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Perceptions of Employees on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region

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University of the Witwatersrand

Faculty of Humanities
School of Human and Community Development

Perceptions of Employees on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region

by

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A research report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Social Work in the field of Occupational Social Work

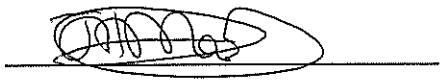
Supervisor: Prof. Busisiwe Nkala-Dlamini

July 2025

DECLARATION

I, Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko declare that this report is my own unaided work and that I have fully given full acknowledgement to the sources I have used. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Social Work in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other University.



Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko

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List of Abbreviations

ADA — American with disabilities
Afr – African
AO — Administration Officer
CRPD – Constitution on the rights of persons with disabilities
DPSA – Department of Public Service and Administrations
DSD – Department of Social Development
EHWP – Employee health and wellness program
EWD — Employees with disabilities
F — Female
HR — Human resources
HRM — Human Resource Management
Ind – Indian
JHB — Johannesburg
M – Male
NA – Not Applicable
PWD – People with disabilities
SW — Social Worker
SAW — Social Auxiliary Worker
UN – United Nations

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

According to Stats SA 2014, South Africa has 2. 9 million out of 57.73 million of people recorded as living with a disability, and they find it difficult to participate in economic activities (Tinta et al., 2020). It is argued that despite the recognition of disability issues and the development of various policy framework by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, South Africa continues to experience conflicting situations in achieving equity for meeting the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace (Tinta et al., 2020).

Despite progressive legislation in South Africa, PWD remain underrepresented in the workforce and continue to face barriers that hinder their full participation. These include inaccessible workspaces, negative co-worker attitudes and lack of reasonable accommodations (McKinney Swartz, 2021). Studies also highlight the role of co-worker acceptance, management support and equity in shaping workplace experiences (McLaughlin et al, 2004; Blanck, 2020).

People with disabilities (PWD) continue to experience exclusion from the majority of contexts among stereotypical constructions of disability, in spite of numerous well-documented legislation that impacts their employability in South Africa (Smith et al., 2018). Therefore, South Africa continues to experience conflict and contradictory situations in achieving equity for meeting the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace (Sing, 2012). Studies conducted in South Africa about the employment of people with disabilities have shown that less than 2% of PWD are in the workforce despite the mandate of employment equity legislation (Sing, 2012). People with disabilities are still disadvantaged by the system in all spheres of life (Black and de Matos-Ala, 2016).

Furthermore, Zaluska, et al., (2019) state that there is a stubborn gap in the much

lower employment rate of EWD in the world countries when compared to social demographics that leads to resisting change in the employment of PWD (Zaluska et al., 2019). Zaluska, et al. (2019) state that various scientific studies show that one of the explanations for this may be poor knowledge of the specificity of different types of disabilities due to the unfavourable social perceptions of PWD. The identified factors contributing to the stubborn gap are stereotype and attitude towards the perspective of PWD and their inclusion in society; employers' attitude towards EWD and the ways of measuring them and the adaptation of EWD in the workplace and work efficiency (Zaluska et al., 2019).

Moreover, it is outlined that not even a quarter of the mandated percentage of PWD has been attained within the workforce (Black and de Matos-Ala, 2016). Similarly, global-based research has shown that many years have passed since the endorsement of the Convention on the Rights of PWD; since it was sanctioned by the United Nations, the employment rate of PWD is still very much lower in the world (Zaluska et al., 2019). Correspondingly, a study conducted in the United States on disability issues has presented that, despite legislation on diversity in the workplace, PWD still experience problems when it comes to securing and sustaining work. For example, in the United States only 34.9% of PWD are employed, compared to 76% of people without disabilities (Bonaccio et al., 2020). Similar gaps have been detected in other countries.

Additionally, the World Health Organisation (WHO) stated that the bottom line is that all over the world, PWD are less likely to be hired than people without disabilities (Bonaccio et al., 2020). There could be a reason that causes resistance to the implementation of intended plans to attain the national aspirations as far as disability issues are concerned. As one of the spheres in the public sector, the question arises, how do the employees with disabilities within the Department of Social Development experience the workspace?

In this section is essential to mention that this study applied a qualitative approach and followed interpretive phenomenological design to explore, to understand and describe the experiences of employees about the workplace accommodation of EWD in the Department of Social Development.

To implement research ethics, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the university ethics committee and was granted permission to conduct the study by the Department of Social Development. As part of ethic consideration, transparent and honest information was provided to the participants, and informed consent was obtained. Permission to record was requested and granted. Participants' rights to privacy

and confidentiality were exercised.

In addition, this study report consists of five chapters, including the introduction, theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, research design and methodology, study results, and the last chapter discusses the main findings, conclusion, and recommendations. The theoretical framework selected for this study is the inclusive perspective. This perspective offers a conceptual shift in understanding workplace disability. It moves beyond a narrow focus on physical access or legal compliance and emphasizes systemic transformation, equity, belonging, and the recognition of diversity as a strength. Inclusion in this context means not only employing individuals with disabilities but also ensuring that they are actively supported, fairly treated, and fully engaged in all aspects of work life. This study adopts the inclusive perspective as its guiding theoretical lens to investigate how EWD are accepted and accommodated in the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg Region.

Literature review will explain global and local perspectives on disability issues, particularly the acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the workplace and possible issues that may underlie the experiences of EWD in terms of history, human development, social, legislative, intellectual, and political aspects.

1.2 Statement of the problem and rationale for the study

It is argued that employment is an important aspect of life that improves people's standard of living and social welfare (Boland and Guerin, 2023). It is further asserted that "Employment is understood to be fundamental for well-being of all people, including people with disabilities, and it is said to be the central to the social inclusion of people with disabilities" (Boland and Guerin, 2023, p. 18). However, the studies conducted in the past about disability and social change have shown that PWD experience major difficulties in the employment area, which causes significant impacts on their whole well-being (Watermeyer et al., 2006). Those difficulties occur because of several factors, such as current trends of high mechanisation, computerisation levels, and issues of gender, race, region, and level of education (Watermeyer et al., 2006). In addition, there is an emphasis on how PWD remain underrepresented in the public sector as there are barriers to their employment, which can be investigated further to seek resolution and liberation (Smith et al., 2018). Therefore, it is suggested that the barriers that hamper the employment of PWD – such as workplace environment, transportation, attitude of co-workers, additional costs of managing one's disability and access to information – be looked at further in order to formulate resolutions and attain employment equity (Boland and Guerin, 2023).

Munsell et al., (2024) articulate that the last decade has seen a demand for improved efforts towards diversity, equity and inclusion of EWD in the workplace. To add, according to UN, disability is something each organisation requires to consider if they want to get the best out of every employee and as each individual is unique, it is important to ask for their needs and challenges (Holt et al., 2024). Based on such statements and the findings that EWD are underrepresented in the workplace, arose the need for this study to explore the challenges to acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the Department of Social Development, to find practices that support employment and inclusion of EWD in the workplace and to contribute to the ongoing discourse on workplace acceptance and accommodation of EWD.

The purpose of this study is to explore employees' perceptions of workplace acceptance and accommodation of EWD within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region. Although the Department of Social Development has made efforts to recruit employees with disabilities, evidence suggests that EWD still encounter significant barriers to their full inclusion. These barriers include negative attitudes from the management, inadequate accommodations, and a lack of systemic support. The persistence of these issues indicates that workplace efforts remain largely compliance-based rather than genuinely inclusive. Therefore, this study argues that without embedding the principles of the inclusive perspective—such as fairness, participation, equity, and respect—policies will continue to fall short in practice.

In addition, grounded in an inclusive perspective, the study aims to uncover how inclusion is experienced or undermined in practice and to identify key factors that either facilitate or hinder equitable and meaningful participation of EWD. Furthermore, the study is of great importance because there is a need to consider workplace accommodation, which is said to play an important role in the employment of PWD, to ensure that all people in society function normally and have equal access to employment, which is the crucial element to maintain economic development (Anand and Sevak, 2017). As a result, there is a significant need to formulate inclusive policies and programmes to ensure equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the labour market, particularly in the public sector (Watermeyer et al., 2006).

Moreover, social work is the core function of the Department of Social Development and in the effort to promote social work's mission, which is to help individuals meet their maximum potential and set social work values such as acceptance, non-judgement, worth and dignity of all individuals, this is a very important study, particularly with the consideration of the fact that PWD have been identified as one of the minority

groups that have been oppressed and discriminated against (Graham et al., 2010). Social work has a crucial role to play in changing the social constructs, influencing the group cultures, and promoting equality to all individuals, hence the need to study and understand acceptance and accommodation of people with disabilities in the workplace hence this phenomenon was explored in this particular department (Berger, 2014).

Moreover, occupational social work, as a specialized field of social work practice in the workplace, focuses on workers in need to promote the workers' perfect adaptation to the employment setting from the perspective of industrial social welfare and industrial revolution (du Plessis, 2001). Therefore, this study on the perceptions of EWD on workplace acceptance, recognition and accommodation was planned, particularly to investigate the issues in this government department. It is anticipated that the findings of the study can be used to influence procedures in the Department of Social Development.

1.3 Research question

What are the experiences and challenges of EWD within the Department of Social Development as far as the support of their disability needs is concerned, so to realize reasonable acceptance and accommodation in the workplace?

1.4 Aim

The study aimed to explore the experiences and perspectives of employees within the Department of Social Development about the acceptance, accommodation and support of EWD in the workplace.

1.5 Objectives

- To explore the workplace experiences of employees with disabilities in the Department of Social Development.
- To explore any challenges that employees with disabilities face within the workplace.
- To determine how the needs of employees with disabilities are accommodated and supported within the Department.
- To determine how employees without disabilities perceive the acceptance, accommodation and inclusion of EWD in the Department

- To identify the measures suggested by EWD to promote their workplace accommodation and acceptance.

1.6 Definition of concepts

1.6.1 Disability

Disability – "the loss or elimination of opportunities to take part in the life of the community equitably with others that is encountered by persons having physical, sensory, psychological developmental, learning, neurological, or other impairments, which may be permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, thereby causing activity limitations and participation restriction with the mainstream society" (*Assessment on Disability Equity in the Public Service*, 2008, p. 30).

1.6.2 Acceptance

Acceptance – It is the inclusion and encouragement of the presence and input of employees with disabilities by the co-workers in social, education, work and workplace activities that enables employees with disabilities to have relationships, have access to resources and interaction with co-workers, and enjoy the same access to active participation in workplace activities as the non-disabled co-workers (Fevre et al., 2013).

1.6.3 Attitude

Attitude – refers to "an emotional and intellectual evaluation, ranging from favourable to unfavourable, of an object, process, or person, including groups of people" (Rétiová et al., 2021, p. 43).

1.6.4 Accommodation

Accommodation – It is about how non-disabled colleagues, including the management, react to preferential treatment, and colleagues' reaction when accommodation requires cooperation and support to fulfil the essential functions of the job (McLaughlin et al., 2004).

1.6.5 Inclusion

Inclusion – the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by co-workers in the workplace by "recognizing, understanding and respecting the ways which we differ" (Fujimoto et al., 2014, p. 3).

1.6.6 Equity

Equity – "promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment through elimination of unfair discrimination and implementation of affirmative action measures to advance black people, women, and people with disabilities" (Thomas, 2002, p. 237).

1.6.7 Summary

This chapter introduced the study, which explores the perceptions of employees regarding the acceptance and accommodation of employees with disabilities (EWD) in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region. The background highlighted the gap between progressive South African disability legislation and the lived workplace experiences of EWD, pointing to a failure in translating policy into practice. The chapter established the theoretical framework guiding this research, the problem statement was identified, the purpose of the study was outlined, the concepts and lastly, the chapter introduced the structure of the report, laying out the progression from conceptual framing to empirical findings and recommendations.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks Underpinning the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section of the chapter discusses the theoretical framework which was employed in this study. The next section illustrates the literature review based on the global and local perspectives on disability issues in the workplace, particularly acceptance and accommodation in the workplace, and what possible issues may underlie the experiences of EWD as far as historical, human development theories, social, legislative, intellectual, and political aspects are concerned. The discussion incorporates the historical understanding of the concept of disability, followed by a broad perspective of disability issues in the workplace; then it will focus on the rate of employment of PWD, the challenges they face concerning their employment, and lastly the suggested measures for workplace acceptance and reasonable accommodation. Different disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, health, and social work, have approached disability from different perspectives, from the medical, social, and inclusive models, and many more, which are thought to play a role in understanding disability. The inclusive perspective has been selected for this study because it upholds diversity in the workplace and promotes an inclusive societal structure.

