



Understanding the Experiences of Individuals with Disabilities in Amusement Parks

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Introduction

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990 to remove barriers to participation for people with disabilities.
- Title III of ADA focuses on ensuring private and public accommodations are accessible, including amusement parks.
- ADA requires businesses to adhere to architectural modifications and provide services that increase inclusion.
- Aspects of amusement parks that fall into these categories include, but are not limited to, accessibility for rides, walkways, restaurants, theatres, and bathrooms.
- Many companies push to incorporate universal design into their parks due to its more inclusive features.
- The way disability can impact individuals varies widely from person to person therefore blanket accommodations and services may not be the most beneficial.
- Participation and inclusion in public settings are crucial to an individuals' overall quality of life and well-being.
- Accessibility services and accommodations within amusement parks can increase occupational performance and participation for these individuals and their families

Methods

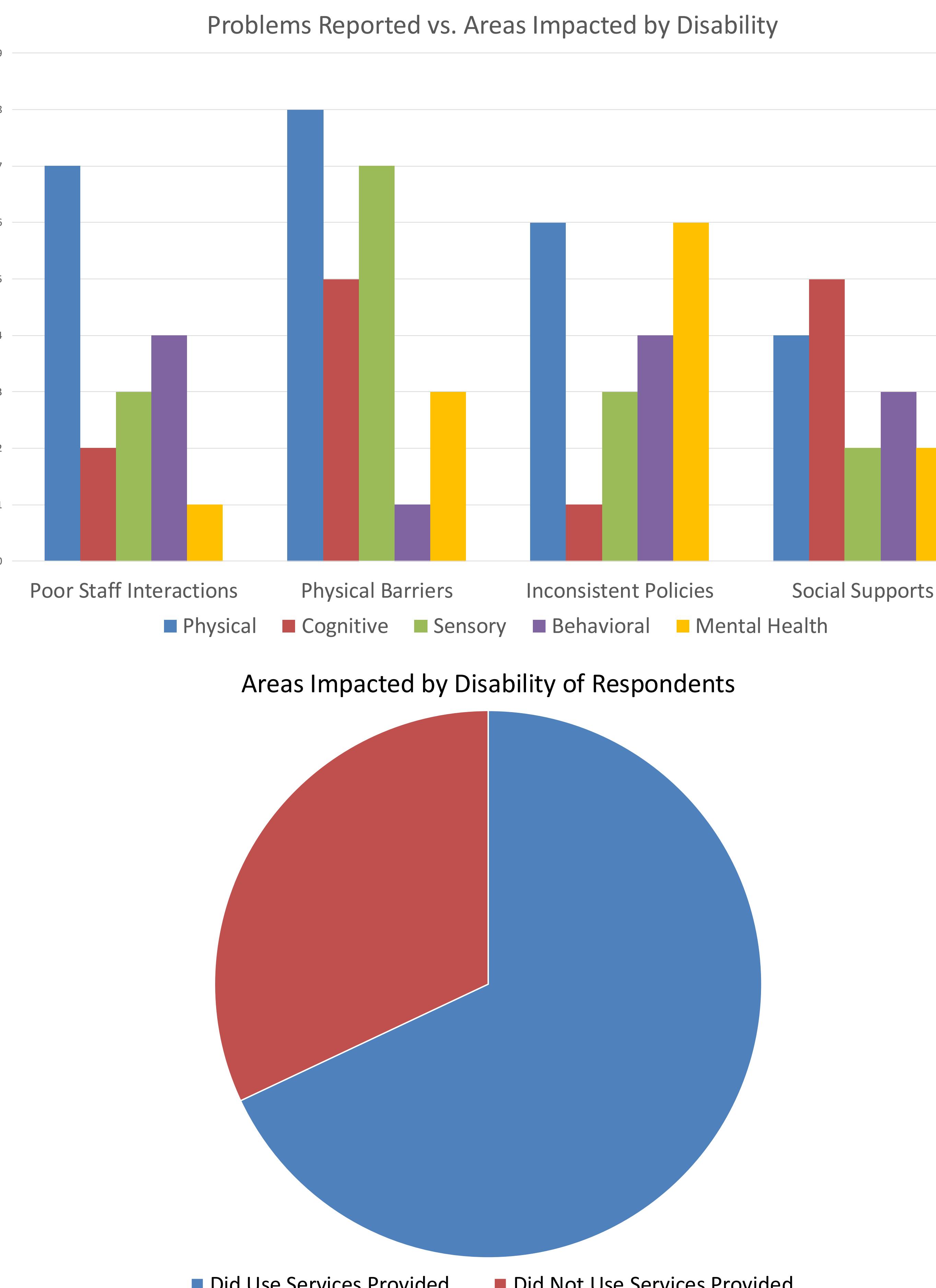
- Conducted a survey collecting data on the subjective experiences of individuals with disabilities within amusement parks
 - Open ended questions
 - Multiple choice
- Inclusion criteria:
 - 18 years or older
 - Living with a disability OR guardian of an individual with a disability
 - Any diagnosis
- Survey shared through social media platforms and word of mouth

Results

PARTICIPANTS

- 25 total participants
- 72% Answered for themselves
- 28% Answered for someone else

Results cont.



Discussion

- Many parks offer more services than required by ADA such as:
 - Front of the line access
 - Wheelchair rentals
 - Sensory rooms

Discussion cont.

- Recent policy changes, such as Disney's Disability Access Pass, have created controversy due to discriminative verbiage
- Poor staff education creates disconnect and leaves park goers feeling alienated
- Many individuals require personalized accommodations due to the variability of certain diagnosis
- Blanket services may not be the most beneficial
- Barriers to accessibility lead to decreased occupational performance

Conclusion

Implications

- Pilot data indicates the need for more equity focused accessibility policies across amusement parks
- Staff training needs to shift from procedural knowledge to disability awareness and understanding
- Accessibility must account for the broad spectrum of occupational performance amongst people with disabilities

Further Research

- Need for comparative studies on accessibility policies between amusement park corporations
- Explore the impact of staff training on accessibility/experience outcomes for people with disabilities outcomes
- Further research on how a wider array of services could promote occupational performance

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Acknowledgement & Contact information

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