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Perceptions of Employability Following an Acquired Brain Injury

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Research Project

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Master's Degree (Industrial Organisational Psychology) in the Humanities Faculty, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Compulsory Declaration

I declare that this is my own, unaided work. This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, cited and referenced.

Signature:  Date: 06 March 2021

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Abstract

While South African legislation has created the structure to foster an equal society for all citizens, there is a lack of inclusive hiring behaviours of people with disability, particularly those with acquired brain injury (ABI). ABI significantly limits an individual's daily functioning and subsequent employment opportunities. Negative perceptions held by Human Resource (HR) personnel of the employability of candidates with ABI represent a significant barrier to their employment. The study followed ethical guidelines and employed a concurrent triangulation mixed-methods design through an online survey to examine HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with ABI. The study investigated participant's familiarity with disability, perceptions of employability, intentions to hire determined by the Theory of Planned Behaviour and their interest to hire based on different disability groups. While this sample of HR personnel was open to hiring candidates with a disability, in comparison to two other disability cohorts (physically disabled and visually impaired), people with ABI were least likely to be hired. The sample were unwilling or unable to adapt their perceptions or act upon these positive perceptions in practice. Irrespective of policy benefits and personal perceptions based on the costs and benefits of hiring a person with ABI, HR personnel did not see survivors of ABI as viable employees. Future research could investigate an adapted form of employment for people with ABI, namely a state-sponsored entrepreneurial endeavour that guides people with ABI to integrate into the mainstream labour force. Such a shift could alter perceptions of employability of people with ABI and shift human resource practices to support and integrate people with an ABI into the workforce.

Keywords: Employability, perceptions, HR personnel, acquired brain injury, disability, theory of planned behaviour, South Africa

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Various policies and legislation, including the South African White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy, state that South Africa should be "a society for all... encompassing human diversity and the development of all human potential" (Republic of South Africa, 1997, pg. 29). However, this is not the reality experienced by many people with disabilities in South Africa. Indeed, reports indicate that people with disabilities have significantly lower representation in the labour market than those who are not disabled (Soeker, 2016).

Survivors of an acquired brain injury (ABI) are particularly affected in this regard and have a low rate of employment both globally (Schulze, 2010) and locally (Wentzel-Du Toit, 2019). An ABI is a brain injury that is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative or induced by birth trauma but occurred after birth (McKee & Daneshvar, 2015). ABIs can be traumatic or non-traumatic. Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is any disruption in brain function or any evidence of brain pathology that is caused by an external force, whereas non-traumatic brain injury is caused by internal factors, such as a stroke, tumour or illness such as meningitis (McKee & Daneshvar, 2015). Brain injuries impact far more people in sub-Saharan Africa than the global average (Jerome et al., 2017) due to the high incidence of trauma and unhealthy lifestyles adopted in society (Krishnamurthi et al., 2013; Webster et al., 2015).

Depending on the location and severity of the brain damage, a person with ABI may experience permanent changes to their physical, cognitive, emotional and social well-being, which may impact their daily functioning and quality of life (Cancelliere et al., 2014). One such difficulty is that the associated sequela of ABI includes cognitive deficits, personality changes or increased rates of psychiatric illness, which can hinder the maintenance or acquirement of appropriate employment (McAllister, 2007). Nevertheless, it is important from an economic (Tyerman, 2012) and general wellbeing perspective that those survivors who can return to work, do so (Cancelliere et al., 2014; Medley et al., 2010).

The sequelae experienced by survivors of ABI are not the only obstacles experienced in their bid to maintain or obtain employment. Additional barriers include the negative perceptions HR personnel hold around the employability of a person with a disability, particularly those with an ABI (Baker et al., 2018; Gewurtz, 2016; Kaye & Harrington, 2015; Maja et al., 2011; Soeker, 2016). People with a myriad of diagnoses fall under the auspices of the National Disability Strategy, all of whom are adversely affected by unfavourable employer perceptions, as can be seen in the staggering 68% of South African adults with disabilities who are unemployed (Wentzel-Du Toit, 2019). However, the perception of

employability of different diagnoses appears to adhere to a perceptual hierarchy, as employers seem to be particularly averse to the hiring of people with an ABI both globally (Copeland, 2009; Susuman et al., 2014) and locally in South Africa (Adnams, 2010; Soeker et al., 2012). Employers' unfavourable perceptions in conjunction with the current economic recession that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and South Africa's already high rate of unemployment means that able-bodied and disabled people are competing in the same job market, where a person with an ABI or other disability may be at a disadvantage (Smith, 2020; Soeker et al., 2012). As a result, people with ABI, despite their being motivated and able, may struggle to find employment.

ABI is an economically, socially and personally devastating condition. A deeper understanding of perceptions of employability is important for those seeking employment, employers, employment agencies and those working in supported employment, as well as those in the medicolegal field, insurance companies and courts in determining appropriate compensation or redress strategies. South African HR personnel's perceptions are particularly important in understanding the employment experience for people with ABI, as they are generally on the 'front line' of recruitment drives. Further, few studies have focused on investigating their perceptions of the employability of candidates with disability. Thus, a greater understanding of their perceptions and how they may be changed may present an opportunity to leverage this group as positive role models for inclusive practices. Additionally, little has been done to examine perceptions of employability and subsequent barriers and enablers to the employment of candidates with an ABI in conjunction with other disabilities in South Africa. Ultimately, this information may be used to provide a realistic framework for rehabilitative counselling practitioners, employers and governments to identify strategies to increase employment opportunities amongst people with disability, particularly survivors of brain injury. This leads to the following research questions.

(1) What are HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with an ABI?
(2) Does HR personnel's familiarity with disabilities impact their interest in hiring a person with ABI?
(3) Is there a hierarchy in HR personnel's perceptions of employability of individuals with a physical disability, sensory disability and ABI?
(4) Do the variables of the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model predict the intent to hire a person with an ABI?
(5) How do HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with ABI change once presented with a 'success' story of candidates with an ABI?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter aims to discuss contemporary literature regarding ABI and candidate employability. ABI is initially discussed as a disability in the context of South African labour law and insight is given into the aetiology and implications of ABI in South Africa. Thereafter, the importance of returning to work and inhibitory or enabling factors to returning to work is discussed, with reference to the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Disability

Globally, there are various movements for the protection of people with disabilities. For instance, in 2006 the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) expressed that all persons with disabilities should have equal access to all human rights (Schulze, 2010). The CRPD arose out of resistance to the lack of overt legal protection for disabled people and due to their being perceived as objects rather than subjects with rights, typical of the medical model of disability. The medical model of disability has been the pervasive understanding of disability and has been harmful as it places emphasis solely on impairment, such as the long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment of a person (Schulze, 2010). This narrowed understanding can result in exclusion and barriers to accessibility for the person with a disability. The CRPD challenges this understanding, arguing that disability cannot solely be understood based on impairment(s), but based on how the interaction between impairment and other constraints prevents a person from equal enjoyment of rights (Schulze, 2010). This study adopts the CRPD's social model and non-definition of disability, which recognises that disability is a dynamic concept resulting from the interaction between individual capacities and attitudinal, social and environmental barriers that limit full and inclusive participation in all aspects of society (Krahn et al., 2015).

Disability in South Africa

The social understanding of disability seems to be mirrored in South African legislation, which recognises that the medical model neglects the wider social needs of those with disabilities (Dube, 2005). Indeed, South Africa has some of the most comprehensive legislation and policy in the world that aims to protect and promote the rights of an estimated 7.5% of the population who have a disability (StatsSA, 2014). This includes the Integrated National Disability Strategy White Paper in 1997 that proposes a society for all and the South African Human Rights Commission (SHRC) in 1995 that promotes, protects and monitors human rights in South Africa, including the right to employment. Further, as a member of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa, South Africa must ensure "decent work, to just and favourable

conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to protection against unemployment, to protection against exploitation and to protection from forced or compulsory labour" (African Union, 2018, p.16).

Disability-specific legislation. The White Paper and SHRC formed the foundation for South African policies and legislation specifically protecting people with disabilities in the workplace (Dube, 2005). Some of these policies will be discussed in turn.

First, the Employment Equity Act (EEA), No. 55 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) outlaws any discrimination by organisations based on race, gender or disability during recruitment and selection or while in the workplace. Indeed, the establishment of the EEA cultivated Affirmative Action measures, the Code of Good Practice on the Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace and the Technical Assistance Guide to the Employment of Persons with Disabilities. These codes and guides direct both employers and employees in encouraging equal opportunities and treatment for persons with disabilities (Dube, 2005) and attempt to reduce the disadvantages that many groups experience in recruitment and employment contexts (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007). For instance, the EEA stipulates that organisations with 50 or more employees and a specified turn over should audit their policies and practices to identify any barriers to employment of people from designated groups (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

Second, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) of 2000 prohibits any discrimination based on race, gender and disability by an individual or government. Employers are expected to reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities, ensure that hiring, training and placement processes are available and that obstacles unfairly inhibiting equal opportunities are eliminated (Mitra, 2008). Thus, people may not discriminate through denying or removing supporting or enabling facilities to help people with disability to function in society (Dube, 2005)

Third, the Skills Development Act (SDA) aims to enhance skills development in South Africa, improve employment prospects of those who are previously disadvantaged or disabled and redress these through training and education (McKinney & Amosun, 2020).

Lastly, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act of 2003 encourages businesses to employ people, particularly Black people, with disabilities. Complying organisations that offer opportunities for previously disadvantaged people with disability are rewarded with B-BBEE points, are preferred service-providers to government or large corporates, have favourable tax returns and increased business (Akwasi, 2020).

Poor Implementation of Protective Legislation in South Africa. These policies and legislations ultimately aim to decrease the physical and social barriers to employment and enhance people with disabilities' employment opportunities (Wordsworth, 2004). However, despite legislative support both internationally and in South Africa, the field of employment remains a site of disability-based discrimination (Schulze, 2010). Globally, the unemployment rate is two to three times higher for people with disabilities compared to those without a disability. Of the people with disabilities who are employed, they are likely to be in low-paid jobs that are segregated from the mainstream labour market (Schulze, 2010). This could be attributed to various causes, including poor access to quality education as a result of the disability and poor vocational training (Joosub, 2019). These factors often converge to form barriers to a person with disability receiving the education and training required for many jobs, which ultimately contributes to their poor employment rates (Joosub, 2019). These findings indicate that perhaps the lofty ideals of these legislations have not been achieved. In South Africa, this can be attributed to the South African government's low prioritisation, budget and resource commitment (Dube, 2005). For instance, many survivors of brain injury in South Africa do not receive the level of healthcare and rehabilitation required due to the high demand and lack of accessibility to these services (Joosub, 2019). This impacts their ability to find employment.

While the government is accountable to address the high unemployment of the population with disability, South African organisations and hiring managers also need to take accountability for obstructing inclusive practices (Wordsworth, 2004). Poor understanding, lack of championing of the cause, insufficient or inappropriate institutional systems and an overall lack of capacity has resulted in few of the legislations and policies being effectively implemented in South African organisations (Dube, 2005). While many South African employers seem to be aware of equal opportunity policies, only a few have specific strategies to employ people with disabilities (Braddock & Bachelder, 1994; Gida & Ortlepp, 2007). Thus, a discrepancy exists between what is expected of employers and HR personnel by law and their actual hiring practices (Gewurtz, 2016). This inconsistency renders people with disabilities vulnerable, as they often lack access to adequate health and basic education, are at risk of economic isolation due to poor employment prospects of and are vulnerable to discrimination and abuse. Thus, employers and HR personnel have the responsibility to identify the barriers people with disabilities may face in finding appropriate employment and to provide structures to accommodate and overcome these barriers (Bruyere, 2000; Chappell & Johannsmeier, 2009).

Acquired Brain Injury

While all people with disabilities are likely to experience barriers to enjoying full participation in society and the labour market, people with ABI are found to be amongst the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised populations in South Africa (Adnams, 2010).

Aetiology of Acquired Brain Injury

ABI refers to any injury that results in a disruption of normal brain function (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). In chapter 1, ABI was defined as a brain injury that is neither hereditary, congenital, degenerative nor induced by birth trauma but rather transpired after birth (McKee & Daneshvar, 2015). A differentiation was also made between traumatic or non-traumatic causes of brain injury, suggesting that traumatic brain injury (TBI) includes any disruption in brain function or any evidence of brain pathology that is caused by an external force, whereas non-traumatic brain injury is caused by internal factors, such as a stroke, tumour or illness such as meningitis (McKee & Daneshvar, 2015). This section will elaborate further on both the primary and secondary causes or origins of subsequent brain dysfunction.

Traumatic Brain Injury. Traumatic brain injury (TBI) can further be classified as either open (where the outer protective layers of the brain have been compromised due to a penetrating injury, such as a gun-shot wound) or closed (due to blunt force, rotational impetus or rapid acceleration or deceleration, for example, in the case of a motor vehicle accident) (Alexander et al., 2010). A traumatic insult to the brain may result in a focal coup injury at the site of impact, a contrecoup contusion involving a remote brain area or diffuse axonal shearing which impacts the parenchyma in the brain and disrupts the brain's vasculature (Graham & Luntos, 2002). Within hours of the primary trauma, decreased cerebral blood and oxygen flow or cerebral herniation perpetuate brain dysfunction and morbidity, a consequence sometimes referred to as a toxic cascade (Turner-Stokes et al., 2015). As a result, cellular and vasogenic fluid accumulates in the brain, which produces cerebral oedema, heightened intracranial pressure, cerebral ischemia and raised chances of infection. This is referred to as secondary injury, which includes defects resulting from inflammation, oxidative stress and mitochondrial, metabolic and vascular mechanisms that may perpetuate the cellular injury (Naidoo & Maxeke, 2013).

The impact of a penetrating injury is dependent on both the velocity and trajectory of the projectile and the location of the area involved. These factors have an impact on the functional pathways severed and secondary damage related to infection, including hyperpyrexia (fever), hypotension (low blood pressure) and hypoxia (oxygen deficiency). A

crushing head accident may result from compression of the head between two objects, which may occur in workplace accidents (Walland, 2017).

Non-Traumatic Brain Injury. Non-traumatic brain injury arises when deficiencies in normal functions of the brain occur without external trauma. These include stroke, tumours, aneurysms, infections or near-drownings. Similar to a TBI, non-traumatic brain injury can be focal or diffuse, depending on the specific aetiology (Walland, 2017).

In South Africa, where diabetes and hypertension are prevalent, there is a high incidence of cerebrovascular accidents (CVA), commonly known as stroke (Maredza, 2015). CVAs are classified as ischemic or haemorrhagic. Ischemic CVA occurs due to an interruption of blood flow in blood vessels that supply the brain tissue. Interruptions may arise due to factors affecting blood flow in the vessel, within the walls of the vessel and external to the vessel, referred to Virchow's Triad (Kushner et al., 2020). This leads to a lack of blood flow (ischemia), oxygen and nutrient delivery. These deficits result in decreased ATP levels and energy stores and eventual cell death (Arai et al., 2011). Haemorrhagic CVA refers to bleeding in the brain resulting from weakness in the blood vessels or hypo-coagulation states (Walland., 2017).

A contemporary approach to understanding brain functioning positions the brain as a neurovascular unit (Arai et al., 2011). This unit comprises of multiple cell types or neurovascular units, including neuronal, glial and cerebral vasculature. The dynamic interaction of these neurovascular units results in brain function. Under normal conditions the neurovascular units signal and interact, allowing for normal brain function. Disruption of the normal interaction of the neurovascular units leads to the pathophysiology of stroke (Arai et al., 2011). CVA results in three occurrences that lead to dysfunctional cell to cell interactions in the neurovascular unit. These may occur as a direct result of the injury at the time of CVA or as a result of the inflammatory process that follows the initial injury (Arai et al., 2011). Firstly, disruption of the signalling between the endothelium and astrocytes leads to blood-brain barrier leakage, which causes cerebral oedema. Secondly, disrupted signalling between neurons and endothelium interferes with hemodynamic coupling or increased blood flow in areas of high neuronal activity. Lastly, improper signalling between neurons and glia cells impede normal neurotransmitter release, reuptake kinetics and communication along axons (Arai et al., 2011).

Consequences of ABI

Although patients who suffer a mild ABI may initially experience poor concentration, irritability, dizziness, depression, anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and loss of emotional wellbeing,

most show complete recovery within a week to three months with no long-term cognitive, physical or emotional behavioural consequences (Molaie & Maguire, 2018). Functional improvement is usually a reflection of recovery due to neuroplasticity and compensatory strategies. However, those with moderate to severe ABI may experience long-term physical, cognitive and emotional or behavioural implications, which can permanently affect their ability to partake in or complete tasks in their daily life and work (Daneshvar et al., 2011; Webster et al., 2015). As the severity of a brain injury varies in different people, there may be unique implications for each survivor's cognitive, psychological, emotional and physical functions. Physical sequelae affect mobility, balance and coordination that may mean survivors require assistive devices to walk (Alston et al., 2012). Cognitive sequelae may manifest as deficits in attention, memory, communication and executive function. Finally, emotional sequelae could involve mood disturbances, personality changes and a loss of identity (Conneeley, 2012; McAllister, 2008; McKee & Daneshvar, 2015).

The physical, cognitive and emotional sequelae could potentially lead to psychosocial consequences, such as social isolation, loss of employment, loss of independence and decreased leisure activities (Conneeley, 2012). Furthermore, people may face different challenges around community integration and psychosocial adjustment during this period (McCabe et al., 2007).

ABI in South Africa

ABI is a significant contributor to mortality and morbidly globally (Rutland-Brown, 2006). Rates of ABI in South Africa are significantly higher than other developing and developed countries (Badul, 2012). To illustrate, in the United States (US), the overall incidence rate of TBI is estimated to range from 180 to 250 per 100 000 of the population based on hospital admissions, however, South Africa is estimated to have an incidence rate of 316 per 100 000 people (National Institute for Occupational Health, 2017). The elevated frequency of TBI may be attributed to three factors, the high incidence of motor vehicle accidents and interpersonal violence estimated to impact respectively five and four more people than the global average (Webster et al., 2015), as well as unhealthy lifestyles and health behaviours (Johnson et al., 2016; Manyema et al., 2016; Naidoo & Maxeke, 2013).

Motor vehicle accidents. Motor vehicle accidents are the most significant contributor to injury mortality in South Africa due to unsafe road environments, poor enforcement of existing traffic laws, road rage, alcohol abuse and aggressive driving (Norman et al., 2007).

Interpersonal violence. The unique history of South Africa offers insight into the high rate of violence and crime in South Africa. While South Africa is now a democracy, it

has struggled to negate the effects of racial segregation and exploitation that lead to income inequality, poverty, high unemployment, rapid social change, gender inequalities and family breakdowns (Norman et al., 2007). High rates of violence remain and seem to particularly affect young or old people, males and those in low socio-economic status brackets, making these groups particularly vulnerable to TBI (Naidoo & Maxeke, 2013; Norman et al., 2007).

Unhealthy lifestyles. Many South Africans follow unhealthy diets and lifestyles, making them vulnerable to obesity, diabetes, dyslipidaemia and hypertension, all of which are associated with strokes (Johnson et al., 2016; Manyema et al., 2016). Strokes are considered to be one of the most significant non-communicable disease causes of morbidity and mortality in Africa and account for a considerable number of non-traumatic ABI cases in South Africa (Krishnamurthi et al., 2013; Sajjad et al., 2013). For instance, in South Africa, strokes are responsible for 25000 deaths annually and cause 95000 people to live with ABI (Maredza, 2015). The burden has been likened to an epidemic in South Africa that threatens the country and its citizens (Manyema et al., 2016; Maredza, 2015).

Returning to Work

The impairments associated with an ABI and the perception society has regarding the employability of a person with ABI typically make it difficult for survivors of brain injury to return to life as they knew it, with many survivors becoming economically inactive as they struggle to either hold their pre-injury job or find suitable alternate employment (Baker et al., 2018; Jasper & Waldhart, 2012; McDonnall & Lund, 2019).

According to Van Velzen et al.'s (2009) systematic review of 47 ABI studies, only 39.3% of people with a non-traumatic ABI and 40.6% of people with a TBI return to work two years after their injury. This was confirmed in Diaz et al. (2014) systematic review, it was found that only 40% of survivors of ABI return to work. These studies were dominated by research from first world countries such as America, Singapore and Germany with few studies from third world countries, including South Africa. Given the poor provision of services, such as lack of vocational support and rehabilitation in South Africa, it is likely that the number of people with ABI who can find stable employment in South Africa is far lower (Akbar, 2015; Mitra, 2008; Watt & Penn, 2000). Indeed, Soeker (2011) estimates that 97% of people with ABI do not return to work in South Africa. Therefore, the vast majority of ABI survivors in South Africa may be unable to return to a sustainable form of employment.

The Importance of Returning to Work

There are two arguments for the importance of returning to work after an ABI, based on the economic impact and the general wellbeing of the person with an ABI.

Economic Perspective. Based on an economic perspective, lack of employment after an ABI has major economic implications for South Africa (Tyerman, 2012). There are many direct and indirect costs involved in the treatment and management of ABI. For instance, it is estimated that the direct costs and indirect costs of TBI are 20 billion Euros per year in Europe (Olesen et al., 2011). Direct costs include consultation with physicians and other health professionals, acute and chronic healthcare, medications and numerous other medical expenses. Indirect costs include lost productivity as a result of morbidity and mortality, as well as the costs of informal care for families and communities (Manyema et al., 2016). No figures could be found that quantify the costs of ABI in South Africa, but due to the high prevalence of ABI in South Africa, there is likely a 'burden' of disability on the economy (Bonneterre et al., 2013).