2.2 The Inclusive Perspective

The inclusive perspective is the framework that was selected for this study. It is stated that inclusive perspective is a new framework that includes care elements of human resource development, career development and diversity intelligence (Thoms and Burton, 2018). The inclusive framework was selected because it aligns with the social work perspective of upholding diversity and the commitment to eliminating oppression, as

social work shifted the address of disability issues from a diagnostic-medical perspective to human diversity and social justice perspective (DePoy and Gilson, 2002). This shift was to allow the address of disability in diverse conditions with disabling environment. This shift means that social work has curved to a contemporary view of disability which aims for a full community inclusion by the focus on internal and external factors that create a disabling condition in the person's life (DePoy and Gilson, 2002).

The inclusive perspective views disability not as a limitation of the individual but as a societal issue shaped by the environment and institutional structures (Mackelprang et al., 2021). Fujimoto et al. (2014) describe workplace inclusion as involving recognition, belonging and voice. Thoms and Burton (2018) add that equity is achieved not through uniformity but through flexible approaches to support diverse abilities. This model aligns with social work's commitment to human rights, dignity and anti-oppression (DePoy Gilson, 2002).

The inclusive perspective has a broader idea for improving quality of integration and co-participation with PWD to bring about change in the workplace. It is basically about belonging, engagement and having a voice in the workplace (Fujimoto et al., 2014). A term known as work-oriented inclusion has been introduced under the inclusion perspective and it emphasizes the intervention by human resource management which has not been effective in developing inclusive organisations for PWD who have been isolated and disempowered to gain economic benefits (Fujimoto et al., 2014). Hence, human resource researchers, practitioners and academicians are recommended to consider the importance of diversity and the inclusion model as a replacement of social and medical model.

This is seen as the ability to appreciate the value of workplace diversity and use this appreciation to improve the intelligent and conduct for understanding equity (Thoms and Burton, 2018). Moreover, it is argued that this model has the capacity to recognise the value of those who maybe unrecognised and to guide management to a workplace where cohesion does not mean uniformity can be to intensify production within the organisation. It further suggests an establishment of a work setting that encourages diversity as it is the fundamental element of success (Thoms and Burton, 2018). The inclusion perspective recommends acceptance of disability as part of diversity framework and diversity as an essential part of culture and language (Thoms and Burton, 2018).

Furthermore, McCrary (2017) suggests that social inclusion is a human right that should not only be protected by the state alone, but organisation and communities

must be welcoming, flexible, adjusting to the needs and contributions of PWD. The work of care and integrating PWD into the organisations benefits their rights instead of letting it lie with the state's legalistic approach. It is further argued that social inclusion and participation of PWD cannot be ensured by lessening physical barriers to access or enlightening PWD about their rights. Social inclusion and meaningful social participation are the rights that must be recognised and offered to PWD. Hence, social inclusion has been praised by World Health Organisation as it cultivates inclusion with long-term support (McCrary, 2017). Social inclusion of PWD may result in improvement of sense of belonging and significant developments to human, social and economic development of the people at large. The ethic of care is to facilitate social inclusion, good care that has sensitivity, effectiveness, intelligence and goodwill as it considers the views and experiences of PWD. Social inclusion further emphasizes specific care and responsiveness to specific people and circumstances instead of universal human rights and it plays a crucial role in enabling the inclusion of PWD in the organisations (McCrary, 2017).

In South Africa, there are government regulations that regulate the inclusion of disability in the built environment (Mckinney and Amosun, 2020). There is also an argument about social exclusion that it causes a painful experience which can have damaging effects on the individual's well-being. Therefore, it is important to enquire about the experiences of PWD in the effort to include and accommodate them in all domains of the society (Mckinney and Amosun, 2020).

Moreover, inclusive mechanisms can empower and address oppressive social constructions and suppression, which have led to unequal employment opportunities for EWD (Smith-Chandler and Swart, 2014). The inclusive perspective demands the inclusion of EWD in everyday activities and encouraging them to have roles alike to their co-workers who do not have disability (Mckinney and Amosun, 2020).

2.3 Human Development of the Disability Concept

It is believed that all humans develop as they go through life, and can have disabilities, whether present from birth or acquired later in life (Mackelprang et al., 2021). It is stated that Sigmund Freud believed that all development was sexual and tension-reducing in nature, and he focused on intra-psychic elements of five stages of human development. He alleged that disability was caused by abnormal development; for example, it is believed that children with impairments that delay developmental milestones are destined to develop psychosexual problems and experience stagnant development (Mackelprang et al., 2021). According to Erik Erikson's ego psychological

theorists, development is seen in a non-disabling context, while ignoring the healthy development of PWD, as disabilities are described as missed or unresolved stages of development arising from PWDs' individual pathologies (Mackelprang et al., 2021).

By contrast, Vygotsky believed that impairments are not considered as abnormal until they are brought into the social context, hence they are social and environmental consequences (Mackelprang et al., 2021). Similarly, in his Moral Development theory, Kohlberg alleged that children's development is socially influenced. Furthermore, people automatically assumed that disability and pathology are synonyms, and PWD and their families are anticipated to experience emotional problems such as depression and anxiety; if they are not displaying these problems, they are perceived as not adjusting well (Mackelprang et al., 2021).

In terms of Charles Darwin's biological evolutionary theory, his ground-breaking work on evolution suggested that conditions such as natural selection lead to ever-adapting and evolving species, meaning that natural developments lead to evolutionary advances. According to Darwin, disabled persons were understood as having lesser-evolved development, and they were to be eradicated by institutionalization, outlawing their marriage, and forced sterilization (Mackelprang et al., 2021).

According to the approaches above, non-disability is assumed as normal, and disability as an exception or abnormality. For, example, PWD are segregated and not equally prioritized, and they face employment discrimination. It is argued that these social practices negatively affect the self-image and life satisfaction of disabled youth as well as the ability to be economically self-sufficient (Mackelprang et al., 2021).

In South Africa, colonial and apartheid histories reinforced stigma and exclusion of persons with disabilities (Black de Matos-Ala, 2016). These histories continue to shape organisational cultures and co-worker attitudes toward acceptance and inclusion (Watermeyer et al., 2006).

To conclude, the human development theorists viewed disability as an abnormality in human development as well as socially influenced by the environmental factors. These philosophies may have led to the marginalisation and vulnerability of PWD in society. The history of disability will be discussed next, which also shows similar societal practices that were segregating and dehumanizing for PWD.

2.4 Historical Background of Disability

Disability is defined differently depending on the ideology and tradition. It is defined medically, culturally, or politically. Disability is defined as "a total or a partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions, total or partial loss of a part of the body, the presence of organisms causing disease or illness (such as HIV), the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body, or disorder, illness or disclosure that affects a person's perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or that results in disturbed behaviour, and learning difficulties" (Hui et al., 2021, p. 4).

According to Mackelprang et al. (2021), disability has existed in all societies and can be traced back from the beginning of documented history. The Neolithic tribes believed that disabilities were caused by the spirits, therefore rituals were performed to release the spirits (Mackelprang et al., 2021). Life with disability was regarded as substandard and labelled negatively. It is stated that in the pre-colonial era, in African societies, disability was a social construction informed by cultural and religious beliefs, and disability was identified as a punishment for wrongdoing (Ndlovu, 2021). Ndlovu (2021) further stated that PWD were feared, discriminated against or even murdered because of fear that they could bring curses to the community.

The negative social constructions continued into the post-colonial time, when PWD were patronized. This led to the formation of professional interventions to treat PWD such as rehabilitation, medical corrections, institutionalization, and charity (Ndlovu, 2021). During the apartheid era in South Africa, education was divided into mainstream and special education, for learners with disabilities (Ndlovu, 2021). The practices by the Neolithic tribes, African society prior to colonialism, and during apartheid, of performing spiritual rituals, arose from the negative labelling of PWD, believing that disability was a punishment for wrongdoing or a curse on the community. Murdering PWD can now be seen as discriminating, segregating, and dehumanizing for PWD (Ndlovu, 2021). Throughout history, perceptions of disability have resulted in deep negative beliefs and social attitudes that separated PWD, by denying them social participation.

To conclude, the above-illustrated history of disability shows how PWD have been vulnerable, discriminated against, and marginalized globally and locally. The intellectual models of disability will be discussed next.

2.5 Intellectual Perspective

The shift from the medical to the inclusive model has redefined how society approaches disability. The inclusive model highlights the importance of respect, participation and systemic fairness (Berger, 2014). Workplace attitudes remain a major barrier to inclusive employment, as shown in recent studies (Hui et al., 2021; Bonaccio et al., 2020).

There are main models of inventing, understanding, and handling disability (Withers, 2024). These models are to be briefly discussed below and they are the eugenic model, the medical model, the rehabilitation model, the charity model, the social model, the radical disability model, and the biopsychosocial model, which are oppressive to PWD. The inclusive model is the last model to be broadly discussed in this study as it has been selected for understanding how issues of employees with disabilities can possibly be addressed in society.

It is argued that the eugenic model is the foundation model, based on a belief that some people are genetically superior to others, and that people believed to be inferior contaminate the gene pool, weakening the strength and desirability of the entire population. This idea was to reduce the number of unwanted people with the intention to eradicate them and thereby to promote selective breeding, to encourage the population growth of desirable people (Withers, 2024).

The medical model of disability was a primary paradigm to understand disability as a disaster for persons, based on the body. The rehabilitation model is said to be emerging from a medical model, focused around individual bodies and minds, with the intention of curing disability, or diminishing or adapting or covering it (Withers, 2024).

The social model understands disability as an oppression imposed on disabled people as a result of impairments. It moves the focus away from PWD to the inaccessibility of the built environment and society (Withers, 2024).

The above models were regarded as lacking to engage the lived experiences of PWD. Hence, the new ways of thinking shaped an umbrella of a disability justice and radical disability model. The radical model challenges a unified notion of disability that all the above models do not contest the matters at heart of the problem, while aware that the pluralistic and instable nature can encapsulate ethical problems, and the use of disability risks reasserting the problematic effects, conceptual and psycho-social imaginaries (Beaudry, 2019). The biopsychosocial model considers disability in the framework of a collaboration between biological, psychosocial, and societal factors, each limiting the

person's function to some extent. This is seen as the execution of ecological systems theory within the context of disability (Babik and Gardner, 2021).

Furthermore, a study conducted in the United States on disability accommodation which had been requested and granted, which had positive spillover effects on the attitude of co-workers, and a positive attitude on the requesting employees, has shifted the view of disability from a narrow medical minded model to social and universalist models, which highlight the factors that most disability-related problems identify with a social and physical environment which can be improved (Schur et al., 2014). The social model argues that "there is a way that society is organised that marginalises and restricts people with disabilities" (McConlogue, 2022, p. 139).

The universalist model argues that human experience, from the basic needs and psychological processes to the principal values, is intrinsic and similar across humans (McConlogue, 2022). The study conducted on disability accommodation requested and granted has inspired the value of policy formulation where the acceptance and inclusion of PWD is concerned. After this study, there was a recognizable growth of generalized benefits of workplace accommodations among the leading companies in the United States, by accommodating employees with or without disabilities (Schur et al., 2014).

Consequently, the emerging of the social and universalist viewpoint led to many companies being legally mandated to provide recruitment and management programmes for EWD, and to manage workplace diversity (Schur et al., 2014). The social and universalist viewpoint led to the provision of valuable human resources to combat effects and barriers in the continuum of employees, which impede the hiring, job performance, job security, training, commitment, organizational behaviours and turn-over of EWD (Schur et al., 2014).

When it comes to the inclusive model, social work as a profession upholds diversity and is committed to eliminating oppression; it has shifted addressing of disability issues from a diagnostic-medical perspective to a human and social justice perspective (DePoy and Gilson, 2002). This shift was to allow addressing disability in diverse conditions or a disabling environment. This shift means that social work has curved to a contemporary view of disability which aims for full community inclusion by the focus on internal and external factors that create a disabling condition in the person's life (DePoy and Gilson, 2002). Furthermore, it is stated that the inclusive perspective is a new framework that includes the care elements of human resource development, career development, and diversity intelligence (Thoms and Burton, 2018).

