

# A Comparative Study of Disability in 2 Samuel 9 and among the Bamasaaba in Eastern Uganda

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## **Abstract:**

The interpretation rendered to disability narratives in the Bible and the religious perceptions of disability contribute to how society constructs the phenomenon of disability and respond to disability inclusion. The socio-religious construction of disability arguably shapes the attitudes, behaviours, and interpretations of disability inclusion among Bamasaaba. Using an integrated theoretical framework of liberation theology and social constructivism, the study conceptualizes disability as a socially constructed phenomenon that does not reduce the ontology of human essence. The aim of the study was to explore how the interpretation of disability in 2 Samuel 9 and the social cultural construction of disability among Bamasaaba can promote social and religious inclusion of persons with disability. The exegetical study of 2 Samuel 9 indicated that the identity for people with disability; perception of leaders toward persons with disability; practice of restoring the socio-economic status of people with disability, creating an enabling environment for social interactions for people with disability, and securing the future for persons with disability are critical for disability inclusion. And through an explanatory sequential design, it was established that the Bamasaaba religious beliefs and perceptions are critical determinants of disability inclusion. Further, findings confirmed that attitudes and behaviours, socio-cultural understanding of disability; caregiver education level, socio-economic status, nature of the disability, and provision of spiritual support were significantly associated with religious participation of persons with disability. Based on the findings, this study recommends a positive and inclusive interpretation of disability among religious communities that can transform perspective and enhance inclusion by integrating people with disability fully into society through deconstructing normative notions within religious communities.