups that cannot leverage it. One of those groups is individuals with physical impediments. It is claimed that 12 percent of the world's population consists of disabled people, meaning that there are over 1 billion disabled people. It is known that 93 million are children and 720 million are adults (WHO, 2020). According to the information provided by the statistical information system of people with international disabilities, of the 2.511.950 people with physical impediments living in the world, 1.414.643 are males and 1.097.307 are females (ASHEYHGM, 2021).

Throughout the history, the acceptance of disabled people has been a challenge. This situation hampers the living standards of physically disabled individuals, causing hardship as a result. It was once restricted to having their social surroundings and even a family and child (Lipson

and Regers, 2000, 73-74). Along with the social problems, psychological adversities also rise. Therefore, disabled individuals are compelled to face psychosocial issues (Aykurt, 2020, 428).

At a certain point in life, people irrefutably experience disability. This happening occurs either in their own or acquaintances' lives (Abdullayev, 2023). Disability varies depending on the source and cause. Those

are divided into three sections: before birth, during birth, and after birth. The reasons for before birth; drug usage, parents being relatives, illnesses during pregnancy, genetic reasons, the alcohol or drug addiction of a mother, the traumas gained during pregnancy, stress, diet, and unhealthy diet might be the cause. The reasons during birth; births that do not occur under normal conditions, traumas, incorrect practices, etc. can be the factor. The causes after birth may be accidents occurring in work settings, traffic accidents, household incidents, earthquakes, terrorism, wars, industrial accidents, etc (Koca, 2010).

It is observed that the obstacles that physically disabled people encounter are overcome by time. Currently, we can see that individuals with physical impediments possess opinion articulation of freedom in international and national policies and are represented in many areas of society (WHO, 2011). Nevertheless, this does not confirm that problems are fully alleviated. Still predicaments such as being outcasted by certain groups, not being endorsed by family and social surroundings, not considering disabled individuals in city planning, lack of sufficient knowledge of employees working in the service and transportation sectors, insufficiency of economic support, limitations in academic life, problems in bilateral relations due to disability are experienced (Jensen ve Karoly, 2008).

Another handicap that obstructs the life quality of disabled people is the accessibility issue. Resources and

services should be available for every individual. Absence of this condition leads to the discrepancy, and it is related to the previously mentioned setting (Duranton and Guerra, 2016: 18). In the Modern Age, accessibility barriers are prevalent in urban areas where a high concentration of people exist. One of the core challenges in urban design is the fact that there are confined or no layouts suitable for people with disabilities (Evans, 2009). Disabled individuals face such hurdles every day. Thus, the prioritization of the resolutions for the highlighted problems is of a great essence.

The Objective of the Research and Analysis Reasons

The greatest handicap experienced by disabled people in the process of adaptation to society lies in their competency to move freely in social life. If an individual encounters physical barrier in his or her surroundings, these questions the full participation in the environment. In conjunction with the physical reasons, psycho-social causes are led as a result, which contributes to the disadaptation of an individual positively. While investigating those adversities, we can observe that infrastructure issues are hurdles that have been faced since the past and still remain one. Subsequently, it maintains the relevance of the matter and leads to research in this field.

The infrastructure problems of individuals dwelling in Azerbaijan are at a severe level. The sparse of audible traffic lights, the lack of lanes for wheelchairs on the roads, the absence of rules to ensure the movements of disabled people on buses and subways, and the presence of written signs for people with hearing disabilities mainly in the center of the city, and other predicaments make this study relevant in Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, there is no empirically based answer to some of the inquiries that arise in such an environment. For instance, how does a disabled person navigate? What would they want to have access to? The answers to these questions may seem obvious at first sight. However, the empirical proofs are required to be certain. The goal of this study, therefore, is to investigate the issues related to infrastructure experienced by people with physical disabilities and formulate solutions. The major element in identifying resolutions to a hindrance is that researching the problem through individuals experiencing it will assist us in uncovering more optimal and accurate approaches.

One of the major factors that augment the worth of ongoing research is that we cover a country that has bounded empirical information in the relevant literature. A few minutes of searching in scientific databases posits that no article on the indicated topic has been issued in Azerbaijan implementing the methodology for the current study. In an article that is relatively pertinent to our topic, the stress levels of individuals with impairments in 9 CIS countries were quantitatively examined (Stickley et al., 2021). Therefore, the study with a distinct objective does not provide the information that current research can offer. Furthermore, the outputs of our study may be constructive for those researching MDB settings as well as scholars studying disability concerns in this geographical area.

