STUDY

ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN BOSNA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Authors:

dr.sc.Haris Memišević
Union of organizations for support to the people with intellectual disability of FBIH – SUMERO

Selmir Hadžić
Association of special education teachers, occupational and speech therapists- STOL

Associates:

Aida Akagić-Hodžić

Haris Haverić

Saudin Hodžić

Bosnia and Herzegovina
Sarajevo

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Content

INTRODUCTION

„ Disability should not be viewed or represented as an obstacle to the success. I had motor neuron disease for almost my whole life. It (disease) did not prevent me to achieve a significant career in astrophysics and to have a happy family life "

Professor Steven Hawking

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) disability is an umbrella term encompassing impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. Current understanding of disability is not based on medical premises but is viewed according to a social model. It practically means, that it is the society that makes people disabled, not their medical condition. More than one billion people or 15% of the world population have some form of disability (World Report on Disability). This number is expected to be growing in the future due to the global increase in chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardio-vascular diseases, tumors and mental diseases. All over the world, people with disabilities have poorer health condition, less social participation and higher prevalence of poverty than people without disabilities (World Report on Disability, 2011).

This statement truly reflects the situation of people with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. People with disabilities are, unfortunately, still the most marginalized and the poorest category of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Society, for long, has viewed this people as the incompetent who need a life-long support in the state-run Institutions. Such practice still exists and Institutions provide life-long care for over 1200 people with disabilities. It is necessary to mention that many people in these Institutions were placed there against their will, they cannot choose how long they will stay there and who they will be with. However, voices for changing this state of affairs have become more louder. Many non-governmental organizations (NGO) in Bosnia and Herzegovina promote the idea of deinstitutionalization, prevention of institutionalization and providing supports to people with disabilities in their local communities. This is exactly one of the highlights of the spirit of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from 2006, the document that represents a true paradigm shift in the conceptualization of disability. Its goal is the humanization and full respect of the rights of persons with disabilities, with special attention given to the need of full inclusion of people with disabilities into the local community. Special significance of the Convention is the affirmation of the view that people with disabilities are equal members of the society, who have same choices, rights and duties as persons without disability. The question of disability has turned into a human rights issue, stemming from the fact that people with disabilities experience injustice in all walks of life: from the access to health care to the employment.

As already mentioned, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Convention and thus demonstrated its dedication to full recognition of rights, needs and abilities of people with disabilities. The other

significant documents that Bosnia and Herzegovina signed are the Council of Europe documents such as European Convention for protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, European Social act, as well as the action plan for the promotion of rights and full participation of people with disabilities in the society: improving the quality of life for people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a duty to align its legislature to these international documents if it wants to become a full member of European Union.

Apart from the declarative support to the principles of the UN Convention, BiH has done very little to implement the Convention in practice. According to the Alternative report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014), the key issues for people with disabilities in BiH are:

1. Inability to be fully socially included;
2. Discrimination based on the cause of disability;
3. Lack of support services to people with disabilities;
4. Poverty of people with disabilities and their families;
5. Discrimination of people with disabilities by the staff in service providers in public institutions.

The Alternative report further states that the UN Convention is directly violated in Convention articles: 9. Accessibility, 19. Living independently and being included in the community, 20. Personal mobility and indirectly violated in the Convention articles: 5. Equality and non-discrimination, 8. Awareness rising, 21. Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information, 24. Education, 25. Health, 27. Work and Employment, 28. Adequate standard of living and social protection, 29. Participation in political and public life, 30. Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport, 33. National implementation and monitoring.
According to this report it is clearly visible that BiH is still very far from accepting and implementing the true spirit of the UN Convention. Full implementation of the Convention would lead to better quality of life of people with disabilities.

What follows is the description of social protection model in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Social protection in the Bosnia and Herzegovina context

According to the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a complex state, composed of two entities (Republic of Srpska and Federation BiH) and Brcko district. Federation BiH is further divided into 10 Cantons, while Republic of Srpska (RS) is centralized. Also, the social protection system in Republic of Srpska is Centralized (Law on social protection in RS, 1993), while according to the Constitution of Federation BiH (FBiH), the social protection has been defined as a joint jurisdiction of federal and cantonal authorities. The Constitution of FBiH defines that Federal

authorities create a policy and passes general frameworks, and cantonal authorities are responsible for establishment of institutions, implementation and financing of social protection. Of course, instead of equalization of the system and legislative in this area, we now have each canton having its own legislature and regulations in the area of social protection.

Social protection can be defined as a system of economic, political and all other social institutional measures and activities whose goal is prevention of causes of social problems and creation of conditions for appropriate institutional measures in cases where social problems do appear (Vidanovic, 2006).

Almost 20 years after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country still has many challenges in creating the system of sustainable development, a situation that reflects on the entire social sector, and especially on the sector of social protection of the most vulnerable people in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), such as people with disabilities. Laws and regulations in the social protection area are not being implemented equally across the territory of BiH. For example, economically better Cantons, such as Canton Sarajevo, can allocate larger funds in the area of social protection than poorer Cantons such as Posavina Canton.

The most widely used form of social protection for people with disabilities in BiH is the disability allowance, and people with disabilities who do not have any other means of supporting themselves are entitled to this form of social protection.

The disability allowance amount is not enough to cover the most basic needs of people with disabilities and their families and most recent changes in the Law on Social protection in FBiH (2009), made due to the economic crisis worldwide, further limited the eligibility of people with disabilities for this form of social protection. Namely, only people with disabilities who are assessed to have more than 90% bodily impairment are entitled to receive the disability allowance. It is important to note that there are certain differences among the legal status of people with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to their legal status, people with disabilities fulfill their rights. We have four legal categories of people with disabilities:

- War veterans with disability
- Civilian war victims with disability
- People with disability due to labor activities
- People with developmental disabilities (not due to war)

Currently there is a huge debate on equalizing the rights of all these categories, because currently there are big differences in the disability allowance of war veterans with disability and people with developmental disability (former group receiving much higher disability allowance).

Regarding the type of disability, people with disabilities recognized by the Law are:

- People with visual impairment
- People with hearing impairment
- People with language and voice disorders
- People with intellectual disabilities
- People with combined disabilities

The assessment of people with disabilities is performed by:

- for children: *Commissions within the Centers for Social Protection* and
- for adults: *Institute for medical expertise in Federation BiH*.

At this moment, it is important to note the inadequacies in the assessment procedure to determine the percent of disability. For people with sensory and motor impairments (people with visual, hearing and physical disability) the assessment procedure is clear, but in the case of intellectual disability, the assessment is not thorough and very often it is arbitrary.

The goal of this study was to examine the quality of life of people with developmental disabilities. In the beginning, the concept of quality of life has been described.

Quality of life of people with disabilities

Since the ancient Greece, much attention has been given to the quality of life. Thus, the famous philosopher Plato pondered about the factors that contribute to the good life. In the last 30 years, much attention is given to definition and conceptualization of the term quality life for people with disabilities. This is especially relevant now that the social model of disability replaced the medical model. Within the social model framework, more attention is given to the quality of life and the ways to improve the quality of life. Improving the quality of life has become one of the main goals of support services for people with disabilities (Brown, Hatton, Emerson, 2013). Quality of life is now, more frequently, the initial and final point in planning, providing and evaluation of Individual Support Plans. It is important to note that the quality of life consists of the same factors for people with and without disabilities. But defining the construct quality of life is not an easy task. Most authors agree that quality of life is a multidimensional construct consisting of subjective and objective measures. Quality of life is achieved when the needs are satisfied and when there is an opportunity for life improvement in all segments. In conceptualizing the quality of life, the accent is put on personal values and personal choices. One of the widely spread and accepted models of disability is the one given by Schalock and Verdugo (2002). The model postulates that the quality of life is composed of the following factors:

- Sense of wellbeing
- Social participation
- Independence

Wellbeing in this sense encompasses the emotional wellbeing, interpersonal relations, material wellbeing, personal development, physical wellbeing, self-determination, social inclusion and rights.