This perspective has a broader idea for improving the quality of integration and co-participation with PWD to bring about change in the workplace. It is basically about belonging, engagement, and having a voice in the workplace (Fujimoto et al., 2014). A term known as work-oriented inclusion has been introduced under the inclusion perspective, and it emphasizes the intervention by human resource management, which in the past has not been effective in developing inclusive organisations for PWD, who have been isolated and disempowered from gaining economic benefits (Fujimoto et al., 2014). Hence, human resource researchers, practitioners, and academicians are recommended to consider the importance of diversity and the inclusion model as a replacement of the social and medical models.

This is seen as the ability to appreciate the value of workplace diversity and use this appreciation to improve the intelligence and conduct for understanding equity (Thoms and Burton, 2018). Moreover, it is argued that this model has the capacity to recognise the value of those who may be unrecognised, and to guide management to a workplace where cohesion does not mean uniformity, and which can be used to intensify production within the organisation. It further suggests an establishment of a work setting that encourages diversity, as it is the fundamental element of success (Thoms and Burton, 2018). The inclusion perspective recommends acceptance of disability as part of the diversity framework, and diversity as an essential part of culture and language (Thoms and Burton, 2018).

Furthermore, McCrary (2017) suggests that social inclusion is a human right that should not only be protected by the state alone, but organisations and communities must be welcoming, flexible, and adjusting to the needs and contributions of PWD. The work of caring and integrating PWD into an organisation benefits their rights instead of letting this lie with the state's legalistic approach. It is further argued that social inclusion and participation of PWD cannot be ensured by lessening physical barriers to access, or enlightening PWD about their rights. Social inclusion and meaningful social participation are the rights that must be recognised and offered to PWD. Hence, social inclusion has been praised by World Health Organisation as it cultivates inclusion with long-term support (McCrary, 2017).

Social inclusion of PWD may result in improvement of a sense of belonging and significant developments to the human, social, and economic development of the people at large. The ethic of care is to facilitate social inclusion, good care that has sensitivity, effectiveness, intelligence, and goodwill, as it considers the views and experiences of PWD. Social inclusion further emphasizes specific care and responsiveness to specific

people and circumstances instead of universal human rights, and it plays a crucial role in enabling the inclusion of PWD in the organisations (McCrary, 2017).

It is stated that in South Africa there are government regulations that regulate the inclusion of disability in the built environment (*Assessment on Disability Equity in the Public Service*, 2008). There is also an argument about social exclusion, that it causes a painful experience which can have damaging effects on the individual's well-being. Therefore, it is important to enquire about the experiences of PWD in the effort to include and accommodate them in all domains of society (*Assessment on Disability Equity in the Public Service*, 2008).

Moreover, Smith et al., (2018) also argue that inclusive mechanisms can empower and address those oppressive social constructions and suppression which has led to unequal employment opportunities for EWD. The inclusive perspective demands the inclusion of PWD in everyday activities and encouraging them to have roles like their co-workers who do not have a disability (McKinney and Swartz, 2021).

In terms of the political debates, inclusion covers a range of requirements to enhance the lives of disadvantaged people, conditional on the national context, in which the requirements are addressed in different ways within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015) and the New Urban Agenda (UN, 2016), quoted as significant global milestones to attaining inclusion and equal opportunities such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which laid down the right to self-determination and equal opportunities for PWD (Meier et al., 2024). Meier et al. (2024) state that inclusion incorporates the aspect of the structural involvement of the people in social systems, in particular in functional sub-areas of society, which are covered and protected by fundamental rights.

Inclusion takes place as a selective utilisation and concern for persons' capabilities and achievements. It can be understood as "the total of social processes in which dispositions must be utilised and necessary resources must be accessed by those involved, to actually be able to experience an equal distribution of social roles and the right to political, social and socio-spatial participation in the respective subsystems of society" (Meier et al., 2024, p. 8). It is argued that there can be no inclusion without inclusive spaces and cities, communities, and local policies that offer the essential resources and access for people to be able to undertake social roles and fundamental rights taking effect.

The term 'inclusive cities' was discussed on an international level during the Global

Report (UN, 2001) for sustainable urban development strategies, which needs cities to address problems such as social exclusion of minority groups, inclusive growth, and making cities work for all, ensuring better access to work, health, education, housing, and public transport (Meier et al., 2024). In terms of UNCPD (UN, 2006), inclusive local policies put an emphasis on barriers to the interactions between individuals and their social and physical environments, and the consequential barriers to full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (Meier et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the focal point of social work in the inclusive perspective is on a legitimisation process through institutional structures and local policy-making, as it is argued that values and norms that people apply in a society determine the social coexistence and the distribution of resources and life opportunities (Meier, 2024), for example, to make physical structures accessible to EWD in the workplace and developing policies that promote reasonable accommodation of EWD in the workplace. An inclusive work environment implies eliminating obstacles to working, and enabling employees to show knowledge and skills in a form that allows them to excel (McConlogue, 2022). The term 'inclusive communities' refers to "a political approach with which inclusive structures, cultures and practices are developed at local level" (Meier et al., 2024, p. 14). All people, regardless of ethnicity, skin colour, gender, language, religion, political or other views, national and social origin affluence, disability or other status, or other forms of social attribution, are respected as "members of a diverse human community" (Meier et al., 2024, p. 14).

South African companies have developed policies and practices to identify and dismantle barriers, and facilitate the employment of PWD. Therefore, this is a social issue that requires and inspires cutting-edge research in various disciplines, including industrial relations, sociology, psychology, human resource, and management on issues that impact EWD in the workplace (Schur et al., 2014).

For example, South Africa has introduced a social protection policy to improve employment and equality, promote and accelerate policies and strategies to move towards socio-economic development, and to promote the rights of vulnerable groups (South African Institute of International Affairs, 2021). Through campaigning and disability struggles, the South African government has been forced to recognise the needs and challenges faced by PWD, and to focus on effective, strategic planning for sustainable inclusion. Government entities, such as the Department of Social Development, have been introduced to ensure PWD are reasonably accommodated within the society, and the addressing of disability issues such as social acceptance, education, and employment (South African Institute of International Affairs, 2021).

To improve the inclusion of PWD, the South African government developed policies on Reasonable Accommodation and Assistive Devices for EWD in the Public Service, and there are objectives listed for disability management which are to ensure inclusion in the workplace and equal access to employment, to offer training, skills and development opportunities while ensuring the mainstreaming of disability issues, and to establish norms and standards for provision of reasonable accommodation (South African Institute of International Affairs, 2021). In addition, policies seeking to protect the right of PWD include the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 2000 of 1997, the White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy, and the 2016 White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

However, it is stated that there is a disconnect with regards to effective implementation and support for key factors of society. Consequently, PWD in South Africa are still struggling with the lack of equitable economic opportunities, social understanding of disabled communities, social infrastructure to accommodate disabled communities, specialized health care for disabled communities, dedicated education facilities for disabled communities, and access to information (South African Institute of International Affairs, 2021).

The models discussed above, which are the eugenic model, medical model, rehabilitation model, charity model, social model, radical disability model, and the biopsychosocial model are oppressive to PWD. On the other hand, the inclusive model promotes inclusive practices and reasonable accommodation of PWD in communities, even though PWD are still suffering from unfair discrimination concerning education, housing, structures, and socio-economic exclusion. Political and social perspectives will be discussed next.

2.6 Political and Social Dimensions of Inclusion on PWD in the Workplace

Policies such as the UNCRPD and the Employment Equity Act support the right to inclusion for EWD, yet their implementation is uneven (Thomas, 2002; du Plessis, 2001). Resistance from colleagues and misconceptions about ability continue to be major obstacles (Schur et al., 2014).

It is argued that employment is "the important source of purpose and social integration for adults with disabilities who may be isolated from other forms of engagement due to physical or environmental barriers" (Carr and Namkung, 2021, p. 136). PWD

are at greater risk of exposure to the challenging living and working conditions associated with poor health outcomes, such as lower income and employment insecurity (Khayatzadeh-Mahani et al., 2020). Employment plays a key role in the well-being and quality of life of PWD and grants an opportunity for financial independence. It is stated that there is a concerning expanding gap between governments across the globe. Furthermore, Russell (2019) argues that capitalism started the commodification of impaired bodies, and the primary oppression of PWD is their exclusion from the workforce.

It is stated that PWD experience lower labour-force participation rates, and higher unemployment rates than non-disabled persons. The disabled person's historical exclusion has contributed to their poverty, and PWD are three times more likely to live below the current poverty line, from the beginning of capitalism, where people were forced to either find work that would pay a wage or starve, as they were no longer tied to the land or farming, and as production became industrialized, people's bodies were gradually valued for their ability to function like machines. Then PWDs were without job accommodations and considered less fit to do the essential tasks of factory workers (Russell, 2019).

It is argued that industrial capitalism formed a class of proletarians, or a class of disabled with labour power that was expunged or excluded from paid work. It is informed that PWD were labelled as a social problem and hence separated from mainstream life. This ended in a welfare state of provision of social programmes such as segregated sheltered workshops that exploited PWD by paying them below minimum wage. It is stated that as capitalism forced workers into a wage relationship, it equally forced PWD out of it, and this resulted in economic discrimination within the capitalist system (Russell, 2019).

It is believed that, based on the social-oppression opinion of disability, disability affected employees flourishing at work through reduced job self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as the "employees' confidence in their ability to complete their overall job" (Zhu et al., 2019, p. 4). Moreover, it is argued that PWD are regularly socially oppressed with less social capital because of various barriers to doing and being at work, while inclusion can lessen the negative effects of disabilities on the magnitude of self-efficacy; where PWD are recognized by the workplace, they feel more supported and they believe they can perform job tasks well (Zhu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Bonaccio et al. (2020) state that PWD are not still treated equally or receive the same treatment for work opportunities as people without disabilities, views

shown by many employers in the whole employment cycle from pre-employment, and work entry experiences to the final dissolution of employment relationships. In terms of social barriers, it has been found that PWD's work experience confirms that medically-based assumptions are used as the basis of discrimination as ill-health is related to poor performance and absenteeism (McKinney and Swartz, 2021).

2.7 Legislative Perspectives on the Informed Employment of PWD (Legislative and Organisational gaps)

While legislative frameworks exist, the employment of PWD in South Africa's public service is still not equitable (Sing, 2012). Organisational cultures often resist change and fail to enforce inclusive practices effectively (Fevre et al., 2013).

It is argued that at the centre of disability antidiscrimination laws such as the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the laws of other countries, lies a requirement that social institutions affirmatively eradicate attitudinal and organizational barriers challenging PWD, as they exercise the rights to partake fully in society (Blanck, 2020). It is said that the accommodation principle is the significant driver of inclusion, particularly in disability employment antidiscrimination law and policy, which requires the company to make reasonable modifications to allow equal and full participation of PWD. It is further stated that the important accommodation principle in disability inclusion employment law and policy is to offer equal employment opportunity to everyone irrespective of disability (Blanck, 2020).

It is suggested that to encourage the employment of PWD, two dominant legal approaches – anti-discrimination legislation grounded on social models of disability and an employment quota scheme based on a medical model – are generally employed. It was found that both legal frameworks have inadequate effectiveness and promotion of employment of PWD in China (Hao and Li, 2020).

However, it is argued that despite the legal requirements of the ADA, PWD continue to report low rates of job accommodation from employers (Wong et al., 2021). PWD continue to face significant limitations to employment in East Africa, despite the elaborated framework and reasonable accommodation in the UN Convention on the Rights of PWD. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report, PWDs constitute about 15% of the world's population and they experience challenges in securing jobs (Ebuenyi et al., 2019).

Similarly, in South Africa, PWD are poorly represented and remain excluded from the workplace, as they form approximately 1.2% of the workforce, despite all the legal frameworks that are meant to promote the employment of PWD. They remain excluded, and employers are not willing to accommodate them due to recruitment criteria that focus on job performance. Hence there is a need to identify and address issues that influence the hiring and retention of PWD, to enforce the expected workplace transformations (Doolabh and Khan, 2020).

It is also confirmed that public service departments, both national and provincial, are still challenged with the employment of people with disabilities (PWD) despite the legislative and institutional measures that are put into place, such as the 1998 White Paper on Affirmative Action and the 2% target for disability equity (Sing, 2012). Sing (2012) also concur with the above, as it is confirmed that public service departments, both national and provincial, are still challenged with the employment of PWD despite the legislative and institutional measures that are put into place, such as the 1998 White Paper on Affirmative Action, and meeting the 2% target for disability equity.