Neurotrauma also threatens the financial security of the individual, their family and their greater community, as unemployed individuals are less likely to have a means of being independent, contributing members of society (Wordsworth, 2004). High unemployment requires more money to be paid out in disability grants, as people with a disability rely on social welfare rather than actively seeking-employment (Wordsworth, 2004). An overreliance on social welfare rather than seeking financial independence perpetuates a cycle of poverty and negatively impact both the individual and the country's economy (Ju et al., 2013).

General Wellbeing. Based on a general wellbeing perspective, returning to work after an ABI plays a crucial role in establishing financial independence and enhancing a person's self-worth, quality of life, perceived health, social integration, dignity, sense of personal fulfilment and belonging as expressed by the SHRC (Ju et al., 2013; Opperman, 2004; Tsaousides et al., 2009). Survivors of ABI who do find employment may experience better health and an enhanced sense of wellbeing, less physical and mental impairments and better adaption (Cancelliere et al., 2014; Medley et al., 2010). Soeker's (2016) qualitative research around the return of South African individuals with a TBI to the open labour market, described how participants felt that they were reintegrated into society when they began working independently and autonomously with able-bodied individuals. Similarly, Akbar's (2015) research found that South African survivors of ABI generally had a desire to work and felt that they were just as capable as their colleagues, however, their unique abilities and considerations needed to be understood. Being employed helped survivors of ABI feel 'normal' in that they could actively participate and contribute to society (Akbar, 2015). Consequently, survivors of an ABI who can return to work should be encouraged to do so in

meeting their fundamental human right of becoming financially independent and contributing members of society (Burke et al., 2013; Opperman, 2004).

Factors Influencing Lack of Return to Work

Various factors influence the survivor's return or failure to return to work after an ABI. Donker-Cools et al. (2018) propose three factors influence return to work, disease-, activity- and personal-related factors. One additional categorisation, contextual-related factors, is proposed as the employment of disabled persons needs to be viewed within the wider context of South African society (Carroll & Coetzer, 2011).

Disease-Related Factors. The severity of the brain injury and length of time spent in hospital and rehabilitation is likely to be related to loss of function and ability to be competent in the job held before their injury. Thus, survivors who are hospitalised or in long-term rehabilitation are likely to have more severe conditions and take long-term sick leave, which may have negative implications due to limited employer flexibility and job policies (Donker-Cools, 2020).

Activity-Related Factors. The degree of independence a survivor of ABI can take on is significant in determining whether individuals return to work after an ABI. Survivors of ABI who are dependent on others in their everyday activities are unlikely to be able to perform at the required level in full-time employment (Donker-Cools et al., 2018).

Personal Factors. Personal factors, such as disposition, education and previous employment are critical in understanding why survivors of ABI may or may not return to work. For instance, those with low levels of education or a lack of competitive employment pre-injury were less likely to return to work (Donker-Cools et al., 2018). Further, the candidate's disposition and interpersonal skills are important in determining whether they are seen as employable or not (Bonneterre et al., 2016).

Contextual-Related Factors. Despite the South African legislation encouraging that provision be made for employing people with disabilities, there are institutional and environmental barriers that hinder the employment of people with disability. Firstly, there are inadequate health care resources and limited capacity to expand the few vocational rehabilitation services that do exist to prepare the person with a disability for the workplace (Louw et al., 2020). Without access to appropriate vocational rehabilitation, many survivors may be unable to cope with the challenges posed by returning to or finding work. Subsequently, this may lead to job loss and job instability for survivors of ABI, thereby undermining the quality of their lives and ability to find appropriate employment (Meulenbroek & Turkstra, 2016; Tyerman, 2012). Wilson (2017) found that rehabilitation

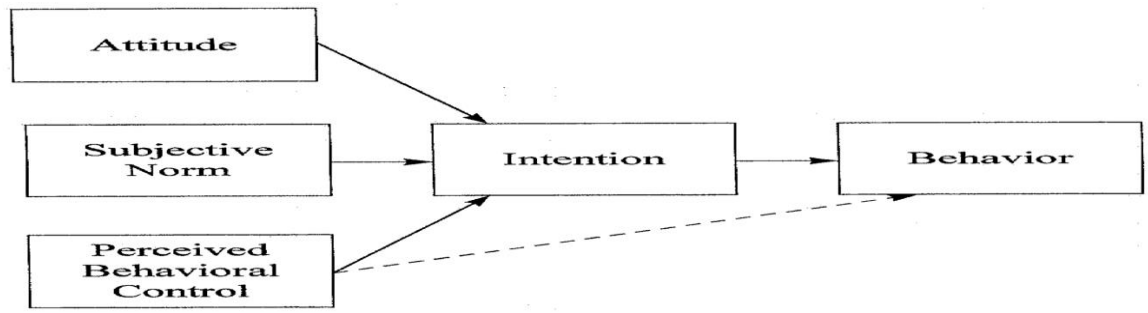
initiatives in low to middle-income countries, such as South Africa focus only on physical and mobility impairments, effectively neglecting the cognitive and psychosocial difficulties a survivor of ABI may face. For instance, a method of vocational rehabilitation, neuropsychological rehabilitation (NR) aims to assist ABI survivors who have cognitive, emotional or behaviour deficits in their daily functioning (Bier et al., 2018) and has been shown to improve patients' and their families lives after an ABI (Brasure et al., 2013). However, NR is not invested in as a viable solution in South Africa as it perceived as lacking efficacy and due to healthcare budgets being spent on injuries that are more responsive to treatment (Winegardner & Coetzer, 2017). Secondly, Schneider et al. (1999) found that South Africans with ABI struggle to access social welfare services, education and transport, which hinders their search for employment. Thirdly, South Africa currently has an unemployment rate of 28.48% (Statista, 2020), thus there is an oversupply of labour in the South African labour market and survivors of ABI have to compete with many able-bodied people for the same jobs. This makes their task to find and maintain suitable employment far more difficult (Akbar, 2015; Asikainen et al., 1996; Meulenbroek & Turkstra, 2016). Lastly, the perceptions that employers hold of people with ABI in the workplace influence whether they are deemed to be employable (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013). Thus, it is necessary to gain insight into the employer's hiring intentions and subsequent hiring behaviour with reference to the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) focuses on individual motivation or intention as a determinant of the likelihood of performing a particular behaviour (Azjen, 1991). A person's intentions are determined by three theoretically independent categories, their attitude toward a behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, as seen in Figure 1 (Azjen, 1991). TPB is a social-cognitive theory that assumes that conscious behaviour is generally rational and goal-oriented (Conner & Armitage, 1998). This theory offers a framework to analyse how personal and social factors impact HR personnel's intention to engage in the hiring of candidates with disabilities (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013).

Figure 1

The Theory of Planned Behaviour



Note. Reproduced from Hausenblas et al. (1997)

Attitude

A person's attitude towards or evaluations of a behaviour are informed by the behavioural beliefs of the perceived outcomes or attributes of the behaviour. Holding strong beliefs that a certain behaviour will lead to positively-valued outcomes, may lead to a behaviour being viewed favourably and vice versa (Azjen, 1991). Attitudes are influenced by the social and cultural values held in society. In this case, HR representative's or employer's attitudes towards the employability of people with disability are often negative, due to unfavourable beliefs around the candidate's ability to perform necessary job functions, perceived costs or stereotyped characteristics (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013). Gröschl's (2005) qualitative research in the hotel industry, found that some employers held discriminatory, negative beliefs around the poor aesthetic of someone with a disability and the negative impact this could have on their hotel's image. Negative attitudes can bias hiring decisions as potential employers may believe that hiring candidates with disabilities will have negative consequences and subsequently do not engage in the behaviour (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013).

Subjective Norms

Peoples' and groups' normative beliefs inform the subjective norms they subscribe to, which influence their behaviour (Azjen, 1991). Subjective norms are cultivated based on significant others' approval or disapproval of certain behaviours, the person's motivation to comply with the expected norms of behaviour, the relative social pressure associated with a behaviour or due to legislation that encourages certain behaviours (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). Thus, based on HR personnel's perceived norm and support received in hiring a person with a disability, they may be willing or unwilling to engage in hiring behaviours (Fraser et al., 2011). South African research shows that there is a discrepancy between organisational subjective norms and those stipulated by legislation regarding reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). Thus, subjective norms and subsequent behaviours are not necessarily regulated by labour laws and subsequently, HR personnel and

employers are unlikely to engage in unfavourable hiring practices toward people with disabilities (Akbar & Wissik, 2018).

Perceived Behavioural Control

A person's beliefs about their capability to perform a behaviour and the availability of the resources to support the behaviour inform perceptions of behavioural control (Azjen, 1991). Control beliefs arise from the presence or absence of enablers and barriers to certain behaviours, as well as the perceived power or impact that each control factor has in facilitating or inhibiting behaviour (Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2009). Thus, a person may be more likely to hire a candidate with ABI if they have adequate knowledge of the processes involved and organisational support to be able to do so (Fraser, 2011). An individual with little control over their actions due to a lack of required resources is unlikely to engage in the behaviour despite their positive attitude or supportive subjective norms around the behaviour (Han et al., 2010). This may be the case in many South African organisations, where despite the willingness to hire, HR personnel may not have the resources in the form of required knowledge of legislation or reasonable accommodations or may lack the support of their superiors in hiring a candidate with ABI (Akbar & Wissink, 2018).

Intention

Ultimately, TPB can be used to understand employers' attitudes, perceived behavioural control and the subjective norms that influence an intention to hire a person with a disability (Azjen, 1991; Jasper & Waldhart, 2013). Intention is an indication of a person's motivation in their decision to exert effort in performing a behaviour (Azjen, 1985). Thus, it is assumed if intention can be predicted, so can behaviour (Donald et al., 2014). Ultimately, HR personnel's attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control determine whether the representative has the intention to hire a person with an ABI.

The Relevance of TPB

TPB is useful in the employment context for various reasons. Firstly, it accounts for the fact that HR personnel do not always have complete control over the hiring process (Ang et al., 2014). Rather, the process of hiring is also influenced by personal and environmental factors, including negative manager attitudes toward job applicants who are disabled or insufficient hiring policies and workplace accommodation for disabled employees (Ang & Amin, 2015). Secondly, TPB is relatively robust and has been used successfully in various disciplines, such as psychology, health, sociology, marketing and consumer behaviour (Ang & Amin, 2015). Lastly, this model can be used to identify key behavioural, normative and control beliefs affecting HR personnel and employer behaviours. HR personnel or employer's

hiring intention positively predicts hiring behaviours (Azjen, 2006). Therefore, insight into the HR personnel's hiring intent offers useful insight into the employment of people with an ABI (Ang et al., 2014).

Perceptions of Employability of Candidates with an ABI

There is a critical need for the employment of people with ABI in promoting and enhancing their quality of life (Soeker et al., 2012). However, if managers and HR personnel conducting the hiring process hold unfavourable perceptions around the employability of people with ABI, it is unlikely they will hire them. Employability can be understood as a person having the skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes necessary to select and pursue a vocational opportunity that they will be competent and content in (Paadi, 2014). Employability can further refer to whether a candidate can retain their job or be hired in a job they desire (Paadi, 2014). This is important in hiring decisions as well as medico-legal assessment, which is the investigation and reporting of current and future potential for employment and their loss of earnings as a result of their disability (Pryor & Hawkins, 2009).

Perceptions of other's employability are influenced by numerous factors (Luecking, 2011). Across all organisations, hiring is a time consuming and thus expensive endeavour, which requires recruiting, processing, eliminating and selecting applicants (Fernandez-Araroz, 1999). HR personnel do not want to make poor hiring decisions that lead to poor person-job fit and subsequent reduced employee morale and performance, loss of business prospects and increased employee turnover (Durrani & Rajagopal, 2015). Consequently, HR personnel seek employees who are adaptable, adequately qualified and motivated to acquire and maintain competitive advantage and ultimately ensure organisational survival (Van der Heijden, 2002). Such a candidate may save the company money, help the company make money or help the company to be more efficient by accomplishing work to a certain standard (Luecking, 2011). Thus, HR personnel are likely to form perceptions of a candidate's employability based on the candidate's skills, knowledge and personal attributes, such as motivation, performance, reliability and effectiveness (Luecking, 2011). Important in this process is that the HR representative utilises fair hiring practices, particularly as they may be role models for other HR or non-HR employees (Durrani & Rajagopal, 2015). This necessitates a further understanding of HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with disability, particularly ABI (Spirito Dalgin & Bellini, 2008). The remainder of the literature review will focus on the factors that influence HR personnel's perceptions of employability and perpetuate exclusionary or inclusive hiring practices.

Factors Negatively Influencing Perceptions of Employability after an ABI

HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with an ABI are negatively influenced by factors including attitudinal barriers, poor perceptions of employability in comparison to other disability groups, hesitancy around accommodations and lack of skilled and competent candidates.

Attitudinal barriers. Attitudinal barriers are one of the greatest obstacles to achieving equal opportunities and social integration (Bruijn et al., 2012; Wapling & Downie, 2012). It is generally recognised that people's attitudes and perceptions are informed by whether the person has sufficient knowledge of the disability, rather than their being prejudiced themselves (Maja et al., 2011). If people have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of a disability, the implications thereof and subsequent capabilities of the person with the disability, it is likely they will hold inaccurate or negative perceptions of that person (Baker et al., 2018; Soeker, 2016). Two factors influencing employers and HR personnel's perceptions, stigma and poor understanding of ABI, are discussed further.

Stigma. People's misperceptions of brain injury can be detrimental and may lead to stigmatisation, which is characterised as an attribute, label or mark that has been placed on an individual or group of individuals who are perceived as different from the 'norm' (Goffman, 2009). These negative perceptions may lead to a group being marginalised, experiencing unfavourable working conditions or facing social barriers that prohibit their opportunities for employment (Maja et al., 2011). Culler et al. (2011) reported that US employers and HR representatives hold negative perceptions of the term disability, which instils a sense of fear, unpredictability and avoidance behaviours and inhibited hiring behaviours. Further, according to Peck and Kirkbride (2001), US employers may fear employing "damaged goods" (p.74), assuming that people with disabilities may threaten a company's productivity and profitability compared to people without a disability. Employers who hold these perceptions may consciously or unconsciously engage in unfair treatment of people with disabilities (Copeland et al., 2009). A further contributing factor is superstitious cultural beliefs that lead to stigmatisation and suspicion of people with disabilities, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, such as South Africa (Swanepoel & Almec, 2008). For instance, in South Africa, traditional healers ascribe hearing problems to being caused by bewitchment by ancestral spirits (De Andrade & Ross, 2005) or punishment for past sins (Groce & Kett, 2014). This may have implications for the business as people from some cultures may not want to contract products or services from disabled people (Handojo, 2004). Thus, multiple and intersectional discrimination can intensify attitudinal barriers for people with disability (Bruijn et al., 2012).

People with ABI are particularly vulnerable to being stigmatised based on their disability. Linden and Boylan (2010) found the general public of Northern Ireland tended to use negative labels to describe TBI survivors, including aggressive, dependent and unhappy. Similarly, McLellan et al. (2010) found that communities in America have negative attitudes toward people with brain injuries and associate them with undesirable characteristics such as being less mature, intelligent, adaptable, polite and employable than those without a brain injury. Qualitative and quantitative research conducted in South Africa suggests that one of the biggest challenges shared by survivors of brain injury is the stigma that leads to unfair discrimination and entrenched prejudice in communities, structures and systems in society (Barnes & Mercer, 2005; Chembeni & Nkomon, 2017; Gewurtz et al., 2016; Progression, 2020; Susuman et al., 2014).

Poor Understanding of Disability. Employers who have a low level of understanding or knowledge of disability, such as ABI, may be more resistant to the idea of hiring a disabled candidate than those who are more informed (Houtenville & Klargyrou, 2011; Ralph & Derbyshire, 2013; Rudstam et al., 2012; Stergio-Kita et al., 2017). To illustrate, in Kaye et al.'s (2011) research, HR personnel had a lack of awareness about how to manage and accommodate employees with disabilities and were afraid of being 'stuck' with an employee who cannot be disciplined or fired due to risks of a lawsuit (p. 528).

A lack of understanding may stem from HR personnel and employers not being exposed to examples of workers with disabilities who have been successfully employed and accommodated (Kaye et al., 2011). A lack of exposure led them to rely on stereotypes of people with disabilities, which may include their being poor performers and likely to be frequently absent (Kaye et al., 2011). According to Maja et al. (2008), South African employers and employees have limited exposure to people with disability, which influences their negative perceptions of and resistance to employ a candidate with a disability. For instance, according to Ralph and Derbyshire's (2013) research in the United Kingdom, many people are not informed about how recovery from a brain injury may differ from other physical injuries and are often ignorant about the long-term impacts of brain injury, particularly with regards to the cognitive challenges that arise. People holding these perceptions may believe a survivor of brain injury can recover if they try hard enough, perceiving those who do not recover as lazy (Ralph & Derbyshire, 2013). Akbar (2015) found that South African companies did not take time to learn about the condition of employees who had sustained an ABI, subsequently, they were not seen as separate from their disability and their unique strengths and weaknesses were not accounted for. Ignorance

can lead to negative attitudes that have tangible impacts, such as influencing the position offered or whether reasonable accommodations are made for the candidate (Braddock & Bachelder, 1994). This links to the TPB, as employers' attitudes and the subjective norms inform their intent to hire a survivor of brain injury (McDonnall & Lund, 2019).

Hierarchy of Disability. Employers and HR personnel seem to have different perceptions of employability for different groups of people with disabilities (Tøssebro, 2013). Andersson et al.'s (2015) research involved vignettes being presented to Swedish employers of appropriately qualified and competent candidates with different disabilities. The results indicated employers were only weakly interested in employing any candidate with a disability but were more interested in hiring particular disabilities over others. Candidates with a physical disability were most likely to be hired, while those with intellectual, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities were least likely to be hired. Of particular interest in this study is that candidates with ABI were identified as the least employable group (Andersson et al., 2015). Preferences for certain disabilities over others and the unfavourable perceptions held about ABI is supported in the literature (Barr & Bracchitta, 2014; Bricout & Bentley, 2000; Gilbride et al., 2000; Ju et al., 2013; Khalema & Shankar, 2014; Spirito Dalgin & Bellini, 2008). Fevre et al. (2013) demonstrated that employees with an intellectual or emotional disability, such as ABI, experienced 117% more negative treatment in the workplace than people without a disability, while those with a physical disability only experienced 15% more negative treatment. With reference to the TPB, this indicates how negative attitudes around one particular disability may lead to poor intent to hire.

Stigma plays a considerable role in informing this hierarchy. For instance, employers often do not consider applicants with ABI due to their holding preconceived and potentially prejudicial views of the capabilities of the candidate (Hernandez et al., 2000; Luecking, 2011). Arguably, survivors of ABI may experience more intense discrimination in hiring procedures and organisation, which could be explained due to the perceived 'stability' of the injury (Andersson et al., 2015; Schomerus et al., 2012). To illustrate, a person with a physical disability who relies on a wheelchair is unlikely to experience a great change in their disability, their everyday behaviour or their ability to perform tasks. However, this may not be the case for a person with a brain injury, whose condition may progress unpredictably and impact their behaviour and capacity to work consistently (Andersson et al., 2015). Kaye et al. (2011) describe this as the fear of the unknown, as HR personnel reported being afraid of "people with disabilities, afraid of the unknown and also afraid of certain disabilities more than others" (p. 530). Further, employers may be more knowledgeable about physical

abilities and therefore be more interested in hiring a person with this kind of disability. Thus, a lack of information may influence ignorance around various disabilities (Andersson et al., 2015). Therefore, an increasing amount of information and knowledge is needed to help employers and HR personnel to provide more inclusive hiring practices.

Accommodations to Workplace and Job role. According to the EEA and Code of Good Practice, people with disabilities must be reasonably accommodated in the workplace. A reasonable accommodation is defined as, "any modification or adjustment to a job or working environment that will enable a person from a designated group to have reasonable access to, to participate in or advance in employment" (Republic of South Africa, 1998, p.9). This is required to make the organisation 'disability friendly' by identifying barriers unique to a candidate's situation and disability and ensuring they have access to the resources in the organisation (Mitra, 2008; Wordsworth, 2004). Inaccessible environments create physical and institutional barriers to inclusion, participation and access to information and knowledge (Bruijn et al., 2012; Wapling & Downie, 2012). Reasonable accommodations can be made to the physical environment and job role dependent on the sequelae associated with a person's disability. For instance, survivors of ABI may not always require accommodations to the workplace, but often require adaption to the job role through reassignment of certain functions, adjusted office hours and the provision of specialised supervision, training and support (Republic of South Africa, 2002; Wordsworth, 2004). On the other hand, if a person's ABI leads to physical symptoms there may be considerable challenges hindering their return to work or finding work, particularly if work is manual labour, which often does not have transferrable skills. This may be an issue as it may not be possible to create a modified version of their job (Chang et al., 2011). Reluctance to make reasonable accommodations will be further explored regarding a lack of knowledge around what constitutes reasonable accommodations and perceived cost implications

Lack of Knowledge of Reasonable Accommodations. There is a dearth of knowledge, experience or established practices that guide employers and HR personnel in making their workplace more inclusive. In Kaye et al.'s (2011) research on factors influencing HR professionals and managers' choices to hire, retain and accommodate candidates with disabilities, demonstrated that incomplete knowledge of the law may mean employers are not confident hiring people with disabilities. According to Gewurtz's (2016) systematic review, employers may have a pervasive lack of knowledge concerning the accommodations in the workplace and hiring process as demarcated by the law. Similarly, Akbar's (2015) research indicates that there is inconsistency in the overarching policies and regulations around

employing and incorporating ABI sufferers into South African organisations. Unfavourable hiring intentions and inconsistent policies in South Africa leads to knowledge gaps as most organisations do not have the necessary HR policies and procedures to assist disabled individuals, particularly not a person with an ABI (Chan et al., 2010; Akbar & Wissink, 2014). According to the TPB, HR representative's perceived behavioural control is implicated, as they may not feel equipped with the requisite skills to hire, evaluate or manage a person with ABI and subsequently, do not engage in hiring behaviours (Strensrud, 2007).

