

## **Challenges Facing Students with Disabilities and the Ways of Overcoming them: University of Tabuk as a Model**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to investigate challenges facing students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk from their point of view. The study sample consisted of (51) male and female students, and an electronic questionnaire consisting of (58) paragraphs was distributed over five Dimensions prepared by the researcher. The study revealed The level of challenges facing students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk is medium, and the academic and environmental challenges are at a low degree, while the technical challenges, environmental services and medical services are at a medium degree. The study found that there are statistically significant differences in the degree of challenges facing students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk. Attributable to the college in favor of the scientific faculties, there are statistically significant differences in the challenges facing students with disabilities at Tabuk University due to the type of disability in favor of hearing disability. The researcher recommended providing support services for students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk in a balanced way so that it meets all the needs of students with disabilities.

**Keywords:** Supportive Services, Students with Disabilities, Tabuk University.

### **Introduction**

Everyone in society has the right to learn, and this applies to individuals with disabilities (Abdella, 2018), and according to the United Nations (UN, 2015), it is estimated that one billion

people globally have a single physical, sensory, intellectual or mental disability or more. Persons with disabilities are the largest and most disadvantaged minority in the world. Several regulations have been directed to ensure the effectiveness of people's rights, notably the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol.

An individual with a disability is defined as “the individual who has one or more barriers that limit his ability and make him need external help, and this deficiency may be due to an accident or from birth” (Sabti & Falak, 2017). As Al-Sayyid (2018) defined him as “the individual who differs from those who are called normal in physical, mental or social aspects to the extent that requires special rehabilitation operations until he reaches the maximum use of his abilities and talents.

The researcher believes that a student with a disability is a student who has a physical, mental, psychological or social problem that prevents him from efficiently carrying out various life tasks, and makes him need someone to help him, and he needs special ways to deal with him.

There are different types of disability, including hearing disability, motor disability, intellectual disability, mental disability, visual disability, and psychological disability (Al-Fatny, 2021). Laws and legislation have sought to enable individuals with disabilities to obtain their right to education, as the number of these individuals in universities has increased worldwide (Melero, et al., 2018), and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken it upon itself to provide decent life opportunities for all of its citizens, including education. The Kingdom is interested, according to its capabilities, in providing equal opportunities for educating individuals with mental and physical disabilities through the development of various cultural training curricula that suit their conditions. This development is done to provide care for people with special needs by providing them with the necessary education and training to help them develop the appropriate skills to reach the best levels of education compatible with their abilities (GOV.SA).

Many challenges facing students with disabilities appear, and the challenges are defined as the difficulties and obstacles that students with disabilities face in universities during their studies and affect their achievement and performance (Al-Adra, 2016). And challenges represent dangers, threats or difficulties that prevent the achievement of goals, and these challenges are attributed to their source. Social challenges represent a threat, danger, or detraction from a set of values or behaviors upon which the community value system is built, while cultural challenges represent a threat, danger or derogation. From the development of the cultural system, and educational challenges are represented in the presence of shortcomings and inability in educational institutions that hinder them from achieving the desired goals. In general, it can be said that the challenges facing the individual are natural forces and conditions or undesirable human social conditions and things that are contrary to what we believe or aspire to, and constitute obstacles to achieving our goals and objectives at the individual or group level (Ahmed, 2020).

The researcher believes that the challenges facing university students with disabilities are the conditions, Situations, attitudes and beliefs facing the university student with disabilities that prevent him from achieving his goals and continuing his university studies successfully, and enabling him to perform well.

On the topic of challenges related to universities, it can vary to include methodologies, limited use of new technologies, negative attitudes towards disability or lack of training in the

field of disability, attitudes of faculty members towards these students and an assessment system that fails to adapt to their needs. In light of the difficulties and methodological barriers faced by students with disabilities, and a variety of studies have found that information and communication technology and the employment of distance learning can be elements that favor their integration into the university system (Roberts, et al., 2011).

