

Examining Ndebele derogatory labels bestowed on people with disabilities in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This article examines some Ndebele derogatory labels which are bestowed on people living with disabilities in Zimbabwe. The article aims to unravel the etymology of such names and their effects on people living with disabilities. Using the descriptive theory of proper names, the study perceives derogatory names as an outright description of a person's disability, which is normally an unwelcome practice in any society. The findings suggest that people living with various forms of disability are aware of the derogatory labels attached to them by society as seen from their responses. The study concludes that people living with disabilities among Ndebele communities of Zimbabwe face a lot of discrimination and are likely to be disempowered due to the descriptions which they bear. The conclusions of the study may also apply to other Zimbabwean language communities and perhaps other parts of Africa.