It is said that most of the public service departments do not embark on and pursue awareness programmes and disability sensitization. As a result, despite the South African Constitution's principles and values, many workers are not sure how to interact with and how to treat their counterparts, which could lead to arrogance, impatience, misunderstanding, intolerance, an uncomfortable workplace, a patronizing attitude and behaviour, and turning of PWD into second-rate citizens (Sing, 2012, p. 165).

2.8 The Employment Rate of PWD in the Workplace

According to WHO, the employment rate varies across countries but the bottom line is that all over the world, PWD are less likely to be employed than persons without disabilities (Bonaccio et al., 2020). Hui et al. (2021) stated that, according to the WHO 2018 report, that in a population of over a billion, only about 15% of PWD worldwide are employed, despite the promotion of equal opportunities in employment to enhance PWD participation in the labour force.

Concurrently, it is informed that there is a lower employment rate of youth with disabilities compared to youth without disabilities, while they are eager and skilled for work (Lindsay et al., 2019). Similarly, adults with disabilities have a significantly lower rate of participation in the labour force compared to persons without disabilities (Carr and Namkung, 2021). Moreover, according to STATSSA (2018), South Africa has a

high unemployment rate and the great challenge is that PWD continue to be excluded from the labour market (Doolabh and Khan, 2020).

2.9 The Accommodation of PWD in the Workplace

It is said that PWD do not access employment opportunities in the same way their counterparts do, despite all the legislation on diversity. PWD are still separated compared to abled-bodied people, and the reason for the underemployment of PWD is that employers still hold pessimistic views about the work-related capabilities of PWD (Bonaccio et al., 2020). In the cycle of employment, recruitment, selection, social integration, and performance management, employers would be worried about whether PWD have the essential qualifications or abilities. The employers would be uncertain about the impact the newly-hired PWD may have on existing employees. Furthermore, it is said that employers may have fears about the performance and well-being of EWD, and are uncertain about how to deal with problems, how to address problems if they continue, and how to discontinue the employment relation (Bonaccio et al., 2020).

Furthermore, it was found that workers with physical disabilities reported to have perceived unequal work opportunities, job discrimination, and lower levels of supervision and co-worker support. Moreover, it was discovered that people with functional limitations are at heightened risk of institutional discrimination such as not being promoted (Carr and Namkung, 2021). PWD may be disqualified from full social acceptance because they may be seen as not fully capable of carrying out expected social roles (Carr and Namkung, 2021). Moreover, the tense relationships, disrespectful treatment, and blocked opportunities are sources of work stress that may further destabilize the workers' psychological and physical well-being (Carr and Namkung, 2021).

Furthermore, it is argued that there are barriers to full inclusion of PWD, despite the rising acknowledgement of disability as a diversity dimension with the aid of the disability rights paradigm (Carr and Namkung, 2021). Concurrently, McKinney and Swartz (2021) state that it has been found that in South Africa, PWD experience barriers in the integration phase of employment, despite the progressive legislation.

However, it is said that the WHO reported that governments worldwide are encouraging the employment of PWD by motivating the workforce to partake in reducing the discrimination tendencies. Many countries have established laws against employment discrimination of PWD (Zhu et al., 2019). For example, it is said that some countries have put in place some specific procedures to promote employment of PWD, for example, the US government requires employers to ensure that the workforce contains at

least 7% of PWD.

2.10 The Challenges Experienced by PWD in the Workplace

It is stated that, despite the rights-based legislation, PWD experience persistent barriers to employment. Barriers to employment are defined as "events or conditions, either within the person or his or her environment, that make career progress difficult" (Khayatzadeh-Mahani et al., 2020, p. 2697). The barriers include relationships, difficulties with social skills, and impairment in verbal/non-verbal communication, and also include employment characteristics (type of business, size, location, employment practices, employers' attitudes and misconceptions.) According to McKinney and Swartz (2021), some of the barriers found have been the employers' concern about the perceived cost of accommodation for PWD, the loss of productivity, and rise of supervision costs, but the top three barriers are the employers' awareness, practices, and stigma; understanding disability is one the big challenges in the workplace (Khayatzadeh-Mahani et al., 2020).

There is a necessity for HR and the employer to have the required knowledge, skills, and understanding of disability, as these have a major impact on the responsibility to recruit and select PWD for employment. For example, exclusion from employment may begin right at the initial stage of employment if PWD are not able to access the advertisement, interview venues, or have their needs accommodated. To add, it is reported that people with visual disabilities are unable to access written texts such as newspapers, and those with physical disabilities cannot hold or turn the newspaper. Some do not have access to computers or assistive devices to access emails that are forwarded to them (McKinney and Swartz, 2021).

Furthermore, it is said that the Department of Labour and the legislation emphasized that PWD must be treated with merit, all interview venues must be accessible, the people must be treated without a focus on their disabilities, but employers were found guilty of being unprofessional during the interviews, which shows a lack of policy implementation. Therefore, this shows the lack of government backing to the employers, and it attests to the lack of monitoring of business practices regarding the employment of PWD (Babik and Gardner, 2021).

Furthermore, it is said that PWD experience discrimination during employment interviews due to the employers' fear of the unknown. PWD are less like to be selected for interviews or hired in comparison to their peers. In terms of studies conducted on individual experiences of PWD with a disability status, they reported a lower feeling of

thriving at work, as the organisational practices buffer this and have negative effects. There is a low tolerance in the workplace environment that hampers the self-efficacy of PWD. The psychological performance and well- being of PWD are impacted due to internal and external problems, such as attitudes and discrimination. Disability is seen as reducing employees' perceived self-efficacy or belief in their capability to thrive, hence leading to lower thriving at work (Zhu et al., 2019).

In addition, it is reported that only 34% of PWD are hired, compared to 75% of non-disabled peers, because PWD experience numerous barriers at work due to fear of requesting accommodations, unsupportive employers or co-workers, or inflexible schedules; in particular, the physically disabled may leave the labour force earlier than anticipated (Wong et al., 2021).

2.11 The Suggested Resolutions to Improve Reasonable Accommodation of EWD in the Workplace

It is suggested that it is critical to establish an enabling and supportive work environment for PWD. The DPSA job access framework lists the important factors to look at to accommodate EWD, such as the retention of PWD by creating better job skills development, such as improving the quality of work-life of PWD by putting into place support mechanisms such as organizing an interpreter for the deaf during interviews (Sing, 2012). According to the South African Public Service, it is mandatory that all HR communication is aligned with the Constitution and Batho Pele Principles. This involves spreading information to encourage communities, including PWD, to get involved and participate in government programmes, including recruitment intentions, in the Public Service (Sing, 2012).

Furthermore, it is suggested that for reasonable accommodation, the HR manager needs to monitor and evaluate programmes that impact the employment of PWD in the workplace, and to take reasonable measures to address accommodation of PWD in order to lessen the impact of a person's disability on their capability to achieve the essential functions in the workplace. For reasonable accommodation to occur, there must be approval that there is no hardship caused by either party, based on fair and equal treatment, as stated in the Constitution (Sing, 2012). For reasonable accommodation, active management measures must be considered to advance minimum standards of empowering and guaranteeing that there are no barriers that hinder access to public institutions (Sing, 2012).

Furthermore, it is suggested that job accommodation means altering workplace en-

vironments; providing supportive personnel; flexible scheduling; providing assistive technologies; modifying job responsibilities; and modifying workplace policies (Wong et al., 2021).

Moreover, it is proposed that "to prevent barriers to employment of PWD it is important that interviews are sensitive, objective and unbiased" (McKinney and Swartz, 2021, p. 4). Employers should reasonable accommodate PWD to actively participate in the recruitment process if they have revealed their disability during the application process, such as providing interpreters. During the interviews, questions should avoid the person's disability, such as asking how they would execute the job, but focus on necessary qualifications to allow fair and equal job selection opportunity. Moreover, it is suggested that it is important that the employers offer an environment where PWD are stimulated and reinforced to disclose their disability, in order to meet the State Employment Equity target of 2% (McKinney and Swartz, 2021).

2.12 Summary

This chapter discussed the relevant literature that informed the study on workplace acceptance and accommodation of employees with disabilities (EWD) and the inclusive perspective as the guiding theoretical lens—emphasizing systemic transformation, participation, and respect for diversity in the workplace. The chapter examined existing research and conceptual models related to disability, inclusion, acceptance, accommodation, attitude, and equity, grounding the study in both local and global scholarship. The chapter also explored the models of disability. Research methodology will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research approach, design and methods used to explore how disabled and non-disabled employees perceive workplace inclusion, acceptance and accommodation. It details the sampling strategy, data collection tools, procedures and ethical considerations that guided the study.

3.2 Research Approach, Paradigm and Design

A qualitative research design was adopted to capture the in-depth perspectives and lived experiences of employees with and without disabilities. This approach allowed for the exploration of participants' attitudes and understanding of inclusion and equity in the workplace (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative designs are particularly suited to studies that explore social constructs such as disability, accommodation and organisational culture (DePoy and Gilson, 2002).

This study used the qualitative approach, which explores understanding the subjective meaning that people bring to their situation and interpreting data (Creswell, 2014). It is rooted in the interpretivist paradigm, which acknowledges that reality is socially constructed and best understood through the subjective experiences of individuals. This aligns with the inclusive perspective and the social model of disability, which emphasise the importance of voice, participation and recognition (Thomas, 2002).

The study followed an interpretive phenomenological design. This research design aimed to explore the lived experiences of a phenomenon representing an individual level of analysis with an understanding of that social contexts are rooted within an individual being (Frechette et al., 2020). It focused on the development of ideas and their analysis to reveal the meaning of the transcripts (Beck, 2021). Interpretive phe-

nomenology research design is a systems approach to interpreting the transcended text of interview material and which leads to an explanation that yields to understanding (Beck, 2021).

Lived experiences and perceptions were explained and illustrated. The focus of the design was on interpretations of meaning as it is argued that described lived experiences are incomplete until they contain interpretations of significance for the person (Frechette et al., 2020). The emphasis was on the contextual nature of qualitative research findings, which were produced through co-construction between the participant and the researcher (Frechette et al., 2020).

3.3 Population of the Study

Population refers to "individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics" (De Vos et al., 2011, p. 223). It is usually the group of people from whom the researcher wants to draw conclusion (Babbie, 2010). Both disabled and non-disabled participants were selected to capture a range of experiences and attitudes towards equity and disability inclusion (McLaughlin et al., 2004). The population were the employees of the Department of Social Development in the JHB Metro region, chosen from a list that was provided by HR. It is stated that researchers should be more deliberate in their sampling of what will be studied (Babbie, 2010). Hence, the initial aim was to obtain data only from EWD to best help the researcher to understand the phenomena, but due to the small number of EWD in the JHB Metro Region of the Department of Social Development, the researcher resorted to including the population employees without disabilities who worked in the disability unit, because of their experience in disability issues and so to provide sight into workplace inclusion, acceptance and accommodation.

3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure

A sample "comprises elements or a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested" (Grinell and Unrau, 2008; Monette et al., 2005; as cited in De Vos et al., 2011, p. 223). It is stated that sampling is a way of choosing a sample that will represent the population studied (Babbie, 2010). In this study, the researcher considered who were the best informants for the study, and then checked if the sample was appropriate.

The sample of the study consisted of seven EWD and eight employees without disabilities. Purposive sampling was selected as suitable for the study, because the researcher

was interested in participants who have the best knowledge concerning the experiences of EWD in the workplace. Purposive sampling is "composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative, or typical attributes of the population that serve the purpose of the study best" (De Vos et al., 2011, p. 232).

The researcher was granted permission to access relevant data, which was the list of EWD in the region, and to conduct interviews in the Department by Gauteng Social Development Research Unit. This was appropriate for the study, and the HR data on EWD comprised the only seven EWD who were then considered by the researcher to be the participants who best represented the research topic. The purpose was to select the participants who would help with understanding the topic studied and the research question. It was confirmed by the employer that this was the number of EWD in the Department of Social Development, JHB Metro, which was very low.

Due to the very low number of EWD, the researcher resorted to approaching employees without disabilities from the Disability unit of the Department of Social Development, to gather information about the viewpoint and experiences about the acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the workplace. To select participants, the researcher requested and was granted permission by the unit Supervisor to approach the individual employees of the unit. The researcher gave full information about the research to individual employees without disabilities that were available in the office on those particular days. The employees without disabilities agreed individually to participate and appointments for interviews were set with the eight employees individually.

