



NAME & SURNAME: LINDOKUHLE MDEYI UBISI

STUDENT NUMBER: 1259577

SUPERVISOR: DR. JOANNE NEILLE

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Surname: Ubisi

First name/s: Lindokuhle Mdeyi

Student no.: 1257599

Supervisor: Dr. Joanne Neille

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List of abbreviations/acronyms and explanations used within the study:

Abbreviation/acronym	Explanation
GWD	Graduate with a disability
GWDs	Graduates with disabilities
AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organisation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
PWD	Person with a disability
PWDs	Persons with disabilities
NDP	National Development Plan
NYDPF	National Youth Development Policy Framework
SETAs	Skills Education Training Authorities
DOL	Department of Labour
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
CRPD	Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
CEE	11th Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report (2010-11)
CSI	Corporate social investment

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

One of the global concerns identified by the Centre for Social Development in Africa is where do graduates with disabilities (GWDs) end up after they graduate (Graham, Selipsky, Moodley, Maina, & Rowland, 2010). More importantly is their integration within the work environment (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, AGCAS, 2015). This requires an in-depth look at issues surrounding disability and society, higher education as well as employment. Persons with disabilities (PWDs)¹ are largely exposed to poverty, subpar healthcare, infrastructural backlogs, violence, discrimination, inadequate basic education, high educational drop-out rates, youth unemployment as well as scarcity of jobs as compared to their non-disabled counterparts (Graham *et al.*, 2010). It is believed that various key global stakeholders including multi-state partnerships, donor foundations, private and public industries, and NGOs can all act as instrumental measures towards alleviating these socioeconomic inequalities (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Emerging from this context, employed GWDs enjoying successful entry, adjustment to and further development within the work environment present a worthwhile group to follow given their successful career trajectory. Furthermore, by understanding their resilience, research can contribute to enabling theory and practice which empowers future GWDs to navigate successful entry, adjustment to as well as further development within the work environment.

¹ “There are many debates about appropriate terminology for disability and disabled people. In keeping with social model conventions, South Africans have tended to use the term “disabled people” because according to the social model, people are disabled by society. Hence the term “Office on the Status of Disabled Persons”. Other legislation such as the Employment Equity Act uses the term “persons with disabilities”. By the time the Ministry was established, the term used was “persons with disabilities” (Ministry for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities), in contrast to OSDP usage. This reflects the usage in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – to be discussed later in this chapter – as well as the influence of North American terminology on disability, which argues a people-first approach. The argument is that people are more than their disabilities, and that the term “disabled people” totalises their experiences and reduces them to nothing more than products of disablement. There is no consensus on use of the terms “disabled people” or “people with disabilities”; both usages reflect concern with the rights of disabled people. In South Africa, in activist circles the term “disabled people” continues to be used extensively despite the official terminology in the Ministry moving to “persons with disabilities”” (Swartz, 2012, p.35).

The World Health Organisation Disability and Health Fact Sheet estimates the prevalence of PWDs to be over one billion worldwide (WHO, 2015). It is further estimated that 150 million of these individuals are children with disabilities (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF, 2006). From this billion and more, 718 409 of this population remain children with disabilities within South Africa (Statistics South Africa, StatsSA, 2014). Globally, an estimated 90 per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries remain out of school (UNICEF, Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children, 2014). Within SA, children with severe disabilities have the lowest educational outcomes: 24.6 per cent had some primary education, 23.8 per cent had no formal education and 5.3 per cent had attained higher education (StatsSA, 2014). The Centre for Social Development in Africa's 2014 report estimated PWDs in SA with a university degree had risen from 0.3 per cent from 2002, to between 1 and 2 per cent in 2014 (Graham *et al.*, 2014). This means that few PWDs attain higher education to enter jobs of tertiary requirements.

Despite the goal for inclusive and quality education for all people, the World report on disability (WHO, 2011) suggests access, affordability and availability of special and assistive educational resources and facilities remain restricted by impairment (for example, spinal impairment), environmental (lack of wheel-chair accessible facilities) and contextual barriers (preconceived bias on performance ability from students and other peers) for children with disabilities. Thus, higher education remains remote, if not unobtainable for most PWDs in South Africa as well as in other developing countries (UNICEF, 2014). Furthermore, transitioning from an educational setting to the work environment has also become a global and national priority which has called for changes in quotas, targets, reasonable accommodation amongst other things to realise equal rights and privileges for PWDs within the open job market (WHO, 2011). According to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), this entails a shift from a medical model which emphasises the impairment of PWDs who need to be cared for instead of being empowered, to a social model that aims to attain the social, economic, political, informational as well as attitudinal change for all PWDs (WHO, 2011). This requires

the recognition of diversification of workplace settings and participation of more trained and skilled PWDs (Ramutloa, 2010).

South Africa has recently aimed to bridge this gap through equity driven policy and interventions (StatsSA, 2014). For example, South African organisations have been encouraged to aspire to have a 2 per cent quota of PWDs (Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003; Employment Equity Act of 1999; National Development Plan, NDP, 2012). Vocational and skills training education has been set up funded mainly from Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs) to equip existing and new PWDs into the labour market (NDP, 2012). However, not only have most corporate organisations failed to implement this quota regarding hiring, retention and promotion of professional PWDs (StatsSA, 2014), but government agencies have also not complied with this regulation (Commission for Employment Equity Report 2010-11, Department of Labour, DOL, 2011). The most recently available estimate figure of the total workforce within SA of skilled PWDs was at 0.8 per cent in 2011 (DOL, 2011).

In most developing countries, 8 in 10 PWDs were unemployed in 2012 (NDP, 2012). The absorption rate of PWDs within the SA labour market remains slightly increased from 0.7 per cent in 2006, to 0.83 per cent in 2010 (DOL, 2011). Furthermore, the concentrated distribution is more likely to be represented at the lower occupational levels. This is evident as more than 60 per cent of the 43 913 PWDs reported by employers within the report were said to occupy semi-skilled, unskilled positions and temporary job positions (DOL, 2011). Yet, during such poor projected academic and career trajectories, great strides have been attained by some PWDs, including those who graduate with above average marks at tertiary institutions *en route* to entering the work environment (AGCAS, 2015). This study aims to follow the workplace resilience of GWDs to suggest ways which may further promote successful entry, adjustment and further development within the work environment of future GWDs.

1.2 Definition of key concepts

1.2.1 Graduates with disabilities

GWDs relates to PWDs who have attained any post-secondary qualification (university degree, diploma, trade certificate as well as technical and vocational training). StatsSA (2014) reports that only 5.1 per cent of PWDs had attained higher education as opposed to 12.1 per cent for persons with no disability. Despite the introduction of special needs schools, some PWDs find themselves within mainstream educational settings due to special needs schools being full, with extensive waiting lists, as well as providing inadequate teacher support to enable competence and mastery of the curriculum (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Within mainstream schools, children with disabilities face unique challenges related to reasonable accommodation within the school setting, stigma from peers, academic limitations related to lack of assistive technology, as well as lack of proper teacher training and support (Children with Disabilities in South Africa: A Situation Analysis: 2001-2011, Department of Social Development, 2012). In SA, there are limited tertiary institutions which specialise in training matriculated PWDs (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Thus, GWDs represent a unique subgroup within SAs educated population (Matshedisho, 2007).

1.2.2 Graduates with disabilities and the work environment

SA has inherited great injustices and inequalities based on race, gender, class, ethnicity, geographical location as well as (dis)ability which has impacted the employment landscape of South African organisations (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). For example, the Census 2001 revealed the disparity in employment rates stating that only about 19 per cent of PWDs were employed as opposed to 35 per cent of persons without disabilities (StatsSA, 2014). The Commission for Employment Equity annual report (CEE, 2009–2010) stipulates 3 909 of PWDs within SA (about 0.6 per cent of the total disability population) were employed GWDs (Ramutloa, 2010). In 2011, the representation of all actively employed persons showed that PWDs have slightly lower proportions within the labour force as opposed to persons without disabilities (62.0 per cent and 63.4 per cent respectively). Unemployed figures showed similar patterns with persons without disabilities as it was estimated that almost a third (27.5 per cent) of the working-age

population (15-64 years) were unemployed. On the contrary, PWDs ranked the highest as opposed to persons without disabilities amongst persons not economically active (10.8 per cent and 9.0 per cent respectively) (StatsSA, 2014). However, despite the poor absorption into the work environment, some GWDs have successfully entered, adjusted and further developed within the work environment (Sayce, 2011).