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have the exact numbers on the number of people with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The recent census from 2013 did not have that item in the questionnaire, a census which represented a very good opportunity to have at least an approximation on the number of people with disabilities and their type. The goal of the current study is to investigate the quality of life of people with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The theoretical framework for the quality of life is the one given by Schalock and Verdugo (2002).

METHODOLOGY

Non-governmental disability organizations and Centers for social work were contacted to obtain information about people with disabilities, the users of their services. The goal of the study and its importance was also explained to them. Total of 25 NGOs were contacted throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and majority of them accepted to participate in this study. We then contacted the people with disabilities and explained the goal of the study to them. The participation in the study was voluntary and all the participants gave their informed consents to participate in the study. Anonymity of the data was guaranteed. In the case of people with intellectual disability who were deprived of legal capacity, consent was asked from the parents/legal guardian. The data were collected in direct interviews with people with disability. In some cases, people with disabilities could not provide us with the information asked, in which case we contacted their parents/family members or others familiar with the person who could provide us with the information. The interviews (Personal Outcomes Scale) were conducted by the Members of the Association of special education teachers, occupational and speech therapists in Canton Sarajevo, and in some cases the interviews and questionnaires were filled by the professional staff in Non-governmental disability organizations. The interviews with the participants were conducted in the period January 2014- June 2014.

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 320 people with disabilities, both sexes, with different types of disability: people with intellectual disability (mild and moderate intellectual disability), people with visual impairments, people with hearing impairment, people with physical disabilities and people with combined disabilities. Combined disabilities consist of two or more disabilities (usually physical disability and intellectual disability). The average age of the participants was 31.4 years (standard deviation 10.6 years). The participants were from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As previously mentioned, all participants had developmental disability, so war

veterans and civilian war victims were excluded from the study. All participants gave their consent to participate in this study and for people who are deprived of legal capacity, the consent was obtained from their parents/legal guardians.

Demographic data on the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of participants in relation to the disability type

Type of disability	Frequency	Percent
Intellectual disability	**153**	**47.8**
Hearing impairment	**62**	**19.4**
Physical disability	**40**	**12.5**
Visual impairment	**31**	**9.7**
Combined disabilities	**34**	**10.6**
Total	**320**	**100**

As can be seen from the table 1, the majority of participants are people with intellectual disability, 153 or 47.8%, followed by people with hearing impairment, 62 or 19.4%, than physical disability 40 or 12.5%, combined disabilities 34 or 10.6 percent and least participants were from the group visual impairment, 31 or 9.7%.

The sample of the participants in relation to the sex consisted of 182 males (56.9%) and 138 females (43.1%). There were 77 participants (or 24.1%) from Republic of Srpska and 243 participants (75.9%) from the Federation of BiH.

Instrument

For this study we used Personal Outcomes Scale constructed by Van Loon et al. (2008). Personal Outcomes Scale measures quality of life based on 8 dimensions of quality of life validated in numerous cross-cultural studies. That was one of the main reasons we decided to use this instrument for the purposes of this research. The 8 dimensions measured on this questionnaire are: personal development, self-determination, interpersonal relations, social inclusion, rights, emotional, physical and material wellbeing. The instrument is 3 point Likert type scale with total of 48 items. The results on the scale range from 48 to 144 points, higher scores indicating better quality of life.

Statistical analysis

Data were shown descriptively (percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and in hypothesis testing we used Chi square test, t test for independent samples, and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

A chi square (X^2) statistic is used to investigate whether distributions of categorical variables differ from one another. A t-test determines whether two groups have different average values. Lastly, analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to compare mean (average) values in more than two groups. Given that the Personal Outcome Scale can be interpreted through individual items and through the total score (individual items with Chi square test and total score with t test and ANOVA) both methods of analysis were used in order to obtain the clearest picture possible on the quality of life of people with disabilities. The data were analyzed by using the computer program SPSS v.13 for Windows.

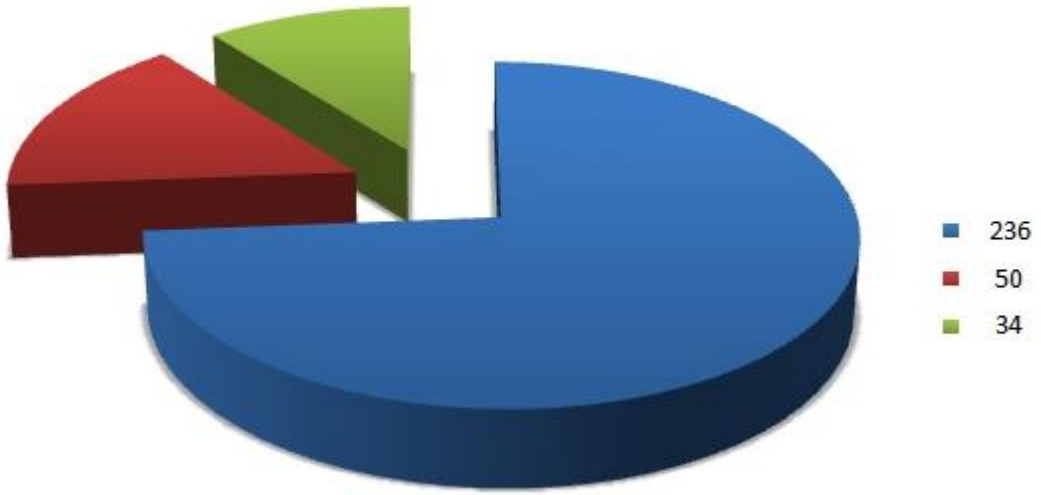
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were shown in two parts. In the first part, the results were presented in relation to the objective measures of quality of life such as accommodation, do they have their own room, is he/she married etc. In the second part, we showed the results from the Personal Outcomes Scale.

Type of accommodation

In relation to who they live with, 236 people with disabilities or 73.8% live with their parents, 50 people or 15.6% live independently and 34 people or 10.6% live in some other arrangement (such as group home, refugee placement etc). Distribution of results is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Accommodation of people with disabilities



In relation to the accommodation arrangements and type of disability, it is evident that living arrangements are not equally distributed among different disability categories. These results were shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of accommodation arrangements in relation to the type of disability

Type of disability * accommodation

Type of disability	Accommodation			Total
	Independent	With parents	Other	
Intellectual disability	**6**	**124**	**23**	**153**
Hearing impairment	**29**	**29**	**4**	**62**
Physical disability	**2**	**35**	**3**	**40**
Visual impairment	**13**	**16**	**2**	**31**
Combined disability	**0**	**32**	**2**	**34**
Total	**50**	**236**	**34**	**320**

It is clearly shown in this table that the greatest percentage of people with disabilities who are living independently is from the category of people with hearing impairment, 29 or 46.8% live independently. In the category of people with visual impairment, 13 people or 41.9% of them live independently. Two people or 5% in the group of people with physical disability live independently. Six people with intellectual disability or 3.9% live independently. Out of 34 people with combined disability, none of them is living independently.