The Disability unit was targeted because it worked directly with PWD on a daily basis, and its employees may be knowledgeable about disability issues. In addition, employees without disabilities were included in the study to increase the low number of participants, and possibly to obtain a satisfying amount of data on the study topic. The participants interviewed fulfilled the inclusion criteria, and the sample size was large enough to allow the identification of consistent patterns in the data; as a result the research used a sample size of 15 participants.

3.5 Research Instruments and Pre-testing of the Research Instruments

The research instruments are tools utilised to collect data in the study such as questionnaires and interviews (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The researcher designed an instrument for this study based on the key areas of interest. The research instrument used was a semi-structured interview guide using open-ended questions to guide the

interview, to keep focus on the areas of interest. The interview guide used was a set of five questions which aimed to explore the experiences and perceptions of EWD on employment issues. They were aligned with the study's objective covering acceptance, equity, support and organisational culture (Dong et al., 2022). The questions were specific and carefully worded, and based on the topic of the study. The open-ended questions enabled the researcher to probe and ask for a more narrative approach to extract the information through research listening skills, and enabled the participants to be flexible in their responses (Given, 2008). The interview questions are attached in Appendix E and Appendix F (Research Questions).

Pre-testing can be described as a practice whereby the researcher tests something that was developed before the actual use to ascertain the likely problems with it (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Pre-testing was done in the beginning of data collection, whereby an interview was arranged with one of the employees from the given list. Firstly, it was found that the participant could not take part in an online interview because she did not have a computer, and she could not read and write because she is blind. Furthermore, it was discovered that most of the employees on the list did not have computers or internet to allow online interviews. This posed a challenge to carry on as planned in the research proposal.

The outcome of pre-testing assisted to enhance and opt for the most suitable method of data collection. Therefore, the researcher made a request to the Research Ethics Committee, as well as the Department's Research Unit to make changes in the method of data collection, from online interviews to face-to-face interviews, and approval was granted. As a result, face-to-face interviews were conducted and therefore there was no anonymity but only confidentiality right was exercised.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

Data collection is the process that includes "setting boundaries for the study through sampling and recruitment; collecting information through unstructured or semi structured observations and interviews; documents, and visual materials; as well as establishing the protocol for recording information" (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 185). The semi-structured face-to-face interviews were utilized to collect the information. This data collection method can be described as the "interchange with an individual or group that is known or expected to possess the knowledge [the researchers] seek" (Babbie, 2010, p. 342). Semi-structured interviews assisted to obtain a detailed picture of perceptions or experiences on the topic. It allowed flexibility for the participant, and I was able to follow-up on fascinating avenues that emerged (Babbie, 2010).

I contacted the participants via email and or telephonically to arrange face-to- face interviews. During the arrangement, I introduced myself and gave full and detailed information about the study.

Dates, times, and venues were set up for interviews with those who were available and willing to participate in the study. It was agreed between me and the participant on the venue where the participant felt more comfortable, in consideration of EWD. The interviews were conducted in the participants' workplace offices. The communication with a participant with aphasia and hearing impairment and I, was through writing. I requested this particular participant to read the questions and I provided him with a paper to write his responses and he cooperated. Furthermore, the visually impaired participants were asked questions as per the interview guide and I took notes of their responses. Responses from all the participants were audio-recorded.

Face-to-face individual interviews that allowed privacy, confidentiality and comfort were conducted. Sufficient time was given during the interviews to be able to ask all the questions, and for the participants to get enough time to answer the questions (Babbie, 2010). The interviews' length was approximately 45 minutes. Notes were taken and the interviews were recorded. The interviews' length was approximately 45 minutes. Notes were taken and the interviews were recorded.

All questions that I asked were clear and simple, asking one question at a time, asking open- ended questions, and allowing the participants to do 90 percent of the talking, while the researcher was taking notes and an audio recorder was switched on (De Vos et al., 2011).

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis "involves segmenting and taking a part of data (like peeling back the layers of an onion) as well as putting it back together" with the aim to make sense out of text or data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 192). It is further stated that once collected data is in a suitable form, the researcher is ready to interpret them for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect ideas, or interpretations that initiated the inquiry (Babbie, 2010, p. 117). I used thematic analysis as the analytic approach for this study. It can be described as "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Okoko et al., 2023, p. 463). This analytic approach was chosen as appropriate for this study, as it was concerned about the experiences of EWD. This approach was also selected because it was appropriate for large amounts of qualitative data that needed to be sorted and

analysed. Lastly, this approach was found helpful in ensuring trustworthiness of the study (Okoko et al., 2023).

Table 3.1: Data Analysis Process

Phases	**Procedure Implemented**
Phase one: Familiarising oneself with data	This step was achieved through the transcription of the interviews. Listening to audio recording, reading and re-reading the transcripts allowed for immersion in the data (Okoko et al., 2023).
Phase two: Generating Initial Codes	The emerging codes were marked, and initial codes were produced from data, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006).
Phase Three: Searching for themes	To search for themes, the common views and statements were grouped, and the initial codes were collated and connected.
Phase Four: Reviewing themes	At this stage, the identified themes were refined. It was checked if the identified themes were relevant to the purpose of the study, and it was determined whether the themes are representing the data extracts (Okoko et al., 2023).
Phase Five: Defining and naming themes	At this stage, brief names were given to each theme to give a clear picture of what the theme entails, and it was ensured that the themes were linked to the objectives of the study. Furthermore, themes were examined to ensure that data extracts are coherent; aligned and refined to remove repetition of themes. The correspondence between the data extracts and the themes was checked. Furthermore, the representative quotes were included in discussion of research finding. All the above was done to enhance trustworthiness and to demonstrate the rigour of the research findings (Okoko et al., 2023).
Phase Six: Producing the report	The data analysis report was written up, which included the description of themes and the evidence to support each theme, thereby convincing the reader of the merit and credibility of the analysis.

Data was analysed by listening to, reading, reasoning, interpreting, and making infer-

ences from the collected data. Transcripts were coded manually to identify recurring patterns related to inclusion, accommodation, acceptance and equity. It included the reduction of raw information, sifting, identifying patterns and constructing a framework based on the finding (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). Data analysis focused on the meanings that were developed by the individual participants about their own life experiences. From the participants' personal experiences, I looked for the key concepts. For example, the researcher analysed the conversations had with the participants by considering the naturally occurring data, the latent content, transcribing verbal data into written form to conduct a thematic analysis, reading the transcriptions, and sorting the collected data into manageable patterns (Given, 2008). The six phases of thematic analysis were followed as identified in (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and they are shown in Table 3.1.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations can be defined as "the moral and professional standards that guide decisions and actions taken during the research process and define what choices are considered acceptable and unacceptable" (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 24). It is stated that researchers "need to protect their research participants; develop a trust with them; promote the integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions, and cope with the new and challenging problems" (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 88). It is stated that during the research process, ethical issues must be considered prior to conducting the study, in the beginning of the study, during data collection, when analysing data and during the reporting, sharing and storing of data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). To implement the research ethics, I obtained ethical clearance from the University of Witwatersrand (see Appendix B-Ethical Clearance).

Permission to conduct the study in the Department of Social Development, JHB region was granted by the Director of Research and Policy Coordination (Appendix C-Approval Letter). Transparent and honest information about the study was given including the contact details of the researcher and the supervisor (Appendix A-PIS). Informed consent was requested from all participants prior to data collection, which indicated voluntary participation. In other words, the participants were asked for consent to participate in the study and for the interviews to be recorded, and if they agreed they signed consent forms. Furthermore, participants were advised that should they feel uncomfortable and wish to withdraw from the study they were entitled to do so without any penalties. Interviews were held at the times and venues suitable and convenient for the participants. Permission to audio-record the interviews was requested,

and only I and my research supervisor had access to the recordings.

Indeed, the participants' right to privacy and confidentiality were exercised. The data collected was kept safe. It was saved on a laptop with a protected password. The sensitive nature of disability experiences required careful handling to avoid harm or re-traumatisation (DPSA,2008). For example, one participant who disclosed that he needed counselling due to the effects of issues that affect EWD in the workplace was referred for counselling at Zinakekele EHWP, which provides wellness services to the Department of Social Development. There was no anonymity because face-to-face interviews were conducted but confidentiality was ensured and pseudonyms was used in all report writing.

3.9 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is determined by the researcher's ability to prove credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability and authenticity of the study. Furthermore, it is stated that trustworthiness is significant when inductive content analysis is applied because categories are formed from the raw data with no theory-based categorization (Elo et al., 2014). It is stated that the quality of research report must be developed and ensured by ensuring accuracy in the data presentation, avoiding bias, and claims that cannot be supported (Cope, 2014). The four alternatives for assessing how the trustworthiness of this study will be ensured will be discussed below.

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to "the ability of qualitative instruments to answer the qualitative projects' objectives and the connection between the qualitative outputs and the real situation on the ground" (Madondo, 2021, p. 121). This includes the identification and a correct description of the participants (Elo et al., 2014). Therefore, this study aimed to obtain the experiences of PWD, all of whom must be employees of the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg Region. Furthermore, the researcher developed credibility of the study by creating a high level of consistency in the report writing. I ensured that participants' characteristics were well-described in report writing as well as that themes and codes correlate with participants' responses by double-checking and referring to the collected raw data (Svinndal et al., 2020).

3.9.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to "the stability of data over time and under different conditions" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2). This was achieved by reading similar studies to find consistency of data; as other studies with similar respondents and similar conditions concurred with the findings of this study, it was considered as a dependable one (Cope, 2014). During the reporting, I outlined the procedures and research instruments used so that other can be able to use in the attempts to study similar topics (Given, 2008).

3.9.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to "the potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance, or meaning" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2). During data collection, the same questions (Appendix E) were used to all the participants who were workers with disabilities as well as the same questions (Appendix F) for participants without disabilities. Furthermore, the researcher ensured accurate demonstration of the actual given data or respondents' responses, and refrained from bias or their own viewpoint. That was done by providing rich quotes from the interview responses (Cope, 2014). Furthermore, transparent description of research steps taken from the beginning to the end such as raw data, data analysis, data reconstruction, and summaries, were used to confirm the outcome (Cope, 2014).

3.9.4 Transferability

It can be described as the ability to "the reasoning that findings can be generalized or transferred to other settings or groups" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2). During the reporting, I provided clear descriptions of the participants' selection process, context, culture, and their characteristics (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2).

3.9.5 Limitations and Delimitations

The number of EWDs in the Department of Social Development, JHB Metro Region, is very low. As a result, the researcher opted to include co-workers without disabilities in the interviews to gain more views and perceptions of the employees about the acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the workplace. This is a limitation because this information was not obtained 'from the horse' mouth.' Hence, the dependability of the data may decrease.

3.9.6 Summary

This chapter focused on discussing the method used for this study. The research approach, design, the population, the sample size and sampling procedure were explained. Furthermore, the research instrument, methods of data collection and data analysis were discussed. The phases of data analysis by Braun and Clarke were demonstrated in a table form. Lastly, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of the study were discussed. The study findings will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Study Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected from the semi-structured interviews with 15 participants through purposive sampling. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis which is "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Okoko et al., 2023, p. 463). To add, an analysis through the inclusive perspective is discussed as the themes that emerged relate to inclusion, acceptance, accommodation and equity. An overview of how data was analysed is provided as well as the themes that came up. Subsequently, an overview of the demographic information of the participants is provided followed by the discussion of the identified themes.

4.2 Overview of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to analyse data because it was the most suitable analytic approach to sort the large qualitative data. The six phases of thematic analysis identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed whereby I familiarised myself with the collected data by listening to the audios and transcribing the verbal data into written form. This was followed by generating codes which involved reading and sorting collected data into patterns. The next phase was to search for themes and to review themes whereby I reduced data and created concepts. The patterns were identified and the frameworks were constructed.

