

Participatory Empowerment and Economic Capacitation in Disabled Peoples' Cooperatives in South Africa

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ABSTRACT Participatory paradigm can be regarded as an instrument for identifying the needs of all persons within a community, and means of empowering deprived or marginalized groups. Therefore, this study investigated the extent in which cooperatives strive to empower disabled people. A survey was conducted using a five-level Likert scale to decipher respondents' perceptions of level of participation, empowerment, capacitation, satisfaction with management and perceived benefits. The responses (N=28) were reduced using Principal Components Analysis to determine how questionnaire items contributed to variables under consideration. Hypotheses were tested using bivariate correlation and linear regression, to test the mediation effects of participation, empowerment and capacitation. The results showed that capacitation and empowerment resulted from membership cooperatives among disabled people at Zamani Disabled People's Organization. It was on the basis of the results that cooperatives have a potential of empowering disabled people and that this is achieved through democratic operation, where members equally participate in the daily business and inclusion in decision-making.

INTRODUCTION

The way managers structure the employment relationships in their organizations is a key factor in producing relative societal income inequality. The welfare of any society is commonly characterized by economic, social, physical and spiritual health, and that broadly refers to the well-being of a society as a whole (Antras et al. 2016). There are many advantages in adopting cooperative techniques in businesses, either big or small. It assimilates hands-on work, ownership and public participation, at the same time enhancing everyone to consider work while ensuring organizational development and maintaining profits and sustenance for competitiveness (Kabiri 2002). The understanding of disability could be closely related to sexism and racism in highlighting the complexities accompanying disability. On this point, it is understood that there are many different restrictions imposed on people with disability to perform in different spheres of life, to basically support their living. In the absence or unenforced social policies aimed at ensuring social economic equality by parties in jurisdiction including government, indirectly that will arguably results to disability (Abberley 2006).

People in administrative power, for example, in the government, are entitled to do justice by devising development programs that will benefit all people including those living with disability in different forms (Chambers 2002). The capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes derives from the empowerment process. This method assists in the assimilation and ensuring effectiveness of the individual in the group, enhancing organizational development with good governance of human and resources forming part of the cooperative (McEvoy 2012). According to Clark (2007), in explaining the development process, the focus should be on human competences that show what people are able to be and do, not on what they can purchase, gain or consume. The success of the cooperative is determined by how employees as owners have the good relationship amongst themselves and what relationship they develop with the type of resources they use as inputs and expectations as outcomes or production. From that point of view, organizational justice is important, in that it includes skills development, fair profit sharing, good commu-

nication strategies and channels, and to enable peace and negative way in which members of the organization might react from the unfair practices (Burststein and Vogel 2016).

Cooperation and Capacitation of Disabled People

Capacitation of disabled people is important, however, it has to take place in the form of employment, training and career development programs (Wespac Group 2017). Globalization is currently a major challenge in the development of many organizations and the plight of disabled people, but on those complex challenges societies and organizations are obliged to adopt to avoid the situation of pathology. This process becomes even more complex if the new employees are disabled, and facing all sorts of exclusions and rejections from the social system (McLaughlin et al. 2004). In a situation of economic downfall, people with disabilities are particularly rejected in the labor market, with the possibilities of unequal chance of being employed as compared to able people, due to specialization that is proclaimed to be needed for competitiveness (Ruiz and Moya 2007). Although the difficulties in the employment of these people are not new, what is new is the particular concern to solve them from an approach focused primarily on the right to equality (Rodriguez-Pinero 2005). It is very important to create work environments that will accommodate disabled people before they come, as a way of recognizing their availability and that they do possess capabilities for completion and production.

Cooperatives are strategic enterprises by which people in third world states can do business as cooperatives focus on members rather than on capital. This brings people together through a common purpose and creates wealth, but must be competitive and sustainable (Chang et al. 2016). According to Corrigan and Shapiro (2010), studies on the employment situation of people with disabilities have focused primarily on issues related to accessing employment and the adaptation of the job and the work environment to the needs of each individual. However, knowledge about the process of adaptation of individuals with disabilities to the job, after completion of the entry process to an organization, is almost subjective (Colella et al. 1998). Thus,

colleagues play the essential role in the workers' adaptation to the job.