Perceived Cost Implications. A lack of knowledge about the necessary accommodations leads to apprehension and reluctance to spend money to provide accommodations to people with disability (Gewurtz, 2016). Kaye et al.'s (2011) research with HR professionals and managers indicated that these groups were concerned about the financial and legal risks related to hiring candidates with disabilities. Employers were also concerned about the increased workload on managers, supervisors and HR personnel, who would have to learn more about employer's legal responsibilities, research appropriate accommodations, evaluate costs and benefits of the hire and manage any other unanticipated issues that may arise (Kaye et al., 2011). Jasper and Waldhart's (2013) research indicates that leisure and hospitality employers in the US cite the actual and unknown costs of accommodations as impediments to the hiring of people with disabilities. Specific concerns are held around ABI and resultant issues of absenteeism, conditions that interrupt workplace routine and the additional costs incurred (Fuerstenberg et al., 2011; Rudstam et al., 2012). These concerns may impact HR personnel and manager's attitudes, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms about people with ABI, which may mean they are unwilling to make provision for these candidates in the workplace (Rudstam et al., 2012; Yeates et al., 2016).

Skilled and Competent Candidates. No matter if disabled or able-bodied, to be successful in a job application, the applicant needs to have the experience and skill required for the job. Unfortunately, due to the disabling nature of an ABI, many people may no longer have the competencies to complete certain work or may not have access to the educational resources required to upskill (Carroll & Coetzee, 2011). In the US, people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than those without a disability, further, they may have lower levels of education and vocational training due to their age at the time of injury or a lack of access (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013). According to Burke et al.'s (2013) systematic review, 72% of US companies cited the nature of their work as too challenging for people with disabilities. A similar situation is present in South Africa as the population of people

with disabilities, including ABI, generally lack adequate qualifications for skilled jobs (Progression, 2020). According to statistics based on a database of over 7000 South African candidates with disabilities, only 23.5% have a Matric or equivalent qualification and only 5.2% have had tertiary education (Progression, 2020). This can be compared to 59% of the general South African population of 25 to 64-year-olds who have an upper secondary education (OECD, 2019). The poor level of skills may be attributed to a history of limited education access and support in South Africa (Wordsworth, 2006). This is an obstacle to employment, as many employers may be willing to employ people with disabilities, but may not do so due to a candidate's inadequate qualifications (Wordsworth, 2006), or because of the nature of the work (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013). Further, employers may incorrectly assume that the candidate was not capable or " [would not] pull his own weight", "can't do the job 100%" or "might not have the same capacity as other workers" (Kaye et al., 2011, p. 529). A further concern is a difficulty in assessing the applicant's ability to perform job tasks and steps that can be taken if the person does not perform as well as other able-bodied workers (Kaye et al., 2011). Therefore, the match between the person's competencies and the job is essential (Gustafsson et al., 2013).

Numerous obstacles exist in the hiring of a person with a disability and more specifically, survivors of an ABI. The TPB is immediately applicable in understanding employer's and HR personnel's perceptions and intention to hire candidates with ABI. The subjective norms and attitudes held by HR personnel may be influenced by a lack of information, knowledge and understanding around ABI, which leads to stigma, negative perceptions and subsequent exclusionary organisational practices (McLellan et al., 2010; Opperman, 2004; Ju et al., 2013). Further, a lack of perceived control over the hiring of and accommodations for the person with ABI may discourage HR practitioners from hiring these candidates (Chang et al., 2011). Based on the empirical literature discussed above, the following hypotheses are posited:

H_1: HR personnel have unfavourable perceptions of the employability of candidates with ABI.

H_2: HR personnel's familiarity with disabilities positively impacts their interest in hiring a person with ABI.

H_3: HR personnel are more interested in hiring candidates with physical or sensory disabilities than a candidate with an ABI.

H_4: Variables of the Theory of Planned Behaviour predict HR personnel's intent to hire a candidate with an ABI.

Factors that Improve Perceptions of Employability after an ABI

Increasingly, more research is presenting findings that some employers hold positive perceptions around hiring people with disabilities (Andersson et al., 2015; Ju et al., 2013; Hernandez et al., 2000). This can be attributed to increased awareness and understanding of disabilities and recognition of the benefits of hiring a person with a disability, such as ABI.

Adequate Understanding of Disability. HR personnel and employers who have access to resources in the form of information and education around various disabilities may engage in more inclusive hiring processes (Gewurtz et al., 2016). Research indicates how employers who had successfully hired people with disabilities were more willing to hire than employers who did not have the same experience (Andersson et al., 2015; Copeland et al., 2009). This suggests that HR personnel and employers who are more informed regarding different disabilities have more accurate and realistic understandings and attitudes toward various disability groups. Subsequently, important stakeholders may support more inclusive hiring processes and offer more employment opportunities for those with disabilities (Gewurtz, 2016). For instance, as employers and HR personnel become cognisant that brain injury does not necessarily imply generalised dysfunction, they may be more willing to identify and accommodate for the individual's strengths and weaknesses, which could involve tailoring job descriptions and tasks to tap into the individual's preserved skills (Andersson et all., 2015; Gewurtz, 2016).

Training and provision of resources to increase knowledge about disabilities, necessary accommodations and the impact of disability on job role and performance may alter employer's perceptions to include candidates with disabilities as able applicants who, if supported, can perform at the same level as their able-bodied counterparts (Ameri et al., 2018; Chan et al., 2010; Fraser et al., 2011; Wiggett-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). Ultimately, as HR practitioners become more familiar with inclusive hiring procedures, they may cultivate a stronger sense of perceived behavioural control, more favourable attitudes and be influenced by favourable social norms and thus, be more likely to have the intention to engage in the behaviour of hiring a person with an ABI (Ameri et al., 2018).

Recognition of Benefits. Research illustrates the benefits of incorporating differently-abled people. These advantages include an increasingly diverse workforce, return on investment and a sustainable organisation.

Increased Diversity. As diversity becomes increasingly important in the modern organisation, more employers are seeking to create a more favourable culture for people with disabilities (Ju et al., 2013). However, many organisations seem ignorant of the fact that

employing people with disabilities is a way to increase the diversity of their workforce (Luecking, 2011). Researchers cite the numerous benefits of hiring candidates with disabilities, including increasing the number of quality workers, increased profits, reduced cost of onboarding new staff due to already loyal employees and enhanced cultural reputation (Ju et al., 2013; Yin et al., 2014). Diverse organisations tend to have a good organisational culture and satisfied employees who feel their employers recognise their value and are committed to creating and maintaining a sustainable workplace (Hartnett et al., 2011). This influences employees', HR personnel's and employers' subjective norm to be more inclusive of diversity and difference (Azjen, 1991).

Further, recognising and celebrating diversity falls in line with the constitution and legislation in South Africa. According to the Code of Good Practice within the EEA, people with disabilities should be afforded equal opportunities with regards to job opportunities and necessary accommodations within the workplace. Thus, ensuring inclusive and fair hiring procedures will ensure that companies reduce the likelihood of litigation against problematic hiring practices (Lengnick-Hall, 2008). Additionally, in line with B-BBEE legislation, companies may be recognised for their diversity quota and benefit from increased B-BBEE points (Lengnick-Hall, 2008).

Return on Investment. A commonly voiced concern is that hiring and accommodating a person with a disability may incur an extra cost. However, increasingly, employer attitudes are changing to recognise that hiring these candidates may be a worthwhile investment. For instance, employers are beginning to recognise people with disabilities as having sought after characteristics (Gewurtz, 2016). Further, in accommodating disabled employees, other employees receive the message that the employer values the employees and is positive, adaptive and responsive to their needs. Ultimately, this may improve the employee's organisational loyalty and commitment and the organisation's competitive advantage, effectiveness and productivity (Cleveland et al., 1997; Hashim & Wok, 2012; Ju et al., 2013). In the case when training needs to be provided, research has established that people with disabilities are worth the investment as they may be easy to train, generally have a positive attitude to work and often have a low rate of turnover and absenteeism (Hartnett et al., 2011). Thus, it is feasible for South African organisations to see these employees as a worthwhile investment and to make the required accommodations, such as the restructure their job design to suit the needs of ABI survivors, which may lead to the benefits of loyal, committed and satisfied employees (Hashim & Wok, 2014; Hernandez et al., 2008; Lengnick-Hall, 2008).

Organisational Sustainability. Organisations that employ people with disabilities as part of a diverse workforce may be more profitable and sustainable over time. Enhanced organisational culture and reputation as a result of a more inclusive workforce may lead to a "feel and look good" effect for employees and customers (Fredeen et al., 2013, p. 15). For instance, companies with a diverse workforce are likely to have a good reputation with customers, leading to their favouring the company and potentially increasing the company's profitability and sustainability (Maja et al., 2013). Further, employers who tap into larger candidate pools, including people with disability, may cultivate a workforce that is robust, innovative and adaptive (Fredeen et al., 2013). Such an organisation may be attractive to talented, innovative people, which may re-embed employee loyalty and commitment (Hashim & Wok, 2014). Therefore, it should be ensured that HR personnel are offered the necessary support and guidance to steer the hiring behaviours that are favourable to people with disability, in particular those with an ABI. The final hypothesis is presented:

H_5: Once more informed about the realities of an ABI, HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of a person with an ABI change to be more favourable.

While the research concerning employers and HR personnel's attitudes of the employability of disabled individuals is broad, there is an opportunity to better understand the real concerns of those in hiring candidates with disabilities. This is particularly important to consider based on the South African context and the population of survivors of an ABI. This research fills a gap in that it offers a greater understanding of South African HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with an ABI and the factors that may influence these perceptions. Facilitating the integration of people with disabilities, particularly those with ABI, into the workplace requires that HR personnel's and employer's attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are critically examined and if necessary, adapted so that their behaviours and affective reactions toward this group are more inclusive. Deconstructing the perceptions that contribute to barriers to employment and identifying practices to address employer concerns will help people with ABI to participate more fully in the workplace and society. This may improve hiring outcomes and reduce the disparities experienced by people with disabilities as well as informing vocational rehabilitation and more accurate and holistic assessments of the candidate's opportunities to return to work.

Chapter 3: Method

This chapter describes the methodology applied to answer the proposed research questions. Firstly, the research design is discussed and variables are identified and classified according to the research questions. Thereafter, the sampling procedure and procedure of data collection are elaborated on, along with the measures and statistical analysis techniques used. Lastly, the ethical considerations of the research are described.

Research Design

A mixed-methods cross-sectional research design was used as a framework for conducting this descriptive research project (Field, 2013). The most common approach to mixing methods, Triangulation Design, was utilised (Creswell et al., 2009). A concurrent sequence was followed in collecting and analysing the quantitative and qualitative data. Equal emphasis was placed on both methods, with quantitative data being analysed first and the qualitative data second to help explain, or elaborate on the quantitative results.

Whilst it is recognised that the chosen approach is complex due to the required integration of the data, controls were implemented through the thorough planning and design of the closed and open-ended questions to directly relate to each other (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The benefits of this design are that the weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative data are, to an extent, offset by their combined usage and a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem may result. Further, a mixed-method may increase the credibility of findings through the triangulation of different evidence through directly comparing and validating quantitative results with qualitative findings (Creswell et al., 2009).

Quantitative Design

Within the parameters of this design, a quantitative approach allowed for an investigation into perceptions relative to the employability of ABI survivors. This method has the advantages of being flexible, easy to implement and practical (Field, 2013). However, as the quantitative method relies on a correlational design, the study was vulnerable to a large number of threats to internal validity, such as social desirability bias (Field, 2013). This threat to internal validity was controlled for through the anonymity of the study, as answers could not be traced back to individual participants, which may have meant they were more willing to respond honestly (Blanche et al., 2006). Further, the use of cross-sectional research means that only the results for a specific moment in time were considered, which threatens the external validity of the study and restricts the generalisability and applicability of the results beyond a sample of South African HR personnel. Therefore, the researcher employed caution in interpreting so that no causal conclusions were made as a result of this research (Field,

2013). Further, the use of a mixed-methods design offers some degree of triangulation that may counter such threats to external validity (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Qualitative Design

In addition to the above, open-ended items included in the questionnaire were directed at a deeper understanding of the perceptions of employability after an ABI. Including a qualitative approach facilitated the collection of more rich data, as participants could elaborate on their experiences, feelings and perceptions (Blanche et al., 2006). However, this method of data collection can be unreliable, as the external factors impacting participation cannot be controlled for. To minimise any threats to the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher prioritised four characteristics, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility, the activities that make it credible that findings were derived from the data, was established through triangulation of qualitative and quantitative results (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Transferability, the basis for making similarity judgements, and dependability of data representations, were upheld as there is consistency between data collected and the reasonable results reported. Confirmability, the assurance that findings were grounded in the data, was established through the researcher being reflective on the influence of their subjectivity and biases on their interpretations and representation aided by their supervisor. Thus, the results are a reflection of the data, rather than the researcher's construction (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Qualitative data limits the generalisability of the findings and thus, in the reporting of results, the researcher was careful to only apply the findings to this particular sample (Field, 2013).

Classification of Variables

The following variables were statistically analysed.

- Level of familiarity with disability (years' experience in recruitment, close family or friend with disability, number of people with disability hired, number of people with ABI hired): Predictor variable (regarding its impact on perceptions of employability)
- Theory of Planned Behaviour (subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, attitude): Predictor variables (regarding their impact on intent to hire)
- Theory of Planned Behaviour (intent to hire): Criterion variable
- Interest in Hiring (per case study): Criterion variables
- Qualitative questions: Descriptor variable
- Perceptions of employability: Criterion variables
- Changes in perceptions after more information provided: Descriptor variable

Sampling Procedure

A sample refers to a portion of a population of interest (Blanche et al., 2006). This study targeted a sample of HR personnel using non-probability sampling technique, convenience sampling. Although this technique limited the generalisability of the study's findings, due to the scope and time constraints of this research project, as well as the specific inclusion criteria, it was deemed acceptable (Blanche et al., 2006). Further, non-probability sampling meant that a survey could be administered quickly, inexpensively and safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Identified participants were invited to snowball participation amongst colleagues in a similar field of employ.

Participants

A total of 67 participants completed the questionnaire in the research study. No participants gave incomplete responses and thus there was no exclusion due to missing data. No exclusion criteria were set for the length of service in the industry, rather the inclusion criterion for participation in the study was working in an HR function or having some experience in recruitment procedures, therefore all participants met the inclusion criteria

The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 64 years, with the majority of the participants in their late thirties (M= 38.8, SD =14.42). There was an overrepresentation of females in the sample, as is expected from a sample of HR personnel. The majority of participants identified as White, followed by Black, Asian and Coloured subgroups. Participants were predominantly English speaking, followed by Afrikaans and Setswana. Least spoken were Sesotho, IsiXhosa and SiSwati. Interestingly, most of the participants in the study were white females, which may have impacted the results with regards to their perceptions. This is discussed in the limitations section as it may have prominently represented a particular viewpoint of this cohort, rather than that of the general South African population. Participants had a high level of education, with the majority of the participants holding a bachelor's degree or a diploma/certificate and very few participants having gained only a matric certificate. Majority of the participants studied and were employed in the people management and humanities fields, followed by those employed in medical, finance and accounting and marketing fields. The sample had a range of experience, with most of the participants having more than 5 years of experience in recruitment. Please see Table 1 below.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables

Baseline characteristic		Frequency	Percent
		n	%
Gender	Female	52	77.6
	Male	15	22.4
Home language	English	41	61.2
	Afrikaans	5	7.5
	Setswana	5	7.5
	IsiZulu	4	6
	Sepedi	3	4.5
	Xitsonga	3	4.5
	IsiXhosa	1	1.5
	Sesotho	1	1.5
	SiSwati	1	1.5
	Other	3	4.5
Race	White	41	61.2
	Black	18	26,9
	Asian	5	7.5
	Coloured	3	4.5
Highest education	Bachelor's Degree	29	43.3
	Diploma/ certificate	17	25.4
	Master's degree	10	14.9
	Advanced certificate	7	10.4
	Matric certificate	3	4.5
	PhD	1	1.5
Current occupation	People Management	34	50.7
	Humanities	12	17.9
	Medical	5	7.5
	Accounting and finance	4	6.0
	Marketing	4	6.0
	Engineering	3	4.5
	Education	1	1.5
	Insurance	1	1.5
	Mathematics and statistics	1	1.5
	Project Management	1	1.5
	Aviation	1	1.5
	Retail	1	1.5
Years' experience	Less than 1 year	15	22.4
	1 year	7	10.4
	2 years	7	10.4
	3 years	3	4.5
	4 years	3	4.5
	5 or more years	33	49.3

Note. N=67

Measures

Measuring instruments were selected to elicit information relevant to HR personnel's demographic information, familiarity with disability, their intent to hire, perceptions of employability, their interest in hiring different disability groups and whether perceptions change after the presentation of a success story. The measures used to assess these constructs are discussed in turn below.

Demographic Variables

The following demographic variables were measured; age, gender, race group, home language, level of education and field of study, sector their organisation is involved in, years of experience in recruitment and familiarity with brain injury. Please see Appendix A for measurement instruments.

Non-demographic Variables

Familiarity with Brain Injury. To determine the level of familiarity of the participant with disability and brain injury, questions 10, 12, 13 and 14 in the demographics section were posited. Participants were asked on a dichotomous scale whether anyone in their close circle had a disability, if they had experience hiring someone with a brain injury. Dependent on the answer to the second question, the participant was asked to indicate how many people with disabilities they had involved in the process of hiring, ranging from 0 to 20+. Last, participants were asked to indicate which disability category the applicants fell into, including physically challenged, sensory disability, psychiatric disability, ABI, chronic illness, congenital condition or another form of disability. Please see Appendix A.

Theory of Planned Behaviour. Fraser et al. (2011) investigated similar constructs to the current study and thus, their items were modified and incorporated in the present survey to elicit data relevant to the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The resultant scale comprised fifteen items representative of four independent constructs, namely intent to hire, attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Responses to these items were given on a 7-point Likert scale, each with unique anchors. Prior to the presentation of scale items and to ensure universal understanding, participants were presented with a brief introductory summary of acquired brain injury (please see Appendix A). Participants were instructed to answer the questions assuming that a high functioning person with an ABI had applied for a position at their company. First, subjective norms were measured using a Likert-scale, (1) *Very unlikely* to (7) *Very likely*, based on the likelihood of five stakeholders (CEO, co-workers, senior management, supervisors and government agencies) approving of their hiring decision. This subscale had an acceptable reliability in previous research (α=.77) (Fraser et al., 2011). Secondly, perceived behavioural control was measured in response to participant's

perceived degree of control over the hiring of a person with ABI. For instance, “If you wanted to, could you hire a high functioning person with an ABI?” (Item 1). This was measured through three items on a Likert-scale with unique anchors. According to Fraser et al. (2011), the scale had an excellent reliability (α=.81). Thirdly, intent to hire was measured on a Likert-type scale with anchors (1) *Extremely unlikely* to (7) *Extremely likely* for two of the three items. The third item, “To what extent is your company equipped with the facilities to accommodate a high functioning person with ABI?” was answered on a Likert-type scale with anchors (1) *Extremely unequipped* to (7) *Extremely equipped.* Based on McDonnall & Lund (2019) validation study, internal consistency reliability for the items was high (α=.91). Lastly, four attitudes toward hiring a person with ABI was measured using a bi-polar adjective scale; *Not at all challenging- Very challenging, Desirable- Undesirable, Good- Bad* and *Wise- Foolish* in response to the question “If in the next six months, I hired a high functioning applicant with an ABI, I believe that the result of hiring would be”. The measure had an excellent internal consistency reliability (α=.88) (Fraser et al., 2011). Each subscale had an appropriate reliability in previous research, however, there is no evidence of this scale being used in South Africa and so the scale is implemented with caution.

Case Study. Three case studies were compiled to elicit and compare the HR personnel’s perceptions of three types of disabilities. Compilation of the case studies was based on Andersson et al.’s (2015) data collection method, where vignettes of different disabilities were presented to potential employers. Three case studies independently describe three candidates with disability (visual impairment, high-functioning ABI and physical disability). These descriptions were based on generalised descriptions of the disabilities, which may be problematic, but were necessary to compare participant’s answers (Andersson et al., 2015). The case studies were kept as similar as possible, to ensure the applicants had comparable qualifications and competencies for the job and that their disability had similar effects on their work situation. It was noted that the person in the description was unique with different access to resources, opportunities and needs. The job description was the same for each of the candidates and the same questions were asked after each case study (please see Appendix A). Three questions focused on employer’s interest in hiring the candidate and were rated on a 7-item Likert scale (1) *Not at all interested* to (7) *Very interested*. This measure was shown to have acceptable psychometric properties (Andersson et al., 2015). Additionally, participants were asked, “How interested would you be in hiring this candidate if you had the necessary resources to support them?”, which was answered on a 7-item Likert scale ranging from (1) *Not at all interested* to (7) *Very interested*. Lastly, two qualitative

questions were asked after each case study, in an open-ended question format. These questions were, “What would the benefits be if you hired this applicant?” and “What problems or barriers might arise in the hiring of this applicant?”. As this was a tailored case study question, there is no evidence of it having been used in South Africa and so was interpreted with caution.