According to the results of Chi square test, a statistically significant difference was noted in the accommodation conditions in relation to the type of disability $X^2(8, N = 320) = 91.5, p<.001$.

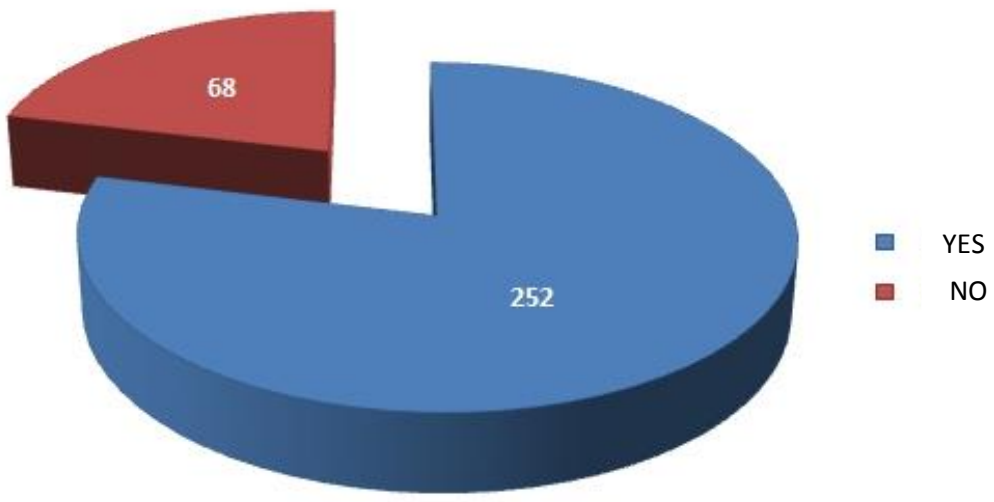
It is important to note that in order to live independently, one has to have certain income, so it comes as no surprise that people with hearing impairment have the highest rate of independent living as they have the highest employment rate as well. In the case of people with combined disability, who need almost permanent support, it is probably their psycho-physical conditions, rather than economic factors, preventing them from independent life.

Own room

Regarding the own room in any type of accommodation, the results show that 252 people with disabilities or 78.8% have their own room and 68 of them or 21.2% do not have their own room.

The distribution of results is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Number of people with their own room



In this case, owning a room, there is also a statistically significant difference in relation to the disability type X^2 (4, N=320) = 14.7, p<.01. In table 3 we presented a distribution of results of owning a room in relation to disability type.

Table 3. Owning a room in relation with type of disability

Type of disability * owning a room

Type of disability	Own room		Total
	YES	NO	
Intellectual disability	**111**	**42**	**153**
Hearing impairment	**57**	**5**	**62**
Physical disability	**34**	**6**	**40**
Visual impairment	**27**	**4**	**31**
Combined disability	**23**	**11**	**34**
Total	**252**	**68**	**320**

From this table it is evident that highest percentage of people with disability who do not have their own room are people with combined disability 32.4%, followed by the people with intellectual disability 27.5%, physical disability 15%, visual impairment 12.9% and hearing impairment 8.1%.

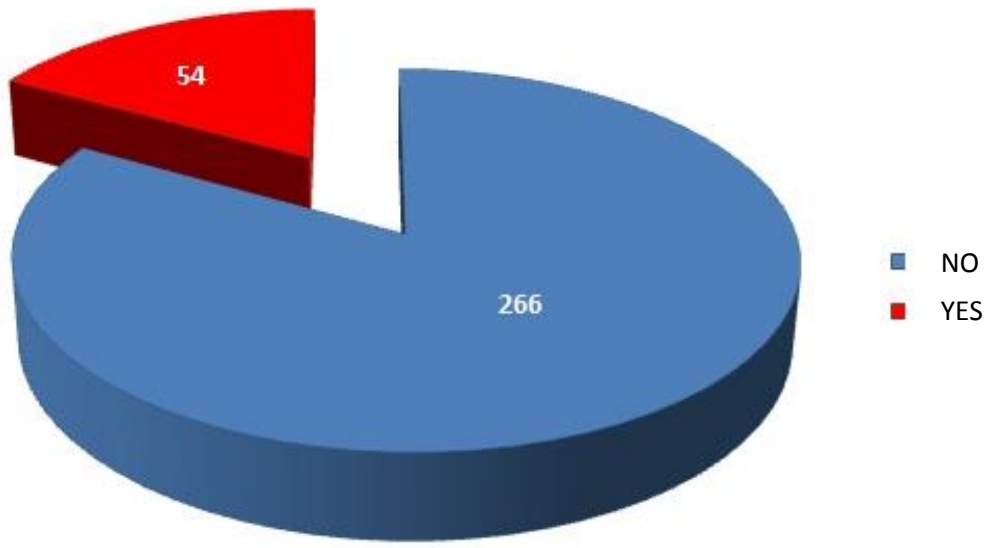
Yet again, people with hearing impairment seem to have better conditions as compared to other groups of people with disabilities.

Marital status

In this sample, 266 people or 83.1% are not married (or living with the partner), and 54 people or 16.9% are married. These results are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Marital status of people with disabilities

Are you married ?



Regarding the association between marital status and type of disability, there was a statistically significant differences among the different types of disability X^2 (4, N=320) = 71.4, p<.001. Distribution with percentages is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Association between marital status and type of disability

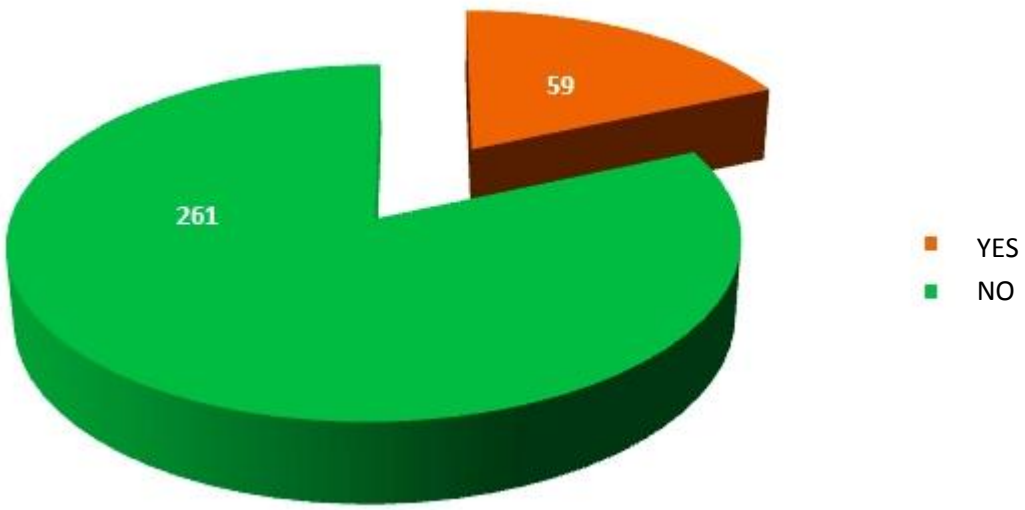
Type of disability		Married		Total
		YES	NO	
Intellectual disability	Count	11	142	53
	% type of disability	7.2%	92.8%	100.0%
Hearing impairment	Count	31	31	62
	% type of disability	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Physical disability	Count	3	37	40
	% type of disability	7.5%	92.5%	100.0%
Visual impairment	Count	9	22	31
	% type of disability	29.0%	71.0%	100.0%
Combined disability	Count	0	34	34
	% type of disability	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	54	266	320
	% type of disability	16.9%	83.1%	100.0%

It can be seen from the table that 50% of people with hearing impairments are married, followed by people with visual impairment at 29%, people with physical disability 7.5%, people with intellectual disability 7.2% and in this sample, none of the people with combined disabilities was married.