In general, the aim of cooperative formation is to offer an opportunity for local people to take development into their own hands and make it a meaningful concept at the local level. Cooperatives have arisen where the cost of adjustment to economic change has threatened to destroy communities and where local people needed power to control the pace and direction of change in order to preserve what they valued (Jaravel 2016). Coworkers are the main source of getting information about the organization and they are responsible for creating a positive environment and a climate of support (Stone and Colella 1996). According to Moreland and Levine (2002), studies have shown that work teams have the greatest influence on employees during social adaptation to work, due to phenomena linked to power and trust in interactive relationships (Moreland and Levine 2002). The presence of diversity landscapes, such as disability, can negatively affect the personal relationships of team members. As noted by the theory of social categorization (Turner 1985) and the paradigm of similarity attraction (Schneider 1987), there is inclination for relationships with those perceived as similar to oneself, rather than those belonging to minority groups, such as people with disabilities.

Capacitation Enabled by Participation and Empowerment

Unclear ownership of the property, high administrative and maintenance costs as well as consultative costs can have huge attributes to the shortfall of the cooperatives (Jones and Klenow 2016). Various social environments one lives under have a huge impact in how one will behave (Barkan 1998). The character of an individual is not only determined by the healthcare and circumstances accompanying growth, longing to achieve desired goals, personal experiences and challenges encountered along life contributes to the character of an individual and the decision-making abilities. It is this ability that contributes to the individual's character that will determine the extent of effective participation as an individual to the group (Blair 1998). The acquired skills, knowledge, ability to work and good health are what contribute to human capital, which can be achieved through education

and empowerment programs. The poor had been long unable to grasp into the changing ways of sharing knowledge. Thus, it should be recommended that widening methods of communication would be pivotal in the flow of knowledge equally to all, especially the disadvantaged and who were historically infringed. The ICA outlines education as a major requirement in the success of a cooperative. On those bases, proper education should be always in the top agenda of the cooperatives, because they can possibly also institute effective systems for informal knowledge dissemination (Langmead 2017).

This will benefit participants in terms of skills and be able to collaborate with fellow members in dealing with personal and work related issues to enable a positive long-lasting workplace environment (Kieffer 1984; Bohme 1997). The formation of the process for empowerment is an active one, in that it is influenced by the direction of human and the state. This process is important in the assimilation of social and political insights in the control of human and resources (Brestas 1996), as such, the capabilities at the personal level automatically fuse with the commitment of the public. Empowerment should enable anyone to participate in all spheres of work including organizations, communities, and implementation of social policy (Crook and Manor 1998). This would be possibly achieved through democracy in the workplace, freedom, justice in the procedures of redistribution, equality amongst all membership and social inclusion in decision-making body and in every developmental program. The positive outcomes of the process will be evident if these principles are properly considered for implementation (Sandoval 2016).

The techniques of participation according to Barkan (1998) include the understanding of the importance of how to assimilate development and the state, because the members of each state must understand and adhere to the national development programs that seek to address the social issues. Therefore, all members should participate and benefit. The argument of Cunill (1991) was that increasing level of social inclusion will enable those who are active in participation have the broader access of directly deliberating with the government concerning perceived type of leadership, principles of fairness and consultation (Minogue 1997: 4). There are important elements that Rhodes (1996) outlined

in the participative process as crucial, these include, justice, transparency, liability, capability, and respect for law as key (Edralin 1997). For the proper governance that enhances inclusive participation, communication is very important from national level to the local level and from local to national and to the private sector, to ensure that everyone has variety of choices for participation to choose from (Schneider 1999). This according to Ddunga (1998) will increase the pace of quality service delivery, while ensuring accountability to the government. Past studies founded amateurism membership for leisure and hobbies, and altruism participation for contribution to society, as major motivators for participation in collective intelligence. These motivators are not essentially exclusive but, rather, often appear concurrently. There are other factors like external motivation, such as monetary benefits, career development, and human relationships (Sandoval 2016).