Previous Research

The infrastructure issues confronted by people with disabilities have been the subject of research worldwide for a lengthy period. Likewise, a boost of interest in this matter is observed in Azerbaijan. By implementing quantitative research methodology regarding the infrastructure of disabled people, Musasoy (2022) conducted a survey. In a survey conducted among the population, more than 60% of individuals with disabilities reported that they encounter adversities with infrastructure. The magnitude of addressing these challenges is underscored. Unlike the present research, his study did not specifically provide resolutions; it simply identified and presented the predicament. The investigation of a problem is as essential as the determination of its solutions. Therefore, resolving the adversity is not adequate. The innovation of strategies to resolve the issues is also required.

If we consider the global scale, the infrastructure barriers encountered by disabled individuals are studied in more than one state of America by Eisenberg et al. (2022). This study examined cities with infrastructure for people with disabilities utilizing special air transport and cities with unsatisfactory infrastructure. As a result, no difference was discovered among the cities. In the current study, the interviews were conducted with disabled individuals, and the impact of infrastructure problems on them was investigated simultaneously, unlike the former research.

Danso et al. (2019) examined the handicaps experienced by people with visual impairments in infrastructure. The challenges at transport hubs and in the metro were discussed. In this study, questionnaires were administered to 4 respondents, including metropolitan employees and engineers. This study was conducted in the Kumasi metropolitan region in Ghana. In contrast to the present study, it is evident that it solely investigated infrastructure concerns occurring in the metropolitan area. Meanwhile, merely 4 people, consisting of metro specialists and an engineer, are involved in the study as respondents. The investigation of other aspects of infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, overpasses, etc.) was disregarded in the study. The absence of such instances renders the examination of these components of the subject matter unavoidable.

Phillips (2002) reflected on the challenges during the Soviet period in his study. He mentioned the neglect of disabled individuals and the obstruction of their active movements. Simultaneously, it is pinpointed that although reforms are underway in Ukraine regarding people with impairments, disabled individuals still encounter infrastructure and employment-related problems that hinder their comfortable movement. Unlike the present research, no survey or questionnaire was employed in the methodology section, making it inevitable to conduct a study investigating the infrastructure issues of disabled individuals in the post-Soviet countries.

Stickley et al. (2021) conducted research studying the psycho-social problems of individuals with physical impairments in post-Soviet countries including Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Moldova, and Russia. In this research, 18 thousand people were involved as respondents, and their psycho-social issues were studied. The study drew attention to the psychological problems of people with disabilities. The reason for this was revealed to be inappropriate conditions. Here, the infrastructure challenges of people with impairments were examined within the psychosocial problems.

Since the above problems are not explicitly addressed, it is vital to research them, considering the individuals may not perceive underlying causes and impacts to be endearing.

Methodology

A qualitative method was employed in this study. Due to the utilization of qualitative research methodologies encompassing interview and document analysis, a cohesive and accurate portrayal of notions and phenomena in the natural environment is exhibited. The common traits of qualitative research are natural settings, direct data gathering, thorough descriptions, process orientation, inductive data analysis, participant standpoint, and flexibility (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006).

In this study, a qualitative research model was used. The study was conducted in the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku. A semi-structured questionnaire was designed by the scholar to determine the deficiencies and unveil approaches. The interview consisted of open-ended questions. Therefore, attaining the resolution of predicaments becomes straightforward. The meetings were conducted both online and face-to-face, depending on the participants' conditions. Fifteen physically disabled individuals were involved in the sessions. The snowball sampling method was used to assess the respondents. Initially, individuals exhibiting four specific characteristics were selected, and subsequent participants were recruited through their networks.

The study group for this research comprises disabled individuals ranging in age from 18 to 29.

To ensure confidentiality, unique code numbers were assigned to each respondent. The interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the respondents with disabilities.

Participants who did not consent to audio recordings had their responses documented manually. Given the sensitive nature of research, interviews were conducted in settings where participants felt at ease. To elicit more comprehensive responses, the questions were clarified and complemented with examples. The duration of the interviews ranged from 25 to 30 minutes and were conducted between May 21 and June 5.

The interview commenced with revealing reasons why individuals with physical disabilities refrain from going outside, the hindrances they tackle when navigating outdoors, and the challenges faced when moving independently. Additionally, the underlying causes of these adversities and potential solutions were addressed. The interview questions:

When did you acquire your disability?

How does your physical disability impact your life?

How does your physical impairment influence your emotional well-being? How do you usually spend your leisure time?