1.3 Statement of the problem

Extensive research in SA has been conducted on the visibility/invisibility, barriers/facilitators as well as stagnation/transformation issues of disabled tertiary students and their lived experiences (Bell, 2013; Lorenzo, 2012; Lourens & Swartz, 2016). Lorenzo (2012), for example, showed that rife social, economic, political and cultural inequalities exist within all aspects faced by disabled youth in maintaining their livelihoods. Lourens and Swartz (2016) study showed many disabled students still feel the need to hide entire, or parts of, their visible impairment. Yet, there is limited research which has been conducted within the SA context which highlights the transition of GWDs from tertiary to the work environment, mainly the successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace, particularly resilience and positive attributes of GWDs. Assuredly, understanding resilience amongst GWDs could immensely assist researchers and practitioners to develop theoretical frameworks which could be utilised to foster resilience within school as well as work environments. In addition, the utility of these resilience theories could further be employed to facilitate holistic interventions, equity-driven policy, stakeholder-beneficiary engagement, as well as rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of legislative frameworks. This includes the White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy of 1997 and Employment Equity Act of 1999. Furthermore, given the high drop-out and unemployment rates amongst PWDs, the bearing on theory, policy and intervention can hopefully contribute to the alleviation of these issues. This paper aims to investigate resilience within the career trajectory of GWDs. By so doing, the paper seeks to inform theory, policy and intervention on resilience for GWDs, especially in terms of resilience and positive attributes.

1.4 Rationale

Out of respect to the person who motivated this study, I would like to introduce the true account of “Grace”. Born blind, “Grace” always knew she was meant to ‘see’ the potential in others. This is why she followed a career in psychological assessment. Throughout her studies, she had been supported by university staff as well as assistive structures, including members of a Disability Rights Unit, private transport and braille translated study material. To all those around her, “Grace” was an inspiration, graduating with above-average marks for her Honour’s degree, as well as occupying various activist roles within student organisations with a strong disability focus. All in all, “Grace” was set to achieve great strides in her aspiring career. However, three months after graduation, “Grace’s” attempts to find employment were met with negative perceptions of her ability to perform psychological assessments as a blind individual. Amidst the reasons she considered to her rejection, she thought perhaps the need for assistive technology might be too costly to consider for employers, or maybe her visual impairment might stir fear and loss of confidence from clients. Yet, never losing hope, “Grace” was permanently employed with a private corporation specialising in psychological assessment within a year of finishing her studies. Now, in her position as a junior staff member, “Grace” still advocates for equal work practices for all employees. Extending her activist position, “Grace” uses her personal experience to motivate young PWDs to become fully active in the advancements of all PWDs.

The challenges of graduates with disabilities range from entry, adjustment to as well as further development within the work environment (Maja, Mann, Sing, Steyn, & Naidoo, 2011). Much like Grace, this includes unfair discrimination in hiring practices, lack of reasonable accommodation within the work environment, as well as few opportunities for top management promotions (DOL, 2011). Recent demographic studies by StatsSA (2015) estimate that 24.5 per cent of South Africans ages 15-64 were unemployed (16.0 million employed, 15.1 million not economically active and 5.2 million unemployed). Economically active individuals include people from 15 to 64 years of age who are either employed or unemployed and seeking employment. Young people aged 18-34 years with graduate and other

tertiary education (50.65 per cent) make up this figure (StatsSA, 2015). According to the Human Right Watch Report (2016), unemployment rates intensify with power differences as a function of race, gender, (dis)ability, and access to education. Given the socio-political legacy of SAs history, the structural inequalities established by these power differences remains entrenched within today's society. For example, comparative figures of skilled employees differ in terms of Black and White people (15.6 and 58.65 per cent respectively) and male and female (36.23 and 34.63 per cent).

Only the 11th Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report (CEE 2010-11) reflects the difference between disabled and able-bodied skilled employees (0.8 and 99.2 per cent respectively) (DOL, 2011). However, much national priority in recognition of these inequalities has been underlined in terms of differential access to education, including the recent outcome of the student movement, #FeesMustFall negotiations to provide funding to all students with below-average annual household incomes. Government has injected increased budgets into higher educational institutions to fund students. The establishment of learnerships and apprenticeships have attempted to attenuate a largely unskilled South African youth population. Furthermore, labour laws which impart favour to previously disadvantaged groups have become introduced in employment settings including quotas and target systems (StatsSA, 2011). Yet, the struggle remains in terms of integrating marginalised groups such as GWDs within the open job market (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, AGCAS, 2015).

A consistent work ethic, positive attitude, resourceful problem-solving skills are amongst the favourable observations cited by employers of employed PWDs (Hernandez *et al.*, 2007). Indeed, PWDs have become assets within the work environment (Minkowitz, 2007). However, in spite of the above feats, in developing countries like SA, one recognises the incidence of unemployed PWDs remains high (StatsSA, 2014). Furthermore, upon entering the job market, these individuals are often disappointed by the lack of occupational change (stigma), progress (poor infrastructure to facilitate optimal performance), as well as potential benefits (extension of assistive technologies to also assist clientele) following employment of

PWDs (Harris & Roulstone, 2010). The concept of resilience amongst employed PWDs remains overlooked within literature as well as most workplace corridors.

Many theories and definitions of resilience exist to account for the overcoming of adversity in health problems, family or relationship problems, academic, workplace and financial worries among others of resilient individuals. However, the shared definition amongst practitioners of resilience is “the capability to cope and rebound (bounce back) in the face of significant adversity, risk, trauma or stress” (Kruger & Prinsloo, 2008, p.242). According to figures from a StatsSA’s Community 2007 Survey (2008), more children with disabilities are likely to be orphaned; that is 1 in 4 children with disabilities in SA has lost at least 1 or both parents as opposed to 1 in 5 non-disabled children. Another 2010 survey by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry uncovered that more than 13 000 children with disabilities resided in youth care centres nationwide with 28 reporting at least one type of disability, and that many of these centres remained not fully equipped to cater or facilitate proper integration within mainstream society for children with disabilities (Department of Social Development, 2012). Furthermore, given that 70 per cent of the unemployed South African demographic consists of young PWDs (National Youth Development Policy Framework, NYDPF, 2002), the resilient narratives of “Grace” and others become an essential gap to fill within literature as well as workplace corridors.

According to Statistics South Africa (StatsSA, 2015), the absorption of GWDs within the labour market remains relatively lower within the South African employment sector as compared to non-disabled persons. However, GWDs have gradually been entering the South African employment sector (DOL, 2011). Despite the staggering drop-out rate among PWDs from primary and secondary education (37 per cent of youth ages 16-18 compared to 14 per cent of non-disabled in 2007) (Social Surveys Africa, 2009), the remaining few ultimately graduate from a higher educational setting. Literature predicts adverse outcomes (fear, stigma and prejudice) for PWDs when entering the job market (Enable United Nations, 2007; Human Right Watch Report, 2016; WHO, 2011). However, in spite of the negative societal perceptions, some GWDs do manage to enter a variety of job markets, hold longer working terms, as well as exceed to managerial positions (AGCAS, 2015).

This indeed highlights the need to explore resilience as well as the self-reported positive attributes of those who successfully enter, adjust and further develop in the work environment. This approach is certainly a welcome change from the majority of literature in disability studies which merely focuses on the negative life experiences of PWDs.

1.5 Research question and aims

This exploratory study aimed to address the following research questions and aims:

Research question:

1. What are the social and work experiences of GWDs?
2. What are the experiences of resilience and positive attributes amongst GWDs within the working environment?

Main aim:

- i. To explore the successful entry, adjustment to and further development of GWDs within the work environment.

Sub-aims:

- i. To gain insight into the ways in which GWDs have empowered themselves from their social and work experiences.
- ii. To explore the ways in which GWDs have transitioned from the university environment into the working environment.
- iii. To investigate resilience and positive attributes which influence the decision to work within a specific work environment.

1.6 Research objectives

Drawing from the above, the following presents the research objectives of this paper:

- Resilience in the work environment requires certain attributes which might be consistent across employed PWDs. Thus, a self-developed theoretical model of these attributes can be constructed to demonstrate the relationship between self-reported positive attributes and their importance for resilience. However, with the nature (congenital or acquired), type (physical, communicative, cognitive, and sensory or a combination of these) as well as access to intervention (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare) per disability, one should consider how these aspects shape reported positive attributes across individuals. The researcher thus identified what are the self-reported positive attributes shared by PWDs who have a working term of at least 5 years.
- Based on the results, the researcher developed a conceptual framework of reported positive attributes through which to relay their contribution to existing theories of resilience and employment for PWDs. The objective here was to identify any contribution of this model to existing theory on resilience, particularly for youth unemployment. Youth unemployment remains a prevalent issue among young PWDs (NYDPF, 2002). Following the self-devised theoretical framework, the study highlighted how the suggested positive attributes can be promoted to increase job entry particularly among young PWDs.
- Finally, policy and intervention remain invaluable enablers to adjustment and further development for resilience to continue. In this case, enabling policy and intervention strategies were outlined for PWDs to acquire and internalise these positive attributes to achieve greater things in the employment industry. The researcher thus identified changes which can be introduced at policy levels to enable employed GWDs to enjoy equal rights and privileges in the workplace.