Adapted-Perceptions of Employability Index. The original Perceived Employability Index (PEI) was developed to investigate the relationship between perceived employability and subsequent health (Berntson & Marklund, 2007). An adapted version of this measure was used to quantify HR personnel’s perceptions of the employability of the individual with an ABI. The adapted version used in this study is made up of six statements that are related to perceived skills, experience, network, personal traits, knowledge of the labour market and perceptions of difficulties coping with the demands of the workplace. Participants were required to respond on a 5-point Likert scale, (1) *Do not agree at all* to (5) *Agree entirely*. An example of a statement is, “People who have an ABI have the competence that is sought-after in the labour market” (Item 1). The original scale’s internal reliability was assessed and found to be excellent (α=.88) (Berntson & Marklund, 2007). However, given the adapted nature of the scale and the lack of evidence of the use of this scale in a South African context, the scale was implemented with some caution. Please see Appendix A.

Change in Perceptions. The study aimed to investigate whether participants perceptions of employability would change after receiving a ‘success’ story of a group of people with ABI. A picture of a quilt project that a team of individuals with ABI completed at a local rehabilitation centre, Headway, was given to participants, together with a write up that demonstrated how individuals with an ABI can acquire new skills, show perseverance and teamwork skills. Participants were asked a closed-ended question concerning whether this information would change any of their previous responses. Thereafter, an open-ended question was presented in offering them an opportunity as to why this may be. Please see Appendix A.

Data Collection

Data Collection Procedure

A systematic procedure was followed to avoid foreseen challenges to the research process and ensure the research adhered to ethical considerations. Ethical clearance for the study was approved by the University of the Witwatersrand Human Ethics Research Committee prior to data collection (Protocol number MAORG/20/014) (see Artefact B1 in Appendix B). In addition, permission was granted by the university registrar and coordinator

of Wits Plus to gain access to working students registered for part-time evening classes with Wits Plus for Bachelor of Arts for the World of Work, which includes a commerce major (HR/ Management/ Marketing). Surveys were administered online to ensure efficient survey distribution and to minimise data capturing errors.

Initial contact with relevant participants was initiated via an e-mail disseminated to the Wits Plus students through the University of Witwatersrand's student online platform, SAKAI (please see Artefact B2 in Appendix B). The email clearly stipulated that participants needed to have experience in recruitment and provided information relevant to the research question and the rights of the participant, as well as providing a link to the Google form where the survey could be administered. Selecting the link provided access to the informed consent form. Once informed consent was given, the participant had access to the survey which investigated their perceptions of the employability of ABI survivors. The survey comprised of six sections, which required approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. The use of a survey gave participants the freedom to complete the survey in their own time. Wits Plus students were encouraged to share the link widely amongst their colleagues. As the sampling strategy was non-probability in nature, generalisations to the greater population must be made with caution (Whitley & Ball, 2002).

Once data was collected, it was cleaned and coded by the researcher, using the Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26. Thereafter, the researcher conducted statistical analyses to address the study's research questions.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was interpreted using quantitative and descriptive methods, which allow the researcher to assess the research questions. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis, as the research obtained a count of similar ideas, rather than exploring a particular phenomenon or event in depth. Further, a deductive form of analysis was used, as no new information emerged from the analysis (Field, 2013). Quotes were included to wholly capture the identified themes (Kawulich & Holland, 2012). Quantitative data were also analysed. First, based on the results of the Adapted-PEI, the researcher could quantify HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with ABI. Further, the factors reinforcing HR personnel's perceptions of employability was established based on the thematic analysis of qualitative data. A theoretical thematic analysis was utilised, as the researcher was concerned with addressing specific research questions and analysed the data with these in mind (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Thus, each segment of the data that was

relevant or captured an area of interest was used to form codes and informed emergent themes. These were reviewed, defined and written up (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Second, the researcher split participants into various demographic groups (familiarity with brain injury, years of experience in recruitment, number of disabilities hired and number of people with ABI) and used correlations to determine whether familiarity with brain injury influenced perceptions of employability.

Third, the different groups' interest in hiring candidates from the case study was computed using a paired sample's t-test, to determine whether differences in groups affected HR personnel's perceptions of the potential candidate's employability.

Fourth, the HR personnel's attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control were investigated to see if the variables predicted their intention to hire a person with an ABI specifically. Hierarchical multiple regression was informed by Fraser et al.'s (2011) study where subjective norm accounted for the greatest proportion of variance, followed by attitude and perceived behaviour control. G-power software was used to determine the power, based on the significance criteria, sample size and effect size to have an expectation that 80% of random samples from the sample would represent a significant relationship, if there was one in the population. A power analysis was used to determine that the appropriate sample size required for the research study would be 68. As 67 samples were taken, statistics that were not sensitive to sample size were used.

Lastly, qualitative analysis was be used to investigate whether HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with ABI change upon further information and why this may or may not be so.

Ethical Considerations

The three pillars of ethical research, autonomy, justice, beneficence and maleficence were used as foundations in designing the research. Participants are assumed to be able to speak English and therefore, this was the language of investigation. Autonomy implies the participant's right to determine their own life course (McLeod, 2013). The researcher maintained this principle by noting that there would be no risks or benefits to the participants due to their participation in the research and that the participants were free to agree to participate or decline participation in the research (McLeod, 2013). Before commencing the data collection, participants were be required to read through the study's purpose, their rights to anonymity and the voluntary nature of the study. Thereafter, participants were asked to give their informed consent to participate. The ethical principle of justice was upheld by ensuring that the benefits and burdens of the research were equitably allocated (MacLeod,

2013). Beneficence, the promotion of the welfare of the individuals and maleficence, ensuring there is no harm to the participants, was upheld (McLeod, 2013). The participants were not a vulnerable population and could give informed consent and understand any risks of the research, therefore, there was no risk to their partaking in the research. As the procedure involves filling out a questionnaire, it was a low-risk study and was unlikely to cause any harm to the participants. Respect for confidentiality and anonymity was ensured as the participant's identity could not be linked with their answers. To do this, participants were not asked for any identifying information and their information was stored on a password-protected computer. Thus, participants' data could be kept anonymous and secure, as there was no need for the researcher to ask their name to identify them.

Chapter 4: Results

The following chapter will discuss the results obtained from the statistical and thematic analyses. It should be noted that a pilot study was not conducted in this study, due to time constraints. These analyses include reliability and construct validity analyses for each scale, descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing. In relation to the hypotheses, first Pearson's correlation coefficient test was conducted regarding familiarity of brain injury and perceptions of employability. Secondly, a paired t-test was conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between the interest in hiring candidates with different disabilities. Third, multiple regression was conducted to determine if HR personnel's attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms predicted their intent to hire. Lastly, thematic analysis took place in gaining a deeper understanding of participant's experiences with people with disability, in particular ABI. Further elaboration and interpretation of the results will be provided in the discussion chapter.

Reliability and Validity Analysis

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis drawing on Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the corrected item-total correlation was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the Theory of Planned Behaviour items, Adapted-Perceived Employability Index and case study questions. Notably, the demographic data, change in perceptions and qualitative data obtained in this study was not subjected to a reliability analysis as this data was not obtained using a scale, but single closed- and open-item questions developed explicitly for this study. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency or the extent to which each item on a scale measures the same underlying construct (Field, 2013). Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1, where 1 demonstrates absolute internal consistency. According to Kline (1999), scales are reliable if the Cronbach alpha measurement is .7 or above. However, Hair et al. (2006) propose that an alpha coefficient of above .6 is acceptable if the measure is preliminary and if there are very few items in the scale. This approach was adopted in the study. Further, the corrected item-total correlation measures the correlation between an item and the rest of the items on a scale. Items with low corrected item-total correlation signify that the item may reliably measure the same underlying construct as those measured by other scale items. Based on Field's (2013) recommendation only items with correlations above .30 should be retained. The reliability analysis for each scale is outlined below.

Theory of Planned Behaviour. This questionnaire was broken into 4 subsections, namely attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and intentions. The 5-item

Subjective Norms subsection revealed an excellent reliability of .89 (Nunnally, 1978). Item 5, "To what extent will the government approve of your hiring a person with ABI", seemed to slightly lower the reliability of the scale, however, the item had suitable corrected item-total correlations that indicate that the items were sufficiently correlated with each other and thus no items were omitted. The Perceived Behavioural Control subscale had an unacceptable reliability of .54. This is attributed to item two, "To what extent is the hiring of a high functioning person with ABI under your control?", which had a very low corrected item-total correlation (.25) (see Table C2 in Appendix C). This item was removed and the subsequent alpha coefficient was more acceptable at .66 (Hair et al., 2006) and the corrected-item total correlations were acceptable. It is noted that this has implications for the validity of the TPB scale and whether it is sufficient to represent the construct of interest, however, due to the adequate mean inter-item correlation (.56), it was deemed acceptable to proceed with this scale (Field, 2013). The Attitude subscale had an acceptable reliability of .7. However, if item 1, "If you hired a high functioning person with ABI in the next 6 months it would be challenging" was removed, the reliability would increase (see Table C3 in Appendix C). Further, as this item had a very low corrected item-total correlation, it was removed from the analysis. The resultant three-item scale had an acceptable and improved reliability of .78 and each item had acceptable item total-correlations. Lastly, the Intentions subscale had an acceptable reliability of .73. If item 1, "Are your offices equipped to support a high functioning person with ABI" was removed, the reliability would increase. However, this item had an acceptable corrected item-total correlation and thus was not omitted. Please see Table C1- C3 in Appendix C for all reliability statistics.

Case study. There were 3 case-studies, each consisting of 4 quantitative items and 2 qualitative items. Only the reliability of the quantitative items can be measured and discussed in this section. The sensory disability (α=.85), ABI (α=.92) and physical disability (α=.81) subscales all had excellent reliability. However, on each subscale, item 3, "How interested do you think other employers would be in hiring this candidate" seems to have been a problem and its removal would increase the scales' reliability. However, all items had suitable corrected item-total correlations and thus were not omitted. Please see Table C1.

Adapted-Perceived Employability Index. The 6-item questionnaire had acceptable reliability of .71. However, item 6," People with an ABI may find it difficult to cope with the demands of the workplace (e.g. emotionality, fatigue)" had a very low corrected item-total correlation, which indicates that it does not correlate well with the overall scale (see Table C4

in Appendix C). This item was removed and the reliability of the scale increased to an acceptable .73. Subsequently, all items had acceptable corrected item-total correlations. Please see Table C1 and C4 in Appendix C.

Validity Analysis

To test the construct validity or goodness of fit of the scales, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was implemented on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, each of the Case Studies and the Adapted-Perceived Employability Index (Field, 2013). EFA was conducted to determine the underlying structure of the scales and whether the scales measure what they are theoretically intended to measure (Field, 2013). Thereafter, CFA was completed to verify the underlying structure determined using EFA (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). A description of EFA and CFA will be given before presenting the results for each scale. The entire data sample was screened prior to the analysis to ensure that there were no assumption violations. The data were normally distributed based on the Q-Q Plots and was measured on an interval scale (Field, 2013).

Exploratory Factor Analysis. EFA allows for the interrelationships of items to be analysed and the underlying factor structure of a construct to be determined. EFA aims to reduce the number of scale items into a smaller set of factors while minimising the amount of information lost (Hair et al., 2014). Thus, it is possible to establish a hypothesis regarding the model structure and the factors that underlie sets of items. The most commonly used method to estimate parameters in models is principal component analysis (PCA) and principal factors analysis (PAF). These methods only allow for conclusions to be made relevant to the sample collected, thus no generalisations of the results can be achieved (Field, 2013). PAF was selected to extract factors as it derives a mathematical model through which factors are estimated. This suits the purpose of the analysis, which is to determine the underlying structure of the construct. PAF was preferred over PCA, as PCA cannot determine the underlying factor structure as it only decomposes the data into a set of linear variates (Dunteman, 1989).

An oblique rotation was adopted to aid in interpreting the factor structure. Oblique rotation was chosen as there are existing high correlations between items on all three of the scales of interest. Further, Field (2013) argues that oblique rotations are more suitable for naturalistic data generated from psychological constructs. Direct Oblimin was chosen over Promax as the method of factor rotation, as Promax was designed for very large data sets (Field, 2013).

Before initiating the EFA, two key assumptions needed to be assessed, particularly due to the small sample size. Firstly, the data must be adequately distributed, which is determined by assessing the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score. A score above .50 is acceptable and values closer to 1 indicate a more compact pattern of correlates and factor analysis to produce distinct and reliable factors (Field, 2013). Secondly, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity must be significant to indicate if the items in each scale correlate with each other sufficiently (Bartlett, 1954). A significant test statistic ($p < .05$) would indicate that the overall item correlations on the scale are significantly different from zero (Bartlett, 1950).

The following recommendations were implemented in interpreting the factor structure. First, Kaiser's (1970) criterion indicates that only components with eigenvalues greater than 1 can be considered significant and should be retained. Second, Field (2013) recommends only interpreting factor loadings that have an absolute value of greater than 0.4.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. A confirmatory approach, drawing on CFA, can be used to assess how much of the covariance between items is captured by the hypothesised factor structure, or the model's goodness of fit (Hooper et al., 2008). In determining the fit between the sample covariance matrix and estimated population covariance matrices, the Chi-square goodness of fit test can be used as a key indicator. The Chi-square goodness of fit test shows that a good model fit is achieved when there is a non-significant χ^2. Good model fit refers to whether the covariance matrix derived from the model represents the population covariance (Alavi et al., 2020). A non-significant test result suggests poor fit in that there is no difference between the measurement and structural model. Chi-square is generally used as an absolute fit index, with a low chi-square value relative to the degrees of freedom and a higher p-value indicating better model fit (Alavi et al., 2020). However, this indicator is affected by small sample sizes as the computed χ^2 may not be distributed adequately, leading to inaccurate probability levels (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Subsequently, this statistic can only be interpreted to the degree to which the model is discrepant (Alavi et al., 2020).

General survey.

Theory of Planned Behaviour. EFA was conducted on the remaining 13-items of the TPB scale. The KMO measure indicated that the sample was adequate for analysis as KMO= .82, which is 'great' according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999). This is confirmed as all KMO values in the anti-image correlation matrix for individual items were above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2013). Bartlett's Test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2(78) = 553.82$, $p < .001$) and indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for

PAF. Further, based on examinations of the correlation matrix, the items in the TPB are reasonably correlated and none of the correlation coefficients was excessively large. Furthermore, multicollinearity was checked by analysing the determinant of the correlation matrix, which was greater than .000001 (Field, 2013). Thus, there is no need to eliminate any items. Therefore, all assumptions were met and PAF was deemed an appropriate analysis (Field, 2013).

Three factors emerged with eigenvalues higher than Kaiser's (1970) criterion of 1, which cumulatively explained 69.1% of the total variance in the model. Please see Table D1-D2 in Appendix D for eigenvalues and factor loadings. The first factor had an eigenvalue of 6.07, which explained 46.7% of the total variance. The second factor had an eigenvalue of 1.74 and explained 13.42% of the total variance. The third factor had an eigenvalue of 1.17 and explained 8.98% of the total variance. The scree plot was ambiguous, as inflexions justified the retention of 2 or 3 factors. It was decided to retain 3 factors, due to the convergence of the scree plot and Kaiser's (1970) criterion on this value. Factor loadings suggest that factor 1 is Subjective Norms, factor 2 is Attitude and that factor 3 is a new factor, which after careful consideration was labelled "Perceived Freedom of Intentional Choice" (PFIC). There was no cross-loading present. Counter to theory, this finding suggests that in this context, the outcome variable is PFIC rather than Intention, which is predicted by the two input factors, subjective norms and attitude.

The CFA revealed that the three-dimensional model of TPB showed a concerning fit, as the χ^2 was significant ($\chi^2(42) = 71.59$, $p = .003$). However, this can be attributed to the test being sensitive to sample size and therefore, may be inaccurate for this model (Field, 2013). Thus, it is assumed that this model was a reasonable fit. Further, the reliability of the new outcome variable, PFIC was calculated and determined to be good ($\alpha = .82$) and all items had acceptable corrected item-total correlations.

Case Study. The CFA was determined separately for each case study. The KMO measure was .78 for sensory disability, .79 for ABI and .72 for physical disability, which Hutcheson & Sofroniou (1999) describe as good. Further, all KMO values in the anti-image correlation matrix for individual items in all three case studies were above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2013). Bartlett's Test of sphericity was significant for sensory disability ($\chi^2(6) = 135.66$, $p < .001$), ABI ($\chi^2(6) = 258{,}66$, $p < .001$) and physical disability ($\chi^2(6) = 143.41$, $p < .001$), which indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for PAF. Further, the questions in the TPB correlate reasonably well with others, without any of

the correlation coefficients being excessively large. Furthermore, no multicollinearity was present based on the determinant (Field, 2013). Thus, there was no need to eliminate any questions from the case study and PAF was run (Field, 2013).

Only one factor was extracted in each of the case studies, which was termed to be 'Interest in Hiring'. Please see Table D3-D5 Appendix D for eigenvalues and factor loadings. For sensory disability, Interest in Hiring had an Eigenvalue of 2.79 and explained 69.78% of the variance in the model. Interest in Hiring in the ABI case study had an Eigenvalue of 3.28 and explained 82.01% of the variance in the model. Lastly, Interest in Hiring in the physical disability case study had an Eigenvalue of 2.68 and explained 67% of the variance in the model. The other factors had eigenvalues of less than 1 and did not explain much additional variance. The items loaded sufficiently onto a single factor, with loadings above .4. The unidimensional model in each of the case studies was confirmed by the respective Scree Plots. Further, as there was only one factor identified, there was no cross-loading. Thus, one factor, Interest in Hiring, was consistently measured across the case studies.

The CFA indicated that the unidimensional model of Interest to Hire showed reasonable fit for sensory disability ($\chi^2(2) = .476$, $p = .79$), ABI ($\chi^2(2) = 4.34$, $p = .12$), and physical disability ($\chi^2(2) = 4.37$, $p = .12$). Thus, it is assumed that the model found in the data is a good fit with the theory.

Adapted-Perceived Employability Index. The assumptions were met, as the KMO measure was .75, which is 'good' (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999) and Bartlett's Test was significant ($\chi^2(10) = 67.63$, $p < .001$). All KMO values for individual items were above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2013). Further, the questions in the Adapted-PEI correlate reasonably well with others and none of the correlation coefficients was excessively large. Furthermore, no multicollinearity was present (Field, 2013). Thus, there is no need to eliminate any questions. Therefore, PAF could be implemented.

One factor emerged with an eigenvalue of 2.45, which explained 48.95% of the total variance. The other factors had eigenvalues of less than one and did not explain much additional variance (see Table D6 in Appendix D). The items loaded sufficiently onto the single factor, with loadings above .4. The scree plot offered a similar finding. This result falls in line with what was expected from the theory, factor loadings suggest that this factor is 'Perceived Employability' of candidates with ABI. As there was only one factor, there was no cross-loading. Thus, construct validity was upheld for the Adapted-PEI in the South African context.

The CFA indicated that the unidimensional model of Interest to Hire showed reasonable fit for Perceived Employability ($\chi^2(5) = 7.06$, $p = .216$). Thus, it seems that the model of the adapted-PEI is a good fit with the theoretical structure.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were run to determine the minimum and maximum scores, means, standard deviations and the number of participants for the variables of interest. The mean for each variable was compared to the corresponding midpoint of the variable for interpretation. Mean scores that were greater than the variable midpoint illustrated higher levels of the variable of interest being reported in the sample. Mean scores that were lower than the variable midpoint indicated lower levels of the variable being reported in the sample. Please see Appendix E for all descriptive statistics.

The items of the Theory of Planned Behaviour indicated that most participants seemed to hold slightly positive views toward people with an ABI. Positive Subjective Norms scores indicated that participants may be surrounded by people who may slightly support the hiring of people with ABI. Participant's attitudes seemed to be neutral to slightly favourable in terms of hiring people with ABI. The new outcome variable, PFIC, indicated that participants had positive intentions to hire and relatively positive feelings of perceived behavioural control of hiring people with an ABI. The standard deviation of the results was relatively normal, suggesting that the scores for these scales clustered around the mean of the scale, indicating that most people reported similar subjective norms, attitude and PFIC.

The three case studies indicated that there were differences in HR personnel's willingness to hire people with different disabilities. Participants seemed to be most interested in hiring people with a physical disability, but were less interested in hiring people with a sensory disability and least interested in hiring a candidate with an ABI. The standard deviations of all three case study results were relatively low, which suggests that all participants had similar answers and that there was little disagreement in terms of participants' interest in hiring people with different disabilities.

Based on the Adapted-PEI, people seemed to hold neutral to very slightly positive perceptions of the employability of a person with an ABI. The standard deviation of the Adapted-PEI is relatively low, suggesting that the scores for these scales clustered around the mean of the scale, thus it is assumed that many of the participants had similar perceptions of the employability of people with an ABI.

Most of the participants did not have a close family member or friend who was disabled. Further, on average, participants had some experience in recruitment. This measure

had a high standard deviation, which can be understood in light of the large range of experience in the sample. Very few people had experience hiring people with disability, as on average they had hired 1 to 2 disabled people in their careers. Of those who had hired a person with a disability, most fell into the category of physically challenged, sensory disability and chronic illness. Far less hired were people with congenital conditions, psychiatric disabilities and people with an ABI.

Results Relating to the Hypothesis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, Paired-Sample T-Tests and Multiple Regression, as well as qualitative analyses, were used to explore the hypotheses.