Have you encountered accessibility barriers due to your disability? If so, what specific barriers have you faced?

What strategies or approaches do you use to manage those challenges?

What recommendations would you suggest for eliminating or mitigating these problems?

Findings and conclusion

In this section, the core information about the interviewed physically impaired individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 is provided. In adherence to ethical considerations, code names were used to describe the respondents.

Table 1.

Information on Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

No	Age	Gender	Education	Marital Status	Disability type
K1	29	F	Bachelor degree	Single	Visual
K2	20	F	Secondar education	Single	Orthopedic
K3	29	F	Secondary education	Single	Orthopedic
K4	29	M	Secondary education	Single	Orthopedic
K5	19	M	Bachelor's degree student	Single	Hearing
K6	28	M	Associate's degree	Married	Hearing
K7	27	M	Secondary education	Married	Hearing and speech
K8	21	F	Bachelor's degree student	Single	Orthopedic
K9	24	M	Bachelor's degree student	Single	Speech
K10	26	M	Bachelor's degree student	Single	Orthopedic
K11	23	F	Secondary education	Single	Speech
K12	21	M	Bachelor's degree student	Single	Orthopedic
K13	26	M	Master's degree	Single	Visual
K14	27	F	Secondary education	Single	Speech
K15	22	F	Secondary education	Single	Speech

Source: Compiled by the authors based on field interview results.

Findings related to the timing of disability onset

The initial occurrence of this situation is as pivotal as the circumstances faced by individuals with impairments. In this context, when disabled people were

asked about the time and reasons for their current condition, their responses were as follows: two respondents linked their condition to genetic factors, one respondent

to premature birth and its complications, and two others to injuries stemming from medical flaws during delivery. The remaining respondents were born with disabilities and were identified within the first year of life. Both visually impaired K1 and K13 reported that their condition occurred at birth, which they cannot recall. K1 explicitly stated being born blind in one eye and losing vision in the other over time.

"This situation happened during the delivery. I do not remember. There was some vision until the age of three". (Respondent 1)

"I was born with my disability. Initially, there was no vision. Afterward, I had surgery in Iran. Then my eyes were able to see a little. During operation, the electricity of the building went off, and the wound was closed in lamplight since the generator was not functioning". (Respondent 13)

K2, K3, and K6 mention that the reason for the arousal of this situation is the violation by the doctor.

"My back was injured when I was born. The injury occurred after the birth. The doctor damaged my spine during delivery". (Respondent 2)

"The day I opened my eyes to the world, the doctor injured my spine during

birth". (Respondent 3) "When I was a child, I got the wrong vaccine, and it went wrong. I do not recall". (Respondent 6)

K5 and K7, both hearing impaired, state that they were disabled since childhood and that their parents recognized the situation at a later stage.

"I do not remember. My mother felt that I could not hear when I was six months". (Respondent 5)

"I have been like this since birth. My parents brought me to the doctor because I could not speak". (Respondent 7)

The conclusions regarding the influence of disability on individuals' personal lives

The respondents report not recalling the onset of disability since it commenced either before the delivery or at a very young age. When they fully comprehended their situation, they delivered that the experience was initially quite distressing. They were disheartened by others' reactions, especially how people stared at them, in addition to the reluctance of their peers to spend time with them and the mockery they faced. Nevertheless, the limited timeframe of these events and the unlikelihood of such situations occurring again were disclosed. K11 articulated the situation in this way.

"I do not know. I was around seven when I fully realized the situation and it happened when my friends and I were enrolled in different schools. It made me feel upset". (Respondent 11)

Among the respondents, K5 reported the parents being more upset about the condition, and under this circumstance, K5 supported them.

"I cannot recall. Not me yet, my mother was feeling sad. I was stimulating my mother. When everyone was embarrassed to take off their hearing aids, I was not". (Respondents 5)

Respondent 8 highlighted the difficulty of the situation and the lengthy period taken to embrace it. The respondent later pinpointed that she recovered after the

psychologist's efforts to make the respondent attend social events and invitations.

"It was very challenging at first. I could not start going to kindergarten and never could. When I went outside, some children laughed, some mocked, and the bullying lasted for a while. I was in a depression in an elementary school. Then I went to a psychologist.

Afterward, he encouraged me to participate in events". (Respondent 8)

Respondents 10 and 11 report being aware of the situation early on, and, thus, they did not experience any psychological or other damage.