Employment

Next important feature for the quality of life of people with disabilities is having a job. In this sample, only 59 or 18.4% of people with disabilities had a job, while 261 people or 81.6% were unemployed. These data were shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Employment in people with disabilities



Employment status is not equally distributed across the different disability types and again results of the Chi-square test indicate large differences in the employment status X^2 (4, N=320) = 58.9, p<.001.

Distribution of the employment rate in relation with the type of disability is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Employment rate in different disability groups

Type of disability		Employed		Total
		YES	NO	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**17**	**136**	**153**
	% type of disability	**11.1%**	**88.9%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**30**	**32**	**62**
	% type of disability	**48.4%**	**51.6%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**2**	**38**	**40**
	% type of disability	**5.0%**	**95.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**10**	**21**	**31**
	% type of disability	**32.3%**	**67.7%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**0**	**34**	**34**
	% type of disability	**0.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**59**	**261**	**320**
	% type of disability	**18.4%**	**81.6%**	**100.0%**

As can be seen in table 5, the highest employment rate is in people with hearing impairment, with the figure of 48.4%. Coming next are the people with visual impairment with 32.3% employment rate, people with intellectual disability 11.1% and people with physical impairment with employment rate of 5%. Not a single person with combined disability was employed in this sample.

Monthly income

In terms of the monthly income, participants were divided into four categories: 1. No monthly income, 2. Income below 300KM, 3. Income between 300-700KM and 4. Income above 700KM. The income refers to monthly salary, pension or disability allowance. Distribution of results is shown in table 6.

Table 6. Monthly income in people with disabilities

Monthly income	Number	Percent
No income	**44**	**13.8**
Below 300 KM	**140**	**43.8**
300 – 700 KM	**123**	**38.4**
Above 700 KM	**13**	**4.1**
Total	**320**	**100**

We can see in the table that majority of people (140 or 43.8%) with disabilities have monthly income below 300KM, followed by the income between 300KM-700KM (123 people or 38.4%). No monthly income was reported in 44 people with disabilities or 13.8% and the income above 700KM had 13 people with disabilities or 4.1%. We were further interested in the distribution of income in relation with the type of disability. Again, there was a highly significant statistical difference among the groups X^2 (12, N=320) = 42.7, p<.001. Descriptive data are shown in table 7.

Table 7. Monthly income in relation with type of disability

Type of disability		Monthly income				Total
		no income	below 300KM	300 - 700KM	above 700KM	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**28**	**74**	**51**	**0**	**153**
	% type of disability	**18.3%**	**48.4%**	**33.3%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**4**	**27**	**24**	**7**	**62**
	% type of disability	**6.5%**	**43.5%**	**38.7%**	**11.3%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**7**	**15**	**18**	**0**	**40**
	% type of disability	**17.5%**	**37.5%**	**45.0%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**0**	**9**	**17**	**5**	**31**
	% type of disability	**0.0%**	**29.0%**	**54.8%**	**16.1%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**5**	**15**	**13**	**1**	**34**
	% type of disability	**14.7%**	**44.1%**	**38.2%**	**2.9%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**44**	**140**	**123**	**13**	**320**
	% type of disability	**13.8%**	**43.8%**	**38.4%**	**4.1%**	**100.0%**

It is evident in table 7 that relatively the highest income is among people with visual impairments, none of whom is without monthly income and 16.1% of them has an income above 700KM. Ranking next are people with hearing impairment, physical disability, combined disability and intellectual disability.

In Table 7.1. are results of the monthly income in relation to the place of residence (Federation BiH or Republic of Srpska)

Table 7.1. Montly income of people with disabilities in Federation BiH and Republic of Srpska

Place of residence		Monthly income				Total
		no income	below 300KM	300 - 700KM	above 700KM	
Federation BIH	Count	27	98	106	12	243
	% place of residence	11.1%	40.3%	43.6%	4.9%	100.0%
Republic of Srpska	Count	17	42	17	1	77
	% place of residence	22.1%	54.5%	22.1%	1.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	44	140	123	13	320
	% place of residence	13.8%	43.8%	38.4%	4.1%	100.0%

As can be seen from the Table 7.1. people with disabilities in Federation BiH in general have a higher income than people with disabilities in Republic of Srpska, and that difference, according to the results of Chi square test is statistically significant (X^2 (3, N=320)=16.8, p<.01).

In the second part of the results section are the results of the Personal Outcome Scale. We analyzed the data in two ways: by analyzing the individual items on the scale through percentages and Chi square tests and through the analysis of the total score on the scale.

The analysis of individual items on the Personal Outcomes Scale

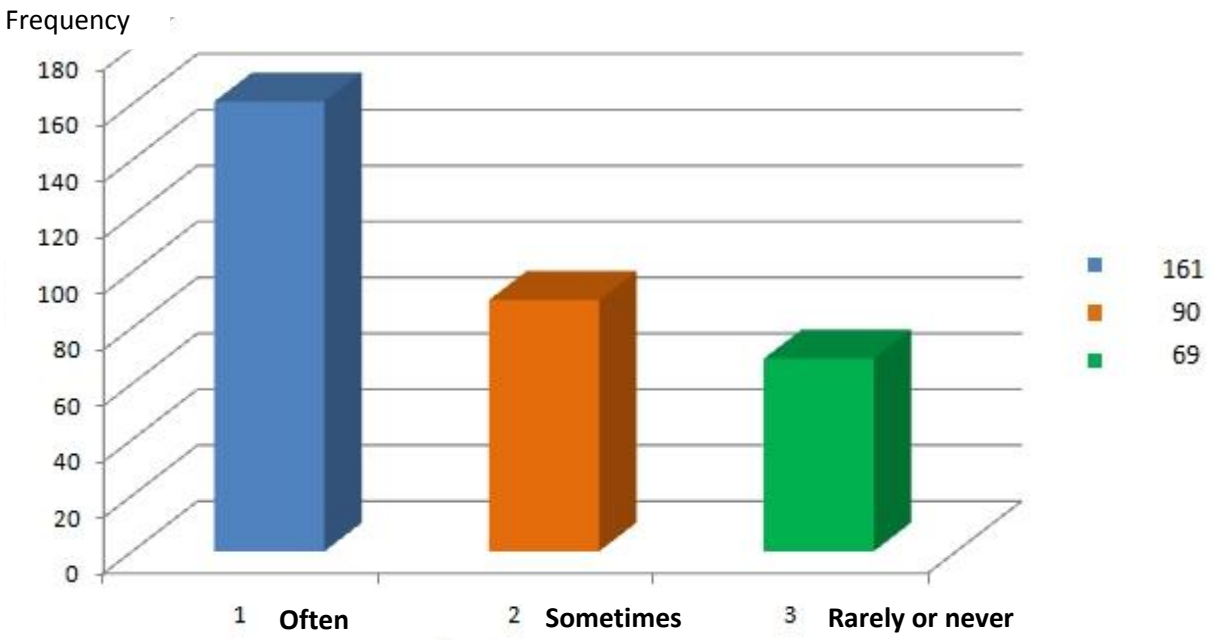
Do you use internet/cell phone etc?

The answers are shown in table 8 and in figure 5.

Table 8. How often do you use internet/cell phones etc?