***H_1: HR Personnel have Unfavourable Perceptions of the Employability of Candidates with ABI*.**

Based on the descriptive statistics of the Adapted-PEI, the following deductions could be made. HR personnel generally had neutral to very slightly positive perceptions of the employability of candidates with ABI. They agreed most with the statement people with ABI have the competence that is sought after in the labour market (M= 3.22, SD= 1.09). HR personnel agreed slightly less with the statement that people with ABI have the experience that is in demand on the labour market (M=2.85; SD= 1.05) and that they know of other organisations that may offer them employment (M=2.7, SD= 0.882). HR personnel were unsure that people with ABI have personal qualities that make it easier for them to get a better or equivalent job (M=2.63, SD=1.2) or a contact network that they can use to get a better or equivalent job (M=2.57, SD=1).

In analysing the written data in response to the open questions, the following themes arose around the benefits and challenges of hiring people with disabilities. The analysis was conducted using a theoretical thematic analysis technique as this research addresses specific research questions (Braun & Clark, 2006). The common themes across all three disabilities are identified, then disability-specific themes are elaborated on. Across the three categories of disabilities, the following common benefits were noted.

Theme 1: Benefits of Hiring a Person with a Disability.

Subtheme: Candidate's Disposition. It was commonly noted that all three candidates in the case study were qualified, experienced and had the necessary skills to complete the job. The fact that the candidates were motivated and seemed to have a cheerful disposition seemed to make them more appealing to participants. Further, the participants seemed to be impressed by each candidates' good work ethic. However, participants were more likely to

comment on the candidates with physical and sensory disability's disposition than on the candidate with ABI's disposition.

Subtheme: Candidate's Loyalty. Many participants felt that candidates were likely to be grateful to the company for employing them, knowing that many companies could be opposed to hiring a person with a disability. This indicates that HR personnel were aware that candidates with disability were likely to face discrimination in hiring decisions. If hired, participants noted how these candidates were likely to be loyal, satisfied, hardworking, dedicated and determined to succeed in their jobs. Further, participants felt that the candidates would be willing to go 'over and above' their job description, which was appealing to the candidates.

Subtheme: Benefits to Company Image: B-BBEE and Humanitarian. Participants expressed the view that the image of the company was likely to be enhanced if a disabled employee was hired. Companies that hire people with disability were seen to cultivate an inclusive, non-discriminatory and caring culture that offers equal opportunities to all. Subsequently, companies may enjoy the benefits of enhanced image and broadened labour base, which may inspire other organisations to follow in their suit, effectively normalising the employment of people with disabilities and changing perceptions of how work is done. Further benefits included an improved B-BBEE scorecard as hiring these candidates would improve the company's rankings due to a more integrated headcount. All three candidates were females of colour, previously disadvantaged and disabled. Thus, if hired, this would contribute positively to the company's B-BBEE scores. It is noteworthy that this was the only inclusive practice legislation that participants referred to.

Further, many participants noted the humanitarian aspect of hiring a person with disability due to their feeling good about offering an opportunity to someone "less fortunate", who may not have found employment otherwise. HR personnel were clearly aware of organisation's resistance to hiring candidates with disability, particularly in the tough job market currently found in South Africa. They noted that hiring a person with a disability in a caring and supportive environment offered the potential for personal growth, uplifting the candidate's self-worth and general wellbeing. This was particularly noted regarding the candidate with ABI, which may result in a reduction in their symptoms. Participants also noted that the candidate would benefit from social upliftment, career progression and growth offered in an employment situation. Positively impacting a person's life in this way was noted to lead to a feeling of personal gratification or "feel-good factor". Further, participants reported feeling empathy with the candidate. Further, importantly, it could lead to the

integration of ‘other’ into mainstream organisations, which may become more supportive and inclusive of difference. Participants noted the effect not only on the individual, but the opportunity of “supporting the community as a whole”.

Subtheme: Learn from the Candidate. Candidates with disability were recognised as having diverse experiences and perspectives on problems and the world. Participants expressed the view that organisations may benefit from the opportunity to learn from the candidates so to incorporate their diverse viewpoints and innovative ideas into their strategies, decisions and interactions with their clients.

Further, other able-bodied employees in the organisation may benefit from a “reality check” of their problems relative to a person with disability. Able-bodied employees may be inspired by the disabled candidate’s determination and positive attitude. This source of motivation was identified to potentially inspire better teamwork and engagement in the organisation. Participants identified the contribution of people with disabilities as valuable, which could potentially improve company culture and be a point of competitive advantage.

Lastly, participants commonly noted how incorporating a person with a disability into the workforce allows for other employees to be educated about their conditions and the capabilities of people with a disability. Increased exposure was thought to change non-HR employee’s perceptions of disability.

Theme 2: Disadvantages of Hiring a Person with a Disability.

Subtheme: Too Little Demand. Participants commonly referred to the many able-bodied and unemployed people in South Africa with the same skill set, who were likely to be favoured over a candidate with a disability. Thus, in the current economic climate, combined with South Africa’s high unemployment rate, participants felt that there wasn’t enough demand or capacity to hire people with disabilities.

Subtheme: Discrimination in the Workplace. It was commonly noted that the discrimination and stigma of staff and colleagues would be a challenge to overcome for candidates of all disabilities. One participant perceived there to be a challenge around, “The overcoming of the staff’s perception that the applicant may not be able to fulfil their duties and that they may be a burden”. Another noted that it would be necessary to “break the stigma”. Concerns were expressed regarding non-HR employee’s tolerance and patience with the candidate, which may impact the person’s ability to complete their role in a team. For instance, a participant noted that it would be a challenge “to get people in the organisation to see someone [who is disabled] as a person who still has full functioning of her mental faculties and talk to her as a real person”. Common consequences of a lack of acceptance

were the exclusion from the team and team activities, increased interpersonal frustration and negative emotional impacts on the candidate.

Stigma in the workplace was attributed to the perceived "burden" such a candidate may place on colleagues. Participants gave the example of able-bodied employees being unable to relate to or interact appropriately with disabled candidates, which impacts the formation of a coordinated team and their subsequent treatment of the candidate. Participants raised concerns about whether able-bodied employees would feel comfortable with the hiring of a person with a disability, as they do not know how to accommodate them. This was particularly the case with a candidate with an ABI and sensory disability. Significantly fewer participants raised concern around stigma being faced by a person with a physical or sensory disability, potentially indicating that employees cope better with a visible physical or sensory disability as opposed to an ABI, which is relatively invisible to people interacting with the candidate.

Subtheme: Impact on Efficiency. Numerous participants were concerned about the candidates' ability to perform their tasks efficiently and efficaciously so that they can add value to the company and progress in their career. Particular emphasis was placed on the fast pace organisations operate at and whether the participant will be able to remain abreast of the changes in the organisation. It was commonly reflected that the organisations that participants worked in had strict deadlines, long hours and required an efficient pace of delivery. Participants in the medical, finance and construction fields seemed to be particularly concerned around this theme, as candidates needed to be aware of their surroundings, keep up with the chaotic pace and physically manoeuvre in the environment.

The candidate with sensory disability was identified as likely to feel disoriented and disheartened in chaotic environments. The candidate with ABI was seen to be unable to maintain the required effort over time to complete the task, leading to missed deadlines and increased stress for all involved. The candidate with a physical disability was a concern as they may struggle to "manage the physical pace of the company" and perform different tasks relating to their role. In a busy office when there are many people moving around and high "foot traffic" the person may have problems in moving around and completing their work.

Subtheme: Increased Need for Support Systems. Across the case studies, the increased need for support and extra effort was noted in the forms of emotional and technical support. Emotional support in the form of encouragement and kindness and technical support in the form of monitoring and cross-checking the candidate's work and accuracy were noted

to be areas of extra support. The extra support required was seen to place extra workload on managers and colleagues.

Theme 3: Benefits of Hiring a Candidate with a Sensory Disability. In terms of the benefits of hiring a person with a sensory disability, participants commonly mentioned the candidate having good interpersonal skills and an optimistic, cheerful and good disposition, which was likely to lead to her success. Some candidates noted that she was likely to fit in with the culture and morale of the organisation. Further, while the installation of systems to support this candidate in her daily role is likely to be costly, one participant noted that this was in the best interests of the company as it may drive improvement in digitising systems, making them more accessible and improving data integrity.

Theme 4: Disadvantage of Hiring a Candidate with a Sensory Disability.

Subtheme: Increased Incurred Cost. High costs of hiring and the financial burden of an unfeasible hire seemed to be a concern. Costs were seen to include adjusting and restructuring the office and technology to accommodate the candidate. There were some structural boundaries to this, such as a well-established hardcopy filing system or having an old building that could not be altered. Further, the increased time that the candidate would require to adjust to their new surroundings and the extended training and onboarding would implicate a cost for the company. A concern was raised around whether the candidate would work at the company for long enough to warrant the expense.

Subtheme: Insufficient Support. There was recognition of the additional supportive infrastructure necessary in assisting the candidate's adjustment to the new workplace and her job requirements, which could take up valuable company and employee time. Further, there was apprehension as to the adaption and tailoring of current training and onboarding programs to meet this candidate's needs. This would include adapting all written communication elements of the job to be technologically-based. Participants felt that top management would not easily buy into hiring this candidate, as many established systems would have to be adjusted. For instance, the impossibility of digitising their filing systems, which would disadvantage the employee. Further, there was uncertainty as to how to support the candidate if the supportive equipment malfunctioned and she was unable to work.

Subtheme: Accuracy on the Job. Participants were anxious about the candidate's reliability and accuracy in the role. This candidate was perceived as likely to make many errors that would impact her performance. These repeated errors were likely to lead to frustration for the candidate and their co-workers due to increased turnaround time and potentially far-reaching consequences of these errors.

Theme 5: Benefits of Hiring a Candidate with an ABI. Participants noted the benefits of employing a high-functioning candidate as a pair of "extra-hands" at a reduced cost due to their working part-time. Participants' perceptions fell on two sides of a spectrum. One side saw the candidate as an employee who could handle more "routine and mundane" tasks, which may lift pressure off able-bodied staff so that they could complete more complex tasks. On the other side, the participant was seen as a valuable employee who should be treated as any other employee. A participant wrote how the candidate may be "… no less hard-working, no worse candidates than any other potential employee. In some sense, a candidate with an acquired brain injury could be a better hire". Another stated that candidates with ABI can "do more than the bare minimum". Further, it was noted that "workaround" or adaptations could be made to account for the candidate's slower processing.

Theme 6: Disadvantages of Hiring a Candidate with an ABI.

Subtheme: No Benefit. Some participants noted that there would be no benefit to hiring a candidate with ABI, as it would place additional workload on co-workers and supervisors who would be required to offer increased monitoring and support. One participant noted that they "wouldn't take the risk", another stated that they would not hire a candidate with "ongoing medical issues". The lack of benefit commonly concerned the nature of the part-time only work that was required. Many people did not think that the cost implications of hiring a part-time person with an ABI were feasible.

Subtheme: Impacted Productivity. The majority of participants noted concerns around the candidate's slow productivity and compromised" ability, which impacts turnaround on tasks. Commonly noted physiological issues attributing to this were fatigue, headaches, illness, irritability and diminished or slow processing and functioning. One participant noted, "The fatigue, headaches and slow problem solving will hinder the applicant from performing at a level that does not cost the company time".

Associated issues could lead to the candidate being labelled as lazy as they take time away from work when fatigued, they may also be seen as a risk as their performance and accuracy may decline during the day. If the candidate was not able to fulfil tasks on time, it may lead to the frustration of staff and poor teamwork. A candidate who works at a slow pace may place more of their workload on their colleagues, who have to support the candidate. A participant wrote, "We need our employees to have attention to detail and accurate problem-solving skills and ability to work under pressure in a high demand work environment - this would not suit this candidate. Leaving early would place too much load on the remaining team members".

Subtheme: Associated costs. Deficits in performance were perceived to be costly for the company in time, as well as the possibility of having to defer deadlines. It was noted that extra facilities would have to be provided, which also incur costs. One participant noted how the accommodations that would have to be made for a person with ABI were more arduous than those that would be made for a person with a physical disability. They stated, "[Making allowance for wheelchairs], however, seems to be more of a norm in most companies in comparison to making adjustments for employees who suffered an ABI". Subsequently, organisational effectiveness and performance may be negatively affected.

Subtheme: Unpredictability and Absence. Due to the nature of the disability, participants raised concerns around the candidate's presence at work being unpredictable due to their need to take increased medical leave for their migraines or headaches. This may disrupt their ability to do their job and contribute toward effective teamwork. Participants raised concerns around the uncertainty of the "future progression or regression of the injury".

Theme 7: Benefits of Hiring a Candidate with a Physical Disability.

Subtheme: No Cognitive Impairment. It was particularly noted for physical disability that the lack of cognitive impairment made the candidate a more favourable hire. One participant stated that, with this candidate, there was no need to "compromise on intellectual stamina". Further, participants were most enthusiastic about this candidate's disposition, one even noted how she may be a "good role model" to other staff. Further, it was noted that it would be easier to onboard due to her already existing skills.

Subtheme: Already Catered for. Further, several candidates were comfortable with the idea of hiring this candidate as their offices already accommodated for people with physical disabilities. Indeed, these participants were confident in the benefits the candidate may gain by having access to these facilities. Another candidate noted that although there were cost implications, this structural change needed to happen in the organisation. They stated, "The various changes to the physical space may be costly, but in general, all office spaces should already be built with wheel-chair accessibility in mind".

Theme 8: Disadvantages of Hiring a Candidate with a Physical Disability.

Subtheme: Adaptations to Office Physical Structure. Majority of the participants expressed concern relative to the structural changes that would have to take place in the office to accommodate the candidate, which implies a cost. Necessary changes to the workplace would include, wheelchair ramps, lifts, wide walkways, adjusted filing cabinets and adjustable furniture. Many did not have a "wheelchair-friendly zone" and or were inaccessible if there was malfunctioning of lifts. One participant working in the medical field

noted, “Our workspace is not suited for wheelchair use and cannot be altered due to space and fixture limitations. We are also needing our employees to be physically able to help elderly visually impaired patients - so this employee’s disability would prevent this. Our filing systems are all high and cannot be changed due to huge volumes of filing space needed for medical record storage.”

The necessary changes and renovations required in adapting the office environment have cost and time implications for the business. Further, changes will also need to be made to supplying necessary resources and support for the candidate to work on a day-to-day basis, which will incur a cost. This makes hiring a physically disabled candidate, as one participant stated, “not a smart business move”.

Summary of Themes. There is a substantial overlap between themes, as participants expressed both the benefits and the challenges of hiring persons with disability. Common benefits to each of the disability groups included their positive dispositions, loyalty, benefit to company image, enhanced B-BEEE scores, humanitarian aspect and an opportunity to learn from the candidates. However, the following common disadvantages were noted, discrimination in the workplace, impacted efficiency and increased need for support. For sensory disability specifically, benefits included the good disposition of the candidate and the technological benefits of an upgraded system. However, participants expressed concern around increased incurred costs, inability to offer adequate support and poor accuracy on the job. Secondly, participants either saw a candidate with ABI as able colleagues’ more routine tasks, while others saw them as a valuable and equally contributing member of the workforce. However, participants expressed concerns regarding the nature of part-time work, slowed productivity of people with ABI, the cost to the company and the unpredictability and implications of their absence. Lastly, participants noted the benefit of there being no cognitive impairment in a candidate with physical disability, as well as the fact that they were already accommodated in many of the organisations. However, they were hesitant about the adaptations to the office physical structure and the cost implications thereof.

Assumptions of Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation

Pearson’s product-moment correlation was used to investigate the hypotheses. Pearson’s correlation is appropriate to determine if a linear relationship exists between two quantifiable variables (Field, 2013). Preliminary checks were performed to ensure that there were no violations of the assumptions of the Pearson product-moment correlation. These are discussed in turn below.

Level of Measurement. The dependent variable of interest in this study, namely Adapted-PEI, was measured on an interval scale, making it a continuous variable. The independent variables, level of familiarity with disability and recruitment experience were measured on interval scales of 0-20. While Pearson's correlation coefficient requires that data is only interval, variables can be categorical provided there are only two categories (Field, 2013). Thus, point-biserial correlation coefficients were used to calculate the correlations between the variables, having a close friend or family member with a disability, experience in recruitment and experience hiring people with disability, and their perceptions of employability of people with ABI (Field, 2013). Thus, this assumption has been met.

Normality. The data must be normally distributed in a correlation analysis. Adapted-PEI had acceptable skewness (0.22) and kurtosis scores (-0.90), which fell in the accepted boundaries of being between -1 and 1 and -3 and 3 respectively (Field, 2013). Adapted-PEI's normal distribution was confirmed by the histogram and Q-Q plot (please refer to Figure F1 in Appendix F). There were no significant outliers found in the data. Years of experience had acceptable skewness (-0.38) and kurtosis scores (-1.66), which suggest a normal distribution. This is confirmed in the histogram, Q-Q Plots and boxplots, where there is no evidence of outliers (please see Figure F2 in Appendix F). Number of disabilities hired had large skewness (4.38) and kurtosis (24.85) scores due to the significant outliers detected in the boxplot charts. These participants had hired 20 and 10 people with disabilities respectively and thus the outliers were removed (please see Figure F3 in Appendix F). Thereafter the distribution had far more appropriate kurtosis (.7) scores but slightly elevated skewness scores (1.2), which may reflect the underlying construct more than a problem with the measures used. For instance, it indicates that participants had little experience hiring people with a disability (Field, 2013). Pallant (2001) states that SPSS is a relatively robust system, which means it is not susceptible to being skewed by results. Further, the histogram, Q-Q plot and boxplot show that the distribution approximates normality (please see Figure F4 in Appendix F). Thus, it was not deemed to be a threat to normality. For all three of these variables, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Shapiro-Wilk test were significant, which suggests that the distribution is significantly different from the normal distribution (See Table F1 in Appendix F). However, this may have been due to the small sample size in the data set, as these tests may lack the power to detect violations of assumptions in small data sets (Field, 2013). Further, Bootstrapping, a statistical procedure that randomly samples 1000 cases, was performed to mitigate any violations in normality (Field, 2013). Therefore, this assumption can be ignored.

Linearity. This assumption states that the dependent variable, Adapted-PEI, must be linearly related to the independent variables, close family with disability, years of experience in HR, experience hiring a person with ABI and number of disabilities hired. Graphically, the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables should form a straight line, rather than a curved line (Field, 2013). This assumption was upheld as data points on the scatterplot between Adapted-PEI and both years of experience in recruitment and number of disabilities hired had a very weak, but positive correlation (see Figure F5 in Appendix F). Thus, this assumption is upheld.

As all assumptions were met, it was appropriate to run the Pearson's product-moment correlation test.

H_2: HR Personnel's Familiarity with Disabilities is Positively Related to their Perceptions of Employability of Persons with ABI.

The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation did not reveal a statistically significant correlation between whether the participant had a close family or friend with disability, their years of experience in recruitment, their experience of hiring a person with ABI, number of disabilities hired and their perceptions of employability of ABI (please see Appendix G). Thus, contrary to expectations, having experience in hiring a person with an ABI or any disability does not impact perceptions of employability of people with an ABI. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis can be rejected and the null hypothesis can be accepted.

Assumptions of Paired Samples T-Test

Normality. The difference between groups had to be determined to establish whether the distribution approximated normality. As physical disability had the highest mean, it was used as the point of comparison (Field, 2013).

The difference between physical disability and sensory disability had normal skewness and kurtosis scores. However, numerous outliers were detected and subsequently removed (see Figure H1-2 in Appendix H). Thereafter, the skewness (0.06) and kurtosis (0.23) was acceptable and the distribution approximated normality (see Figure H3 in Appendix H). The difference between physical disability and ABI approximated normality, with acceptable skewness and kurtosis scores. However, one outlier was detected in the Boxplot and removed (see Figure H4 in Appendix H). Thereafter, there were no more outliers according to the Boxplot and histogram and acceptable skewness (0.73) and kurtosis (-0.29) scores. Lastly, the difference between sensory disability and ABI had normal skewness (0.02) and kurtosis (-0.15). There were no outliers detected and this indicates that this assumption has been met for each of the pairs (see Figure H5 in Appendix H).

Scale of Measurement. The case studies were measured on a Likert scale of 1-7. It is argued that this is sufficient to be classified as a continuous scale. Thus, this assumption is met.

Paired Data. The data are from the same participants answering three case-study questions, thus they are classified as paired data. Therefore, this assumption is met.

H_3: HR Personnel have more Interest in Hiring People with Physical or Sensory Disability than People with an ABI

There was a significant difference in the interest in hiring people from the different disability groups. The difference between Physical Disability and Sensory Disability was .39, 95% CI [.15;.63], which was found to be significant $t(56)=3.23$, $p<.05$. The difference between physical disability and ABI was .86, 95% CI [0.55;.1.18] and was significant $t(56)=5.33$, $p<.000$. Lastly, the difference between ABI and sensory disability was .47, 95% CI [0.12;0.81] and was also significant $t(56)=2.7$, $p<.05$. This confirms the hypothesis that there is a difference in HR personnel's interest in hiring these disabled candidates, as they were more likely to be more interested in hiring a candidate with a physical disability than a candidate with a sensory disability or ABI. Further, HR personnel are likely to be more interested in hiring a candidate with a sensory disability than a candidate with an ABI. Thus, there is a distinct hierarchy in interest to hire, with HR personnel having the least interest in hiring a candidate with ABI. Thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This falls in line with what is expected from the theory (Andersson et al., 2015). Please see Table 1 in Appendix I.