1.7 Chapter organisation

Following this introduction, chapter two introduces the literature relevant to the topic as well as the proposed theoretical framework. This includes discussions on disability and higher education, disability and the employment sector as well as resilience and disability. The chapter also includes a discussion on the theoretical framework including positive psychology, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, as well as the ICF's biopsychosocial model, particularly in the context of resilience and disability. Chapter three presents the methodology section. Within this section, the paper provides information regarding the procedure of how the research was conducted. This chapter highlights the study site, participants, ethical issues, sample selection and size, study tools and the researcher's reflexivity. In chapter four, the paper presents the study results and discussion while engaging these results with the existing literature as well as the proposed theoretical framework. Finally, chapter five concludes the paper with a summative review of the findings, recommendations, study limitations as well as future suggestions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter firstly explores relevant literature and research into PWDs and society. This includes an in-depth look at the history and current perceptions of PWDs and their position within society. Next, the review will look at PWDs and higher education. As the higher education setting presents an integral environment for GWDs to acquire marketable skills, the South African landscape of higher education and disability is explored for its turnover and ability to prepare students who are identified as disabled. Given the socioeconomic embodiments of the concept of 'employment', employment is defined within the context of this study. Furthermore, the chapter conceptually defines resilience and reviews the internal debates within literature and available studies regarding the concept of resilience. Also discussed is the theoretical framework around resilience (positive psychology, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, as well as the ICF's biopsychosocial model). The literature review locates resilience within these frameworks.

2.2 Persons with disabilities

Disability studies have established new guidelines when describing PWDs (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). According to the WHO's ICF (WHO, 2001), disability represents the intersection of impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions which manifest in the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual attributes (environmental and personal attributes). The shift from person-first highlights a move from deficit to recognition that society imposes disabling obstacles emanating, for instance, from transport, the built environment, lack of peer support among others (Grue, 2016; Howell, 2005; Matshedisho, 2007). This further excludes PWDs from participation in daily activities such as employment (Cramm, Nieboer, Finkenflügel, & Lorenzo, 2013). In other words, there are many persons with impairments (inherited or acquired) that may not identify themselves as disabled but find the reactions (stigma, fear and prejudice) of their social environment as disabling (Human Right

Watch Report, 2016; Mik-Meyer, 2016; Watson, 2002). Thus, for this study, the participant sample will consist of individuals who consider themselves as disabled in some form.

Disability and society

The history of disability and society is best understood from two perspectives on a continuum, namely the medical and social models of disability (WHO, 2011). The medical model presents an individualised definition of disability where emphasis is given to the need for curative medicine, rehabilitation and reintegration to society (WHO, 2011). Disability here was seen as the burden of the state (Swartz & Schneider, 2006). This entailed a lot of private and public sector initiatives including charity fundraising through corporate social investment (CSI), and more recently, the disability grant programme (Swartz & Schneider, 2006). However, engendering agency and mobilisation from PWDs was neglected, creating greater dependence on the state as well as charity organisations (Swartz & Schneider, 2006). With this dependence, the rights and privileges of PWDs become inherited and forged by the state, instead of PWDs themselves (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). This positioned PWDs within a state of vulnerability and exploitation as movement and freedom of choice became wielded by their able-bodied counterparts (Kitchin, 2000).

On the other hand, the social model of disability started in the 1970s in Great Britain with social reformers like Mike Oliver and Colin Barnes advocating for a critical, liberal and empowerment model of understanding disability (Grue, 2016). The social model, not disregarding the medical and rehabilitative needs of PWDs, recognised that disability is a function of physical, social, informational and institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). Disability reflects attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers (stigma, fear and prejudice) which actively or inactively violate the rights and privileges of PWDs to be freely visible and participate within society (Milner & Kelly, 2009). In this case, disability is a social construction utilised as a token of disabling the agency and mobilisation of PWDs within certain social spaces and activity participation (Grue, 2016). Furthermore, the social model emphasised the need for holistic intervention, policy-driven outcomes as well as stakeholder-beneficiary engagement to realise greater visibility and participation of PWDs within

society (Kitchin, 2000; Mik-Meyer, 2016; Watson, 2002). Thus, responsibility for the protection and empowerment of PWDs remained the social responsibility of all stakeholders and institutions within society (WHO, 2011). This follows with the recent move towards the WHO's ICF, a classification system of health and health-related domains which considers the functioning and disability of an individual as well as populations in context from a list of environmental factors (WHO, 2001). Thus, the ICF model can be utilised at an individual level (to assess the person's level of functioning), institutional level (for training and educational purposes), as well as at a social level (eligibility criteria for state entitlements such as social security benefits, disability pensions, workers' compensation and insurance) (WHO, 2011).

Indeed, the celebration of greater awareness, visibility and participation of PWDs in society remain under the attainments of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and Disability Rights Movement of the 1970-80s (Hurst, 2003). In the United States of America and the United Kingdom, this included the passing of amongst other legislation the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Kitchin, 2000). All in all, these legal frameworks echoed similar unifying themes of equal access to education, employment opportunities, transportation, health care, and attendant services for all PWDs (Chandler, 2016; Kitchin, 2000; Walls, 2014). One of the hallmarks of the Disability Rights Movement was the unity and mobilisation of PWDs all over the world (Kitchin, 2000). In SA, the movement heavily impacted changes in racial, social, legal and economic legislation with major social and political shifts towards the collapse of apartheid (Nattrass & Seekings, 1997). However, the social model was called to re-address how greater visibility (social representation) and participation (social engagement) of PWDs within society could be realised (Hurst, 2003).

Following the feats of both the Civil Rights Movement and Disability Rights Movement, advocates of the social model ushered in discourses around de-constructing hegemonic discourses of privilege, othering and ableism (Grue, 2016). Privilege and able-bodiedness was critiqued for its active (discrimination) and

inactive (prejudice) contribution to disability and vulnerability (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). The hegemony of able-bodied representation, language, and culture presents access to inherent privileges in contrast to the socially constructed vulnerabilities in attitudinal, environmental, as well as institutional barriers of disabled people (Lid, 2015). Discourses of othering stress how highlighted differences in characteristics, ability and position in the home, media, sports, business *et cetera* translate into pain, marginalisation and the isolation of PWDs (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). Ableism is social prejudice that characterises PWDs as defined by their disabilities and as inferior to their non-disabled counterparts (Lid, 2015). All in all, these constructs create justification for PWDs to be assigned as well as denied certain perceived abilities, skills, as well as activity participation (Ong-Dean, 2009).

The social model allowed PWDs to redefine disability as not part and parcel of their identity (Watson, 2002). Disability was re-imagined to consider the structure and organisation of society and its othering of certain persons within society (Hurst, 2003). The medical model was critiqued as producing much dependence and learned helplessness amongst PWDs (Grue, 2013). The social model of disability stresses disability is a function of social organisation created by the legacy medical model and ableism within society (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). The model suggests society marginalises PWDs by creating barriers through negative attitudes, inaccessible environments, as well as impenetrable institutions such as the employment sector (WHO, 2011). The social model posits that when such barriers are eradicated, PWDs can also enjoy independence and equality in society (Hurst, 2003). On policy level, the social model of disability is supported by the SA government as indicated in the Integrated Strategy of 1999.

However, the social model has also been criticised for its avoidance of impairment in terminology or, “why appropriate action on impairment - and even various forms of impairment prevention - cannot co-exist with action to remove disabling environments and practices” (Shakespeare & Watson, 2002, p.15). As Shakespeare and Watson (2002, p.15) add, “people are disabled both by social barriers and by their bodies”. Shakespeare and Watson (2002) also note that the social model of disability remains outdated as its implications, namely that

environmental barriers which disable persons with impairments, cannot be fully endorsed as some of them are inextricable aspects of impairment and not generated by the environment. The most recent move in terms of models of disability has been biopsychosocial models which view disability and the person-in-environment (WHO, 2011). These approaches acknowledge limitations due to impairments, with supportive structures and role-players to assist the individual maintain optimal wellbeing within all life domains (WHO, 2011).