The next phase was to name and define themes, which are perceptions and experiences about the employment rate of EWD, acceptance and accommodation in the workplace, support in the workplace environment, challenges experienced by EWD in the Department of Social Development, and recommendations to improve workplace accommodation and acceptance. Then I was able to produce a report which was the

last phase of thematic analysis (Given, 2008). Moreover, an inclusive perspective was integrated during data analysis. Inclusive perspective presented an in-depth analysis of the barriers and enablers of workplace inclusion as reported by participants. Drawing from the inclusive perspective, which emphasizes equitable participation, reasonable accommodation, and the dismantling of attitudinal and structural barriers, the analysis situated participant voices within a framework that distinguishes between token inclusion and genuine belonging. During data analysis and reporting, the data collected was kept anonymous to protect the identity of the participants. During the organisation of the collected data and the reporting of results, I ensured accuracy in data presentation, I avoided bias and unsupported claims to enhance the trustworthiness of the study (Elo et al, 2014).

4.3 Demographic Information of the Participants

The participants were 15 employees of the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg Region. The composition of the research participants is outlined in Table 4.1 below.

As Table 4.1 illustrates, the study participants were predominantly African female social workers. There were 12 females and three males. Only seven of the 15 participants presented with disabilities. This shows a low number of EWD in the Department of Social Development. Only one participant had worked in the Department of Social Development for less than a year, and all the other participants had worked for more than two years in the Department.

4.4 Presentation of Findings

To show the participants 'perceptions and experiences of employees with disabilities on workplace acceptance and accommodation the findings are presented below and in Table 4.2. Five themes and nine sub-themes were developed through the inductive and deductive analysis. The overview of the findings is presented in the table below.

4.5 Perceptions and Experiences about Employment Rate of EWD

This theme involves the participants' experiences and views about whether EWDs are recruited in the Department, the participants' experiences and observations during the job entry level, as well as the rate of employment for EWD in the Department. Under this theme, three sub-themes came up, which are satisfactory recruitment, employers

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Participants

Participant	Race	Gender	Disability	Type of disability	Occupation	Years of employment
A	Afr	F	Yes	Asthmatic	HRM	34 years
B	Afr	M	Yes	Virtually Impaired	SW	7 years
C	Afr	F	Yes	Impaired Hearing	SAW	10 years
D	Afr	M	Yes	Missing Limb	AO	10 months
E	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	4 years
F	Afr	F	Yes	Hydrocephalus and Blindness	SAW	7 years
G	Ind	F	No	NA	SW	2 years
H	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	4 years
I	Afr	F	Yes	Anxiety and Depression	SW	9 years
J	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	2 years
K	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	7 years
L	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	4 years
M	Afr	F	No	NA	SAW	7 years
N	Afr	F	No	NA	SW	11 years
O	Afr	M	Yes	Deafness and aphasia	SAW	2 years

unaccommodating EWD during job interviews, and low employment rate.

4.5.1 Satisfactory Recruitment

Eight of the fifteen participants responded that PWDs have access to the job adverts and they are encouraged to apply for jobs, because the Department of Social Development is obliged to comply with the legislation, meaning that the department does recruit PWD. They responded to say if EWD qualify for the job, they are considered for job interviews and employment. However, two participants with hearing impairment responded to say they experienced challenges during the interviews, but they still managed to secure jobs. The interviewers during the job interview treated them like everyone else, even after mentioning that they have a hearing impairment.

Most responses show that the DSD JHB region is doing well in terms of the recruitment of PWD and opening the doors for those PWD who meet the employment criteria, as these are absorbed despite internal challenges for the employer. The response of one

Table 4.2: Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	**Sub-Themes**
Perceptions and Experiences	• Satisfactory Recruitment • Employer unaccommodating to EWD during job interviews • Low employment rate
Acceptance and accommodation in the workplace	• Acceptance and inclusion by the workers
Support in the workplace environment	• Lack of support for EWD by the employer
Challenges experienced by EWD in the Department of Social Development	• Poor communication between the employer and EWD • Incapacitated EWD
Recommendations to promote workplace accommodation and acceptance	• Provision of resources and skills to EWD • Disability awareness and workshopping the management

participant emphasized that the Department encourages PWD to apply during post advertisements.

"Okay, as a Department because of the advantage of being in Human Resource Management when we do recruitment, sometimes when we do e-target, the recruitment of PWD is our target but it is very rare to get PWD applicant applying for positions in the Department even at lower level it is not easy to find such people applying." (Participant A, Female, HRM)

"There is recruitment because they are forced by law but in terms of resources it is not good." (Participant I, Female, SW)

"PWD are accommodated during posts advertisement, but I am not sure if they apply or even get employed because I have never seen an EWD in the office." (Participant M, Female, SAW).

The quotes above indicate that the Department is seeking to achieve equality in the workplace, with the aim to comply with the Employment Equity Act. However, there are multiple workplace challenges that the employer is delaying to address, such as lack of resources for EWD.

4.5.2 Employer Unaccommodating EWD during Job Interviews

Participants with disabilities expressed that as persons living with a particular disability, they experience challenges during their first encounter with employers. Their disabilities were ignored, as they were treated like anybody else, despite the disability disclosure in their application forms. The two participants' responses explain this below.

"I disclosed in my CV/application that I am using a hearing aid, but since my appointment, nobody has ever asked me about my disability, even my direct manager. I am treated like everybody else. During the interview, I informed them about my disability, but I was still interviewed like everyone else."(Participant C, Female, SAW)

"The communication was bad. I could not communicate with HR telephonically. They sent a message giving a short notice that I must come for the interview. I had to rush from KwaZulu- Natal to Johannesburg. The interview was in writing but in the end, all was good (In writing)." (Participant O, Male, SAW)

4.5.3 Low Employment Rate

Participants' responses show that the employment rate of PWD in the region is very low. All participants expressed that they know one or two EWD as colleagues from other units. In addition, in the employer's records that were produced by HR to prepare for data collection of this study, it was evident that the DSD office has a very low number of EWD, which means that the employment rate is very low despite the measures taken by HR to recruit PWD.

"I have seen only one person with a disability in the Department, her limbs are not of the same size. In a scale of one to ten I would give a two. We are not many people employed in this department. Apart from that person, I've never seen anyone." (Participant D, Male, AO)

"It's difficult, I think the employment rate here is very low to none, especial with the type of disabilities because there is a stereotype that PWD must have a physical disabil-

ity." (Participant K, Female, SW)

The participants perceive the reasons for the low employment rate to be that PWD do not apply for jobs, which may be due to lack of the required qualifications and skills for the jobs. On the matter of retention, the participants responded to say that EWD stay despite the bad work conditions, because they need jobs for survival, and the chances of finding another job are slim. Other than that, the department does not have retention strategies in place. Two participants expressed their experiences regarding the recruitment and retention of EWD in the JHB Region.

"It makes it difficult for the Department to reach the target for PWD. Even if it is out in the advert that out target is PWD it is very rare, because we cannot just recruit anyone but someone with a skill or qualifications for that particular position. The retention strategy, as I said it is very rare to even get applicant with disabilities, no matter how we try to advertise in the media but when it comes to retention strategy, who are we retaining because currently we don't have as much as we want to do a retention. Remember with the retention strategy, we would aim to retain people that are currently employed but at this moment we don't have much. They are very scarce to find." (Participant A, female, HRM)

"There are very few PWD in the department. In terms of retention, I think that PWD stay because they don't have a choice, they stay just be able to survive." (Participant, M, Female, SW)

4.6 Acceptance and Accommodation in the Workplace

This theme entails the participants' experiences and perceptions about the acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the Department of Social Development. The sub-theme that came up is the acceptance and inclusion by co-workers.

4.6.1 Acceptance and Inclusion by the co-workers

According to eleven participants, EWD were integrated within their Units; they worked together as a team with the employees without disabilities. It is during teamwork where they learn some required skills and get support for some tasks that they struggle to do due to their disabilities, as they do not normally work closely with their managers. The participants expressed that they have healthy relationships with their co-workers, and they spend a lot more time in the office with their co-workers than with their managers. Furthermore, the EWD would rely on their co-workers to be able to move

around the building, or even to complete some tasks.

The participants felt included in workplace activities and belonging to their teams soon after they joined the department. In their unit, they were involved in planning, decision making, and meetings. However, it was a different story when it came to their managers or the employer, as they rarely communicated.

"I would not be able to work alone because all the documents and work comes in a typed form so someone must always read for me. So, the Jaws computer would be able to read the emails but not scanned work. That means that it is a must that I always have someone to help read the information for me." (Participant B, Male, SW).

"Based on my experience with colleagues with disabilities, we are working as a team and our co-worker with a disability is willing to work with us, and we are also very accommodating." (Participant E, Female, SW).

"They are included in events, during planning everyone's opinion is worthy, and they included in work-related issues in the unit." (Participant E, Female, SW).

There were four participants with visual and hearing impairments who expressed that they do not feel included in the workplace. The ones with hearing impairments said that they are excluded during the meetings because they cannot hear what is being said, and the employer is aware of that, but there are no interpreters or any aid provided for them.

"I'm not optimally included. As I said, that there is that trust deficit as most of the time things just pass me. For example, there is a task where colleagues are expected to do interviews and give information in the radio, but because of the trust deficit my superior just skips me, I am not given that opportunity. Some of the duties I know how to execute them even better and I have passion, but I get skipped because of my disability." (Participant F, Female, SAW).

One of the participants with hearing impairment further shared that she was discriminated against by her former supervisor in the Department, who would shout at her in the presence of the co-workers and say it is because of your disability that you make so many mistakes because you cannot hear me.

"At present it is all okay but previously with the former supervisor, she was discriminating against me, and she would say things like it is because you cannot hear properly that

is why you do the wrong things. She would shout at me in front of everyone and say did I ever say that colleagues? They would embarrass me, and it was a bad experience. The work relation is very good because they understand me." (Participant C, Female, SAW).

The ones with visual impairments said that they are excluded during task allocation, perhaps due to trust deficit by the managers. They are excluded during the social programmes that are rendered by the Department to the communities, as the employer instructed them to remain in the office for their safety, because there is no personal assistance arranged for them.

"I'm not optimally included. As I said, that there is that trust deficit, as most of the time things just pass me. For example, there is a task where colleagues are expected to do interviews and give information on the radio but because of the trust deficit, my superior just skips me, I am not given that opportunity. Some of the duties I know how to execute even better, and I have passion, but I get skipped because of my disability." (Participant F, Female, SAW)

They are only included when the team goes out for lunch, whereby the co-workers transport them. The participant with aphasia shared that his team members would rather not communicate with him because they would be too lazy to write down the communication, as they cannot use sign language. As a result, he spends most of his work time out in the field, facilitating programmes at schools for children with disabilities, because that is where he is accommodated.

"I only get support from my co-workers. Others are not patient with having to write down the conversation, so they just tell me a bit of the information. So, I am left out during the meetings and all other things and that makes me feel unimportant. I need an interpreter because I am excluded and left out in the department." (Participant O, Male, SW)

4.7 Support in the Workplace Environment

This theme entails participants' experiences and views about whether there is support for EWD in the Department of Social Development. The sub-theme it produced was the lack of support for EWD by the employer.

4.7.1 Lack of support for EWD by the employer

Participants expressed that there is no support from the employer for EWD. It was said that once the EWD is appointed and placed in the unit, they are not oriented around the building, such as being shown the restroom and the kitchen, not provided with their special assistive gadgets, and no interpreters or personal assistants. Hence, the EWD only get support from their co-workers, which would not have been arranged by the employer.

"The employer has never supported me from day one, they showed no concern nor asked anything about my disability while they are very much aware of my disability. They don't even make your colleagues aware of your disability during the introduction." (Participant C, Female, SAW).

"The level of support is 8 in a scale of one to ten. To be honest it is not what I expected because as I was growing up my mother applied so many times for disability grant, but I was never approved." (Participant, D, Male, AO)

"Some managers are just not comfortable assigning real work to disabled staff." (Participant J, Female, SW)

This points to a subtle but pervasive form of exclusion where EWD are present in the workplace but not fully engaged a violation of both the letter and spirit of inclusion. These quotes reflect an institutional failure to implement reasonable accommodation, which is a foundational element of inclusive practice. The burden of adaptation is unjustly placed on the individual rather than the employer, signaling a gap between policy and practice.

However, some participants shared that they were seeing an improvement by the employer, as the employer has started to procure the required gadgets for the two employees with visual impairments such as braille, a recorder, and a computer with jaws. They shared that in the past there was no support at all. An example they gave was that, recently HR has shown some concern, and it would do a check-up on them to check if they are coping. Those two employees with visual impairment also shared the similar experiences of being provided with gadgets that they had waited for for years.