Assumptions of Multiple Regression

Level of Measurement. Multiple regression requires that variables be continuous. All the variables of interest in this study were measured on interval scales, making them continuous variables. Therefore, this assumption has been met (Field, 2013).

Normality. The data must be normally distributed to perform multiple regression. Please see Figures J1-J4 in Appendix J. The predictor variables, attitude and subjective norms, had acceptable skewness and kurtosis scores. However, based on the boxplots, two outliers were detected in Attitude and subsequently were removed. Thereafter, no outliers were detected and skewness (-0.29) and kurtosis (-0.25) scores remained acceptable. The new outcome variable, PFIC had acceptable skewness (-0.28) and kurtosis scores (-0.35). This is further confirmed by the histogram, Q-Q plots and boxplots for subjective norms and PFIC. Further, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk statistics were not statistically

significant for any of these three variables, which indicates that the distributions approximate normality.

It is also necessary to determine whether the residuals are normally distributed. The scatterplot and histograms indicate that the residuals or error terms are normally distributed (see J5-J6 in Appendix J). Further, Bootstrapping, a statistical procedure in which 1000 cases are randomly sampled, was performed to account for any violations in normality (Field, 2013). Therefore, this assumption can be ignored.

Linearity. This assumption states that the dependent variable, PFIC, must be linearly related to the independent variables, attitude and subjective norm. Graphically, the relationship between independent and the dependent variable should form a straight line, rather than a curved line (Field, 2013) (see Figure J7 in Appendix J). Further, the residuals in the predictor variable are plotted against the residuals of the outcome variable. The plot, z-pred vs z-resid, is based on converting the scores of the predictor and outcome variable to z-scores. The resulting plot illustrates the underlying relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable. For the assumption of linearity to be met, there should be no underlying relationship between the model's residuals and the predicted model residuals. If the z-pred vs z-resid graph demonstrates a curve in the distribution of the residuals, linearity cannot be assumed (Field, 2013). This assumption was upheld as data points on the scatterplot, histogram and P-P plots are normally distributed and there are no evident patterns on the graphs (see Figure J8 in Appendix J).

No Outliers. As reported above in the normality section, there were two existing outliers in Attitude, which were removed. Thereafter, no outliers were detected. This is confirmed by the lack of violations of the standardised residual and the -3 to 3 boundaries of Cook's distance score and the z-pred vs z-resid graph. Therefore, it is confirmed that there are no outliers across the variables (See Figure J8 and Table 1 in Appendix J).

Homoscedasticity of Variance. It is assumed that groups are sampled from the population with the same variance (Field, 2013). This is indicated by the variance of the outcome variable being present at each level of the predictor variable. According to the z-pred vs z-resid graph used to test linearity, there is no homoscedasticity present, as residuals are evenly spread around the line (see Figure J8 in Appendix J). Therefore this assumption was met.

Independent Errors. As all data points were from different people, independent errors are assumed not to be a threat to the study. As seen in the z-pred vs z-resid graph (see Figure J8 in Appendix J), there is an even spread of residuals around the line, which suggests

that all errors are independent. Further, the Durbin Watson statistic (1.82) is acceptable, as it is less than 3. Thus, this assumption has been met.

No Multicollinearity. Predictors should not be too highly correlated with one another. This assumption is met as there are no correlations above .7 and the Collinearity statistics, namely tolerance values (0.8) and VIF (1.25) were acceptable.

H_4: The Variables of the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model Predict the Intent to Hire a Candidate with an ABI.

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to analyse the hypothesis. The results suggest that HR personnel's subjective norms and attitudes predict their perceived freedom of intentional choice. This indicates the model aligns to existing literature, which posits that both attitude and subjective norms are important predictors of intent to hire a person with ABI (Azjen, 1991). As hierarchical regression was employed, subjective norms was entered first into the model, as suggested by literature (Ang & Amin, 2015) and was a significant predictor 95% CI [0.4;.73], $t(53)=6.79$, $p<.000$. Subjective norms remained a positive predictor in the second step 95% CI [0.3;.66], $t(53)=5.3$, $p<.000$ and accounted for 47% of the variance in the model. Thus, as subjective norms increase, so do PFIC. Attitude was a negative predictor of PFIC 95% CI [-0.54; -0.01], $t(53)=-2.12$, $p=.04$. Thus, as attitudes become more positive, PFIC decreases. The model of attitudes and subjective norms accounted for 51.2% of the variance in the model, indicating a good fit. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternate hypothesis can be accepted. Please see Table 1 in Appendix K.

H_5: Increased Information of ABI Changes HR Personnel's' Perceptions of the Employability of People with ABI to be More Favourable

Contrary to expectations, this hypothesis was not confirmed. Only 12% of all participants would change their answers to be more favourable based on additional information, whereas 68% wouldn't change their answer to be more favourable. 10% of the participants answered that they might change their answer (See Table E2 in Appendix E). Further insight can be gained from the qualitative results.

Theme 9: Adaptable Attitudes. The HR personnel who changed their attitudes after being presented with more information offered the following explanations.

Subtheme: Insight into Abilities. A few participants noted that they would change their attitude to be more favourable of the employability of people with ABI because they gained insight into the candidate's actual abilities. A few participants noted that it was beneficial to see that the candidate's disability might not interfere with their ability to do the task, with one participant saying, "People must be employed on the basis of their

qualification and the ability to deliver on the task, not on their physical disabilities." A participant noted how this could lead to changes in her practice, "In my life time experience I have never experienced or met anyone with ABI neither to have an interest, after this survey it has made me realize so many things around my work environment, I'm now able to think outside my comfort zone and the gaps we have in recruitment, including our policy".

Subtheme: Competitive Advantage. It was suggested people with an ABI could be a source of competitive advantage, as the candidates with ABI demonstrated an ability to work in a team, coordinate and lift up those around them in the organisation. The potential of ABI candidates was recognised, with certain caveats, namely, they need to be given additional support. A candidate who is supported and nurtured may be a source of competitive advantage as they are hard-working, loyal and able to collaborate with teams. A participant wrote, "I believe that people with ABI are capable of being great employees. Given the correct support and job placement, they could do well. Unfortunately, many companies may not wish to provide this support or make adjustments to the role. However, they may have additional qualities (such as resiliency) that may make them attractive to many organisations". Another wrote, "I still believe that everyone has the possibility of contributing in some way to society. Some people may indirectly inspire others to greater things. I have experienced that an impaired or disabled person, who is given a chance, can become a most loyal staff member." A participant suggested. "People with acquired brain injuries are no less hard-working, no worse candidates than any other potential employee. In some senses, a candidate with an acquired brain injury could be a better hire."

Theme 10: Unadaptable Attitudes. There was a distinction between people who would not change their answers due to their already being positively-oriented and those who wouldn't change their answers due to their feeling the person with an ABI would not be a good hire. Of those who would not change their perceptions to be more favourable toward the candidate's capabilities, the following reasons were given.

Subtheme: Cost to Company. The increased cost to the company in terms of the finances, effort and time required is relatively higher than the cost of hiring a 'normal' candidate would incur. As there is an over-supply of people with low skills in South Africa to fulfil any routine and non-complex jobs, these able-bodied candidates are likely to be hired before someone with an ABI.

Subtheme: Capacity of the Organisation. Participants felt that companies who are hiring need to be realistic about what is achievable and sustainable based on their context and position as a company and the ability, attitude and future career aspirations of the candidate.

Candidates with an ABI are likely to need psychological support and interventions to prevent shaming, victimisation and unfair treatment. Thus, it is an investment and a potential risk for any company to hire a candidate with an ABI as they need to be able to offer them adequate support. For instance, a participant wrote, “Employment is a long-term contract requiring growth, development and social skills that is difficult for non-ABI or disabled people to achieve. The prospect of taking on a person who is already finding their day difficult is a massive challenge.”

Subtheme: Stigma. Some participants noted that most companies aren’t interested in hiring people with any disability, but are particularly not interested in hiring a candidate with an ABI. Some participants still felt that they didn’t know enough about ABI to hire a candidate with ABI, despite the presentation of further information. For instance, a participant wrote that they, “ do not have sufficient information on ABI and haven’t come across someone who has ABI or brain injury. Mostly Brain Injury is known to be great damage and this [results in] less knowledge on the subject”. Thus, HR personnel may be insufficiently informed and thus lack motivation to hire a candidate with ABI. A participant summarised this finding, “This is a cruel, hard world and most organisations or businesses are geared towards productivity and profit. A very small portion of employees will be hired for humanitarian reasons. For the rest, you have to contribute above what is needed. You are a slave to the system”.

Subtheme: Fast Pace. Various candidates were concerned about the high pressure, workload, pace and subsequent stress that employees may experience. Medical, financial and construction jobs were again identified as being inappropriate for these candidates. These jobs were framed to require “absolute attention to detail” and “high standards of excellence”. Concern was raised about the extent to which candidates with ABI would be able to fulfil these roles, due to their absence, low productivity or inability to adapt. One participant who worked in management wrote, “Because in my kind of employment, there's too much pressure, giving reports, moving from one place to another as we are scattered in different buildings. So, this might put pressure on them and result in worsening their condition due to anxiety.” It was suggested that low stress, slower pace and less demanding work would be more suitable, such as the entrepreneurial sector or a sector where, “jobs are more ‘relaxed’ ... work that does not need the function of the body that is impacted by an ABI”.

Theme 10: Participant Recommendations. In their answers, various participants offered suggestions as to how the hiring process could be more effective for people with ABI.

Subtheme: Support. Candidates suggested that employment can be created for people with an ABI, based on the severity of their injury. A more 'tailored' employment solution may provide these candidates with the opportunity and resources required to perform at a high standard. One participant wrote, "people with ABI are capable than more than the bare minimum". Thus, support and accommodations must be made in giving people with ABI an employment opportunity. Further, it is important to get management and employee "absolute buy-in" to have successful hiring.

Subtheme: Education. Various participants raised concerns around the impact that a lack of education may have on these candidate's job prospects. "I think that recruiters and Hiring Managers should be educated that not all ABI sufferers are incapable and they are still able to perform well, they may just need extra TLC". This may lead to their being recognised and employed for "persever[ing] against all odds" based on their competencies, rather than turned away based on their disability. Educating HR personnel and managers and exposing them to people with disability may offer insight into their daily lives, indicate how they may integrate into society and seems to be a way to reduce the stigma experienced by people in the workplace. This will allow for better support to be offered to these candidates.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The high prevalence of ABIs in South Africa is not a phenomenon that solely impacts the individual survivor of the brain injury, but also has consequences for the survivor's family, the South African labour force, healthcare sector and economy (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). Thus, it is critical to interrogate hiring managers' and HR personnel's perceptions of people with disability, particularly those with an ABI. This includes examining the factors that have influenced HR personnel's attitudes and subjective norms, which have implications on their perceptions and their resultant feelings of control and intention to hire people with disabilities. If HR personnel, organisations and government become more informed about these factors, they may develop more inclusive practices to encourage the employment of persons with ABI in the South African workplace (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). This also has practical application within the medicolegal field, as employer's and HR personnel's perceptions of employability may inform decisions on compensation with regards to whether the survivor of brain injury will return to the workplace (Pryor & Hawkins, 2009; Schultz et al., 2016).

The aims of this study were twofold. First, quantitative methods were used to specifically investigate HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of candidates with ABI and other disabilities. Specific factors of their perceptions were explored, including the impact of HR personnel's familiarity with disabilities on their interest in hiring a person with an ABI and the hierarchy of disability in terms of perceptions of employability of people with different disabilities, namely physical disability, visual impairment or those with an ABI. Additionally, drawing on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, further insight is offered into the relationship between HR personnel's attitude and subjective norms and their perceived behavioural control and intent to hire a person with ABI. Second, qualitative methods were used to examine the perceptions that South African HR personnel held around the employability of people with disability and specific barriers to their being hired. This chapter reviews the psychometric properties of the scales and discusses the convergence of both quantitative and qualitative findings relating to the study's hypotheses with reference to relevant literature. Thereafter, the theoretical and practical contributions of the study will be presented, followed by a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study. Lastly, recommendations for future research will be made.

Psychometric Properties of the Scales

The scales used in this study were largely adapted to be relevant to the content being discussed, namely the employment of candidates with an ABI in South Africa. Scales were

adapted to be relevant to perceptions of employability and ABI in South Africa, thus it was essential to establish their reliability before conducting any further statistical analyses. This was determined through Cronbach's alpha and corrected-item total correlation. Some threats to reliability did exist, which lead to further adaptation of the scales. Thereafter, factor analysis was employed to ensure the constructs measured by the scales in the adapted format were consistent with the understanding portrayed in the literature.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

Fifteen items were used to measure TPB in this study (Fraser et al., 2013). At the onset of the research, it was expected that there would be three predictor variables, subjective norm, attitude and perceived behaviour control (PBC), and the outcome variable, intention. As expected from the theory (Azjen, 1991), the constructs were highly and significantly correlated, indicating that they reinforced each other. However, the CFA revealed a 3-factor model that did not align with the theoretical conceptualisation of the TPB. With careful consideration and analysis of the data, the new outcome variable was labelled "Perceived Freedom of Intentional Choice" (PFIC) (Azjen, 1991). PFIC was significantly predicted by both subjective norm and attitude. PFIC and subjective norms had a strong positive correlation, thus subjective norms support PFIC and vice-versa. A moderate negative correlation was present between attitude and PFIC, indicating an inverse relationship.

While this finding seems to be novel, a shift in the construct is not uncommon if the theory is applied to a different context to the one it was established in (McCoy et al., 2007). Culture and context can affect the application of theory, especially in a society like South Africa which is typified by diversity, uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity (Sackman & Phillips, 2004). Further, with reference to literature, PBC is positioned as a multidimensional construct (Trafimow et al., 1996), which sometimes cannot be separated from Intention as a construct (Rhodes & Courneya, 2003). Initially, Azjen and Madden (1986) described PBC as a person's belief of the ease or difficulty associated with a particular behaviour. However, later on, PBC was broken into distinct components of self-efficacy (the ease or difficulty of individual behaviour and their confidence in their behaviour) and controllability (a feeling of personal control over behaviour) (Azjen, 2002; Kraft et al., 2005). It is suggested that self-efficacy has a stronger relationship with intention than controllability does, as self-efficacy better represents internal motivation and subsequently, a person's intention to perform a behaviour (Conner & Armitage, 1999; Terry & O'Leary, 1995; White et al., 1994). This strong relationship can be attributed to the greater measurement redundancy between self-

efficacy and intention, rather than there necessarily being a stronger causal relationship (Rhodes & Courneya, 2003).

This finding makes sense in this study as the two items on the PBC scale that focused on the ease or difficulty of the hiring and the participant's confidence to hire had high internal consistency, while the item concerning the extent that hiring a candidate with ABI was under their control had low reliability and was removed from the data analysis. The demographic data sheds further light on this finding as it indicates that the participants seemed to hold quite junior roles in the recruitment space and had slightly favourable perceptions of employability of people with ABI. However, due to their relatively junior positions, they may not have had any control over the company's hiring decisions and policies, which may have reflected on the scale. Therefore, once controllability items were removed, the participants in this study had high self-efficacy around their intent to hire, which lead to PBC and Intention loading onto the same factor. Therefore, in this research, PFIC can be understood as the participant's perception of the ease or difficulty and their confidence in their intent to hire a person with ABI.

A further interesting point was that items in the attitude and intentions subscales that had poor inter-item correlations seemed to be associated with the diverse and unpredictable nature of the sequelae associated with ABI. These items specifically concerned the extent to which the organisation's offices are equipped to support a candidate with ABI and the extent to which hiring a candidate with ABI would be challenging. Participants answered these questions slightly more negatively compared to the rest of the questions, which focused on the extent the participant would recommend the candidate, the capability of the candidate to make a valuable contribution and whether the decision to hire would be good, desirable and wise. This finding suggests that participants were aware of the implications of hiring and accommodating a person with ABI. Thus, despite being a relatively junior sample with little experience with disability, they were aware of and realistic regarding the challenges of hiring a person with an ABI.

Case Study

A set of four quantitative questions and two qualitative questions determined HR personnel's interest in hiring people from different disability groups. Each case study had acceptable reliability and no items had to be removed. The only item that was questionable concerned whether other employers would be interested in hiring a candidate with ABI. This may be explained by a theme in the qualitative data that suggested that HR personnel were cognisant of other employers' lack of interest in hiring people with ABI. Thus, participants

answered this question more negatively. According to the CFA, one factor emerged for each case study and was labelled ‘Interest to Hire’. These findings are consistent with previous research (Andersson et al., 2015) and indicate that this form of case study is appropriate to be used in the South African context.

Adapted-Perceptions of Employability Index

Six items were adapted to measure HR personnel’s perceptions of employability of people with ABI. An item concerning whether a candidate would find it difficult to cope with the demands of the workplace had low reliability and was subsequently removed. While it was not clear why this item had a low internal consistency, perhaps it could be attributed to participants being particularly cautious given the present economic climate, exacerbated by the very high rate of unemployment and the resultant great supply of labour (Smith, 2020). This unfavourable environment may have negatively affected perceptions of employability. Further, given the variation in the presentation of sequelae associated with ABI, HR personnel may have been unsure as to whether a candidate may cope in the workplace. As expected, the PEI loaded onto one factor, making it a unidimensional measure of perceptions of employability (Berntson & Marklund, 2007). To the researcher’s knowledge, the construct validity of the adapted-PEI has not been previously evaluated. This is a novel finding as it indicates that the adapted-PEI is a versatile measure that can be used for both an individual’s perceptions of their own employability as well as others’ perceptions of their employability. Further, the adapted-PEI seems to be appropriate to use in the South African context.

Discussion of the Hypotheses

This subsection will discuss the findings that relate to this study’s hypotheses with reference to previous empirical literature. The hypotheses will be discussed through collaborating and converging both quantitative and qualitative data, as is characteristic of mixed methods research.

Broad finding 1: Perceptions of Employability

The CRPD’s non-definition of disability states that disability arises from the interaction between various barriers that limit full participation in various aspects of society (Schulze, 2010). This research confirms that various factors play a role in influencing HR personnel’s perceptions of disability, particularly ABI. The findings of the research are very much influenced by the particular sample, most of whom had relatively few years of experience in recruitment and seemed to occupied relatively junior roles. Thus, it is unlikely they had very much control over hiring decisions. Participants referred to both perceived benefits and

barriers to hiring people with disability, which lead to interesting contradictions in the data and an interesting range of perceptions of employability.

According to the analyses on the Adapted-PEI, HR personnel seemed to hold neutral to very slightly positive perceptions of people with ABI's employability. Participants agreed that people with ABI were competent, had experience that is in demand in the labour market and know of other organisations that would offer them employment. This finding falls in line with some current research that suggests that some employers hold positive perceptions about hiring people with disabilities (Andersson et al., 2015; Hernandez et al., 2000; Ju et al., 2013). However, HR personnel were unsure whether candidates with ABI had personal qualities or a support network that would increase their chances of being employed. This finding could be interpreted in two ways. It could be suggested that there is a lack of information or understanding that contributed to the participants being unsure of the support networks people with ABI typically have and what personal characteristics may benefit them in the workplace. This is consistent with literature that suggests that South African employers have limited exposure to people with disability, particularly ABI which limits their awareness and understanding of the disability (Kaye et al., 2008; Maja et al., 2008). However, it could also be suggested that the HR personnel understood how complex ABI can be and how difficult it would be to manage an employee with ABI in the workplace.

The emergent qualitative themes offered further insight into these results. The following factors were found to impact favourable perceptions, the candidate's likeable disposition, HR personnel's recognition of benefits, the humanitarian benefit and increased experience, knowledge and inspiration. Unfavourable perceptions were influenced by perceptions of discrimination and stigma in the workplace, low perceived candidate capabilities, candidate's inability to keep up with the organisational pace and due to cost implications. Perceptions of all three disabilities will be broadly discussed, before narrowing the focus to solely on ABI.

Favourable Perceptions.

Individual Capacity and Disposition. Participants were mostly open to hiring all three candidates due to the candidates' adequate qualifications and positive attitude, motivation and good work ethic. According to Gilbride et al. (2003), employers who are open to hiring and accommodating workers with disabilities still seek candidates who effectively demonstrate the ability to perform the essential functions of a job and who have soft skills, like a positive attitude and dependability (Gilbride et al., 2003). Similarly, Donker-Cool's (2018) framework specifies how activity-related skills (having adequate qualifications or performing tasks independently), and having inter-personal skills are important in

determining whether a person with a disability is viewed as employable or not. Only a few participants, 16.42%, noted the benefit of the candidate with ABI's disposition, with more noting this theme in relation to the candidates with sensory or physical disability.

Value-add Employees. There was a spectrum of perceptions ranging from participants with poor perceptions of employability to those who made a strong case for the hiring of people with disabilities, seeing them as equally, if not more, loyal, hardworking, dedicated and determined to succeed in their jobs than their able-bodied colleagues (Gewurtz, 2016; Hartnett et al., 2011). Participants with favourable perceptions commented that it was likely that people with disability were likely to go 'over and above' their job description. It was noted that they may motivate and inspire those around them and that their valuable contribution may improve company culture and could be a point of competitive advantage. This is consistent with the literature, which states that hiring people with disabilities could positively impact a company's profitability, image and reputation as a workplace that is inclusive, non-discriminatory and offers equal opportunities (Gröschl, 2012; Maja et al., 2013). Not only does the company reputation improve, but the company may be more attractive to other candidates (Hartnett et al., 2011; Ju et al., 2013; Yin et al., 2014).