2.3 Graduates with disabilities

Obtaining a postsecondary qualification presents an invaluable opportunity to attain marketable employment skills (Matshediso, 2007). According to Howell (2005), this is an imperative global and national priority amongst PWDs who already show high drop-out rate. GWDs present an emerging subpopulation which can be considered as resilient based on their ability to transcend the barriers which exist with first the school (for example, lack of peer support), social (stares in the case of visible impairments) as well as the work environment (few GWDs entering the labour market) (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). As stated earlier, prevalence studies report that only 5.1 per cent of PWDs attained a higher education as opposed to 12.1 per cent for persons with no disability (StatsSA, 2014). Furthermore, given that GWDs are not afforded the same educational opportunities from basic to tertiary education, many still choose to enter, compete and perform even better than their non-disabled counterparts (Howell, 2005). This section aims to provide a contextual background of disability and higher education. Although the key focus of this report is mainly on disability, society and employment, this section is important as it presents a crucial background in the journey and preparation of GWDs into the work environment.

Disability and higher education

Foregrounding diversity and equity has become a paramount focus area within the higher educational sector (Ministry of Education, 2001). Every year, higher educational institutions attract a unique pool of students with various disabilities (Howell, 2005). This cohort represents a marginal few of those who manage to

matriculate from special needs or mainstream secondary school (Howell & Lazarus, 2000; Lorenzo, 2012; Matshedisho, 2007). According to StatsSA (2014), of the majority of persons aged 20-24 experiencing functional difficulties (seeing, hearing, communicating among others), many were not attaining a postsecondary qualification. One-fifth of persons with disabilities were not registered with a tertiary institution. In fact, StatsSA (2014) reports that PWDs with severe disabilities had the lowest educational outcomes: 24.6 per cent had some primary education, 23.8 per cent had no formal education and 5.3 per cent had attained higher education. This reflects a high disproportion of students either entering the employment sector without tertiary education, or choosing to remain at home due to a lack of employment skills (Matshedisho, 2007).

This is expected as PWDs encounter a range of personal (impairments, activity limitations and health outcomes related to their conditions) as well as environmental barriers (lack of special needs educators, peer support and adequate assistive technology) within school settings (Cramm *et al*, 2013; Howell & Lazarus, 2000; Maja *et al.*, 2011). Because of these challenges, this leaves many young PWDs unprepared for higher education (Engelbrecht, 2006; Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart, & Eloff, 2003). However, in another report, the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) estimated that the number of enrolled students with disabilities rose from 5 856 in 2011 to 7 110 in 2013, thus increasing the number of graduates in the system from 984 graduates in 2011 to 1 294 in 2013 (South African Government News Agency, 2014). Indeed, this proportion of students warrants a further investigation into their transition within the employment sector. Furthermore, there remains a gap in the literature regarding which positive attributes facilitate the acceleration from a higher educational institution into further progress within the employment sector.

Equity-driven legislation and implementation marks a key milestone to eradicating the barriers to inclusive education for PWDs. A number of strategic legislation within the South African higher education policy framework have been proposed, including the White Paper on Post School Education (Department of Higher Education, 2013) and the South African White Paper on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities (2015). The South African Schools Act of 1996 stipulated that government “take all reasonable measures to ensure that the physical facilities at public schools are accessible to disabled persons”. The Education White Paper 6: Special needs education covering inclusive education of 2001 intensified the demand, requesting that all public schools should invest resources in accommodating students with disabilities (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). With this call, a further plan to introduce 500 ‘full-service’ educational institutions to support the needs of all students was realised. It was further recognised that there was a need for more special needs facilities for learners with severe impairments in all functional domains but the overall objective of the policy was to endorse inclusive education for all learners. This endeavour translated into accommodating impaired students with their able-bodied counterparts within the mainstream system (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Studies show children with disabilities perform better given sufficient enablers, including trained special needs educators, supportive peers, accessible study material as well as the built environment within schools (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2002).

At a higher educational level, the Education White Paper 3: Transformation of Higher Education System recognises the importance of circumventing discrimination by setting provisional strategies and practices to re-address the inequalities of the past in response to the needs of students with disabilities (StatsSA, 2012). Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) advocates distribution and monitoring of policies regarding access to educational settings, support measures, as well as evaluation of outcomes of equity in mainstream educational settings. The Article demands progress reports on “school attendance, level of educational attainment, literacy rates and skills persons with disabilities possess” (StatsSA, 2012) to abate the number of drop-outs and repeaters. As highlighted earlier, the emerging GWD presents a marginal and thus resilient figure, surpassing the odds of early drop-out and an unemployment statistic which represents the predicted trajectory of most children with disabilities (Graham et al., 2010; Matshediso, 2007).

2.4 Employment

Employment relates to the job opportunities available for GWDs to earn a source of livelihood (Wordsworth, 2006). Employment encompasses an integral aspect in a person's existence (Grieve & Van Deventer, 2006). Employment not only serves a socioeconomic utility through which an individual can measure their access to livelihood assets but also their sense of worth (Duncan, Swartz, & De la Rey, 2004). Employment thus intertwines with the individual's self-concept (Grieve & Van Deventer, 2006). Returning to employment, employment ranges from classifications of part-time, full-time or seasonal, to permanent, contract or self-employment. It remains crucial to keep track of the employment rates of South Africans overall to determine areas of further development. Particularly with regard to PWDs where some individuals choose not to disclose or identify themselves as PWDs (Wilton, 2006), the true extent of employment figures remains difficult to ascertain (StatsSA, 2014). Research into this marginal figure remains not only imperative for statistical purposes, but also for policy and intervention (StatsSA, 2014).

Disability and the employment sector

According to WHO (2011), the employment history of PWDs was mainly limited within state administrative, secretarial and service-oriented positions. These included office workers, clerks, support staff, food service workers, school janitors, medical transcriptionists, day care workers, brick-layers and waste removers (Braddock & Parrish, 2001). Outside the public service sector, PWDs also found employment in farms, churches, banks, retail and private businesses as farm caretakers, administrative staff, gardeners, tellers, carpenters, painters, jewellery-makers, actors, and interpreters amongst others across disabilities (Lindstrom, Hirano, McCarthy, & Alverson, 2014). GWDs mainly held vocational careers including teaching, social work, accountants, librarians, cooks and many other categories (Braddock & Parrish, 2001). Within SA, PWDs often occupied similar positions until employment declined due to automation within the service and retail industry, pressures of reasonable accommodations, as well as the introduction of the disability grant programme (Cramm *et al.*, 2013; Mitra, 2008; Swartz & Schneider, 2006). This has since raised the prevalence of unemployment particularly amongst an already high level of unskilled youth with(out) disabilities (NDP, 2012). Today, notable figures

such as Ralph Braun, Steve Jobs, Stephen Hawking amongst others show great progression and resilience within their respective careers. Much like the true account of “Grace”, GWDs have been noted to enjoy career success in multiple career fields as lawyers, information technologists, architects, biologists, chemists, statisticians, mechanics, landscapers, writers and in many others (Patterson, 2014).

However, the employment experiences of PWDs are usually imbued with adverse challenges which differs from one PWD to the next. One should be mindful of the nature of disability, family support and socioeconomic context as some of these figures enjoy personal and environmental enablers which facilitate their resilience (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Ableism exercised in entry, adjustment and further development within the work environment is a reality for PWDs, and by extension GWDs (Wadsworth, 2006). In SA, most PWDs and GWDs are still found within unskilled and semi-skilled positions (DOL, 2011). Ableism plays a role in, for example, weighting expenditure of accommodating PWDs, earmarking certain posts for PWDs, or hiring PWDs to meet employment equity targets (Wadsworth, 2006). Once located within the work environment, PWDs remain constrained within the same position as further development remains hindered by a glass-ceiling effect which prevents further promotion (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). Furthermore, PWDs find themselves within a state of precarious labour (Vosko, 2006). In precarious labour, one remains subjected to unfair and unprotected labour conditions such as poor salaries, employee benefits, unclear job descriptions, as well as a state of desperation of losing one’s job (Vosko, 2006). One is therefore forced to remain employed because of the perceived lack of other available opportunities (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014).

Indeed, greater visibility and participation of PWDs in the work environment rests on among other things, fair access to employment opportunities (Human Right Watch Report, 2016; Lid, 2015; Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). The latest statistics from 2012 indicates the prevalence of PWDs in South Africa stands at 13 per cent, thus marking an estimated 2 870 130 PWDs in 2012 (StatsSA, 2013). The CEE 2010-11 showed that 43 913 of PWDs were in part-time, temporary or permanent employment (DOL, 2011). Although this suggests an increase on the 12 049 in

active employment in 2003, only 0.83 per cent of PWDs were employed in 2010. As opposed to their counterparts, 5 236 124 able-bodied individuals held temporary or permanent employment in 2010 (DOL, 2011). Race, class and gender differences have also not been corrected in most working contexts, particularly for PWDs within the employment sector (Cramm *et al.*, 2013; Lorenzo, 2012; StatsSA, 2014). For instance, the CEE 2010-11 indicates that PWDs occupied 1.4 per cent of positions in top management amongst mostly white males (63 per cent), and 1.2 per cent in senior management amongst white males at 44.2 per cent and white females at 19.4 per cent (DOL, 2011). Instead, the majority of employed PWDs can be found within entry and subordinate positions including learnerships and administrative positions (DOL, 2011).