There are services that can be provided to the disabled in universities to reduce the obstacles that prevent them from continuing to study, which are: the service of recording the needs of students at the first contact of the disabled student with the access unit at the university, and the service of assessing the capabilities of the trained staff of the access unit meeting with the disabled students, after studying the outputs of the service registration needs Students, and discuss the possible facilities that apply to each of them (Kouroupetroglou, et al., 2011). A personal assistive technology service that provides the appropriate infrastructure and tools for testing and evaluating a variety of assistive technologies today (Pino, et al., 2010), a transportation service, and an accessible educational materials service where this unit is tasked with transforming academic educational materials. into a format accessible to people with disabilities (Klaus, 2009), a psychological counseling service (Kouroupetroglou, et al., 2011), a sign language interpretation and a video relay service that provides sign language handouts and videos so that deaf students can request a sign language interpreter for the course ( Parette & Peterson-Karlan, 2010), and providing the laboratory with additional computers with programs to suit the different disabilities of students (Theodorou & Meliones, 2020).

Al-Hamidah (2020) has clarified the support services that are provided to students with disabilities to health services that include detection of hearing and visual disabilities through examination, control of infectious diseases and health awareness, and social service that is concerned with helping students with disabilities in social interaction, independence and self-reliance, and academic services from Guidance during the registration period, providing academic support from study courses commensurate with the nature of their disability, providing devices and assistive technologies and training them on them, providing them with facilities such as appropriate transportation, assisting them in writing exams, in addition to recreational services.

### ***Previous studies***

Dwaikat study (2015), which aimed to know the reality of the services provided to students with special needs in Palestinian universities, from the point of view of the members of the teaching and administrative staff. An-Najah National University, and Birzeit University in Palestine, the researcher used the questionnaire as a tool to achieve the objectives of the study, and the results showed that the services provided to people with special needs according to their availability were arranged as follows: “the psychological, social, academic and then administrative fields, then the administrative facilities, and finally the structural facilities and the technology used.” and support for the education of people with special needs. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the provision of educational services provided to students with special needs due to the variable of the university in which they work, gender and educational qualification.

Ahmed’s study (2020), which aimed to know the challenges faced by students with disabilities at the university, including administrative, educational, and psychological challenges, and challenges related to movement to and from the university. The study sample consisted of (140) students from Fayoum University in Egypt. The researcher used A questionnaire, the results of the study concluded that there are many challenges facing students with disabilities at the university, including challenges related to buildings, challenges in

movement inside and outside the university, and service challenges such as transportation, elevators, devices and tools necessary for them, in addition to their own legislation and laws, and administrative challenges include difficulty joining many departments, the lack of administrative cooperation with them, discussing their problems, and the lack of grants and loans offered to them, as for the educational challenges represented in the lack of educational institutions in achieving their goals, the lack of specialists to deal with them, and the social challenges of forming friendships and the absence of promotional activities belong to them.

Masadeh's Study (Masadeh, 2020) This research aims to explore the most relevant challenges that students with physical disabilities have to face at the Hashemite University in Jordan. A quantitative design was used as a questionnaire was developed to collect data. The study sample consisted of sixty-three (63) students with physical disabilities, who were recruited from the faculties of humanities and sciences at the Hashemite University. The results revealed that students with physical disabilities faced moderate challenges. The way they perceived challenges differed based on the study variables, namely gender, academic year and type of faculty. There were also statistically significant differences in students' perception of challenges in some areas of the study tool.

In a study conducted by Martins & others (Martins, et al., 2021) to investigate the views of the employees of disability services offices regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities, and describe the characteristics, difficulties and challenges of these offices. The sample consisted of (62) employees of a public university institution in Brazil and Portugal using a questionnaire developed for this purpose. The results showed that despite the demands faced by the offices of services for people with special needs, the signs of good progress in supporting students with disabilities are increasing. Although services play an important role, minimal autonomy and significant difficulties persist in many areas of management and intervention. Comprehensive policies based on equity and equal opportunity and more resources are needed to guarantee the rights of all students to higher education.

Mahadat & others (2021) conducted a study to identify the degree to which students with disabilities in public universities appreciate the services and facilities provided to them, their attitudes towards these services, and the difficulties and obstacles associated with providing these services. The study used the educational services scale and was applied to (208) male and female students with disabilities in Jordanian universities. The results showed that the degree of estimating the availability of services and the difficulties and obstacles associated with providing services was moderate. The results also showed that there were statistically significant differences according to the gender variable in favor of males, and to the variable of academic level in favor of bachelor students, while there were no statistically significant differences due to the variables of the type of disability and the college.