The Present Study

The technique of participation according to Feeney (1998) provides a situation where the public engage prospectively for development about their future prospects and how their desires has to be infused with state provided programs. Further to that, the people at the grass-roots level become part of the economic development, enabling the process not to leave them behind while having representation (Feeney 1998), as such, every member of the society as an individual, group or organization owns the process and control the process. Many past studies have been dealing with cooperatives in terms of profit sharing (Schneiberg et al. 2008), also from social movements perspective (Kruse et al. 2010). It is therefore evident that, the studies focusing on the economic initiatives of the disabled to empower themselves and positively contribute to the society are very minimal and need attention. Strategies of participation are wide and can be utilized in the implementation of all development projects ranging from the health sector, basic and higher education and agriculture (Oakley 1995; Sen 2002).

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for the study include the following:

- Participation determines perceived level of capacitation.
- Participation is correlated with perceived level of empowerment.
- Benefits of membership are determined by the perceived level of empowerment.
- Perceived participation determines perceived benefits of membership.
- Benefits of membership are correlated with satisfaction with cooperative's management.

METHODOLOGY

This study evaluated the imperative of cooperatives in capacitating disabled people. SPSS (version 21) was utilized for the statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire. In order to achieve the aims of the study, the researchers utilized a quantitative research design. Zamani Disabled People's Organization comprised of 50 members, therefore, the researchers used a census study. To elicit data for answering the research questions and for the achievement of the research aims, the study used a Likert-scaled questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. To elicit the correlations and differences on variables, the study adopted bivariate correlation, linear regression, and ANOVA.

Scales and Measures

Perceived Level of Capacitation (PERLECA)

It was the aim of the study to detect the level of capacitation disabled people perceived by participating in a cooperative. On a variable PERLECA, that comprised of fifteen items, the PCA, measure of sampling adequacy, produced that the sample was not adequate for factor reduction with $KMO = .232$, $BTS, X^2 = 476.417$, ($df = 105$), $p < 0.05$. PERLECA accounted for 36.018 percent of variance after reduction. The item, "*I have been capacitated with skills that make me competitive*", appeared to be the most item to describe PERLECA with mean=3.18, SD= 1.442.

Perceived Level of Participation (PERLEPAR)

The study also sought to find out the level of participation disabled people perceive by participating in a cooperative. On a variable PERLEPAR, that comprised of fifteen items, the PCA, measure of sampling adequacy, revealed that the sample was adequate for factor reduction with

$KMO = .723$, $BTS, X^2 = 630.974$, ($df = 105$), $p < 0.05$. PERLEPAR accounted for 70.196 percent variance after reduction. The item, "*Members are able to sustain projects and problems by themselves after the projects resources have been exhausted*", appeared to be the most item to describe PERLEPAR with mean=2.46, SD=1.201.

Perceived Level of Empowerment (PERLEMP)

The study also sought to find out the level of empowerment disabled people perceive by participating in a cooperative. On a variable PERLEMP, that comprised of fifteen items, the PCA, measure of sampling adequacy, revealed that the sample was adequate for factor reduction with $KMO = .718$, $BTS, X^2 = 638.926$, ($df = 105$), $p < 0.05$. PERLEMP accounted for 74.439 percent variance after reduction. The item, "*My life as an individual, family, or community has changed with my membership of Zamani*", appeared to be the most item to describe PERLEMP with mean=2.32, SD=1.389.

Satisfaction with Management of a Cooperative (SAMACO)

The study also sought to find out the level of empowerment disabled people perceive by participating in a cooperative. On a variable SAMACO, that comprised of fifteen items, the PCA, measure of sampling adequacy, revealed that the sample was adequate for factor reduction with $KMO = .673$, $BTS, X^2 = 480.369$, ($df = 105$), $p < 0.05$. SAMACO accounted for 58.018 percent variance after reduction. The item, "*Every day behavior assists in the cooperative to succeed*", appeared to be the most item to describe SAMACO with mean=2.43, SD=1.136.