Furthermore, there has been increased interest between the intersection of race and disability, particularly discourses around White males being the subject of reverse racism within the employment sector (Booyesen, 2013). Given the societal power shifts and changing social identities in SA, certain employment measures have aimed to bring about equal representation within the work environment with implications for the employment sector (Booyesen, 2013). Legislation, such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998, has introduced employment equity quotas, which dispenses favour on designated previously disadvantaged groups, including Blacks, females and PWDs (Marumoagae, 2012). Previously, advantaged middle-class groups such as White males, once seen as possessing the highest level of higher education as well as occupying the roles that control the means of production (land, mines and financial resources) now remain last to be considered when hiring (Seekings, 2016). Furthermore, poor and uneducated White males, who do not necessarily enjoy these privileges have fallen within the cracks of unemployment (Nattrass & Seekings, 1997). Moreover, this phenomenon has penetrated within the ranks of White males with disabilities (Booyesen, 2013).

Moving forward, there remains a need for an employment policy framework to regulate the constitutional rights and opportunities of all PWDs to enjoy equal employment opportunities (Human Right Watch Report, 2016; Lid, 2015; Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). Employment policy frameworks should be regulated and

reinforced to advantage and protect PWDs constitutional rights and opportunities in the work environment (Marumoagae, 2012). This legislation should not only provide guidelines and implementation indicators, but also guidelines for monitoring and evaluation purposes (Marumoagae, 2012; Sayce, 2011; Wordsworth, 2006). This proposed framework remains a crucial yardstick not only for guidelines and implementation indicators, but also for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The following employment frameworks are worth mentioning here (StatsSA, 2014, p.7-8):

- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995;
- White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 1997;
- White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997;
- South African International Relations and Cooperation Framework;
- Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1996);
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (Act 39 of 1996);
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997);
- Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998);
- Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act 53 of 2003);
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); and
- The Constitution of South Africa (Act 106 of 1996).

From the highest Law of the land, the Constitution of South Africa, to the most basic, including the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1996), the state, trade unions as well as disability activists have worked consistently to forge policy which re-addresses the systematic inequalities and promote advancements for PWDs (Human Right Watch Report, 2016; Maja *et al.*, 2013; Marumoagae, 2012). Section 9 of the Bill of Rights, which is a national benchmark for all citizens, avers: “The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, age, *disability*, religion...” and highlights the implications and provisions to counter such infractions (Marumoagae, 2012). In addition, the Department of Labour ensures commitment to inclusive employment practices via the Employment Equity Act (1999), Black Economic Empowerment Act (2003),

Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (LRA), NDP, 2012 and Public Service Act of 1996 which requires 2 per cent of employed personnel to be PWDs (StatsSA, 2012). As previously mentioned, the current observation of this policy has not been met across all sectors. Article 27 of the CRPD highlights the need for transformation policies such as quotas, targets, affirmative practices, return to work measures as well as creating and enforcing a general policy which will safeguard inclusive employment practices (StatsSA, 2014). Key provisions of labour practices provided for the employment of PWDs include amongst others (StatsSA, 2014, p.10):

- Prohibiting discrimination based on disability regarding all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
- Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others;
- Enabling persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes placement services and vocational and continuing training;
- Ensuring that persons with disabilities can exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
- Promoting employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment.

2.5 Resilience

Resilience has been an extensively applied, adapted and revised concept within the fields of medicine, psychology, sociology and developmental studies (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Researchers and practitioners working in the field of resilience have contributed extensively to the formulation of prevention and rehabilitation programmes within the household, schools, hospitals, the criminal justice system, as well as the labour force (Lohne & Severinsson, 2006; Scholl & Mooney, 2004; Shogren, Wehmeyer, Buchanan & Lopez, 2006). There are multiple definitions and models to study resilience. However, a common definition and usage

of resilience within most studies is “the capability to cope and rebound (bounce back) in the face of significant adversity, risk, trauma or stress” (Kruger & Prinsloo, 2008, p.242). Indeed, this definition represents a large body of research which locates resilience within positivist (Ungar, 2004), competency benchmarks (Black & Lobo, 2008), norm-based definition (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014) which may not reflect the individual-viewpoints, context and cultural dimensions as well as unclaimed assets employed by individuals while navigating hardship or just everyday tasks by individuals who do not necessarily see themselves as possessing exceptional qualities (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2015). This study aims to build upon this literature by asking for self-reported positive attributes amongst GWDs which have contributed to participants’ workplace resilience.

Resilience and disability

South Africa is plagued by high unemployment rates (StatsSA, 2015). More so, the distribution of unemployment remains prevalent amongst marginalised and vulnerable populations such as women, youth and PWDs. In this literature review, it was argued that the South African employment sector has been struggling to integrate GWDs within the open job market. Resilience and disability within the employment sector presents a national priority for GWDs (Shogren *et al.*, 2006). Upon completion of their studies, many GWDs enter university databases to be disseminated within employment agencies. Recently, internship sites such as AbbVie in Johannesburg which specifically recruits PWDs with any postsecondary qualification have become available to give GWDs priority. Government incentives such as affirmative action in the form of quotas, targets and anti-discrimination measures have been instituted to redress unfair labour practices aimed at PWDs (Marumoagae, 2012). However, despite these advances, the reality is that PWDs remain underrepresented within the employment industry (Lewis, Dobbs, & Biddle, 2013).

There are few PWDs sharing positive experiences from the work environment (Maja *et al.*, 2013). For example, in a recent investigation of employment experiences of employed PWDs within a university in Gauteng, employees expressed fears when disclosing one’s disability (Marriott, 2015). As one participant

stated, “No matter how much you accept your disability, the environment and society will always remind you of it” (Marriott, 2015, p.37). This shows that certain spaces within society as well as the work environment are still not accommodative to PWDs. Furthermore, PWDs remain largely disadvantaged in terms of recruitment, promotion as well as safe working conditions (StatsSA, 2014). This has been the investment of much literature within Disability Studies (Enable United Nations, 2007; Human Right Watch Report, 2016; WHO, 2011). On the other hand, harnessing resilience within the employment sector for PWDs presents a gap in knowledge with worthwhile socioeconomic implications. For example, resilient employees foster better retention, skills development and thus multi-skilled labour forces which attracts investors from overseas (Marumoagae, 2012). Secondly, resilience promotes opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship and partnerships to kick off one’s own company, thus relieving the financial burden on government (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Finally, enacting equal employment standards addresses the past discriminatory practices that have prevented PWDs from entering, adjusting to and further developing in the workplace (Lorenzo, 2012). This study aims to unlock this resilience and positive attributes amongst GWDs by exploring how they have successfully entered, adjusted to and further develop within the work environment.

Literature underlining the intersection of resilience and positive attributes amongst PWDs has been prevalent in international as well as South African literature, but scarce amongst GWDs. For example, Lohne and Severinsson (2006) found hope to be an important marker to resilience following a spinal cord injury. In a meta-review on the application of positive psychology and self determination to research in intellectual disability, Shogren *et al.* (2006) uncovered the emphasis on strengths and capabilities correlates with resilience. Scholl and Mooney’s (2004) study into young PWDs’ determinants which influenced success in a work-based learning programme highlighted a key relationship between the young persons’ personal characteristics (resolution) and program components (stakeholder’s involvement in the decision-making processes of youth). Existing literature suggests realistic career objectives, positive mindfulness, self-determination as inherent attributes of resilience (Elliott, Kurylo, & Rivera, 2002; Dorsett, 2010; Shogren *et al.*, 2006), while equity committed employers, supportive work colleagues, and

reasonable work structures (Hernandez et al., 2007; Moxley, 2002; WHO, 2011) as environmental attributes of resilience for employed PWDs.

However, despite the robust scholarship around resilience, resilience has also been critiqued for its shortcomings (Ungar, 2003). Resilience has been critiqued for its lack of coherent meaning and ecological validity amongst most studies (Heiman, 2002; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten, 2001). The lack of consensus amongst practitioners and policy-makers makes its measurement and generalisability limited across individuals and groups (Ungar, 2004). Hutcheon and Lashewicz (2014, p.1385) further add that existing definitions of resilience represent hegemonic notions “aligned with Western, middle-class, ableist norms of healthy, normal, or valued functioning”. Indeed, such definitions remain problematic as those participants who remain outside these ableist categories are often excluded as not resilient (Patterson, 2002). This critique remains in line with the findings by Hutcheon and Lashewicz (2014) finding who problematised the dominantly ability-centric (Black & Lobo, 2008), “chasing the positive/dwelling in the negative dichotomy” (p.1386), and outcomes-oriented definitions of resilience (Masten, 2001) in families with members with disabilities, concluding that there is a “need for definitions of resilience that embrace multiple, contesting, and family-defined or person-defined pathways to the navigation of family life and ‘disability’” (p.1386).