"I realized it earlier than usual. I embraced it as a part of mine and knew I would overcome it. The diagnosis was not introduced to me as a severe one. My family supported me a lot. My feet were paralyzed. I was facing difficulty writing, reading, and reading in different languages. My psychological condition was ideal. I was doing exercises. At the age of nine, I began walking by holding onto one side. I was taking a certain number of steps". (Respondent 10)

Although a resilient individual, the disability condition leaves an impact on the person's life. Considering that the sessions were conducted only once, individuals would refrain from elaborating on the current influences and consequences of their disability. While fostering trust was prioritized during the interviews, it is believed that establishing such a connection during one session was challenging.

Findings Regarding the Analysis of the Feelings Caused by Physical Disability in the Individual

As a response to how their disability impacts their feelings, many participants mentioned that they perceive their condition as a normal part of life and make peace with it. They noted experiencing vast adversities during childhood and facing times of emotional struggles that remain a part of the past. Some participants indicated that since they were born with this condition, they were not feeling distressed yet society's lack of knowledge on this topic made them upset. Nonetheless, not all interviewees have fully embraced their situation, and acknowledged sometimes not feeling emotionally well. Other participants reported that they have encountered no notable challenges, either because of their childhood or having this condition since birth. K4 expresses the situation in this manner.

"Since it comes from birth, I do not feel any change. I just had a reclusive stance, and I overcame it over time". (Respondent 4)

Among participants, K1 reported being tardy at work due to the disability, and this situation frustrated this participant.

"I try my impairment not to influence my feelings. However, it sometimes does. We do our work at a slower pace. I felt a sense of sorrow because of my disability". (Respondent 1)

Respondent K14 indicated being a child when the situation was comprehended thoroughly and not feeling well. The participant expressed how scary the situation was at some points and cried over it occasionally. Nevertheless, currently, K4 accepts the condition and states that it is not of great essence.

"I was around seven I understood my condition deeply, yet I cannot recall. I remember children pushing me and saying they did not want to play with me. At that moment, I ran home sobbing. It sometimes scared me. Currently, it does not mean anything". (Respondent 14)

The Findings regarding the Analysis of Leisure Time Utilization of Physically Disabled Individuals

The participants commonly engage in activities analogous to their hobbies. In conjunction with that, some cannot spare time during the day to value their idle time. The majority of individuals articulate that they spend time constructively and partake in activities that yield personal advantages. Their satisfaction from this situation is observed.

Participant K8 asserts utilizing leisure time efficiently and allocating time to socialize, unlike in the participant's childhood.

"I listen to music and sometimes walk...now socializing. Despite the childhood now socializing". (Respondent 8)

Meanwhile, K15 states engaging in calming endeavors during idle time.

"I draw pictures. It pacifies me. Spending time with my friends, listening to music". (Respondent 15)

The other participant, K2, reports possessing an occupation and completing half of the tasks remotely and the other half in the workplace whilst watching TV shows during spare time. Moreover, K2 mentions participating in social projects.

"I work either during the day or at home, or I am called to projects. I watch TV shows in my free time". (Respondent 2)

According to the given answers, although sometimes difficult to implement for them, respondents productively spend their time during idle hours or at weekends. Within this framework, it is blatant that along with the encountered handicaps, numerous joyful moments were experienced, and the vitality of those moments in their lives is undeniable.

The Findings regarding Accessibility and Service Access Problems Experienced by Individuals due to Physical Disability

Whilst examining the answers provided by respondents, the accessibility and service access challenges faced by physically disabled individuals were identified. When allocating those problems into sections, typical predicaments are observed in public transportation, ramps, sidewalks, and with social service workers.

Respondent K1 elucidates the adversity of moving on paths, and the absence of distinct signs for people with visual impairments at the subways and commuter stops. Furthermore, K1 reported encountering a problem when trying to obtain a health document at one of the entities.

"I have difficulties moving on the roads. There are many ups and downs. I face challenges getting on and off the bus. There are no raised letters on subways. When I went to receive a health report from an institution, whose name I do not want to mention, in the service sector, one of the employees disrespected me because of my disability". (Respondent 1)

Another respondent, K7, expresses concern that employees in the service field do not adequately treat individuals with physical impairments and that the ramps are excessively elevated. Meanwhile, some restaurants and cafes lack elevators.

"They disregard us. I have difficulties comprehending this. This situation can also occur with the officer talking to us. Ramps are impractically elevated, and I face challenges. We cannot find elevators to go upstairs at some restaurants and cafes". (Respondent 7)

Respondent K1 remarks on the impediments experienced at passenger terminals and aboveground crossings.