### ***Commenting on previous studies***

The researcher reviewed a group of previous studies that dealt with the challenges facing students with disabilities, which he was able to reach, and arranged them from oldest to newest. Previous studies that the researcher dealt with the challenges facing students with disabilities in universities. The studies showed the existence of challenges such as the study (Dwekat, 2015), which showed psychological, social, academic, and administrative challenges, and facilities in buildings, and the study (Ahmed, 2020) showed challenges Administrative, educational, psychological, mobility and movement. Previous studies used the descriptive approach for its suitability to such studies. Previous studies used a questionnaire to collect information and some studies used interviews as an additional tool for collecting information.

This study was distinguished from previous studies by the difference in its sample "Tabuk University Students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". The researcher benefited from previous studies in preparing the theoretical framework and preparing tools and methods of statistical analysis.

### *Study problem and its questions*

Obtaining a university degree for people with disabilities is crucial in their lives, because it secures them with a future job that they depend on for financial independence from their families, as poverty and disability are directly related (Nye-Lengerman & Nord, 2016), but disability increases the chances of abandonment. The study among students with disabilities due to poor academic performance (Smedema, et al., 2015), and therefore calls have grown to integrate them into society, remove social, environmental and behavioral barriers in society, and make university education inclusive of all members of society without discrimination, regardless of economic status or disability (Van Mieghem, et al., 2020), and one of the important factors for the success of students with disabilities at the university is the attitude and willingness of faculty members to implement changes and adapt their curricula to the needs of these students, and to provide the university with material and moral support and sufficient support to finish their study period successfully, and secure a physical environment Social, safe, and stimulating their energies (Morina, et al, 2015). Revealing the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities from their point of view reveals their needs and satisfaction with the services provided by the university; Therefore, this study sought to reveal the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk

### *Study Questions*

The problem of the study consisted of the following questions:

- 1- What is the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at Tabuk University?
- 2- Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the arithmetic averages of the estimates of students with disabilities to the degree of availability of support services provided to them at the University of Tabuk due to the type of disability variable?

### *Objectives of the study*

This study aimed to achieve the following:

- Disclosure of the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk.
- Detecting the impact of the type of disability variable on students with disabilities' estimates of the degree of availability of support services provided to them at Tabuk University.

### *The importance of studying*

The degree of challenges facing students with disabilities at the university can be considered as one of the indicators of academic accreditation in universities. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in the following:

**Theoretical importance:** This study prepared a theoretical framework that may restrict university administrators in forming a theoretical perception of the nature of the support services provided to students with disabilities.



**Practical importance:** the results of this study benefit the quality unit at the university to provide balanced support services based on the real needs of students with disabilities, and researchers may benefit from the questionnaire prepared in this study and from previous studies provided in their research.

***Idiomatic and procedural definitions:***

The study terms can be defined as follows:

**Challenges facing students with disabilities:** “The challenges facing the individual are natural forces and conditions or undesirable human social conditions and conditions that are contrary to what we believe or aspire to, and constitute obstacles to achieving our goals and objectives at the individual or group level (Ahmed, 2020).

**Challenges:** The researcher defines challenges as the physical and moral obstacles and obstacles facing students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk in the academic, technical, environmental, medical and administrative fields, which impede their studies and their adaptation to the university environment. The challenges were measured through a questionnaire of support services prepared by the researcher in this study.

**Disability:** organic disorders and imbalances that have an impact on the affected individual in determining the use of some organs of hearing, sight and movement (Sherman, 2015).

**Students with Disabilities:** They are Tabuk University students registered during the academic year 2021/2022 who suffer from moderate and severe visual, hearing and movement disabilities and need compensatory devices and support services to reduce the impact of disability on their adaptation to university life.

***The limits of the study***

**Human limits:** This study was applied to (51) male and female students with visual, auditory and motor disabilities.

**Spatial boundaries:** This study was applied at the University of Tabuk.

**Time limits:** The procedures for this study were applied in the first semester of the 2021/2022 school year.

**Objective limits:** In collecting its data, this study relied on an electronic questionnaire that measures the support services provided to students with disabilities; Therefore, the generalization of the results of this study is determined by the validity and reliability of its tool.

## **Method and Procedure**

The method and procedures dealt with the study method and its sample, and how to build the study tool and its procedures.

**Study Approach:** This study adopted the descriptive analytical approach to reveal the degree of challenges facing students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk.

**The study sample:** The sample of this study consisted of (51) male and female students with visual, hearing and motor disabilities who study at the University of Tabuk, and they were selected by the comprehensive survey method.