To date, there is no systematic, mutually-agreed upon, emic/insider’s perspective, or culture-specific definition that fully encapsulates resilience (Ungar, 2003, 2004, 2008). On the other hand, existing definitions remain limited in considering resilience as a plural, fluid, developmental, and localised phenomenon (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2015). Rather, most existing definitions of resilience emphasise the utilisation of protective factors such as hope, optimism, satisfaction and vitality against risk factors such as risk, harm, adversity and vulnerability (Black & Lobo, 2008; Masten, 2001; Ungar 2004). Again, the utility of these factors may not be present amongst all participants as individuals might rely on a host of previously unclaimed attributes or processes per context across the developmental span (Masten, 2001). Hutcheon & Lashewicz (2014, p.1385) further problematises this missing link by maintaining resilience research adopts “distinct research paradigms

(positivistic versus postmodern/constructivist), research designs (quantitative versus qualitative), and assumptions (resilience as a set of traits versus a set of processes, as stable versus emergent, as applicable to most individuals or groups versus subjective and constructed in context) which have yielded contradictory ideas” for both policy as well as intervention strategies. This study departed from the call to allow participants to define their own sense of resilience and positive attributes from their career trajectory thus far.

2.6 Theoretical frameworks

The selected theoretical framework was based on a literature review amongst over 50 articles on Wiley Online Library, ScienceDirect, OpenAccess, ResearchGate, AcademicEdu, PsychNet, Springer, utilising the key words, ‘disability’, ‘resilience’ and ‘theoretical framework’. These search engines were selected for their broad publication scope as well as bibliometric outputs. Three prominent theoretical frameworks emerged which corresponded with these key words. Figure A presents the theoretical framework that will be utilised in unearthing resilience within this study:

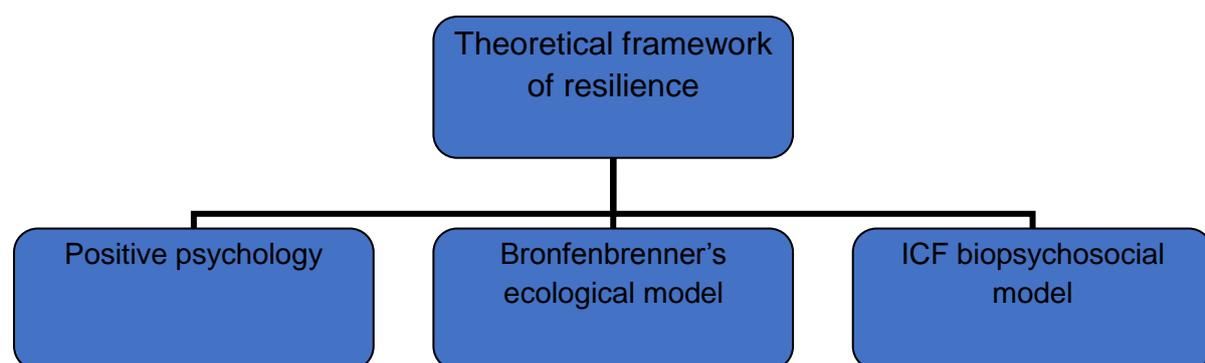


Figure A: Theoretical framework employed within the study

Positive psychology

The intersection of disability and positive psychology has fairly been growing but still needs more extensive research within the South African context (Lourens & Swartz, 2016). According to key proponents, Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000,

p.124), “Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life”. Positive psychology is thus a strengths-based approach which calls individuals to utilise their ‘signature strengths’ to live a ‘good life’ (Peterson, 2009). Although there are multiple, competing and overlapping schools of thought within positive psychology, most practitioners abide by the principle of positive psychology as fundamentally centred against the move away from preoccupation with deficit, to a move to inherent potential and growth (Schalock, 2004). The available literature within positive psychology suggests three pillars can be observed within individuals considered as resilient: (a) positive experiences (optimism, satisfaction and vitality), (b) positive personality (utilisation of personal strengths, virtues and self-determination), and (c) people and experiences embedded in a social context (positive social relationships and cultural norms which facilitate positive social engagement) (Schalock, 2004). This study applied the principles and pillars of positive psychology to analyse the study results.

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model

Bronfenbrenner (1989) presents a systems approach to the study of human development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1989), the personal characteristics espoused by an individual at a particular time are a product of inherent dispositions in conjunction with environmental influences. Bronfenbrenner (1989) proposes a model of environmental subsystems which interact with the person’s individual characteristics. The micro-system presents the immediate environment of direct relationships (colleagues) (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). The meso-system encompasses the connection between the individual’s micro-system (colleagues and floor supervisors). The exo-system relates to the larger social system within which the individual does not function directly but is impacted indirectly by the interaction of microstructures (managing director’s exorbitant demands on the floor supervisor to increase productivity). The macro-system presents the most outer layer where cultural norms and values operate to affect all other systems (an organisational culture of non-equity may translate to an intolerant work environment for PWDs). Lastly, Bronfenbrenner proposes the chrono-system which encapsulates the idea of time in relation to development of the individual (the timing of the death of a

supportive employer). As the individual matures during time, they may learn to react differently to environmental changes (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Optimal human development is attained when the individual is supported by his or her subsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

ICF biopsychosocial model

The ICF biopsychosocial model provides a multidimensional framework which conceptualises disability on three levels of functioning (WHO, 2001). According to the model, body functions and structures, activities, and participation intersect with corresponding levels of disability (impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions). The model represents a synthesis of models based on a continuum within Disability Studies, the medical and social model of disability (WHO, 2011). The medical model presents an individualised definition of disability where emphasis is given to the need for curative medicine, rehabilitation and reintegration into society. On the other hand, the social model, though not disregarding the medical and rehabilitative needs of PWDs, recognises that disability is a function of disabling social, physical, informational as well as institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). The ICF biopsychosocial model acknowledges what is useful in both models. For one, the institution of medical and rehabilitative interventions remains necessary to address the body-level aspects of disability (for example, assistive technology). Similarly, social and environmental strategies remain invaluable to counter restrictions in the individual's access and participation in educational, economic, social, cultural and political activities (WHO, 2011). According to the ICF model (WHO, 2011), the removal of attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers remains the start to realising the resilience of PWDs. This presents the responsibility for the empowerment of PWDs as the social responsibility of all members (family, teachers, community leaders) as well as institutions (schools, churches, health centres among others) within society.

2.7 Summary

Thus far, the literature review has argued for the need to understand the intersection of disability and society, higher education as well as the employment sector amongst

GWDs. In terms of disability, to understand how they are perceived within the social and work environment. With regards to higher education, to follow their transition from higher education to the work environment. In terms of employment, to explore how they navigate successful entry, adjustment to and further development within the work environment. Most importantly, track resilience and positive attributes which contribute to their career trajectories. Literature shows the South African landscape for PWDs as characterised by large-scale poverty, inequality, violence, discrimination, inaccessible built environments, poor educational outcomes as well as drastic unemployment (Graham *et al.*, 2010). Given these harsh conditions, many young PWDs end up dropping out of school to find the most available jobs to sustain their livelihoods (Lorenzo, 2012). Yet, the available literature also shows there are some PWDs who do overcome these adverse conditions, graduate from a higher educational institution, and enjoy successful career trajectories (AGCAS, 2015). By tracking this resilience, the contribution of this study could assist future GWDs to also achieve greater things within their social and work environment. This study aims to contribute to this gap in knowledge and practice.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

As an exploratory study, the study followed a qualitative interpretive research design. Interpretivism principally focuses on the individual's encounters, how individuals utilise these interactions and relationships to construct meaning as well as to inform their personal views (Gelderblom, 2010). Interpretivism remains situated within sociological research, a qualitative methodology which proposes to describe, analyse and understand the social world of an individual's experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Interpretivism focuses on the interactional, linguistic and contextual multiplicity of how rival versions of the world are constructed and defended within participants' responses (Whitehead, 2015). This approach remains attentive to underlining meaning in speech, power relations within discourses and how language is utilised to maintain norms and institutions of hierarchy (Babbie & Mouton, 2011).

An interpretivist approach was useful in uncovering how power structures and language shape the work experiences of GWDs (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). For example, resilience is a socially constructed concept prescribed to behaviours, outcomes as well as personality traits based on Westernised definitions of health and wellbeing (Black & Lobo, 2008; Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014; Masten, 2001). However, when this concept is unpacked, these definitions do not fully encapsulate the individualised, context-specific as well as cultural artefacts which individuals and groups may rely on to overcome adverse situations in early life experiences, health, relationships, financial security as well as work (Black & Lobo, 2008; Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2015; Masten, 2001). Interpretivism was thus utilised within this report to interrogate previously taken for granted concepts and explanations to discover new meanings shaped by individual experiences as well as meaning-making strategies (Babbie & Mouton, 2011).