"The entrance doors for disabled individuals at busses are not opened. We have to wait for the door. The width of the sidewalks is very narrow, and it is not feasible to move there with wheelchairs. Don't they also erect electricity poles on those narrow sidewalks?... There are elevators in the aboveground passages, yet we cannot find the employee who is responsible for functioning the elevators". (Respondent 8)

Respondent K15 highlights experiencing challenging moments whilst interacting with social service employees and the handicap stemming from workers not knowing sign language.

"I go to a sector that is designed for assisting disabled people yet there is no one capable of communicating in sign language. There are even no signs for us. This situation is very troublesome". (Respondent 15)

The Findings on Coping with the Accessibility and Service Access Problems Experienced by Individuals due to Physical Disability

It is detected that the participants tackle such unfavorable situations more than anticipated. Whilst some seek to discern alternatives to evade those adversities, others face challenges in order to overcome and unveil solutions for them.

Respondent K2 lengthens the commute duration to discover novel options if moving on the sidewalks is not viable. Under such circumstances, requesting for assistance from other people is observed.

"When I cannot move on sidewalks, I search for different ways. Even if it is grueling and time consuming. As a last option, I move on the roads that cars pass. When the elevator is not present or broken, I ask for other people's help. I appreciate their help". (Respondent 2)

Respondent K3 is in a dilemma concerning the thoughts. Initially, he advocates for the benefits provided by online services, but subsequently, she argues that this standpoint is not the most appropriate.

"I utilize online services. I might be thankful to the pandemic for this. However, this is also not a suitable approach. We should benefit from the services face to face so that they see the problem and manifest an effort to solve it. Once I had difficulty using the service. The employee told me to leave, and that the rest of the work would be done with my mother. By saying - "If the way the service is provided does not suit me, you have to adjust it" - I

demanded my right". (Respondent 3)

Speech-impaired K6 articulated encountering service accessibility problems since other people do not comprehend sign language and utilizing the notes of the mobile phone to communicate in this situation.

"My sole solution is to write. I always keep notes on my phone open. I write down what I want to deliver". (Respondent 6)

While tackling such predicaments, Respondent K7 tries to solve the problem by communicating and standing aside. However, some problems, as K7 indicates, are not resolved by conversation.

"I stand at one side on the bus. I try to deliver my thoughts by talking to people, yet it sometimes does not work. I do not have any solutions for the problems of elevator and ramp". (Respondent 7)

The Findings regarding the Solutions for the Accessibility and Service Access Problems Experienced by Individuals due to Physical Disability

According to the participants' responses, strategies for addressing the encountered hardships in accessibility and service fields are categorized under the following headings: Augmenting the involvement rate of disabled people in social life, ensuring adequate representation in places, providing training on ethical behaviours for service workers, and designing equal conditions in settings where people spend their leisure time (cafes, restaurants, shopping malls, etc.).

Respondent K1 articulated that prioritization of active participation in social life and the existing challenges would be resolved in advance if taken into consideration.

"When we sit at home, the problems stay still. I suggest being more present in society to highlight and solve the problems. When we are seen around more, the faster the solutions are proposed". (Respondent 1)

Respondent K5 perceives mutual understanding as an effective strategy for problem-solving. A physically impaired individual should observe others and behave accordingly, whilst society should also adopt an appropriate approach toward them. He believes that well-structured projects can lead to this accomplishment.

"Disabled individuals should be attentive. They should consider the people around them. On the other hand, other people should be aware of the disability of individuals in front of them.

This can be achieved through projects, as I believe". (Respondent 5)

By insisting on the layout of the city, Respondent K13 proposes that serious adjustments concerning urban design ought to be undertaken by accountable individuals.

"Government or other entities plan laws and projects. A scarce fraction of people participating in the planning process are disabled people. Therefore, we need to be represented more when such laws or projects are endorsed". (Respondent 15)

Discussion

In this research, the interview methodology is employed to study the predicaments and their solutions in several directions. Although some outcomes exhibit similarities with the former research results, certain divergences are also detected.

In Musasoy's (2022) survey regarding the integration of physically impaired individuals into society, 28,2% of disabled people point to infrastructure issues as a reason for their unemployment and 38,4% of them underscored that transportation is not conducive to their disabilities. In contrast to this, interviews were included in the methodology of the current study, resulting in obtaining a deeper understanding of the matter. The present findings share commonalities with Musasoy's research and in both studies, findings suggest that people with disabilities struggle with social integration.