**study tool:** To achieve the objectives of the study and collect data related to it, the researcher used a questionnaire of the support services provided to students with disabilities from their point of view. The questionnaire in its final form consisted of (58) paragraphs, distributed over five areas: academic services, technical services, environmental services, medical services, and administrative services, and each paragraph corresponds to Five scales (strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1), after extracting the validity and stability of the questionnaire.

#### ***The validity of the questionnaire:***

The validity of the questionnaire was verified by presenting it in its initial form to arbitrators from faculty members specializing in the field of special education in some Saudi and Jordanian universities. The questionnaire came out in its final form, consisting of (58) paragraphs, and a total score of (290) degrees.

#### ***The Reliability of the questionnaire:***

To verify the Reliability of the questionnaire, it was applied to an exploratory sample other than the study sample, and the Reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha equation, and it was (0.93) and it is suitable for the purposes of this study.

The five-grading categories in the questionnaire were also converted into three-scores as follows: 1–2.33 degrees low, 2.34–3.67 degrees medium, 3.68–5.00 degrees high

#### ***Study procedures***

To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher did the following:

Building a questionnaire about the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities, verifying their psychometric characteristics, obtaining the necessary approval to facilitate the study's application procedures from the University of Tabuk, and selecting the study sample in a comprehensive survey of students with disabilities, and their number reached (51). male and female students, applying the study tool to the study sample electronically, organizing the data, entering it into the computer and processing it in view of the study questions, coming up with the results and recommendations.

#### ***Statistical processors***

To answer the study questions, the following statistical treatments were used:

- 1- Cronbach's alpha equation to calculate the Reliability of the questionnaire about the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities.
- 2- Arithmetic averages and standard deviations (Means & Standard Deviation) to estimate the arithmetic averages of the study members' estimates about the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk.
- 3- Analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) to detect the impact of the type of disability (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) on the study members' estimates of the degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk.

#### ***Study results and discussion***

**The results of the first question:** “What is the degree of challenges facing students with disabilities at Tabuk University?”

The arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the responses of the study members were calculated on the fields of identifying the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities as shown in Table (1).

**Table (1)** *Arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the responses of the study members to the fields of identifying the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities*

Paragraph	arranging	mean	standard deviation	Degree
Environmental services	3	3.90	0.50	High
Academic Services	1	3.74	0.55	High
Administrative services	5	3.10	0.81	Medium
Technical Services	2	2.99	0.76	Medium
Medical services	4	2.89	0.89	Medium
The degree of availability of support services provided to students with disabilities at the University of Tabuk		3.35	0.50	Medium

Table (1) shows that the arithmetic averages of the responses of students with disabilities to the questionnaire on the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities ranged between medium and high, and the total score of the questionnaire for the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities was at a medium degree, with an arithmetic mean of (3.35) and a standard deviation of (0.50).

Environmental services came in the first place with a mean of (3.90) and a standard deviation of (0.50) with a high degree, followed by academic services with a mean of (3.74) and a standard deviation of (0.55) with a high degree, and administrative services came in the third place with an arithmetic mean of (3.10) and a standard deviation of (0.81) in a medium degree, while technical services came in fourth place with an arithmetic mean of (2.99) and a standard deviation of (0.76) in a medium degree, and medical services came in the last rank with an arithmetic mean of (2.89) and a standard deviation of (0.89), with a medium degree.

This result is due to the fact that the University of Tabuk is one of the universities that receive accreditation from higher education, and this accreditation requires providing a supportive environment for students with disabilities, and responding to their academic and psychological needs, and the Quality Unit reviews the indicators of comprehensive education at the university, which aims to prevent any circumstances material or moral to marginalize any student and hinder his studies or limit his creativity.

The University of Tabuk also bases its plans on a database, part of which deals with student affairs, monitors all students with disabilities, monitors each type of disability, and the requirements to be provided to the student with disabilities. It is also working on developing projects aimed at meeting the psychological, moral and material needs of students with disabilities.

This result is due to the fact that the faculty members and the university administration understand the needs of students with disabilities, and the physical environment meets all their requirements of ramps, visual, audio and kinetic aids, and allocates specialized budgets for this aspect, while we find that the university is not specialized in providing medical services, but rather transfers students to Specialized medical care when needed. In addition, the university provides students with technologies that it can provide or available to it, and its services do not exceed some audio, visual and motor aids, while leaving the responsibility for providing medical and technical services to the parents of students with disabilities.