Use of internet/cell phones	Number	Percent
Often	161	50.3
Sometimes	90	28.1
Rarely or never	69	21.6
Total	320	100

Figure 5. Internet/cell phone use in people with disabilities



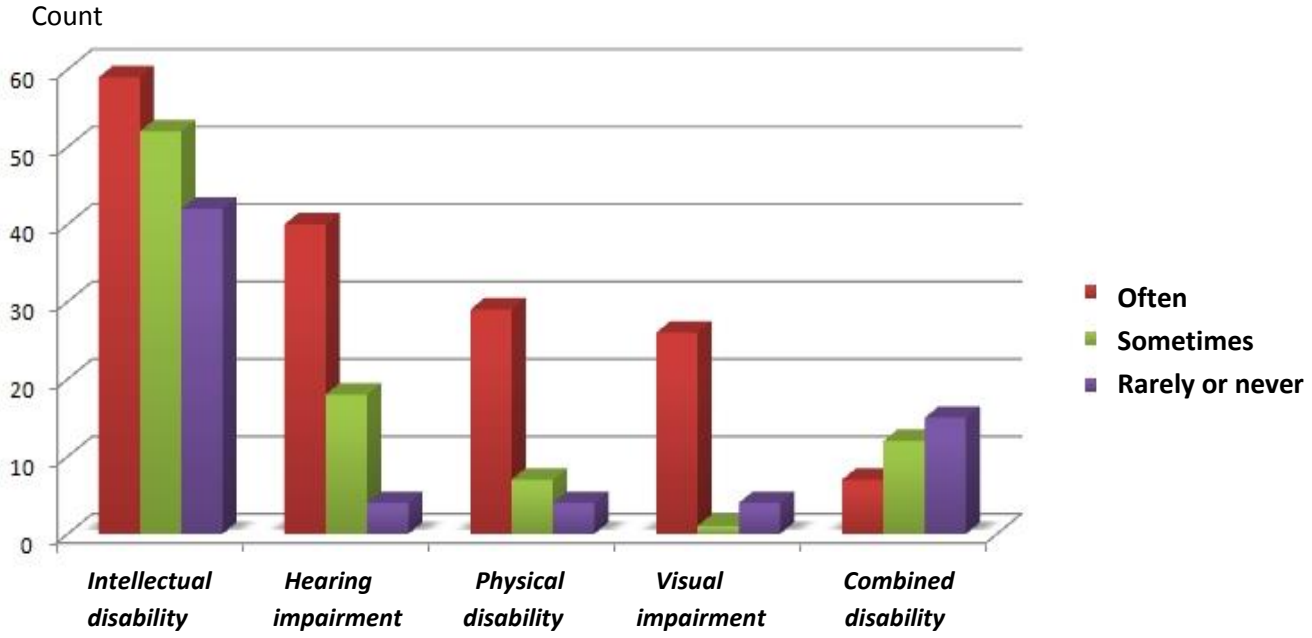
In terms of internet/cell phone use in people with different types of disability there was a statistically significant difference in the rate of usage according to the Chi square test results X^2 (8, N=320) = 55.1, p<.001.

These data are shown in table 9 and in figure 6 for clearer depiction of the trend.

Table 9. The usage of internet/cellphones in relation to the type of disability

Type of disability		Internet/cell phone often	sometimes	rarely or never	Total
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**59**	**52**	**42**	**153**
	% type of disability	**38.6%**	**34.0%**	**27.5%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**40**	**18**	**4**	**62**
	% type of disability	**64.5%**	**29.0%**	**6.5%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**29**	**7**	**4**	**40**
	% type of disability	**72.5%**	**17.5%**	**10.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**26**	**1**	**4**	**31**
	% type of disability	**83.9%**	**3.2%**	**12.9%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**7**	**12**	**15**	**34**
	% type of disability	**20.6%**	**35.3%**	**44.1%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**161**	**90**	**69**	**320**
	% type of disability	**50.3%**	**28.1%**	**21.6%**	**100.0%**

Figure 6. The usage of internet/cell phones in relation to the type of disability



Here we can see a similar trend in internet/cell phone usage among different disability groups except for the people with combined disabilities who have the higher rate of *rarely/never* response than *often*. It is vice versa in all other disability groups.

Do you control at least part of your money?

The answers are shown in table 10.

Table 10. Control of money in people with disabilities

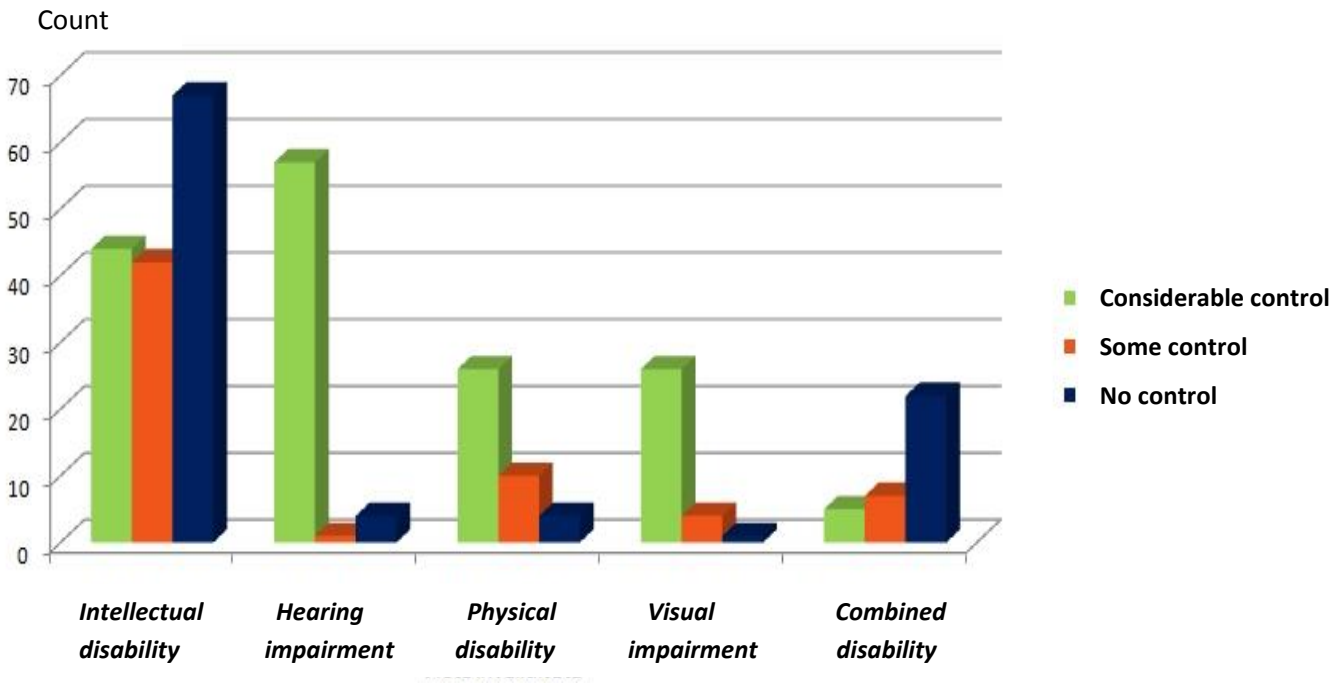
Control of money	Frequency	Percent
Considerable control	**158**	**49.4**
Some control	**64**	**20.0**
No control	**98**	**30.6**
Total	**320**	**100**

People with disabilities in almost 50% of cases have considerable control over their money, and in almost 50% of cases have some or no control. But here also, the distribution is not equal among different disability groups. There is a statistically significant difference in control of money in relation to type of disability, X^2 (8, N=320) = 116.2, p<.001. These data are shown in table 11 and in figure 7.

