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Power dynamics among PWDs during adult learning processes: Motivator or demotivator?

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Keywords: Adult learning, disability, microfinance, power relation

Abstract

People with disabilities (PWDs) need knowledge and skills to engage in livelihood activities and to lead meaningful lives. Unfortunately, they are not or are underserved by the formal and non-formal education system. Improving PWDs' adult learning opportunities requires understanding of the factors that influence their learning. This paper is based on a study that investigated adult learning practices of PWDs regarding microfinance. It focuses on the kinds of power dynamics that operated among (PWDs) and between them and the non-PWDs and how these affected PWDs' learning. We argue that power and powerlessness is not homogenously distributed among categories of PWDs and that representation, leadership, decision-making and status as measures of power can be a source of motivation or de-motivation, depending on how they are handled.

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