The results of this question are similar to the results of Masadeh's study (2020), which revealed a positive view towards university services provided by the university to students with



disabilities in terms of admission and registration, methodological, cultural and sports services, awareness and networking with community institutions, which had a positive impact on the benefit of students with disabilities. Disability to provide services. And the study of Martins and others (Martins, et al., 2021), which revealed that signs of good progress in supporting students with disabilities are increasing from the point of view of employees of disability services offices. And the study of Mahadat and others (2021), which revealed that students with disabilities in Jordanian public universities have an average evaluation of the services and facilities provided to them.

**The results of the second question:** "Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the arithmetic averages of the estimates of students with disabilities to the degree of availability of support services for them at the University of Tabuk due to the variable type of disability?"

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study members were calculated according to the type of disability variable (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), as shown in Table (2).

**Table (2)** *Arithmetic averages of the responses of students with disabilities to a questionnaire about the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities according to the variable of the type of disability (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)*

Type of Disability	No	mean	standard deviation
Audio	13	3.95	0.56
Visual	20	3.17	0.27
motor disability	18	3.11	0.23
Total	51	3.35	0.50

Table (2) shows that the arithmetic mean of the estimates of students with hearing disabilities for the support services provided to them amounted to (3.95) with a standard deviation of (0.56), and the arithmetic mean of the estimates of students with visual disabilities for the support services provided to them amounted to (3.17) and with a standard deviation Its amount is (0.27), while the arithmetic mean of the estimates of students with motor disabilities for the support services provided to them was (3.11) and with a standard deviation of (0.23). As in Table (3)

**Table (3)** *One-Way ANOVA of the responses of students with disabilities to the questionnaire on the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities according to the type of disability variable (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)*

Source of Variance	sum of squares	Df	f	sig
between groups	6.412	2	3.206	
In groups	6.035	48	0.126	25.5
Total	12.447	50		0.000

Table (3) shows that the value of (f) reached (25,500) in terms of (0.000), which is a statistically significant value, which means that there are statistically significant differences in the arithmetic averages of the responses of students with disabilities to the questionnaire on the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities due to the type of disability. In order to detect the direction of these differences, Scheffe test was used as shown in Table (4).

**Table (4)** *An schema test to reveal the trend of differences in the responses of students with disabilities to the questionnaire on the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities according to the type of disability*

<b>Variable category</b>	<b>visual disability</b>	<b>Audio disability</b>	<b>motor disability</b>
visual disability	--	0.785	0.056
Audio disability	0.785	--	0.841
motor disability	0.056	0.841	----

Table (4) shows that the differences in the responses of students with disabilities to the questionnaire on the availability of support services provided to students with disabilities tended to favor students of the hearing disability category compared to students with visual and motor disabilities.

This result is due to the fact that students with disabilities who study in science colleges make more use of the college facilities than students with disabilities who study in colleges of arts. Students with disabilities in the faculties of arts are provided with the support services provided by the university, and in their movement they feel the environmental, technical and administrative facilities, while students with disabilities in the faculties of arts use limited facilities.

This result is also due to the fact that students with disabilities in scientific faculties need support services more than students with disabilities in faculties of arts. They need motor, visual and auditory aids due to the nature of scientific activities, safety precautions in laboratories, constant movement from one department to another, and conducting experiments, in When students with disabilities in faculties of arts do not need this amount of support services.

This result is due to the fact that the hearing disability is one of the least expensive support services, and it does not require high complex skills after providing support, such as motor disabilities. Students with hearing disabilities simply raise their voice, or an advanced seat is allocated from the lecturer, cochlear implants or the installation of hearing aids. His problem is over, and he begins to learn the rest of the ordinary students, so he feels the effectiveness of the support service provided to him, while we find that the movement disability even after providing the support services requires effort from the student, and the visually impaired student needs visual aids and prominent writing sometimes, and special papers, and he still needs support for long periods of time.

The results of this question differ with the results of the study of Mahadat et al. (2021), which revealed that there are no statistically significant differences due to the variables of type of disability and college.

## **Recommendations**

In view of the results of this study, the researcher recommended the following:

- Setting realistic standards and indicators by the quality units in universities to provide balanced support services based on the real needs of students with disabilities.

- Building an updated and realistic database to meet the future needs of students with disabilities.

- Develop strategic plans to meet the medical, technical and administrative needs and improve their contribution to providing the necessary support for students with disabilities.

Preparing field research that investigates the needs of students with disabilities for moral support at the University of Tabuk.

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