"I have not seen any support from the employers for the past years at all until recently, they have been given gadgets to work with. She is still not getting support on moving around the building or viewing her personal information on Employee Self-Service

platform which is also confidential for her to request the co-workers to do it for her." (Participant H, Female, SW)

"The laptop with speaking programme, although it is not perfect but at least I can work with rather than before. The tape recorder is only now that it's being procured to help me when I'm writing minutes and recording calls during enquires so that I can be able to type it." (Participant F, Female, SAW)

All fifteen participants expressed that the level of support is very low, hence they are not satisfied by how the employer treats EWD when it comes to performing their daily functions and tasks. Once appointed, the EWD must navigate their way to achieving the job expectations. They expressed that the employer acts like they do not know about their disability status, hence they are treated and expected to perform like the co-workers without disabilities. The participants shared that they only feel supported and receive the actual support from the co- workers, from personal aspects to work-related issues.

"Non-existing, because I think in order for you to support, there must be something there that you are doing. Then you say you are failing to do your job, what is the problem. Then you support me to become better to meet my expectations, but you are allocating me work without resources, how am I going to do the job. Number two, what are you supporting there in my frustrations. I think in most people with disabilities they must hiring an extra person because there must somehow an interpreter for a person who is deaf. There must be an aid to navigate for a person living with blindness. There must be someone to assist someone with a physical disability. Our cars are not modified for PWD." (Participant, K, Female, SW)

4.8 Challenges Experienced by EWD in the Department of Social Development

The participants shared numerous challenges that are experienced by EWD in the department. It was shared that the buildings in the regional office and satellite offices are not accommodative nor user-friendly to EWD. For example, the lifts do not have braille, there are no wheelchair ramps, and only the ground floor has restrooms that can accommodate the wheelchair users. Moreover, the participants shared that some EWD lack work experience and skills, so then it becomes a challenge for them to deliver the work expectations. This showed that the employer at time does not check the capacity of the PWD during the employment process, and the employer could be employing EWD due to pressure to comply with the statistics requirement concerning

the legislation of employment equity. There are two sub- themes that were constructed under this theme. The first sub-theme is poor communication between the employer and EWD, and incapacitated EWD.

4.8.1 Poor communication between the employer and EWD

The employer does not conduct a needs assessment for EWD. There is actually no communication between the employer and the EWD. As a result, EWD are misunderstood by the employer and the management. There is a lack of resources for EWD, such as assistive technology, personal assistants, and interpreters, hence there is a lack of information distribution to EWD, particularly those who cannot read word documents or emails, or hear during meetings. This means that there is a communication barrier between the EWD and the employer, hence EWD cannot perform to their optimum level. There is lack of support for EWD from the management and the employer.

"Communication is my shortcoming because as a shy person, I rather like to do everything myself, and no ask for help until it too late and overwhelmed. This is all because of my disability, for example it was even difficult making friends when I was growing up. Even now my hand is always hidden in my pocket until we get very close then I can show you my hand." (Participant D, Male, AO).

4.8.2 Incapacitated EWD

It was expressed that EWD are excluded from other allocations of tasks because the managers lack trust in them. Some EWD are limited to perform some duties such as driving, the ability to communicate with clients, doing field work such as home-visits and observing during assessments and case investigations. Some EWD shared that they have low-self-esteem because they are ashamed of their disability. Some EWD experience judgement by the clients, because the clients would not trust their capabilities.

"Firstly, I cannot join the meetings because there is no sign language in the office. I cannot participate or hear during the events or programmes. At times I would feel like I was only employed to drive. This is not fair, because during programmes at schools for the deaf, the colleagues are organized interpreters who can talk, and so they do not miss out during the events, but I do not get an interpreter at hearing school" (Participant O, Male, SAW)

4.9 Recommendations to Promote Workplace Accommodation and Acceptance

This theme entails the suggested resolutions by the participants to address the challenges that are faced by EWD, and to promote a conducive workplace environment in the Department of Social Development. Both groups of participants suggested improvements to foster inclusion. These included regular disability awareness training, improved implementation of policies and involving EWD in planning their accommodations. The two sub-themes that were developed are provision of resources and skills to EWD, and disability awareness and workshopping the management.

4.9.1 Provision of resources and skills to EWD

The participants suggested several resolutions to the challenges faced by EWD in the region. They suggested, amongst others, that there must be wheelchair ramps from the ground floor up to the top floor, and all floors must have toilets that accommodate the wheelchairs users.

"EWD would be accommodated in all aspects only if there is accessibility of the buildings, they are allocated the resources they require, all staff is well-informed and trained about disability, and EWD be oriented around the offices." (Participant M, Female, SW)

It was suggested that the employers need to be sensitive, check the needs of EWD and, before placing them in positions, provide their needs and resources during the placement to foster an accommodative work environment for EWD, as well as providing regular training to capacitate them in terms of work expectation. The resources must include cars that have hand controls for EWD to be able to drive themselves, and interpreters.

4.9.2 Disability Awareness and workshopping the management

Another suggestion was that the employer must organize disability awareness campaigns within the region.

"The government need to be educated about disability. Training and workshops would be arranged to sensitize the Department about PWD." (Participant I, Female, SW)

Furthermore, the managers and all employees must undergo a training on disability and learn how to work better with EWD to improve the accommodation of EWD in the Department. HR also needs to visit the universities and obtain a database of students with disabilities, to recruit them for employment.

"I think the Department needs to visit the universities as well, because there might be students out there with disabilities and recruit them, meet students with disabilities, and have the database of students with disabilities, because if not, then we will continue to only people without disabilities while there are plenty of PWD out there." (Participant A, Female, HRM)

The staff must be informed about having EWD as co-workers and when they join the region, employees with vision impairment be provided with proper orientation around the building. Furthermore, the participants suggested that the employer must assess the needs of EWD, ask for their inputs, engage them and involve them in decision-making on issues that involve them.

"Okay if can get to be listened to what I suggested with intense listening and being understood, I think that I can flourish in my work. For example, previously I would say something, and it would take as if I'm heard but when it comes to implementation it would be something else." (Participant F, Female, SW)

They also suggested that the management must expose EWD to work activities such as social programmes, field work, and radio presentations, so that they can learn and grow in their career. Below are some of the suggestions expressed by one of the participants.

"The employer needs to ask for their inputs and involve EWD in decision-making on what involves them. They need to be allowed to engage with other units and do field work, social programme events, and radio presentations in order to grow in the career." (Participant H, Female, SW).

4.9.3 Summary

This chapter presented the qualitative findings of the study, based on interviews with employees with disabilities (EWD) and their colleagues in the Department of Social Development. Thematic analysis revealed several key areas influencing the inclusion of EWD in the workplace, interpreted through the lens of the inclusive perspective.

Despite these challenges, several enablers of inclusion were also found, and these are: supportive individual supervisors who made efforts to accommodate EWD; positive interpersonal relationships, where EWD felt accepted by some colleagues and lastly, the awareness of inclusion policies, which participants viewed as a basis for advocacy and future improvements. Overall, the chapter concluded that inclusion is not yet institutionalized, and achieving it will require a cultural and structural shift—one that centers the experiences and rights of EWD in everyday organizational practices.

Chapter 5

Main Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the results of the study. It discusses the main findings, interpreted through the lens of the inclusive perspective. The analysis below identifies where the workplace experiences of employees with disabilities (EWD) align with or contradict this framework and resulting implications according to the objectives of the study and conclusions are drawn from the findings. Furthermore, this chapter will consider the strengths and the limitations of this study and make suggestions or recommendations for the Department and future research in this field.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study has used an interpretive phenomenology design to explore the perspective and experiences of EWD within the DSD JHB Metro about their acceptance, accommodation, and support in the workplace. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 workers, in which seven were EWD and eight were employees without disabilities, from DSD JHB Metro. The interviews explored the employment rate of EWD in the region, acceptance and accommodation of EWD in the region, support of EWD in the workplace environment, the challenges experienced by EWD, as well as the suggested resolutions. Moreover, it interprets how participants' experiences reflect the broader themes of inclusion, acceptance, equity, attitude and accommodation in the workplace.

5.3 Summary of Key Findings

5.3.1 *Objective 1: To explore the workplace experiences of employees with disabilities in the Department of Social Development*

The findings of this study showed that when it comes to experiences of EWD as far as inclusion, acceptance, accommodation and equity are concerned, they are satisfied with the recruitment of EWD in the Department of Social Development.

A few participants acknowledged improved recruitment efforts, suggesting progress toward inclusive hiring.In a study conducted in China to explore how practitioners understand, implement and support the employment of PWD, it was found that the private organizations are implementing the Supported Employment (SE) by pushing persons with severe disabilities into competitive employment, and this has helped most PWD to successfully achieve competitive employment, which has also expanded to the United States and many other countries (Gong and Xu, 2024). The findings show that the Department is working hard to meet the required statistics in terms of the Disability Equity Act, which increases the recruitment rate of PWD in the Department. This finding was not anticipated due to the low rate of employment for EWD, internationally.

5.3.2 *Objective 2: To explore any challenges that employees with disabilities face within the workplace.*

The findings demonstrated that there are challenges faced by EWD in the Department of Social Development, as the employer fails to accommodate or to prepare for EWD during the job interviews in the department. The employer was shown to be unaccommodating to EWD during job interviews, as well as PWD having a low employment rate. Participants reported low representation of EWD and inconsistent experiences during job interviews.

The lack of accommodations during interviews and the perception of tokenism indicate that inclusion is not embedded in recruitment systems. These contradictions reflect a compliance-based rather than an inclusive approach, where policies exist but are not accompanied by structural or attitudinal change.

(Sing, 2012, p. 3) state that in America, 40% of government departments do not have an official employment equity plan, which negatively affects PWD, whereas employers are required to comply with the ADA in a way that employers must reasonably

accommodate disabled applicants during the hiring process, even if the interviews are conducted remotely. In a case study conducted about hearing impairment in the United States at an information technology company known as Cloudbeds, a similar experience of not unaccommodating EWD by the employer, as a deaf applicant was invited for a job interview and he requested an interpreter, but the company manager declined his request ("Yes, ADA applies to remote workplaces, too", 2023). Furthermore, in a study conducted in South Africa about experiences of EWD in relation to employment integration and retention, it was found that PWD experience barriers to workplace integration, despite the progressive legislation in South Africa (McKinney and Swartz, 2021).

In a case study that was conducted in Cape Town in 2021, which explored the employers' perspectives on the inclusive employment of PWD, it showed that with South African companies, PWD comprised only 1.3% of their workforce, according to Sing (2021). The key findings made it clear that the employer showed no concern about EWD and rarely communicated with them. The EWD themselves did not have the courage to voice out their concerns, needs, and suggestions to the employers. As a result, their needs were not known to the employer but only to the co-workers. As stated by Dong et al., (2022), there is an unequal treatment of persons with disabilities and undervaluing of diversity in the workplace. This finding was anticipated.

In the field of social work where workers are required to drive, conduct case investigations, communicate with clients, and present their cases before court, these were found to be a challenge for EWD hence they spent their working hours sitting and doing nothing in their offices. The findings showed that EWD have developed low self-esteem, shame, and dependence on the co-workers, and they feel judged by the clients because the clients do not trust their capabilities. The findings demonstrated that the co-workers also perceive EWD to be with limited skills and who cannot function without the assistance of the co-workers.

5.3.3 *Objective 3: To determine how the needs of employees with disabilities are accommodated and supported within the Department*

The findings showed that there is a form of support and accommodation of the needs of EWD in the Department by their co-workers in their respective sections. However, the findings present the opposite when it comes to the management's support to EWD. It was found that the management rarely initiates contact with EWD

Instances where supervisors or colleagues provided meaningful support align with the inclusive values of respect and recognition. Negative attitudes and exclusion from tasks suggest that inclusion is superficial or dependent on individual disposition rather than institutional culture. This fails the inclusive perspective, which calls for consistent and system-wide acceptance of diversity.

In a study conducted in Netherlands to measure workplace acceptance and inclusion with 495 participants, it was found that there was no perceived workplace acceptance (Vornholt et al., 2021). Vornholt et al. (2021) stated that to be accepted in a group of people is a basic human need. The need to belong is described as "a powerful, fundamental and extremely persuasive motivation that underlies the desire to form and maintain social bonds of which this need is fulfilled by work and social affiliation with a group of colleagues" (Vornholt et al., 2021, p. 135). Acceptance is important for self-esteem, morale, motivation, productivity, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction (Sherman, 2021).

