

ABSTRACT

Coping Strategies utilized by Young Adults with Paraplegia in selected Health Care Facilities in Kingston, Jamaica

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Injuries are currently the leading worldwide cause of disabilities and deaths during the first half of the human life span (0-40) years. Injuries have also been the leading cause of lost years of productivity.

This was a analytical study, carried out in March of 1999. The respondents were selected from various institutions, from Mona rehabilitation Center and from homes within the community around Kingston and St. Andrew. A total of forty four (N=44) persons were interviewed. Of this number thirty six (36) were male while eight were females. The majority were in the age group 25-30, i.e. a total of twenty nine (29) persons. Of the forty four (N=44), sixteen or 37.2% were disable as a result of violence, and 28 or 65.6% were single. Thirty five (3) respondents traveled and twenty five persons traveled accompanied by someone, thirty two (32) persons traveled by taxi.

A focus group discussion was held with Physically Challenged Personnel at the Ministry of Health, to aid in the reconstruction and pretesting of the questionnaire.

The majority of the respondents (N=29) were found in the community of the 29, twenty five were males and four were females. The number of females were equally distributed in institution and in the community. All 44 respondents were able to define what level of support they were given by using variables, likert scales and check questions to verify answers. Of the 44 respondents 17 received level 1 care at a health facility, 22 received level 2 care and all 44 received level 3 care at Mona Rehabilitation Centre.

This study reflects that the majority of respondents are coping. However, this does not reflect information about a representative sample of young adults with paraplegia.. More data is necessary to validate the true number of disabled in the community.

This study is a relatively new area of study, therefore more research is needed to validate the conclusions and the results of this study. There also is a need for more involvement of persons with disabilities in the decision making process/programmes for the disabled in the community.