Benefits of Membership in a Cooperative (PERBEME)

The study also sought to find out the level of empowerment disabled people perceive by participating in a cooperative. On a variable PERBEME, that comprised of fifteen items, the PCA, measure of sampling adequacy, revealed that the sample was adequate for factor reduction with $KMO = .784$, $BTS, X^2 = 561.985$, ($df = 105$), $p < 0.05$. PERBEME accounted for 75.245 percent variance after reduction. The item, "*I can participate in any program in my community*", ap-

peared to be the most item to describe PERBEME with mean=2.46, SD=1.453.

RESULTS

The linear regressions F-test have the Ho hypothesis that there is a relationship between variables. With F=22 and 27 degrees of freedom, the test is significant, thus, it can be assumed that there is a linear relationship between the variables in the model (Table 1). The results show that PERBEME will differ based on the change in independent variables. For empowerment to be achieved participation is a very crucial method and it is much encouraged in the empowerment literature (West 2013). Through the philosophy of participation, all stakeholders are part of the solution to any problem, which increases public commitment. When people are participating at a group or organizational level that develops social empowerment and individual wellbeing. The technique had long been standing, and it is necessary that it be utilized with modifications so that it could fit to the current problems and align to the current human development agenda.

For Sinclair (2010) the use of empowerment amalgamates clinical, group and community involvement methods into a single intervention system, in order to respond to people's various needs and to inspire empowerment. The theory of empowerment somehow, is challenged by the traditional medical model, which tends to sever the interactional connection between the concrete realities, the environment and its influence, and the individual certainty, and to emphasize only one side in every field of specialization. Thomas (2013) stated that the strategy for empowerment, infuse these two, and focuses on an integration that stresses the explanatory character, which stems from the mutual connection between the society and human actions. The only strategy of utilizing capacitation requires that one consider the characteristics of social exclusion that tend to cause alienation, which

results in the feeling of inferiority, which manifests the oppressive situations (Trani and Loeb 2010)."

Table 2 showed the overall model test of significance. The MANOVA showed that SAMACO and PERBEME were significant at $p < 0.05$. Therefore, it significantly influenced the standardized variable of covariate PERLECA. Like the concept of 'empowerment', the belief that participation has suffered its usefulness in the current international development agenda, has resulted in doubts and unclear role of voluntary participation in the course of development (Van Rooy 2012). There had been intertwined utilization of empowerment and participation, with the perception from development scholars that the two terms are relatively linked. The way participation will be executed would be determined by the manner in which one party conceptualizes power, the aims and the expected outcomes. As argued by Gaboury et al. (2012), empowerment and participation produce the primary source of power. According to Kabiri (2002), social stratification is the major determinant of power, and the dialectics develop in the perceived level of participation that is determined by empowerment. On the basis of power, and the relationship between empowerment and community participation, the members of the community are entitled to adhere to the direction of the state that contrary tend to be the ones holding power and responsible for implementation. Any form of participation should be fuelled by empowerment, a society that is constituted of loyal and patriotic members and democracy. Further to that, a state that does not only work to construct processes, but that always want to empower the disadvantaged and ensure their role and company in the development process (Grut et al. 2012). For Gaventa (2003), it is necessary to bring on board the members of the society to be part of deliberation at a diplomatic level to influence the direction of government to meet their rights and interests, but further to that widening the channels of the

Table 1: The relationship between PERLEPAR, PERLEMP, PERLECA, SAMACO and PERBEME

<i>Model</i>		<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	Regression	21.519	4	5.380	22.574	.000
	Residual	5.481	23	.238		
	Total	27.000	27			