Qualitative research is a meaning-centred approach which entails data collection and analysis through naturalistic, holistic and inductive reasoning (Creswell, 2013). This means meaning is embedded in the social and cultural

context of the participants, with observations drawn from comprehensive study of the person-in-environment (Creswell, 2013). Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2013) add that sociological research remains instrumental in this context as it allows the qualitative researcher to appreciate social phenomena through the participant's own frame of reference. Participants were interviewed individually through in-depth interviews for to explore their experiences within the work environment. As such, a multiple case study design was employed to collect rich qualitative data from each participant. Case studies provide unique opportunities to gather individual insights, shared experiences and cultural phenomena of participants (Schoeman, 2011). Also, the case study design allowed for interaction during the interview between the researcher and participants, thus allowing for an in-depth analysis into the unique life-worlds of participants. This proved to be a flexible approach which positioned participants as shared co-authors in the research process (Schoeman, 2011).

3.2 Sampling

A participant sample of 6 adults (working age 25-45) were included within the study. Participants from all racial, cultural and tertiary level qualification background were encouraged to participate. Final selection and the total number of participants was dependent on those who expressed interest in participating within the study. The final participant sample consisted of individuals who considered themselves as disabled in some form (for example, visual, physical or hearing impairment). In terms of education, GWDs referred to PWDs with at least a postsecondary school qualification. Participants from all fields of work were invited to gather multiple views of employed PWDs in the workplace. A requirement of all participants was (a) full-time or self-employment, (b) if in full-time work, permanent or contract employment status, and (c) working term of at least 5 years as a requirement of some form of adjustment. The participant working age range (26-45 years) covers the approximate age at first employment given a three-year qualification at a higher education institutional as well as five years working experience. This was ensured by a demographic questionnaire to screen participants for inclusion (Appendix E). Participants were not accessed through human resource departments (HR) and thus not required to speak in their capacity as employees of a certain company. Snowball

sampling was utilised to gather participants. Snowball sampling includes asking the secured participants to refer others who might be interested in partaking within the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). This involves securing details of referred participants and contacting them to see if they would be interested in participating within the study.

Access to participants

In accessing participants, this researcher began by approaching an owner of a private organisation for PWDs which provides a wide range of services for clients with disabilities, corporate sectors and government such as training and development, consultations and referrals, as well as event management. Furthermore, the organisation attracts a lot of successful PWDs who motivate others in the field of Disability. The owner was interviewed first as a participant and thereafter she was asked for names and organisations of where potential participants could be found who would also be willing to be interviewed based on the selection criteria. In other cases, this researcher relied on a contact person within the University of the Witwatersrand's Disability Rights Unit and asked for further referrals from their database. Indeed, this draws a limitation in terms of accessing participants from only one tertiary institution. This decision was based on the accessibility of participants as well as the ethical clearance obtained from the afore-mentioned university. Future research can include participants of different educational levels as well as tertiary institutions. Both the business owner and the Disability Rights Unit provided this researcher with names and contact details based on participants who had indicated within their database that they had wished to be included in any future research. However, it was this researcher who sent emails to potential participants to respond if interested. These two entities do not occupy the role of employer or benefactor towards the participants. Participants were given clear indications within the invitation that participation was voluntary thus there was no coercion.

3.3 Participants

After participants were identified through the above selection criteria, the information sheet and informed consent form (Appendix A, B, C) were explained in detail in a

preferred language to participants, which was English for all participants. Participants were informed of the potential risks (the study offers participants the opportunity to reflect on the positive as well as negative experiences which have motivated them to grow within their respective career) as well as the rewards (participants could have re-visited positive experiences of employment which have shaped their successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace). Participants were informed the study carried no consequences of declining to participate within any stage of the interview. The only participant with a visual impairment was allowed to give verbal assent as he was unable to sign the informed consent form. The participant information sheets and informed consent form were conveyed to the participant verbally. Participants were all asked again if they understood the instructions and the reason for the study before signing the form. An appointed sign language interpreter was not needed as no participant considered Deaf expressed interest to be interviewed. Table 1 below provides the demographics of the participant sample.

Table 1: Demographics of the participant sample

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6
Race & sex	Black male	Coloured Female	Black male	White female	Black male	White male
Disability type	Visual disability: Legally blind	Physical disability: Arthrogryposis (congenital joint contractures in two or more areas of the body)	Physical disability: Double arm amputee	Hearing disability: Partially deaf	Physical disability: Juvenile chronic arthritis (disorder affecting joints, including symptoms of joint pain and stiffness), gradually developing since age 12	Physical disability: Cerebral palsy (permanent movement disorder marked by poor coordination, stiff muscles, weak muscles, and tremors)
Congenital/ Acquired	Congenital	Congenital	Acquired at age 9 due to contact with electric street wires	Congenital	Congenital	Congenital
Highest qualification	BA degree	Diploma	LLB degree	BA degree	Diploma	Master's degree

Job position	Employment Equity Officer within a private organisation	Entrepreneur	Attorney within a private corporation	Receptionist within a Disability Rights Unit	Recruiter within a software developing firm	Head tutor within a Student Development and Learning Unit
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3.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance for this study was applied for and obtained from the Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand (see ethical clearance certificate, protocol number H16/06/39, in Appendix G). The following ethical principles and guiding documents guided the ethical conduct within this report:

- Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association (American Anthropological Association, 2004)
- Policy on Matters Relating to Sensitive and Confidential Research (University of the Witwatersrand, 2016)

Anonymity

Since a private transcriber was hired to assist with data collection, anonymity could not be ensured. However, the appointed transcriber was required to sign a non-disclosure/agreement of confidentiality of the topics discussed within the interview (Appendix E) after being given the information sheet relating to the purpose of the study (Appendix F). Attempts were made to ensure participants understood confidentiality as well as the inability to ensure anonymity within the study in their own language which all participants indicated was English.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was ensured by stating the results will be published as group aggregates rather than including individual names. Also, any quotations used did not have names or identifying details included in them but were instead captured in the form of codes (P1-6). The individual interviews were voice recorded to ensure an accurate record of the information that was received within the interview. After

analysis, these recordings were destroyed. These recordings remained confidential and only this researcher had access to them. During the process of analysis and report writing, the transcripts and audio recordings were kept in a password-protected computer.

Beneficence

The study carried benefits for both the sample of participants as well as the overall study population of GWDs. Explicitly, the study offered participants the possibility to reflect on the positive as well as negative experiences which have motivated them to grow within their respective careers. As Potter and Hepburn (2008) maintain, interviews can produce deeper reflections of the past self in relation to one's future self. Secondly, participant's knowledge and experiences offered the opportunity to contribute to theory on disability within education as well as the employment industry. Additionally, this study carried immense policy and intervention implications. The positive and negative shared experiences amongst participants regarding GWDs in the work environment could shape policy negotiation as well as intervention strategies. This includes contributing to equal rights and privileges of GWDs within the work environment.

Non-maleficence

Given the open-ended nature of the semi-structured interview, it was noted participants may potentially re-visit negative experiences of employment which may re-traumatise them. However, it was explicitly noted that should participants re-experience a past traumatising experience during the interview, they would be given the option to terminate the interview. Thus, a distress protocol was negotiated by this researcher with participants nearest free psychological counselling centres in the form of a referral before setting up the interview. Interviews occurred outside the workplace in order not to single out participants. A comfortable setting with ramps, disability parking and elevators was secured by this researcher to facilitate easy access to the interview facility. This included a private venue at a university's postgraduate room. Travelling and petrol costs were covered by this researcher in the form of an allowance.

3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 Research procedures

Individual interviews were conducted in English, which were audio-recorded by this researcher, at a time and place which was private, safe, and considered suitable to the participants and this researcher (university postgraduate room). Interviews took place during weekends or outside of working hours in order not to personally identify or pull out participants from work. Thereafter, due to time constraints, this researcher distributed the audio recordings between the researcher and a paid transcriber to acquire written transcripts of the audio-recordings. The transcriber was a Masters student within the Psychology Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. She had received training in Qualitative Methods. The transcriber was told the content within the recordings was to remain confidential. The transcriber was asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement not to disclose any content or the identity of the participants (Appendix D). The transcriber was instructed to destroy all the audio recordings after transcription. Also, the transcriber was also paid per the recommended hourly rate. As a measure of ensuring rigour and truthfulness, participants were provided an opportunity to review the translated interviews to ensure that they agree with what was transcribed. Participants were also offered a mutually agreed allowance to cover travel costs. In addition, tea/juice and biscuits were provided during the interview sessions.