Table 11. Control of money in relation with type of disability

Type of disability		Control over money			Total
		considerable control	some control	no control	
Intellectual disability	Count	44	42	67	153
	% type of disability	28.8%	27.5%	43.8%	100.0%
Hearing impairment	Count	57	1	4	62
	% type of disability	91.9%	1.6%	6.5%	100.0%
Physical disability	Count	26	10	4	40
	% type of disability	65.0%	25.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Visual impairment	Count	26	4	1	31
	% type of disability	83.9%	12.9%	3.2%	100.0%
Combined disability	Count	5	7	22	34
	% type of disability	14.7%	20.6%	64.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	158	64	98	320
	% type of disability	49.4%	20.0%	30.6%	100.0%

Figure 7. Control of money in relation with type of disability



From table 11 and figure 7 it is evident that the trends in control over money differ significantly among the different disability groups. People with hearing impairment, visual impairment and

physical disability have much higher control over their money as compared to people with intellectual disability and people with combined disability.

Do you participate in social activities ?

Social activities in this context mean how often people with disability socialize, for example have their friend come over for a cup of coffee, do they attend parties, go to disco clubs etc. The answers to this question are given in Table 12.

Table 12. Participation in social activities of people with disabilities

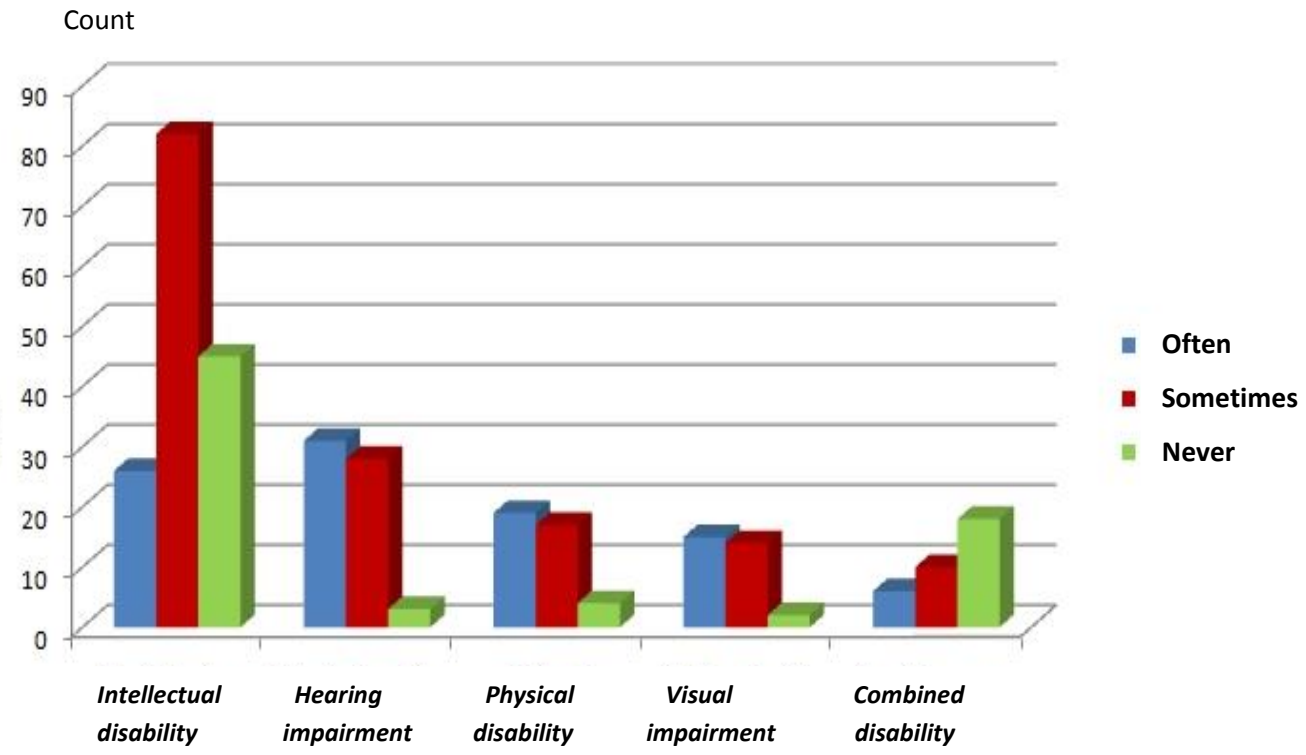
Participation	Frequency	Percent
Often	**97**	**30.3**
Sometimes	**151**	**47.2**
Never	**72**	**22.5**
Total	**320**	**100**

We can see from the table that 22.5% of people with disabilities never participate in any social activity. Again, the distribution is not the same for all disability groups and the association is statistically significant, X^2 (8, N=320) = 62.0, p<.001. For clearer picture, the data were presented graphically in Figure 8 and in Table 13.

Table 13. Participation in social activities in relation to the type of disability

Type of disability		Participation in social activities			Total
		often	sometimes	never	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**26**	**82**	**45**	**153**
	% type of disability	**17.0%**	**53.6%**	**29.4%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**31**	**28**	**3**	**62**
	% type of disability	**50.0%**	**45.2%**	**4.8%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**19**	**17**	**4**	**40**
	% type of disability	**47.5%**	**42.5%**	**10.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**15**	**14**	**2**	**31**
	% type of disability	**48.4%**	**45.2%**	**6.5%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**6**	**10**	**18**	**34**
	% type of disability	**17.6%**	**29.4%**	**52.9%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**97**	**151**	**72**	**320**
	% type of disability	**30.3%**	**47.2%**	**22.5%**	**100.0%**

Figure 8. Participation in social activities in relation to the type of disability



From table 13 and figure 8 it is clearly visible the varying degrees of social activities participation in different disability groups. We have the similar trend as in the previous question. In people with hearing impairment, visual impairment and physical disability, the most frequent answer was „I often participate in social activities“. In people with intellectual disability the most frequent answer was „I sometimes participate in social activities“, and in people with combined disabilities the most frequent answer was „I never participate in social activities“.

Can you have a girlfriend/boyfriend if you want?

The answers to this question were given in table 14.

Table 14. Possibility of having a girlfriend/boyfriend in people with disabilities