Source: Printout from the study

Table 2: The influence of PERLEPAR, PERLEMP, and PERLECA on SAMACO and PERBEME

<i>Tests of Between-Subjects Effects</i>									
<i>Source</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Type III sum of squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta squared</i>	<i>Noncent. parameter</i>	<i>Observed Power^c</i>
<i>Corrected Model</i>	SAMACO	26.955 ^a	21	1.284	171.364	0	0.998	3598.635	1
	PERBEME	26.989 ^b	21	1.285	677.514	0	1	14227.79	1
<i>Intercept</i>	SAMACO	0.044	1	0.044	5.829	0.052	0.493	5.829	0.526
	PERBEME	0.022	1	0.022	11.473	0.015	0.657	11.473	0.805
<i>PERLECA</i>	SAMACO	0	1	0	0.058	0.817	0.01	0.058	0.055
	PERBEME	0	1	0	0.229	0.65	0.037	0.229	0.069
<i>PERLEPAR</i>	SAMACO	0	1	0	0.026	0.877	0.004	0.026	0.052
	PERBEME	3.42E-05	1	3.42E-05	0.018	0.898	0.003	0.018	0.051
<i>PERLEMP</i>	SAMACO	13.911	19	0.732	97.748	0	0.997	1857.219	1
	PERBEME	8.557	19	0.45	237.425	0	0.999	4511.073	1
<i>Error</i>	SAMACO	0.045	6	0.007					
	PERBEME	0.011	6	0.002					
<i>Total</i>	SAMACO	27	28						
	PERBEME	27	28						
<i>Corrected Total</i>	SAMACO	27	27						
	PERBEME	27	27						

Source: Printout from the study

citizens to work together. By nature, every individual requires that his or her input in a dialog be noted and considered. If the process of implementation has a sense of excluding the voice of the poor people at grassroots level, the process thus, will be regarded unjust and will need certain attention and necessary intervention (Gaventa 2003).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that cooperatives have a vital contribution in capacitating disabled people. There are various considerations that determine the success of participation development, these include, social inclusion, proper representation and equality (Bebech et al. 2016). It is vital for any nation state to include the disabled people in the functioning of the state. It is on that basis that one can conclude that any nation state must strive to capacitate disabled people to ensure their role and proper participation in the development process. Organizational justice refers to the fairness received by the employee at work and the perception of treatment received by the employee at the workplace (Pence and Dymond 2016). The philosophy of participatory development is that, individuals are more effective when working as a group, but the effectiveness of the individual

in a group requires necessary empowerment and capacitation because the group enables individuals to achieve their goals that would not be able to achieve on their own. From the results of the study, it is evident that members have been capacitated with skills that make them competitive. Organizations play an important role in valuing the voice of those who are likely to suffer from social exclusion and oppression.

It is important when people organize because this where they share knowledge and challenges they face on a daily basis. This enables them to understand that a problem that you face as an individual, there are many other people who suffer the same. Social justice constitutes self-respect, being reliable and humbleness, and these elements are pivotal to the individual in the process of decision-making. It is these factors that an individual should consider and abide by when demonstrating a feeling of dissatisfaction and how to change the social environment. Through organization, disadvantaged people are capacitated with skills required in the running of a cooperative, including management, marketing, planning, and negotiation and managing the budgets of the business. Further to that, it enables a person to properly conduct themselves as individuals amongst peers, which is mostly important in any business (Boyte et al. 1986). The life of people at Zamani as an individual,

family or community has changed through their participation in the cooperative. Participation is undertaken in a manner forced by those who hold power to convince the public that a proposed project or program is best (Chambers 2002). There are certain elements that enhance good communication and social justice, and they range from trustworthiness when interacting, ability to justify the decisions, avoiding harmful comments and treating each other with maximum respect and dignity. All these elements demonstrate that an individual be treated with courtesy at a group and individual level (Pence and Dymond 2016).