Considering physically disabled individuals, Eisenberg et al. (2022) analysed the cities with high infrastructure by utilizing advanced technical aids in the research. The photos and videos of areas were recorded to juxtapose them. The findings revealed that in the vast regions, the infrastructure is not fully optimal for active movements of disabled people. Nevertheless, the infrastructure conduciveness was investigated based on the responses provided by physically impaired individuals. The major distinction lies in the fact that, within this research, the pathways to overcoming the challenges and potential resolutions are delineated by qualified scholars. The findings yielded in the present study are more accurate considering the concreteness of the investigated area. Moreover, current research is more precise and solution-oriented, whereas Eisenberg et al.'s paper presents findings with a general scope.

Danso et al. (2021) studied the infrastructure concerns of physically impaired individuals. This scholarly investigation was commenced after securing the requisite endorsements and targeted employees within the designated metropolitan zone. Therefore, the same situation was reflected in the present study as superiority, and the focus group, unlike the former research, was individuals with physical impairments. Additionally, the expanded recognition of areas, including the infrastructure, is perceived as another advantage of current research. Philips (2002) contrasted the disabled people in the Soviet and Independence periods. The insights indicated the upgraded life quality in the Independence period, yet the infrastructure issues remain unchanged. The present research involved the concrete participation of respondents, and the collected verbal inputs were incorporated. Since Ukraine and Azerbaijan are post-Soviet countries, the findings from both studies are analogous. The current study, however, can be considered advanced due to the veracity and meticulousness of the outcomes. The justification for this is that Philips researched the contemporary condition via resources reflecting the situation rather than direct interaction with disabled individuals. A more refined methodology for exploring a problem is to derive insights from the communication of individuals directly influenced by it.

Stickley et al. (2021) studied the reasons for the impact of disability on depression. The research conducted in the post-Soviet geographical zones targeted 18 thousand of physically impaired individuals, and the concern of infrastructure is presented as one of the underlying causes of depression. As a result, investigating the issue and offering corresponding solutions hold

considerable significance. The current research thoroughly explores the infrastructure problems experienced by disabled individuals and the applicable solutions are proposed.

Concurrently, the prevailing social stigma against people with impairments is mirrored in the institutions designed to assist them. Furthermore, recent studies emphasize that social change and inclusive development are closely associated with equal participation opportunities for disadvantaged groups in educational and social environments. In particular, innovative and socially oriented approaches contribute to strengthening social integration and improving accessibility conditions for individuals with disabilities (Jafarova, 2026). Additionally, the transformation of modern societies through innovation and social awareness has increased the importance of inclusive policies aimed at supporting vulnerable populations and ensuring their active participation in public life (Jafarova, 2026).

Conclusion

The active engagement of physically disabled individuals in social life is a fundamental pillar in the construction of the welfare state. Toward the end of the previous century, the initiatives of the United Nations and the European Union regarding education, rehabilitation, and employment of people with disabilities elevated the visibility of these concerns. Providing the involvement of disabled individuals is a key parameter for the realization of this objective. To facilitate this, both the infrastructure and the level of preparedness among individuals with disabilities need to be robust. The infrastructure-related issues play a pivotal role in stimulating the participation of disabled individuals in social dynamics and navigating independently. The failure to provide inclusive infrastructure in metro systems, public buildings, elevated walkways, and other infrastructure causes hindrance to access to education, healthcare, employment, and social integration. The responses gathered from comprehensive meetings with physically impaired individuals indicate that disabled people are unable to navigate as they desire. The vitality of public transportation, crossings, and metro stations in the lives of disabled people is highlighted, and the sole way to foster social interaction outside is the resolution of pinpointed issues. Transportation and urban infrastructure are essential for physically impaired individuals. They reported that buses, overpasses, subways, and the flaws in vast buildings and roads from an infrastructural perspective are not inclusive.

Recommendations

According to the responses provided by the participants, the categorization of the proposed recommendations would include the following: There are accountable employees stationed at the elevators of overpasses. When the employees are absent, orthopedically impaired individuals are refrained from utilizing this service. Regarding this matter, the elevators should be directly available for use by individuals with disabilities without the need for attendants. The presence of audible traffic signals in specific areas of the city, while absent in others poses obstacles for visually impaired individuals. The availability of this technology across the city should be considered. In the waiting points for public

transport, the information should be provided by raised letters for individuals with visual disabilities. The ramps fail to meet the requirements of standards. They should not be over 18 degrees.

Individuals utilizing wheelchairs frequently encounter this problem. Addressing this issue with careful consideration is of great magnitude in attaining resolution.

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