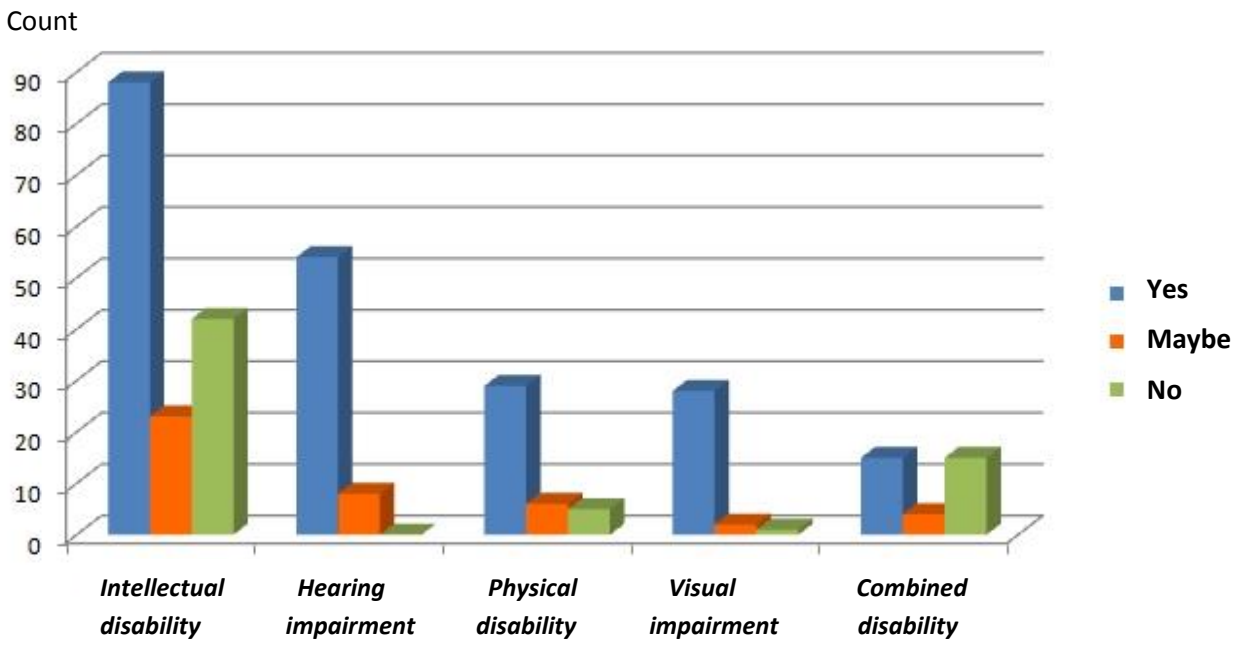
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	**214**	**66.9**
Maybe	**43**	**13.4**
No	**63**	**19.7**
Total	**320**	**100**

Most of people with disabilities can have a girlfriend/boyfriend if they want to. But here again, the rate differs significantly in relation to the disability group X^2 (8, N=320) = 45.2, p<.001. Numbers and percentages are shown in table 15 and in figure 9.

Table 15. Possibility of having a girlfriend/boyfriend in people with disabilities in relation with disability group

Type of disability		girlfriend-boyfriend			Total
		yes	maybe	no	
Intellectual disability	Count	88	23	42	153
	% type of disability	57.5%	15.0%	27.5%	100.0%
Hearing impairment	Count	54	8	0	62
	% type of disability	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%	100.0%
Physical disability	Count	29	6	5	40
	% type of disability	72.5%	15.0%	12.5%	100.0%
Visual impairment	Count	28	2	1	31
	% type of disability	90.3%	6.5%	3.2%	100.0%
Combined disability	Count	15	4	15	34
	% type of disability	44.1%	11.8%	44.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	214	43	63	320
	% type of disability	66.9%	13.4%	19.7%	100.0%

Figure 9. Possibility of having a girlfriend/boyfriend in people with disabilities in relation with disability group



It is evident that all people with hearing impairment can have a girlfriend-boyfriend. In people with visual impairment only one person answered that he/she cannot have a girlfriend-boyfriend. About 12.5% of people with physical disability said they cannot have boyfriend-girlfriend. The rate rises at 27.5% in people with intellectual disability and reaches 44% in people with combined disability.

How frequently have you voted in recent elections?

The answers to this question are given in table 16.

Table 16. How frequently have you voted in recent elections?

Voting	Frequency	Percent
Almost always	**113**	**35.3**
Sometimes	**64**	**20.0**
Never	**143**	**44.7**
Total	**320**	**100**

Almost 44.7% of people with disabilities never voted at the elections. Of course, once again, this percentage is not the same in all disability groups. According to the Chi square test there is a statistically significant difference in voting patterns in relation to disability group X^2 (8, N=320) = 93.4, p<.001. Data are given in table 17.

Table 17. The rate of voting in relation to type of disability

Type of disability		voting			Total
		almost always	sometimes	never	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**30**	**29**	**94**	**153**
	% type of disability	**19.6%**	**19.0%**	**61.4%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**45**	**15**	**2**	**62**
	% type of disability	**72.6%**	**24.2%**	**3.2%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**20**	**7**	**13**	**40**
	% type of disability	**50.0%**	**17.5%%**	**32.5%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**12**	**11**	**8**	**31**
	% type of disability	**38.7%**	**35.5%**	**25.8%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**6**	**2**	**26**	**34**
	% type of disability	**17.6%**	**5.9%**	**76.5%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**113**	**64**	**143**	**320**
	% type of disability	**35.3%**	**20.0%**	**44.7%**	**100.0%**

We can see from this table that significantly more people with intellectual and combined disabilities did not vote in comparison to other disability groups. One factor contributing to this is most certainly the fact that many people with such disabilities are deprived of their legal capacity. Having no legal capacity means not having a voice in the elections and many other rights. It is a human rights issue and much debate is currently underway so people with these disabilities can achieve their human rights.

Do you feel safe in your daily environment?

The answers are given in table 18.

Table 18. Sense of safety and security in people with disabilities

Safety	Frequency	Percent
Very safe	**228**	**71.3**
Somewhat safe	**76**	**23.8**
Not safe	**16**	**5.0**
Total	**320**	**100**

Very few people with disabilities feel unsafe in their environment (16 people or 5%). The analysis of the trend in different disability groups indicate a similar trend in all groups but still the difference reached statistical difference X^2 (8, N=320) = 15.9, p=.044.

Results in relation to the type of disability are shown in table 19.

Table 19. Sense of safety in relation to disability type

Type of disability		Sense of safety			Total
		very safe	somewhat safe	not safe	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**113**	**29**	**11**	**153**
	% type of disability	**73.9%**	**19.0%**	**7.2%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**40**	**22**	**0**	**62**
	% type of disability	**64.5%**	**35.5%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**33**	**5**	**2**	**40**
	% type of disability	**82.5%**	**12.5%%**	**5.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**21**	**8**	**2**	**31**
	% type of disability	**67.7%**	**25.8%**	**6.5%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**21**	**12**	**1**	**34**
	% type of disability	**61.8%**	**35.3%**	**2.9%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**228**	**76**	**16**	**320**
	% type of disability	**71.2%**	**23.8%**	**5.0%**	**100.0%**

Trend is similar in all disability groups, except in the group of people with hearing impairment in which not a single person feels unsafe. The other disability groups had the same trend of answers to this question

Would you say you are a happy person ?

The answers to this question are shown in table 20.

Table 20. Do you see yourself as a happy person?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	**206**	**64.4**
More or less	**107**	**33.4**
No	**7**	**2.2**
Total	**320**	**100**

As can be seen in table 20, only 7 people with disabilities or 2.2% said they were not happy. Completely happy are 206 people or 64.4%, and more or less happy are 107 people or 33.4%. The answers in relation to type of disability indicate statistically significant difference. (X^2 (8, N=320) = 19.1, p=.014) but the trend in different groups is very similar. These data are shown in table 21.

Table 21. Sense of happiness in relation to the type of disability

Type of disability		Happiness			Total
		yes	more-less	no	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**107**	**43**	**3**	**153**
	% type of disability	**69.9%**	**28.1%**	**2.0%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**31**	**30**	**1**	**62**
	% type of disability	**50.0%**	**48.4%**	**1.6%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**24**	**14**	**2**	**40**
	% type of disability	**60.0%**	**35.0%%**	**5.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**26**	**4**	**1**	**31**
	% type of disability	**83.9%**	**12.9%**	**3.2%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**18**	**16**	**0**	**34**
	% type of disability	**52.9%**	**47.1%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**206**	**107**	**7**	**320**
	% type of disability	**64.4%**	**33.4%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

It is very interesting that no person with combined disabilities answered „no“ to this question of happiness. Ranking, 83.9% of people with visual impairment said they were happy, 69.9% with

intellectual disability said they were happy, 60% of people with physical disability said they were happy, 52.9% with combined disability said they were happy and 50% of people with hearing impairment said they were happy. This trend is very interesting given the data so far indicating that people with hearing impairment were best integrated in BiH social activities.