The process of empowerment enhances capabilities of individuals or groups to make proper choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. What is important about this process is that it produces decisions and outcomes that do not favor individuals, but that can be used and implemented by everyone as emanated from the collective process (McEvoy 2012). For Clark (2007), when one attempts to explain the process of development, one should focus on capabilities of the individual, not on the desires or personal interests. The results showed that after joining a cooperative disabled people can participate in any program in their communities and everyday behavior has assisted in the success of a cooperative. Variables were correlated to establish the relationship they have as determinants for disabled people to join a cooperative for empowerment. The results revealed that the variables have a significant relationship with each other for the purpose of the study. Cooperatives play an important role in satisfying economic needs of the people, especially the poor, while attending to social ills that affects the community at large (Nijs et al. 2016). From the results of the study, participation has a significant relationship with empowerment.

According to Feeney (1998), participation enables all stakeholders in the country to be part of policy formulation and implementation, thus, their priorities are incorporated into the process. It allows members of civil society, especially the poor, a chance for involvement in economic development (Feeney 1998:10). Therefore, participation places local people at the centre of the development process by building their capacity to control their own development. It is on the basis of the results that when disabled

people join a cooperative for a common goal that is to empower themselves cooperatives are regarded as best suitable to achieve their aims (Abberley 2006). It was argued in the study that benefits that disabled people perceive will be determined by the level of empowerment the cooperative is able to provide benefits being what disabled people cannot achieve on their own, and empowerment being the ability to achieve what would be unlikely to be achieved without empowerment (Barkan 1998). The study argued that participation has a significant relationship with the benefits of membership proving that disabled people who are participating in cooperatives will be likely to benefit and experience a sense of empowerment for competitiveness (Blair 1998). Cooperative organizations are unique in that they fit all sectors of life and economy, which ensures that everyone has a role to play in the development of the society (Ceci and Kuman 2016).

The results of the study revealed that there is a relationship between the benefits of membership and satisfaction with management of a cooperative, and thus, it is very crucial for any organization, especially where there is low level of professionalism like cooperatives in the rural areas and their membership is disabled, to have committed and dedicated management. Moreland and Levine (2002) emphasized that democratic processes and equal participation is what will create positive attitudes and establishing a sense of being beneficial of in a cooperative. When the independent variables were regressed, the results of the study showed that participation, empowerment and capacitation could cause 7.97 percent change to benefits of membership. ANOVA results showed that perceived benefits of membership will differ based on the change on independent variables (Birchall 2003). The business can be done in many ways as there are various types of them, but strategies for ownership and techniques for controlling the business is very complex, in that the organization will be unlikely to survive in the absence of empowerment and capacitation that should be achieved through participation (Ceci and Kuman 2016).

The results further showed that perceived level of participation and satisfaction with management highly impacts perceived benefits of membership, while perceived level of empowerment and perceived level of capacitation showed

a lower impact. Therefore, when disabled people are given equal opportunity to participate they will be empowered and capacitated with skills that will not limit them in functioning (Robeyns 2005). The relationship that exists between empowerment and participation in a cooperative enhances capacitation of disabled people. The degree of capacitation attained in a cooperative serves as a source of courage to the disabled people and the disadvantaged communities. Further to that, participation and empowerment in a cooperative provide capabilities to choose between different functioning, as the results of the study have hypothesized. The study has argued that cooperatives empower disabled people, supporting the argument of Cunill (1991) who asserted that the inclusion of all parties concerned for participation will result in proper engagement between the government and the civil society, therefore resolving issues resulting to slow process in service delivery and implementation of development programs.

The core argument of this study was that capacitation is the result of perceived level of participation and empowerment. Schneiberg et al. (2008) argued that disabled people would have power to choose their functioning, provided that they have been empowered with relevant skills. Once disabled people have been empowered with skills they regard important to their lives, it is then they will declare a cooperative being beneficial to the disadvantaged people. The participatory development plays an important role in the inclusion of people, especially those disadvantaged in decisions for development and articulating issues that affect them on a daily basis. Social inclusion through participation helps in building unity and empowerment to those disadvantaged (Westpac Group 2017). Further to that, this study argued that even satisfaction with management, has a certain effect, either positive or negative in the benefit of membership in a cooperative (Rodríguez-Piñero 2005). It is, thus, on that basis that this study argues that participatory planning and empowerment strategies will develop a feeling of usefulness to members. This study further indicates that, even if empowerment programs are in place, being satisfied with management plays an important role in creating positive attitudes among members for a workplace to be conducive and democratic.

