

## The Effect of Definition of Persons with Disabilities on Prevalence Rates

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### Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the effect of definition of person with disabilities on prevalence rates by using the 2002 Disability Survey data conducted by the National Statistical Office. This survey set criteria to collect data only from persons aged 13 years and older. This study adopted concept of World Health Organization on the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps proposed in 1980. The comparison was made between the prevalence rates of persons with disabilities deriving from impairment-based questions and from disability-based questions.

The results revealed that the discrepancy between prevalence rates from two definitions was about 1.4 times. Only 14.8 percent of the samples have disabilities based on impairment-based questions, compared to 20.5 percent for disability-based questions. The biggest difference of prevalence rate was found for persons with intellectual disabilities (higher about 3.8 times when using disability-based questions), followed by persons with psychiatric/psychological disabilities (2.7 times).

Limitation of this study pertained to the limited number of questions used for screening implicit disabilities to identify persons who might have intellectual or psychological problems. In addition, the sampling frame for this survey covered only households of people with chronic health conditions, thus population estimation could not be inferred from this number.

This study recommends to adopt the current concept proposed by WHO, the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, as a conceptual framework for the next disability survey. But the sets of screening questions for identify persons with intellectual and psychological disabilities should be carefully investigated before added in the questionnaires. Questions concerning the effect of disabilities on quality of life should be included to provide necessary information for the social policy formulation.