How is your health, how do you feel?

This is the last question from the individual items analysis in Personal Outcomes Scale. The answers are given in table 22.

Table 22. Sense of health in people with disabilities

Health	Frequency	Percent
Very good	**174**	**54.4**
Okay	**118**	**36.9**
Not good/ill	**28**	**8.8**
Total	**320**	**100**

We can see from this table that 28 people with disabilities do not feel well or 8.8%. In relation to disability group there was a statistically significant difference in the sense of health X^2 (8, N=320) = 63.8, p<.001. Descriptive data are shown in table 23.

Table 23. Sense of health in relation to disability group

Type of disability		How is your health			Total
		very good	okay	not good	
Intellectual disability	**Count**	**73**	**67**	**13**	**153**
	% type of disability	**47.7%**	**43.8%**	**8.5%**	**100.0%**
Hearing impairment	**Count**	**52**	**9**	**1**	**62**
	% type of disability	**83.9%**	**14.5%**	**1.6%**	**100.0%**
Physical disability	**Count**	**17**	**21**	**2**	**40**
	% type of disability	**42.5%**	**52.5%%**	**5.0%**	**100.0%**
Visual impairment	**Count**	**25**	**4**	**2**	**31**
	% type of disability	**80.6%**	**12.9%**	**6.5%**	**100.0%**
Combined disability	**Count**	**7**	**17**	**10**	**34**
	% type of disability	**20.6%**	**50.0%**	**29.4%**	**100.0%**
Total	**Count**	**174**	**118**	**28**	**320**
	% type of disability	**54.4%**	**36.9%**	**8.8%**	**100.0%**

As was expected, the highest percentage of people who do not feel good was among people with combined disabilities, 10 people or 29.4%. Subjective health is the best in group of people with hearing impairment, 83.9% of them feels their health is very good.

At the end, we present the total scores on Personal Outcome Scale for people with different types of disabilities. Mean values are shown in table 24.

Type of disability	Mean	N	SD	Median
Intellectual disability	**105.66**	**13**	**16.278**	**107.00**
Hearing impairment	**123.11**	**62**	**12.529**	**126.50**
Physical disability	**117.82**	**40**	**15.586**	**120.00**
Visual impairment	**126.06**	**31**	**12.132**	**131.00**
Combined disability	**93.76**	**34**	**18.072**	**90.00**
Total	**111.28**	**320**	**18.310**	**115.50**

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with Tukey posthoc test to determine the possible statistically significant differences among the groups in quality of life. Given the statistically significant ANOVA, F (4, 315)= 34.3, p<.001, Tukey HSD test was performed to check the differences between the groups. The results are shown in table 25.

Table 25. Tukey HSD test to test mean values of quality of life

Type of disability		N	Subsets for alpha=0.05		
			1	2	3
Tukey HSD[a,b]	***Combined disability***	**34**	**93.76**		
	Intellectual disability	**153**		**105.66**	
	Physical disability	**40**			**117.83**
	Hearing impairment	**62**			**123.11**
	Visual impairment	**31**			**126.06**
	Sig.		**1.000**		**0.80**

Results indicate 3 subsets: first set are the people with combined disabilities, who differ from all groups, meaning they have lower results on the Personal Outcome Scales, second subsets are people with intellectual disability who have higher results from people with combined disabilities but lower from other types of disability. At the end we have the third subset consisting of people with hearing impairment, visual impairment and physical disability, a group which achieved higher results than people with intellectual and combined disability, but these three groups do not differ significantly among each other.

The last analysis in this study regards the predictors of quality of life. As potential predictors we analyzed: sex, age, type of disability and employment status. The results of the regression analysis are shown in table 26.

Table 26. Demographic and environmental predictors of Quality of Life

Model	R	R squared	Adjusted R squared	Statistics		
				Change in R square	F change	significance
1	.426	.182	.179	.182	70.564	.000
2	.501[a]	.251	.247	.070	29.498	.000
3	.537[b]	.288	.281	.037	16.419	.000
4	.569[c]	.324	.316	.036	16.750	.000
5	.612[d]	.374	.364	.050	25.125	.000

a. Predictors: employment
b. Predictors: employment, disability
c. Predictors: employment, disability, disability1
d. Predictors: employment, dis, dis1, dis2
e. Predictors: employment, dis, dis1, dis2, dis3

The prediction model is statistically significant F (5,314)=37.6, p<.001, and factors influencing the quality of life are employment status and type of disability. Factors not included in this model are sex and age, meaning they have no influence of the quality of life. Total explained variance in the score on Quality of Life is 37%, meaning that percentage of variability in the scores can be explained by the employment status and type of disability.

CONCLUSION

This is the first large study examining the quality of life of people with disabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is evident from this study that people with disabilities are the poorest and least employed category of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The rate of unemployment is significantly higher than that in general population. It is also evident that people with disabilities are not fully included in the social activities in the community. Despite all these objective problems, it is important to note that majority of people with disabilities regards themselves as happy. Previous studies have revealed a positive correlation between material wellbeing and sense of happiness (Diener et al., 1993). This study has also found a positive relationship between sense of happiness and material wellbeing, especially employment status plays a significant role in the sense of happiness.

One of the most important findings of this study was the significant difference among people with different types of disability in objective and subjective indicators of life quality. This finding stresses the need for individualization of supports for people with disabilities. Support service providers need to reflect on this and need not to regard people with disabilities as one homogeneous category. On the other hand, this research indicated that administrative division of BiH significantly contributes to the difficulties in the realization of rights in the area of social protection thus negatively impacting the quality of life of people with disabilities.

It is important to note that Bosnia and Herzegovina has a relatively positive legislative in the disability field on all levels. After signing and ratifying the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities, the state is obliged to respect and implement those rights. This certainly serves as a good basis in the direction of improving the life of people with disabilities. Also, many Disability Person Organizations and other non-governmental organizations are working on the promotion of rights of people with disabilities and they are important factors in creating even more favorable legislative in this field.

Besides quantitative indicators of quality of life, we tried, through an informal conversation, to find out which are the biggest obstacles people with disabilities face in their everyday life. The most frequent answer to that was the discrimination they face in trying to find employment and that the state is not doing enough in systematic employment of people with disabilities. Also, the frequent answer was that society has many unfavorable attitudes and prejudices towards people with disabilities. People with physical disabilities often stated the problem of inaccessibility of public buildings, shops, toilets etc.

This short overview of informal answers tell us that the state of BiH has to do much more in improving the quality of life of people with disabilities. In this segment the role of NGOs can be very important in creation of programs aimed to reduce and eliminate prejudices towards people with disabilities, as the prejudices were one of the most frequent problems encountered by the people with disabilities.

In the light of this study finding, it is very important to improve the support services for people with disabilities as it is the only safe path towards improving the quality of life.

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Contact

Union of organizations for support to the people with intellectual disability of FBIH – SUMERO
Address: Sutjeska 18 , 71000 Sarajevo, Bosna i Hercegovina
Tel/fax: + 387 (0)33 266 640 / 266 641
Email: info@sumero.ba
Web: www.sumero.ba

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