Partaking is moreover beheld as the way to allow people with less knowledge to work with

experts as partners (Sandoval 2016). It was evident from the responses that everyday behavior of the management plays a pivotal role in the prosperity of the organization. In describing capacitation, the responses showed that members have been capacitated with skills that make them competitive. As this study sought to increase participation and empowerment of disabled people through Capability Approach, it can thus be argued that cooperatives have made a contribution in empowering participants with capabilities, following the argument of Sen (2004) that functioning could be either potential or achieved. In order for an organization to achieve positive results in a form of profits or services, and also to ensure that organization is a favorable place for work and learning, the organization has to adopt and implement different human resource strategies. A cooperative should not only attract disadvantaged people, but it is very important that it attracts qualified and abled people, for it to work effectively (Jones and Klenow 2016).

A person's capability is then equivalent of a person's opportunity set. But other scholars working within the capability approach have labeled these potential functioning as capabilities (Robeyns 2005). In that terminology the capability set consists of a number of capabilities, in the same way as a person's overall freedom is made up by a number of more specific freedoms (Rawls 1982). It had been argued that membership of Zamani Disabled People's Organization perceived that their participation in the cooperative had contributed towards their empowerment. Therefore, this study maintains that cooperatives are suitable organizations for rehabilitation and empowerment of disabled people. The use of human resource management practices has resulted in higher labor performance, especially in capital-intensive organizations (Chang et al. 2016). It has been highlighted in the responses that members, after joining a cooperative, are capacitated with skills enhancing competitiveness and they participate in mechanisms that will sustain a cooperative and become a life changer to themselves as individuals and their communities.

Therefore, on the basis of the above results, the study argues that participation, empowerment and capacitation are determining factors for disabled people to join a cooperative. The core findings of the study highlighted that per-

ceived level of the empowerment will impact the participation and desired capacitation. Many capabilities will have underlying requirements that vary strongly with social circumstances. Services are achieved by those who try to access them, however, they would not be achieved if that individual is not capacitated to use them. In that manner, one could say that even if that person observes the availability of services, but he or she will not appreciate the services provided to him or her. Therefore, capacitation to disadvantaged people is very important so that it is ensured that services and assistants directly meet their needs (Langmead 2017).

CONCLUSION

It was argued in the study that cooperatives have a potential to empower disabled people, thus, disabled people have been capacitated with skills and knowledge that give them strength and courage for participation. The study has established that members after joining a cooperative had acquired skills that enhanced their competitiveness. It was noticed in the study that satisfaction with management plays a role in the success of a cooperative. Participation, empowerment and capacitation have been argued to be the major determinants to increase the benefit of membership. The study indicated that disabled people join a cooperative because they seek empowerment and declared that the cooperative has a potential to empower and capacitate them. Further to that, disabled people will consider their level of participation, empowerment and their capacitation when they seek their empowerment and a cooperative being beneficial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has revealed that disabled people are capacitated with skills making them competitive, therefore, globalization and technology advancement, development initiatives and interventions, require that governments should provide services that will meet the needs of the disadvantaged people and be able to be used for productivity and competitiveness. This study showed that cooperatives play an important role in empowering disabled people, thus, it is recommended that government should implement policies that do not only specify how cooperatives have to be governed, but also that will also

ensure that cooperatives formed have imbedded mechanisms to empower disabled people. Disabled people are capacitated with abilities to participate in various programs and activities in their communities after joining a cooperative. Therefore, this study recommends that cooperatives, especially those that are constituted of disabled people, should not be regarded as businesses for economic development only, but should be considered also as institutions for empowerment that will make contribution in closing the gap of inequality between disabled and able people.

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