A majority (55%) of participants recognised the benefits of hiring candidates with an ABI, as it led to reduced costs for the organisation who had to pay less to hire a part-time employee who could offer 'extra hands' for assistance. Companies have been negatively impacted by the current poor economic climate and thus, saving costs is a priority in many organisations (Smith, 2020). The spectrum of perceptions was evident as some HR personnel saw an employee with ABI as able to handle more "routine and mundane" tasks that could be adapted to account for the candidate's slower processing. However, other participants saw greater potential in these candidates. One participant wrote how they were "… no less hard-working, no worse candidates than any other potential employee… could be a better hire". Another recognised their ability to "do more than the bare minimum". This indicates how there is a discrepancy in HR personnel's perceptions of employability of survivors of ABI, with some seeing them as simply an extra pair of hands and others positioning them as a potential value add to the organisation.

Enhanced B-BBEE. Increased B-BBEE scores were commonly cited as benefits for hiring people with disabilities, due to the increased financial assistance received in return. However, this was the only legislation that was mentioned by participants, mainly in conjunction with the benefits associated with the improved diversity scores. No other legislation was mentioned in terms of the benefits of securing human rights and inclusive and

fair hiring procedures (Lengnick-Hall, 2008). Perhaps this indicates that companies abide by policy as long as it does not impact their financial viability. Thus, HR personnel's hiring behaviours need to be assessed in conjunction to present legislation, to see how hiring a person with ABI may offer more benefits to company functioning.

Humanitarian Benefit. The HR personnel were clearly aware of the resistance of many South African organisations to hire candidates with disability. With reference to Maslow's Hierarchy, HR personnel may feel a sense of actualisation or positive "feel good" emotion due to the impact they are having on the world and people who may be "less fortunate" than them or who may not have found employment otherwise (Stewart et al., 2018). This is an important point of competitive advantage for companies, as employees who feel a sense of self-actualisation in their work are likely to be motivated, empowered and loyal to the company (Stewart et al., 2018). Participants noted that they would be making a difference as hiring a person with disability offers the individual the opportunity for personal and career growth and to uplift their social and self-worth. A difference could also be made on a community level as there was an opportunity to " [support] the community as a whole".

Some participants (19.4%) noted this theme specifically with regards to ABI and the positive impact this could have on reducing the candidate's symptoms and increasing their overall wellbeing. The humanitarian benefit is a new theme in ABI research and may indicate why there has been a shift in perception to be more favourable of people with ABI. Nevertheless, the integrated results seem to suggest that despite a recognition of the ideal situation, this outlook may not translate into action in the present climate.

Increased Experience, Knowledge and Inspiration. Lastly, many participants noted that they could benefit from learning from the diverse experience and perspective of the candidate with a disability. Participants commonly noted how non-HR employees could benefit from a 'reality check' of their problems and be inspired by the disabled candidate's determination and positive attitude. This source of motivation was said to inspire better teamwork and engagement in the organisation. According to participants, hiring a person with disability would offer all employees the opportunity to be educated about the conditions and capabilities of people with various disabilities, which may impact their perceptions and dismantle unhelpful stereotypes, particularly surrounding people with ABI. Indeed, 15% of participants supported this theme in the hiring of a survivor of an ABI. This theme is consistent with literature, which suggests that as people become more knowledgeable and have exposure to people with disability, they may show greater willingness to hire and are less likely to hold negative perceptions of people with disability, particularly survivors of

ABI (Andersson et al., 2015; Copeland et al., 2009). Participants commented on how an inclusive culture may encourage other organisations to follow in their suit, normalising the employment of people with disabilities and changing perceptions. Additionally, organisations may benefit from incorporating the person's perspective and innovative ideas into their strategies and decisions (Ju et al., 2013).

However, a contradiction arose in the quantitative results that suggest that in reality, HR personnel are unlikely to adopt this idealist perspective in their practice. When presented with a 'success story' that presented more information about candidates with ABI, the majority (68%) of participants did not change their perceptions to be more favourable.

Of those who would change their answers to be more favourable, most attributed their decision to their increased insight into the abilities of persons with ABI. This additional information demonstrated how survivors of an ABI may not experience generalised dysfunction, rather people with ABI may only have difficulties in specific areas. Participants suggested that accommodations could be made in these areas by tailoring jobs to an individual's unique strengths and weaknesses. For instance, participants drew on the stereotype that routine and non-complicated jobs would be appropriate for these candidates, rather than highly stressful and complex jobs. Subsequently, increasing an individual's capabilities in their role and incorporating their diverse perspectives may be a source of competitive advantage and inspiration to organisations, who remain profitable and make a difference in a person's life. However, it was clear that the majority of HR personnel hold inadaptable attitudes. This may be attributed to the various obstacles that remain in hiring a person with disability, particularly ABI.

Unfavourable Perceptions. Common themes arose that inform HR personnel's perceptions of those with a physical disability, sensory disability and those with ABI. Identified barriers interact with survivors' capacities and limit their ability to find work.

Discrimination and Stigma. A major obstacle that was noted was that disabled people may face discrimination and stigma in the workplace. This was particularly raised in conjunction to non-HR staff, who participants particularly identified as having unfavourable perceptions of the candidate's capabilities to fulfil their job responsibility. This is confirmed through the TPB Scale, where HR personnel's co-workers were identified as the least likely groups to approve of hiring people with an ABI. Participants noted that these staff members would fear that an employee with a disability may become a "burden" for them to support and make accommodations for. Further, HR personnel noted that many non-HR staff would be uncomfortable with the idea of hiring a person with disability as they were unsure of how

to make appropriate accommodations or what appropriate accommodations were required. Negative attitudes may lead to increased interpersonal frustration, impatience or intolerant reactions to the person with a disability and exclusion from the team and team activities. This is consistent with literature as it is evident that employees with disability are treated differently to the 'norm' group (Goffman, 2009).

For instance, 7% of participants felt that there would be no benefit to hiring candidates with an ABI. This can be understood in the context of the high rate of unemployment and unfavourable economic conditions in South Africa, able-bodied people are likely to be seen as more employable than those with a disability (Smith, 2020). A few participants noted that they "wouldn't take the risk" hiring a person with a disability or a person with ongoing medical issues. While only 9% of participants raised the theme of discrimination and stigma in conjunction with survivors of ABI, it validates past research that South Africans with disabilities face discrimination and stigma in their organisations (Barnes & Mercer, 2005; Chembeni & Nkomon, 2017; Gewurtz et al., 2016; Progression, 2020; Susuman et al., 2014). There was no reference to superstitious or cultural beliefs that may lead to stigmatisation of disabled candidates, which may indicate that this was not an issue for this sample of HR personnel (Swanepoel & Almec, 2008). Further, all participants that noted discrimination and stigma as an obstacle had some considerable experience in recruitment or experience hiring people with disability. This also suggests that HR personnel with little to no experience may be unaware of the discrimination and stigmatisation of people with disability in the workplace (Goffman, 2009).

Low Perceived Capabilities. . Participants raised concerns about whether disabled candidates would be able to perform their job role to the required efficiency and efficacy, and whether they would be able to cope with the fast pace that organisations seemed to operate at.

This theme was particularly prevalent for candidates with ABI, as 65% of participants were concerned regarding the capabilities of survivors of ABI to complete their tasks. High stress and missed deadlines were commonly noted outcomes, which were likely to negatively impact candidates' health and recovery and the efficacy of the organisation. This finding falls in line with Donker-Cools et al. (2018) disease related-factors, as employers evidently view ABI as a risk and are less flexible with regards to the accommodations that they are willing to make as a result. Due to the vulnerable position of a person with ABI, it was generally recognised that these candidates would need increased emotional and technical support. The increased support aligns with the proposed addition to Donker-Cools et al.'s (2018) framework, contextual-factors, as lack of access to vocational rehabilitation means that

candidates would have to seek support in the workplace. Participants noted the necessity of two kinds of support, firstly, emotional support in the form of encouragement and kindness and secondly technical support through the monitoring and cross-checking of work and accuracy. This extra support adds workload onto managers and colleagues and may dissuade potential employers from employing people with ABI (Donker-Cools et al., 2018).

Unable to keep up with "fast pace". People from each of the identified disability groups were perceived as unable to keep up with the fast-paced changes in the organisation. It was commonly reflected that the participants' organisations had strict deadlines, long hours and required an efficient pace of delivery. For instance, people with sensory disability were seen to be vulnerable to being disoriented and disheartened in a chaotic environment. Participants were also concerned that a candidate with ABI would be unable to maintain the required effort to complete tasks, leading to high stress and missed deadlines. Lastly, in a busy office when there are many people moving around and high "foot traffic" the candidate with physical disability was thought to have mobility issues that may affect their completing their work. The perception that candidates with disability cannot perform to the same level as those without disability is consistent with existing literature (Burke et al., 2013; Chan et al., 2010; Kaye et al., 2011).

The 'success story' and further information did not provide "sufficient information on ABI" or demonstrate ABI candidate's ability to cope with the high pressure, high workload, fast pace and subsequent stress of the workplace. Interestingly, this seemed to be particularly prevalent in medical, financial and construction jobs, as participants were particularly concerned with the "absolute attention to detail" and "high standards of excellence" that are required. This suggests that particular industries may be perceived as less suited to hire a person with disability, particularly ABI (Gewurtz, 2016).

Cost Implications. Participants were commonly concerned of the cost incurred in hiring people with disabilities, particularly if the candidate turned out to be an unfeasible hire. For instance, in the case of a sensory and physical disability, the company would need to take on a financial burden in adjusting and restructuring the office and technology to accommodate a candidate's disability and supplying necessary resources and support for the candidate's work on a day-to-day basis. There were some structural boundaries to this, such as organisations already having a well-established hardcopy filing system or due to the lack of flexibility in office set up. Further, the increased time that the candidate would require to adjust to their new surroundings and the extended training and onboarding would have cost implications for the organisation. Participants did not raise structural or environmental

concerns for the candidate with ABI, rather there were concerns around how deficits in their performance and slow task completion could incur costs and missed deadlines for the company. For instance, managers of an employee with ABI would have to be flexible with the workload and offering part-time work, which may lead to increased workload on others. As is seen in Rudstam et al. (2012), employers are particularly concerned about what reasonable accommodations for candidates with ABI may entail and how their high absenteeism may disturb the workplace.

Participants who did not change their perceptions after the presentation of the ABI "success story" noted that organisations may not have the capacity to take on such risky candidates. Based on the participant's answers, the hiring organisations must be realistic about what is achievable and sustainable based on their context and the size of the company, as well as the ability, attitude and future career aspirations of the candidate. HR personnel are likely to only 'invest' in hiring a person with ABI if they can offer the appropriate long-term support and accommodations for the candidate. This may include psychological support and interventions to prevent shaming, victimisation and unfair treatment. For instance, a participant wrote, "Employment is a long-term contract requiring growth, development and social skills that is difficult for non-ABI or disabled people to achieve. The prospect of taking on a person who is already finding their day difficult is a massive challenge".

Summary of Broad Finding 1. This broad finding suggests HR personnel's perceptions are complex and multi-faceted. However, there is a discrepancy between HR personnel who may hold positive or idealist perceptions relative to the employability of people with disability, while others remain firmly opposed to the idea, despite being presented with a success story. Those who had favourable perceptions saw the candidates as having adequate qualifications and a positive attitude, as per Donker-Cool's (2018) activity- and personal- related factors. The participants recognised the generalised benefits of a good hire including improved company image, increased inclusivity and diversity in the workforce leading to enhanced competitive advantage, the humanitarian benefit they would gain from hiring a person with disability and the opportunity for other staff members to learn about various disabilities and to gain inspiration from these candidates. Thus, both literature (Andersson et al., 2015; Copeland et al., 2009) and participants report the benefits of increased experience with and access to people with disabilities. However, when focusing specifically on the perceptions of employability of people with ABI, it seems that they may have been overly idealistic and may be outweighed by the obstacles to hiring a person with ABI. Many of the participants would not change their perceptions to be more favourable

when offered more information about these candidates. Participants noted various considerable consequences in the hiring of a person with a disability, particularly ABI, which fell in line with Donker-Cools's (2018) framework of disease- and the proposed contextual-factors. These included the associated neuropsychological sequelae, discrimination and stigma in the workplace, candidate's inability to complete their roles and keep up with the organisational pace and the cost implications associated with the hire. Perhaps these results suggest that there are more fundamental structural issues in South African hiring practices that need to be addressed, such as high unemployment rate and oversupply of unskilled workers, employing managers' perspectives of the riskiness of a hire and HR personnel's ability to successfully support and accommodate the candidate. These issues cannot simply be addressed through education of HR personnel, but require more structural changes to support the hiring of disabled candidates in South Africa (Smith, 2020).

Broad Finding 2: Familiarity with Disability and Perceptions of Employability

Contrary to expectations, familiarity with disability did not positively impact HR personnel's perceptions of employability of people with an ABI. Research generally suggests that employers with some familiarity with disability or experience hiring candidates with disability are likely to be more open to hiring candidates than employers with little experience (Andersson et al., 2015; Copeland et al., 2009; Houtenville & Klargyrou, 2011; Ralph & Derbyshire, 2013; Rudstam et al., 2012; Stergio-Kita et al., 2017). This may be due to their being more aware of how to manage and accommodate employees with ABI (Kaye et al., 2011). Thus, the results of this study are divergent from what is found in research.

Overall, participants held neutral to very slightly positive views of the employability of people with ABI, but this was not associated with years of experience in recruitment, number of people with disability hired, experience hiring candidates with ABI and having a close family member or friend with disability. This was confirmed in the qualitative research, where participants who have experience with disability seemed to offer similar balanced perceptions of the constraints and benefits of hiring a person with ABI as those who had no experience with hiring disabled candidates. The only difference was that these participants were more likely to note how living with an ABI does not necessitate poor performance and how appropriate support was essential to successfully and sustainably hire a person with ABI. Perhaps there was no significant difference between the groups as the sample were similarly informed or uninformed regarding the benefits and constraints of hiring a person with ABI and the associated management and accommodation required for these employees in the workplace (Kaye et al., 2011). However, this result must be viewed relative to the fact that

very few participants, only 3.6%, had actually hired survivors of ABI. Of those with experience with disability or hiring disabled candidates, the majority had experience hiring candidates who were physically challenged, had a sensory disability or a chronic illness.

Summary of Broad Theme 2. This broad theme indicates that very few of the HR personnel in this sample had actual hiring experience with ABI. Nevertheless, the degree of experience HR personnel had did not seem to change their perceptions of employability to be more favourable than the perceptions held by HR personnel who didn't have much experience in recruiting people with disability. However, participants with more experience were more likely to emphasize the unique impacts of ABI and the importance of support in ensuring a successful hire of a candidate with ABI.

Broad Finding 3: Hierarchy of Disability

As expected, the findings of this study show that HR personnel favour candidates with physical and sensory disabilities over those with an ABI (Andersson et al., 2015; Barr & Bracchitta, 2014; Bricout & Bentley, 2000; Gilbride et al., 2000; Ju et al., 2013; Khalema & Shankar, 2014; Spirito Dalgin & Bellini, 2008; Tøssebro, 2013). Participants were most favourably interested in hiring candidates with a physical disability, followed by those with a sensory disability. Survivors of ABI were least likely to be seen as employable or have employers interested in hiring them. Thus, people with ABI and sensory disability in South Africa experience more intense discrimination in hiring procedures and organisations than people with physical disability, as is consistent with available literature (Schomerus et al., 2012). This can be further understood with reference to the qualitative data where there were common concerns regarding the employability of people with disability. The concerns raised by participants is discussed for each disability and then the comparison between disabilities is presented.

Sensory Disability. Insufficient support and poor levels of accuracy were listed as barriers influencing poor perceptions of candidates with sensory disability. Due to the nature of the disability, candidates were seen to take up valuable company time in adjusting to the new workplace and job requirements. Further, HR personnel would be required to adapt and tailor their current training and onboarding programs to meet the candidate's needs. While it was acknowledged that more supportive infrastructure would need to be provided, there was uncertainty as to what exact adaptations and adjustments would have to be made to accommodate the candidate, such as how to adapt systems of written communication or change the filing systems. Further, there was uncertainty as to how to support the candidate if the technology-based supportive equipment malfunctioned, a reality in South Africa due to

unreliable power supplies and load-shedding (Brown, 2020). Additionally, participants were concerned about the candidate's reliability, accuracy and their being error-prone. Repeated errors may lead to frustration for all due to increased turnaround time and potentially far-reaching consequences. Hesitancy to hire a visually impaired candidate is consistent with literature (Gilbride et al., 2000; McDonnall et al., 2013)

On the other hand, participants noted that while the installation of systems to support this candidate in his or her daily role were likely to be costly, it may be in the company's best interests to drive improvement in digitising systems, improving accessibility and improving data integrity. Thus, HR practitioners have slightly different perspectives regarding the cost implications, which may arise from the field of work and the size of the company. For instance, participants working in the medical field seemed to be particularly opposed to the hiring of a person with visual impairment due to the necessity of operating technology or physically manoeuvring in the work environment. Other industries, such as the construction and finance industries were also unsuited to the candidate, due to the respective need to "be aware of [the] surroundings to avoid harm to others" and to keep up with the high demands and operational pace.

Acquired Brain Injury. A few participants noted that there was no benefit to hiring a person with an ABI. This can be attributed to people not wanting to invest in an employee that was only able to work part-time, concerns regarding low productivity and their unpredictability and absence. This finding was expected, as literature shows that many employers hold negative attitudes toward candidates with ABI (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013).

Participants were concerned about people with ABI's "compromised" ability to do work and the implications this may have for others' deadlines and workloads. This falls in line with Soeker's (2012) findings that South African employers had poor expectations around candidates with ABI's ability to perform. Physiological sequelae, including fatigue, headaches, illness, irritability and diminished or slow processing and functioning, were recognised to lead to a decline in performance during the day, increasing error likelihood and decreasing attention to detail and problem-solving skills. The resultant increased interpersonal frustrations and resentment may lead to poor teamwork and team cohesiveness. These perceptions align with Jasper and Waldhart's (2013) findings that candidates with ABI may struggle to integrate into teams.

A particular area of concern was the case study's positioning of the candidate as only able to take part in part-time work. Furthermore, participants raised concerns around the uncertainty of what one participant referred to as the "future progression or regression of the

injury", the candidate's inability to have a constant presence in the workplace and the need to take increased medical leave. This is consistent with Andersson et al.'s (2015) finding around the perceived instability of ABI, which negatively impacts HR personnel's views of employability. People with ABI are seen to have an 'invisible' disability, thus it is difficult for people to understand, as the survivor of brain injury may not have any tangible signs and thus people are unsure how to behaves and compensates for the disability (Gewurtz, 2016). Ultimately, HR personnel who are unsure of the candidate's dependability may hold poor perceptions of employability and be hesitant to hire and accommodate them (Andersson et al., 2015).

Physical Disability. Participants raised concerns centred around making adaptions to the physical structure of the office to accommodate the physically disabled candidate. Making accommodations structurally and in the job-role requires investment in extra facilities and implies a cost to the company. This was a problem as many HR personnel noted that their organisations were not "wheelchair-friendly", relying on lifts or due to inaccessible office space. Further, a particular issue was raised around the physical ability required in the job, one participant working in the medical field noted, "[employees must] be physically able to help…patients - so this employee's disability would prevent this". This finding is consistent with literature suggesting that employers have a negative perception of hiring a person with physical disability due to the cost implications (Gewurtz, 2016).

Similar to the result of sensory disability, a division exists between HR practitioners who are willing to make structural accommodations for people with disabilities and those that are not (Gewurtz, 2016). Some participants noted how their offices already catered for people with physical disabilities or it was something they had intended to do anyway. One participant stated, "The various changes to the physical space may be costly, but … all office spaces should already be built with wheel-chair accessibility in mind". For instance, a participant wrote, "[Making allowance for wheelchairs], however, seems to be more of a norm …in comparison to making adjustments for employees who suffered an ABI".

Comparison Between Disability Groups.

Impact of Disability on Job Requirements and Incurred Costs. There are understandable concerns regarding hiring employees with disabilities, particularly concerning the ability of candidates to keep up with the fast pace of business and respective cost implications. However, barriers to the hiring of people with sensory or physical disabilities were mainly structural or environmental, whereas barriers for people with ABI seem to be more focused on perceived poor efficiency and impaired functioning. Further, the structural

or environmental barriers are relatively easily addressed by the company, while hiring a person with ABI remained risky. A potential explanation for this was proffered by participants who preferred to hire a candidate with a physical rather than cognitive or mental impairment, saying that with a physically disabled candidate, there was no need to "compromise on intellectual stamina" as one may have to do if hiring a person with an ABI.

People with an ABI may be seen to have unpredictable efficiency and productivity levels, which may lead to the organisation losing money or investing in a poor hire, as well as the impact on the emotional and social environment of the workplace. Subsequently, HR personnel were more hesitant to hire someone with ABI. According to Kaye et al. (2011), ABI is not a 'stable' disability with a stable trajectory, thus employers may be unsure of hiring a candidate they cannot trust to be dependable and accurate (Andersson et al., 2015; Culler et al., 2011).

Candidate's Fit with the Company. Additionally, while the case studies described people of similar dispositions, participants tended to be more effusive about the dispositions of people with physical and to an extent, sensory disability, constructing them as preferable over candidates with an ABI. For instance, the candidate with sensory and physical disability were identified as likely to fit in with the culture and morale of various organisations and be a "good role model". Participants made fewer comments on the positive disposition of a candidate with an ABI. This interesting finding could be explained by the nature of the disability, employer's favourable perceptions of sensory and physical disability over ABI and the broader requirements of a sustainable business in a capitalistic society (Baker et al., 2018). For instance, based on the candidate's location of the brain injury, they may experience various personality changes. If the injury occurs in the frontal lobe, then the survivor may experience affective and behavioural disturbances, such as aggression, impulsivity, irritability, emotional lability and apathy (Wortzel & Arciniegas, 2014; Riggio & Wong, 2009). This may impact their fit with the company and whether they have the personal qualities to help them succeed and add value to the workplace (Gewurtz, 2016).