5.3.4 *Objective 4: To determine how employees without disabilities perceive the acceptance, accommodation and inclusion of EWD in the Department*

The findings showed that the JHB region of the Department of Social Development was not accommodating to EWD. Although inclusion policies were noted, inconsistent implementation and poor awareness affected their effectiveness (Sing, 2012).

EWD are recruited by the department; however, there was a very low number of them within the region. There is no support provided, no interaction and no communication between the employer and EWD. EWD are only accepted, supported and accommodated by their coworkers. Furthermore, the findings showed that the workplace environment such as the building structures are not accommodative to EWD, resources are not provided for EWD hence they rely mostly on their coworkers for maneuvering around the offices and performing some work activities.

Many EWD had to request or provide their own accommodations; some workspaces remained inaccessible. In rare cases where accommodations were proactively provided, they reflected inclusive intent. The need for repeated requests or personal funding of assistive resources shows that inclusion is not normalised. The inclusive perspective advocates for anticipatory and universal design strategies, not reactive or case-by-case adjustments.

A study conducted at St Gallen in Switzerland about experiences of accommodation

requests, it was found that there is lack of support and accommodation in terms of modification of employee's workplace, work conditions and work processes (Samosh et al., 2023).

Similarly, in a study conducted in a South African province to explore how EWD cope with disability management practices by means of accommodation in the workplace, it showed that there is an unresponsive disability management practices because accommodation to have derailed or turning slowly (Moll, 2023). There is no contact by the employer for the mere sake of dignity, there is no communication of how and where to go for assistance during working hours. It was found that EWD rely on immediate able-bodied colleagues to do good (Moll, 2023).

5.3.5 *Objective 5: To identify the measures suggested by EWD to promote their workplace accommodation and acceptance.*

The findings demonstrated suggestions for provision of resources for EWD. Procurement of resources would certainly promote that accommodation and acceptance of EWD in the Department. Research conducted in the United States to explore the underdeveloped role of available assistive technology in closing the employment group between workers with disabilities and without showed that employers have been much slower to utilize assistive technologies to increase the employment of EWD (Dong et al., 2022). Having the needed resources, such as personal assistance, interpreters, and assistive devices provided would improve the productivity of EWD, which would also benefit the employer; it would also improve the job satisfaction of EWD. It is stated that EWD's required accommodations included mostly physical alterations of the office space and assistive technology (Dong et al., 2022).

Lastly, the findings suggested that HR finding out more about disability needs by engaging with PWD and obtaining the inputs of PWD from higher education would enable the Department to prepare for intake of EWD, to promote their accommodation in the workplace. The EWD also suggested that educating the management about disability would play a fundamental role in promotion of workplace accommodation and acceptance of EWD. Policies exist, but are poorly implemented or not widely understood.

In a study conducted to examine types of accommodation and barriers in requesting workplace accommodation, some of the suggested measures were the promotion of education and awareness of accommodation of the needs of PWD in the workplace

and the empowerment of all employees (Dong et al., 2022). It is stated that EWD experience social, attitudinal barriers, ignorance, and lack of knowledge on disability issues for the employers and co-workers (Dong et al., 2022). The findings also suggested that EWD need to be exposed to their key functions in the workplace whereby training be provided to boost their skills, which could grant them career growth.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter critically examined the study's findings through the lens of the inclusive perspective, which emphasizes equity, participation, and the dismantling of attitudinal and structural barriers to the inclusion of employees with disabilities (EWD). The chapter identified both enablers and barriers to inclusion within the Department of Social Development. Key findings revealed that while policies supporting EWD are in place and some instances of supervisor support exist, true inclusion remains inconsistent and largely dependent on individual goodwill rather than systemic practice. Attitudinal barriers, inaccessible environments, and a lack of policy implementation emerged as significant obstacles, undermining the intent of inclusion policies. Ultimately, the chapter concludes that genuine inclusion requires structural transformation, not just compliance. It calls for a shift from isolated accommodations to embedded inclusive practices that ensure EWD can fully participate, contribute, and thrive within the organization.

5.5 Recommendations

Recommendations for DSD:

- It is recommended that the organisation makes structural renovations to make the buildings accessible and accommodative to EWD.
- The organisation is advised to enhance the recruitment techniques by working with high schools for the disabled, to encourage learners to study social work, and also to work with the universities to obtain databases of students with disabilities, and recruit them to join the organisation, to increase the number of EWD in the organisation.
- The organisation needs to do disability awareness campaigns and training, particularly for EWD within the organisation.
- The organisation needs to conduct the needs assessment of newly-employed PWD, to accurately provide the necessary resources, and equip EWD with the required

skills, which will enable the inclusion of EWD in all work processes to achieve the objectives of the organisation and for the self-efficacy of EWD.

Recommendations for occupational social work:

- At a macro-level, occupational social workers can play an advocacy and decision-making role on issues affecting EWD in government at the national level.
- At the meso- and micro- levels, occupational social workers can develop and implement policies to promote the reasonable accommodation of EWD in the workplace, such as leadership training, induction programmes, support groups, and surveys.
- Occupational social workers are encouraged to work as supportive structures for EWD by offering debriefing services on a mandatory and regular basis.

Recommendations for future research:
As the number EWD with disabilities is very low at regional level, there is a need to conduct a provincial study on the experiences of EWD on workplace acceptance and accommodation with the Department of Social Development.

5.6 Concluding Comments

The Department of Social Development, as the core of social work practice, should be the one setting the tone for other organisations as far as equity for employment and meeting the needs of PWD in the workplace is concerned. This study found the Department of Social Development to be thriving in the recruitment of EWD. Conversely, supportive leadership and employee-driven suggestions for disability awareness and monitoring point to potential levers for change. Moreover, the study revealed that the Department's efforts reflect partial alignment with inclusive principles, but significant gaps persist, particularly in policy enforcement and workplace culture.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL WORK

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Good day,

My name is Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko and I am a postgraduate student for the degree MA in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research regarding perceptions of employees with disabilities (EWD) about acceptance and accommodation within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region. It is hoped that the study could assist EWD to express their experiences on the issue of acceptance and being reasonable accommodated in the workplace. Furthermore, the information gathered could assist in identifying any challenges that EWD are faced with as well the resolutions to those challenges to promote employment equity and the overall well-being of EWD. The outcome of the study could inform the knowledge base, practice of social work and the review of relevant policies in the department.

As an employee with a disability working for the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg Region, you are ideally positioned to contribute to this study. I therefore wish to invite you to take part in the study. If you accept my invitation, your participation would be entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. There are no consequences or personal benefits of participating in this study. If you agree to take part, I would arrange to virtually interview you at a time suitable for you. The interview will last approximately one hour. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering. If you decide to participate, I will ask your permission to tape-record the interview. No one other than the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the tapes.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details below. This study will be written up as a research report. The data collected from this research project will be stored in a locked cabinet for six years following any publications or even if no publications emanate from the study.

A copy of your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used of academic purposes (including books, journals and conferences proceedings) and a summary of findings will be made available to study participants on request. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical, telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours Sincerely,

Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko, 0200021e@students.wits.ac.za, 0825420034

Supervisor: Dr. Busisiwe Nkala-Dlamini, 011 717 4483

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Mazibuko

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H22/06/24**
PROJECT TITLE	Perceptions of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms J Mazibuko
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Human and Community Development/
DATE CONSIDERED	24 June 2022
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Risk Level: Low
EXPIRY DATE	22 August 2025

DATE 07 September 2022 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Professor J Watermeyer)

cc: Supervisor : Dr B Nkala-Dlamini

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a regular progress report. For Minimal and Low studies, this is due annually on 31 December. For Medium and High Risk studies, this is due twice annually on 30 June and 31 December.**

_____ 15 / 08 / 2022
Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX C

GAUTENG PROVINCE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Dr Sello Mokoena
Tel: 082 331 0786
File no.: 06/08/22

Dear Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for your application to conduct research within the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Your application to conduct research on **"Perceptions of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region"** ***[University of the Witwatersrand]*** has been considered and approved for support by the Department as it was found to be beneficial to the Department's vision and mission. The approval is subject to the Department's terms and conditions as stated on the GDSD application form.

You have permission to interview officials and beneficiaries within facilities regulated by the department, conduct observations and access relevant documents where necessary.

May I take this opportunity to wish you well on the journey you are about to embark on.

We look forward to a value adding research and a fruitful co-operation.

With thanks

Dr Sello Mokoena
Director: Research and Policy Coordination
Date: 29/08/2022

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL WORK

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Title: Perceptions of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) about Acceptance and Accommodation within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region

Name of researcher: Jacqueline Hlengiwe Mazibuko

I, ...agree to participate in this project. The research
has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve, I agree to the following:
(Please circle the relevant options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous	YES	NO
I agree that the research may use anonymous quotes in her report	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	YES	NO

I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended, for academic purposes by other researcher, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained. YES NO

….....(signature)
….....(name of the participant)
….....(date)
….....(signature)
….....(name of the person seeking consent)
….....(date)

Umthombo Building - Basement, Room USW-8, Braamfontein East Campus, Private Bag 3, WITS 2050
T +27 11 717 4472 | E socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za | W www.wits.ac.za/shcd/social-work

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APPENDIX E

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: **Perceptions of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region**

Interview Questions

1. **Demographic Information of the Participant**

1.1. Can you tell me about yourself and the work that you do in the department?

1.2. Can you please tell me about how long have you worked in this department?

1.3. Can you please tell me more about your disability and how it has affected your life?

2. **Employment rate of Employees with Disabilities**

2.1. Can you please share with me your view of the degree of recruitment and retention of EWD in the region?

2.2. Please tell me about your experience during the job application until your appointment to your current post.

2.3. How often do you apply for posts in the department and what kind of responses do you receive?

2.4. Can you please share your personal experiences and viewpoint about the opportunities for career advancement for EWD in the department.

2.5. Can you share your personal highlights and lowlights about being an employee in the department?

3. **Acceptance and Accommodation in the workplace**

3.1. Do you work better alone or as part of a team?

3.2. Can you please share your experience about how you have been included in your workplace sectional activities and work expectations.

3.3. Can you describe your experience of work relationships and interrelations between you, your co-workers and your managers?

4. **Support in the workplace environment**

4.1. Please tell me about the kind of support do you get from the employer as an employee with your type of disability?

4.2. Please explain your level of satisfaction about the support you receive in order to be able to perform your daily functions and work requirements.

5. Challenges and Suggested Resolutions

5.1. Can you describe your limiting situations and challenges in the workplace?

5.2. What are your suggestions about having your workplace needs met and improving the accommodation of EWD in the department?

DATE: 2/08/2022

APPENDIX F

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: **Perceptions of Employees on Workplace Acceptance and Accommodation of Employees with Disabilities (EWD) within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg (JHB)Region**

Interview Questions for Employees Without Disabilities

1. **Demographic Information of the Participant**

1.1. Can you tell me about yourself and the work that you do in the department?

1.2. Can you please tell me about how long have you worked in this department?

1.3. Do you have any disability?

2. **Employment rate of Employees with Disabilities**

2.1. Can you please share with me your view of the degree of recruitment and retention of EWD in the region?

2.2. Can you share with me your viewpoint of the experiences of EWD during the job application until their appointment to their current post.

2.3. How often do you think EWD apply for posts in the department and what kind of responses do you think they receive?

2.4. Can you please share your viewpoint and observations about the opportunities for career advancement for EWD in the department.

2.5. Can you share any highlights and lowlights you have observed about being an employee in the department?

3. **Acceptance and Accommodation in the workplace**

3.1. According to your observations, do you think EWD work better alone or as part of a team?

3.2. Can you please share your viewpoint about how EWD have been included in the workplace sectional activities and work expectations.

3.3. Can you please share your observations of the work relationships and interrelations between the EWD, the co-workers and the managers?

4. Support in the workplace environment

4.1. Please share your viewpoint on the kind of support EWD get from the employer as employees with different types of disabilities?

4.2. According to your observations what is the level of satisfaction about the support that EWD receive in order to be able to perform the daily functions and work requirements.

5. Challenges and Suggested Resolutions

5.1.Can you describe the limiting situations and challenges that EWD encounter in the workplace?

5.2. What are your suggestions about having the workplace needs of EWD met and improving the accommodation of EWD in the department?

DATE: 2/08/2022