Summary of Broad Finding 3. The research indicates that practitioners consider three areas when determining interest to hire, namely the impact of the type of disability on basic job requirements, the person-culture fit and ability to perform their function in the context of the company and the financial outlay associated with accommodating the disability. In each of these categories, candidates with ABI are overlooked due to concerns regarding the candidate's dependability, job-fit, ability to fulfil their job requirements and the financial risk associated with hiring. This is attributed to ABI's lack of stability and

emotional sequelae that may affect their ability to do their job (Andersson et al., 2015). Thus, there is a hierarchy in the perceptions HR personnel hold around people with ABI in South Africa, which validates existing literature (Andersson et al., 2015; Fevre et al., 2013; Hernandez et al., 2000; Luecking, 2011; Tøssebro, 2013).

Broad Finding 4: Explanation Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour

Attitude and subjective norms were significant predictors of the new construct, PFIC. This is a novel finding based on the statistical analysis and supported by qualitative data, as the new three-factor construct of the TPB is upheld and it is evident that HR personnel's attitude, underlying normative beliefs and perceptions of general social pressure inform their intentions and feelings of control over hiring a candidate with ABI (Azjen, 1991).

Subjective Norms. Subjective norms were the strongest predictor of PFIC, which falls in line with various researcher's findings regarding behavioural intentions of hiring people with disabilities (Fraser et al., 2011; McDonnall & Lund, 2019). The strong relationship suggests that HR personnel have intent and increased feelings of control over hiring when they deduce that employing a candidate with ABI leads to significant others' approval. This falls in line with previous research which suggests that hiring managers rely on specific cues to examine if supervisors intend to be supportive of their efforts to recruit and select employees (Morgeson & Campion, 2008). The results indicated that while all influential stakeholders were likely to have a neutral to positive response to the hiring of a candidate with ABI, the HR personnel's co-workers, supervisors and CEOs were least likely to have a positive response to the decision. This aligns with South African research which suggests that those with the power to make hiring decisions are unlikely to accommodate candidates with ABI (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). Governments were shown to be most likely to support the hiring of people with ABI, which indicates that participants felt government policies and legislation advocated for the hiring of people with a disability (Dube, 2005).

Attitude. As is consistent with the literature, attitude was also a significant predictor of PFIC. Attitudes are seen to be influenced by the social and cultural values held in society and organisations. These participants held fairly balanced to positive attitudes of the employability of candidates with ABI, despite the various obstacles that exist. However, contrary to the positive relationships typically found in literature (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013), this research found that attitude had a negative relationship with PFIC.

This finding could be understood with reference to Stern's (2000) Attitude-Behaviour-Context (ABC) model, which states that attitudes are comprised of affective, behavioural and cognitive components. The affective component reflects feelings and

emotions about hiring people with disabilities, the behavioural component reflects the way attitude influences behaviour of hiring people with ABI and the cognitive component refers to the beliefs and knowledge about people with ABI in jobs. These components are typically found to be linked (Stern, 2000). However, this is not always the case as cognitive and affective components do not always match with the behaviour. Stern (2000) states that if there are strongly negative contextual factors, such as a lack of inclusive hiring practices and norms in South African organisations, there may be a poor or no relationship between attitude and behavioural intention. The ABC applies to this finding in suggesting that despite HR personnel's positive attitude, they may not have the autonomy or intent to hire a candidate with ABI (Ang & Amin, 2015). Further, an attitude is an evaluation of the favour or disfavour resulting from a particular behaviour (Azjen, 1991). Thus, the costs may be perceived to be too high or the benefits insufficient to warrant engaging in the behaviour (Ang & Amin, 2015). In Ju et al.'s (2013) research, though managers typically held positive attitudes toward workers with disabilities, they had reservations around actually hiring them. This finding, in combination with a depressed economy, may mean that participants had to "toe the line" regardless of their personal attitudes of hiring candidates with ABI.

Realisation in the South African context. These findings present an unusual opportunity to increase inclusive practice in South Africa. There are candidates with ABI who are competent and able to return to the workplace, but due to various barriers, including attitudinal barriers around whether the candidate will fit into the organisational culture and a lack of inclusive hiring practices to influence organisational subjective norms, they are not granted the opportunity to join the mainstream labour force. Rather than relying on legislation and B-BBEE ratings to encourage inclusivity, the government could adopt an alternative approach in the form of a sponsored entrepreneurial enterprise that accommodates individuals with disability who are struggling to find employment. This enterprise could provide a 'halfway point' between relying solely on disability grants and being integrated into the mainstream labour force. Members of this enterprise could learn the skills to cope socio-emotionally and technically in the workplace (Wehman et al., 2005). When adequate competencies are exhibited, the survivor could be provided with a post-accident work-related ability reference and be guided through the transition into an appropriate workplace where they could work at varying capacities dependent on their disability-related sequelae.

In this study, HR personnel were open to hiring people with ABI, but multiple obstacles led to these candidates still being seen as unemployable. Supporting an inclusive enterprise such as this presents an opportunity for companies to partake in inclusive practice

or a form of corporate social responsibility, without having to compromise their own business. Companies could buy shares in this sector and provide opportunities for employees to engage with the enterprise in return for B-BBEE points, which offers the benefits of tax deductions and access to tenders (Lengnick-Hall, 2008). Further, a competent candidate may be offered employment based on what is realistic for the company based on their context, size and field of operation. Candidates may offer valuable contributions to a diverse workforce and culture, which benefits the company's image (Gewurtz, 2016; Maja et al., 2013). This may be welcomed by companies in the current depressed climate, leading to greater uptake and creation of inclusive subjective norms (Azjen, 1991; Smith, 2020). Further, based on the results employees would benefit from meeting their humanitarian needs, having a "reality check" on their problems and being inspired by the candidate. Employees who are more informed as to the capabilities of people with various disabilities may be more willing to engage with them in the workplace (Andersson et al., 2015). Lastly, individuals with disability would benefit from training, support and access to an appropriate workplace. In turn, employees and management may start to interact and have exposure to people with disability and adjust their attitudes and subjective norms to be more inclusive and realistic of hiring people with disability, particularly those with ABI (Kaye et al., 2011).

Summary of Broad Finding 4. These explanations offer further insight into the new conceptualisation of TPB and opportunities for inclusive hiring in the South African context. Currently, the realisation of inclusive government policy is insufficient and needs to be reassessed and new approaches need to be adopted to fulfil this human right. According to the results, HR personnel's intent and perceived behavioural control may be altered through introducing favourable subjective norms, perhaps through the adoption of inclusive practices, which may change organisational culture to start to promote inclusivity (Araten-Bergman, 2016). One such suggestion is a state-sponsored entrepreneurial enterprise that offers a form of vocational rehabilitation to individuals with disability and grants them appropriate exposure, guidance and potential transition to the mainstream labour market (Wehman et al., 2005). Increased and more effective exposure to people with disability may alter non-HR employees', supervisors' and CEOs' attitudes of the employability of people with ABI. If subjective norms in top management change and HR personnel gain more autonomy over their intent, perhaps they will be able to act upon their positive attitudes to hire candidates with ABI.

Implications of the Present Study

This subsection aims to extrapolate the theoretical contributions this study can make to disability and hiring literature, as well as the practical implications of the findings for medico-legal assessments, vocational rehabilitation centres and people with disabilities.

Theoretical Contributions

The findings contribute to the human resource management (HRM) and disability literature in the following ways. Firstly, the present study demonstrates that the adapted-PEI (Berntson & Marklund, 2007), TOPB (Azjen, 1991) and case studies (Andersson et al., 2015) are useful theoretical frameworks that can be used to better understand perceptions of employability. The scales and case study were shown to be reliable and valid amongst a sample of South African HR personnel. Further, a new construct, PFIC, was established to be relevant in this South African context. Further investigation into the construct validity behind the TPB scale is required in future research studies, perhaps with more focus on advanced statistical procedures to determine the factor structure of the TPB in the South African context. Secondly, this study confirmed the assumption that not all disability categories are seen as equally employable, rather HR personnel hold distinct preferences to hire candidates with physical or sensory disability over a candidate with brain injury (Fraser et al., 2013). This could inform government's approach to inclusivity in the workplace. Lastly, insight is offered into what factors specifically impact South African HR personnel's perceptions of employability and whether this is subject to change. A wealth of research exists that investigates the factors influencing people with ABI's return to work, including demographic variables (Arango-Lasprilla et al., 2011), injury severity and characteristics (Dahm & Ponsford et al., 2016; Forslund et al., 2014), length of hospital stay and disability at discharge (Gary et al., 2009), premorbid substance abuse and behavioural problems (Guilmette, 2008) and neuropsychological factors (Benedictus et al., 2010). However, the environment and perceptions that pervade the workplace also play a role in determining the opportunity return to work for people with an ABI. The data generated from this study may encourage greater interest and more accurate interpretation of HR personnel's perceptions of employability of persons with ABI in South Africa and the subsequent opportunity they have to return to work. These theoretical contributions hopefully make a small contribution toward HRM and disability literature by offering further insight into the techniques used to measure employability and the relevant constructs surrounding employability in South Africa.

Practical Implications

This study and the findings discussed contribute to HRM practices and policies as they provide a contextual understanding of HR personnel's perceptions of employability of

people with disabilities, particularly those with ABI in South Africa. This may lead to more informed practices that assist, support and sustain employees, rather than inhibiting their progression in the workplace (Akbar & Wissink, 2018).

The findings of this research are particularly relevant to the expert opinions provided by Industrial Organisational Psychologists in the medicolegal field relative to, for example, a road accident fund claim and whether the survivor will return to the workforce or not. This information aids employers, insurance companies and courts in deciding on the appropriate redress and compensation strategies (Pryor & Hawkins, 2009). Additionally, vocational assessment can be used to make recommendations as to how individuals with disabilities can realistically maximise their employment potential, perhaps through appropriate treatment, training or other forms of intervention that focus on the requisite skills needed for employment (Roessler et al., 2007). Thus, this research may lead to greater validity, reliability, fairness and utility in hiring and medicolegal assessments, where investigations are more holistic and incorporate multiple factors and perspectives (Schultz et al., 2016).

The results of this research in combination with suggestions made by participants in the qualitative data allow for the following recommendations to be made on a policy, organisational and team level. There are very few resources that support empowerment and inclusion in the disability space, South African policy needs to respond to these findings by adapting its approach to be more collaborative and committed so to offer an opportunity for sustainable inclusion (Bradshaw, 2019). This could occur as a state-sponsored entrepreneurial endeavour that offers a sustainable source of employment with potential for career growth for the survivor of brain injury or other disability by offering more targeted training and interventions and to ensure these candidates, when ready, are more appropriately accommodated for in organisations (Akbar & Wissink, 2018).

On an organisational level, stakeholder buy-in is essential in a successful hiring procedure (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). This particularly applies to CEOs, non-HR staff and supervisors, who may be more inclined to engage in inclusive behaviours if they see the direct benefit to the company (Gewurtz, 2016). This benefit may be gaining B-BBEE points and rewards, which may encourage stakeholders to be more open to engaging in inclusive practices. Subsequently, increased organisational exposure to disability may encourage a trickle-down of inclusive principles and effective accommodation and management of people with ABI (Progression, 2020). HR personnel play a particularly important role in ensuring effective accommodations and thus need to be equipped with the knowledge and resources to adequately create inclusive environments where those with disabilities can be hired and

appropriately supported (Progression, 2020). These strategies may facilitate integration by ensuring that inclusiveness becomes ingrained into the culture and values of the organisation (Progression, 2020). HR personnel can also act as role models of inclusivity, exhibiting appropriate disability-sensitive behaviours, which may include awareness of the legal context through utilising disability-related legislation, such as the Skills Development Act and the other elements of the B-BBEE scorecards, as well as having a no-tolerance policy for hostility or discrimination (Akbar & Wissink, 2018). The content covered in Industrial Psychology courses is subsequently of great importance to ensure Industrial Organisational Psychology practitioners are fair and consistent in their practice. Thus, it is recommended that South African Universities and the Health Professions Counsel consult their competencies of Industrial Organisational Psychology interns and students to expand their knowledge of accommodating disabled employees and to assess their ability to create sustainable frameworks that can support the employment of a person with a disability, particularly those with an ABI.

On a team level, teambuilding workshops may help the candidate with ABI to develop conducive team behaviour and social skills (Akbar, 2013). This may improve co-workers and supervisors' perceptions of the candidate's employability and efficacy in their role. Further, disability sensitivity and stigma reduction training could be provided (Chan et al., 2011) to reduce the stigma experienced by people with disabilities, particularly those with ABI, in the workplace (Gewurtz, 2016). Changing the way disability is perceived is challenging, but vital in creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

Strengths

Mixed-Methods Design. When the results of a qualitative study are combined with quantitative techniques, it may lead to richer results and a more accurate understanding of the complexity present in any situation (Creswell, 2009). The mixed-methods approach allowed the researcher to take on a broader and more complete set of research questions and meant that stronger evidence was provided through the convergence and collaboration of findings, to produce more complete knowledge that could inform theory and practice (Creswell, 2009).

Filling a Research Gap. This research delves into a field that seems to have been under-researched both globally and locally in South Africa. Survivors of ABI face considerable obstacles in finding employment and understanding HR personnel's perceptions is vital to enhancing opportunities for the survivors to return to work. This research could be

used to inform policy evaluation, adaptation and implementation to be more effective in assisting those with disability who are seeking employment.

Limitations

Descriptive Cross-Sectional Design. Due to the use of a descriptive and cross-sectional design, the researcher could only collect data from participants at one point in time and thus was unable to make any causal inferences about the relationships between input and output variables due to the use of this design (Field, 2013). Additionally, this design does not allow for time lag effects between variables to be determined. In the future, an experimental design could be adopted to establish a causal relationship between variables.

Non-Probability Sampling. This method of recruiting participants was employed due to time and resource constraints. However, not using random selection to obtain the sample limits the generalisability of results to the broader population (Field, 2013). Indeed, there was an overrepresentation of females and English home language speakers in the sample. This was likely to have influenced the findings of this sample's perception of employability of people with ABI. Hence, the study should be replicated, using a more rigorous sampling method to ensure the representativeness of the general population of HR personnel. For instance, if a database of HR personnel, for instance through the Society of Industrial Organisational Psychology South Africa (SIOPSA) could be obtained, simple random sampling could be utilized to randomly select participants and thus create a highly representative sample.

Control Variables. Various factors were not controlled for in this research study. Control variables are the factors that researchers should attempt to keep constant to rule out alternative explanations for findings, reduce error terms and increase statistical power (Schmitt & Klimoski, 1991). This is a significant limitation as other extraneous factors may have had effects on the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables, which may have skewed the results of the study (Allen, 2017). For instance, it was clear that different industries, particularly the medical field, proposed more barriers to entry than those in other fields of employment. In future, extraneous variables could be controlled for by drawing on an experimental design by manipulating the nature of the sample or environment to be identical across participants or through statistical control through measuring relevant variables and including them in the primary analysis (Becker, 2005).

Use of Self-Report Measures. This study relied on self-report measures to determine adapted-PEI, TOPB, the case study and the qualitative questions. Self-report was utilised in this report as it is an acceptable method of measuring psychological experiences and

perceptions (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, a consequence of this is that common method bias is a threat to the study (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Common method bias occurs when there is a reliance on self-report measures and can lead to artificially inflated relationships between variables.

A further problem is that HR personnel's answers may have been skewed by social desirability bias, a need to provide socially appropriate responses to survey questions, rather than expressing their actual views (DeMaio, 1984). In South Africa, values of human rights and equal opportunities for people with disabilities are emphasised and realised through various legislations and public policies (Dube, 2005). Therefore, HR personnel may have felt uncomfortable expressing negative attitudes or declaring an unwillingness to hire a person with disability, as they may be concerned that this view is socially unacceptable or due to a fear of not complying with labour force legislation and regulation (Araten-Bergman, 2016). Thus, this may have led to overly idealised views on the employability of people with disabilities.

Discomfort with revealing practices counter to the labour law in combination with the composition of the sample where the majority of participants qualified in the People management and humanities field, meant that participants may be susceptible to "faking good" to be socially appropriate (Ziegler et al., 2011). Rather than offering an accurate representation of reality, faking is a response set that portrays a person in a way that helps them achieve personal goals, due to situational demands and person characteristics rather than the attribute of interest (Ziegler et al., 2011). Thus, participant's responses may have been biased to be more favourable of the employability of people with ABI. Future research could account for this by adopting more experimental or observational methodology to cross-check the data and thus control for social-desirability bias (DeMaio, 1984).

Sample Size. Sixty-seven participants completed the survey data. This small sample size may have implications for the generalisability of the study's findings and the statistical power of the techniques used (Field, 2013). Generalisability is the ability to make accurate inferences from a study's findings to the population. However, this requires that the sample should be representative of the larger population and should be relatively large (Polit & Beck, 2010). The sample in this study was drawn from the broader population of HR personnel using availability, non-probability sampling techniques that targeted participants who were easily accessible and willing to participate in the study. However, the sample was not entirely representative of the broader HR population, as it was dominated by White English-speaking people. A representative sample would have had a more diverse mix of races and home

languages to offer a more accurate portrayal of the South African working environment. In future research, a bigger sample should be accessed to increase the accuracy and generalisability of the study's results (Field, 2013).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The Chi-square analysis is a very basic form of CFA and ideally should be interpreted in conjunction with the standardised root square mean, comparative fit indices and the root mean square error of approximation. The use of multiple fit indices provides a more holistic view of goodness of fit, accounting for sample size, model complexity and other considerations relevant to the study (Alavi et al., 2020). Thus, in future research, these statistical procedures must be included to offer a more accurate representation of the fit of the models discussed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014).

Suggestions for Future Research Based on Findings

The findings of this study suggest that HR perceptions of employability warrants further investigation into HRM recruitment and selection practices. Firstly, there could be an increased examination of available organisational resources and policies in South Africa that assist and support candidates with disability, particularly those with ABI. Further, the available resources and guidance given to HR personnel should be assessed based on the effectiveness of the resource. Secondly, more in-depth research on how the perspectives of those with the power in the organisation, such top management, affect HR personnel's scope for the implementation of organisational hiring practices and interventions would be useful. Third, a sample with more experience in hiring employees with disability should be targeted to gain increased insight into the benefits and barriers of hiring people with disability, as well as how familiarity impacts perceptions of employability. This may offer more insight into whether HR personnel's perceptions are based on concrete knowledge or limiting stereotypes. Lastly, while organisations need to continue supporting all employees, it is important to continue identifying strategies to build an inclusive climate for disability at an individual, team and organisational level (Follmer & Jones, 2018). This research suggests that inhibiting factors could be dependent on the type of industry, size of company or stability of the economic system. This could take the form of the state-sponsored entrepreneurial endeavour that acts as a 'transition' zone between unemployment and actively seeking employment in the labour market. This has implications for the practice of Industrial Organisational Psychology in that there is a need for to drive the strategic benefit of more holistic practices. For instance, the social and behavioural determinants of a candidate with an ABI's capacity to be successful in a role needs to be understood within their context. In promoting a more inclusive workplace, perhaps further research could investigate the

traditional norms of professional boundaries that prevent Industrial Organisational Psychologists consulting the candidate's healthcare professional or vocational rehabilitation representative in better understanding the implications of hiring them and better supporting them in the workplace.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

South Africa faces many seemingly insurmountable challenges, one of which is a high prevalence of ABI and subsequent economic inactivity that is damaging for individuals as well as the community and country's economy. People with disability are at a disadvantage in the labour market. There are multiple stakeholders, including governments, top management of companies and HR personnel who can play a vital role in demarcating inclusive policies, equipping people with ABI for the workplace and offering appropriate support and accommodation in the role. This research project investigated South African HR personnel's perceptions of the employability of people with ABI. It was found that this sample of HR personnel have perceptions falling on a spectrum from being very positive to hesitant about the employability of people with disability, specifically those with an ABI. Though many HR personnel seemed open to hiring people with ABI, in actual practice this may not have been the case. This was explained with reference to the multiple and intersecting barriers to employment, including the low level of experience that the HR personnel had with ABI, the hierarchy of disability, the candidates' poor ability to fulfil the social and task-related demands of the workplace and the lack of autonomy that participants had to take action in hiring a person with ABI. These findings suggest that while it may be possible to improve HR personnel's perceptions of employability of people with ABI, unexpectedly, this may not be achieved through increasing familiarity with ABI. Rather, the manner in which people with ABI could be employed could be altered, such as a state-sponsored entrepreneurial endeavour that guides people with ABI to integrate into the mainstream labour force. This facilitated process may alter perceptions through addressing the stigma surrounding the unfavorability of ABI when compared to other disabilities, namely physical and sensory, and through targeting non-HR employee's, CEO's and supervisor's perceptions of employability through different methods. Further, in changing HR personnel's perceptions, it may be beneficial to be cognisant of structural barriers present in South Africa, including high unemployment, an oversupply of unskilled workers and lack of provisions to support disabled people in organisations. Ultimately, there is an opportunity for change in HRM practices in recognising, acknowledging, appropriately supporting and integrating people with ABI, appropriately, as productive and valuable members of the workforce and society.

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