3.5.2 Interviews

A demographic questionnaire was sent via email or letter to participants who met the selection criteria to collect their demographic details such as level of qualification as well as number of years worked within an organisation (Appendix C). Thereafter, an interview was set up at a time and place preferred by the participant and this researcher. Qualitative research interviews aim to gather data which is interpretative, holistic and context-rich (Creswell, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are just one of many tools employed by qualitative researchers to collect detailed descriptions of events or participants' experience. The open-ended nature of semi-structured interviews enables researchers to unearth any hidden meanings, clarify biases as

well as determine any further research problems (Creswell, 2013). Following a consultation with literature, a semi-structured interview guide (Appendix F) was devised to be utilised to collect data from participants during in-depth interviews. Interviews lasted from 1-2 hours.

3.6 Data analysis and reporting

According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research is an engaging process of generating meaning-making through the interpretative task of researcher coding, classification as well as thematic synthesis. Schoeman (2011) highlights that the qualitative researcher draws on inductive reasoning that is multifaceted and relies on common patterns. To answer the proposed research questions and aims, emerging themes and discourses were analysed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis (TA) and Slembrouck's (2001) approach of a discourse analysis (DA). To provide a thorough analysis, themes were generated based on their reference across respondents, based on the number of times mentioned per participant, as well as their significance within existing literature. Table 3 shows a tabulated analysis of themes and notes generated as supported by quotes. Utilising DA, this researcher could analyse discourses, if any arose, from the emerging themes. The following lists the appropriate six steps this researcher followed for using TA (Braun & Clarke, 2006) (see Table 3):

- (1) Familiarising yourself with the data
- (2) Generating initial codes
- (3) Searching for themes
- (4) Reviewing themes
- (5) Finding and naming themes
- (6) Producing the report

Following Slembrouck's (2001) DA approach, this researcher further analysed the following aspects of discourses within the emerging themes:

- (7) Representational use of language beyond a sentence or utterance,

- (8) The meaningful interrelationship between language and society, and
- (9) The interactive or dialogue features of everyday speech

Below, Table 2 shows a step-by-step procedure followed in analysing data for themes and arising discourses. The table illustrates how the identified theme, 'Playing the 'Disability Card'', was isolated using the six steps of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis (2006). First, a separate reading of each written transcript was analysed. Secondly, codes were generated within each and across written transcripts. Next, themes became isolated utilising common key words and phrases around themes. Literature was consulted when consolidating themes with the results. Based on the results and literature, emerging discourses within themes were further analysed utilising Slembrouck's (2001) DA approach. This included understanding the representational use of language beyond an utterance such as the work ethic around PWDs. The interrelationship between language and society was also analysed including how certain concepts enforce vulnerability amongst certain groups within society. Lastly, the interactive and dialogue features within everyday speech including the impact of certain concepts entering everyday vocabulary especially if they remain uncritically interrogated was also identified.

3.7 Rigour

Triangulation in the form of multiple datasets, research methodologies as well as analysis techniques strengthens the credibility and trustworthiness of the relevant research (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Although the researcher did not collect any quantitative data, the researcher provided an in-depth analysis utilising discourse analysis (DA) from the discourses, if any, arose within the discussion of themes. DA complemented TA in that arising discourses could be analysed providing a more rich, in-depth analyses instead of reporting on themes. Also, the study included participants with a few types of disabilities. Furthermore, within qualitative research, the importance of quality checks and interrater reliability remain key attributes to ensure rigour (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Thus, to enhance objectivity, member checks were performed by distributing interview transcripts back to participants to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts, correct for errors, as well as provide the

opportunity for extra volunteer information (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). As this researcher was involved within a research unit with other Masters students, the discussion of themes drawn from the dataset with these members served as an alternative measure of peer review. Moreover, every step taken within the study was reported to ensure other researchers can replicate and follow the research conducted (Babbie & Mouton, 2011).

Step-by-step procedure followed in analysing data for themes and discourses

Interview data		Thematic analysis	
<p>“Look ahm the disability card is the same as the race card or the female card you know. Ahm we just play that card when things are not going your way you can play a race card and call everyone a resist, that’s the race card or you can say is because I am black that’s the race card. The disability card is similar in a sense that I can get away with not doing a lot of things because I am disabled” – P3.</p> <p>‘I think that the notion of the “disability card” is a myth. I don’t think there is such a thing a thing and to understand that you have to go back to privilege. You cannot play a disability card without understanding that fundamentally someone who has a disability is severely disadvantaged and it’s perceived as mistreatment of abled bodied persons when they see a disabled person getting a form of support or accommodation. They say oh that’s not fair what about me without realizing their own privilege” – P4.</p> <p>“Yes, a lot of times, it’s even at home. ... Someone might want you to walk with them somewhere and you might not have the energy to. Then they’ll accuse you of throwing the ‘Disability Card’. But you might want to go somewhere and someone might decide for you that you cannot go there because you are a person with a disability” – P5.</p> <p>“I think you also need to look at the intent behind playing the card, like I said to you I feel... like not having to stand in the queue in the IEC elections for example. I walked in and walked out within 5 minutes, right now that is not necessarily playing the card when I tell the person I have a disability, I mean what happens if I could stand in the queue for three hours and then the next day I can’t get out of bed because I stood for so long?” – P6.</p>		<p>Step 1: Familiarizing yourself with the data – read all 6 transcripts</p> <p>Step 2: Generating initial codes – “Disability Card”</p> <p>Step 3: Searching for themes – words or phrases around code</p> <p>Step 4: Reviewing themes – review available literature on theme</p> <p>Step 5: Finding and naming themes – “Playing the Disability Card”</p> <p>Step 6: Producing the report</p>	
		Discourse analysis	
		<p>Step 7: Language beyond a sentence - discourse around work ethic of PWDs (Davis, 2006; Kitchin, 2000; and Morris. 2014).</p>	
Notes:		Step 9: Interactive or dialogue features of everyday speech - the consequences of this term penetrating everyday vocabulary is that the stigma behind such concepts flourishes if uncritically interrogated for its harmful effects (Byrne, 2000).	
<p>-P3, speaking in the first “I” and secondary position of “you”, affirmed the stereotyping behind the Disability Card (DC).</p> <p>-P4 is opposed to the notion of a “Disability Card”; the concept reaffirms vulnerability of PWDs</p> <p>-P5 relates the concept to a form of ‘policing’ by family to what PWDs can(not) do</p> <p>-P6 shows acceptance of the DC, although within certain circumstances and intentions.</p>		<p>Step 8: Interrelationship between language and society – “Playing the Disability Card” is a repressive concept that socially reinforces the idea that PWDs rely on their disability to elicit advantage and sympathy in demanding situations (Byrne, 2000; Davis, 2006; Kitchin, 2000; Morris, 2014).</p>	

3.8 Researcher reflexivity/bias

Although the study may carry social significance in terms of understanding the role of resilience in education and the work environment, I considered the ethical implications of studying resilience within an already marginalised group such as PWDs. Though the focus of the study was to unearth resilience, I felt that the concept of resilience is problematic as the understanding of resilience shifts not only from one individual to the other, but from one generation to the next. Resilience can be measured in different ways, per different objectives based on different measures (quantitatively as well as qualitatively). The focus of the study was to highlight resilience in full-time employed and entrepreneurial GWDs. This, at times, did not sit well with me as often I would ask myself; does employment status imply that one is resilient? Can somebody who is not working but has managed to overcome trauma or whatever adversity not be considered resilient?

Furthermore, my position as an able bodied young Black male from a working-class background should also be acknowledged as offering a lens towards the participants as well as the dataset. Through the process of conducting the research, as pointed out by one of the participants, I had to acknowledge that my able-bodiedness provided me with privilege. Accordingly, this privilege may sometimes 'blind' or construe how I may perceive or interact with PWDs. Presenting from a position of privilege, my able-bodied presence could elicit desirable responses which comes from perceived interrogation when conducting research on sensitive issues such as positive and negative work experiences. Being a Black male from a working-class family, my racial identification as well as class membership carries a sociopolitical history that I cannot separate from my own worldviews and how I would analyse and interpret the result findings. My presence therefore remains part and parcel of the research.

However, as highlighted above, standard measures of rigor, credibility and trustworthiness were considered to counter any biases within all the research steps. The most important consideration was maintaining regular consultations with my supervisor who could keep me in check. In addition to this, several strategies and

considerations were taken in this regard. First was acknowledging my able-bodiedness as well as maleness (2 participants were female). Since I did not identify myself as possessing any impairment or disability, I provided the participants with the option of being interviewed by a PWD of the same sex. However, none of the participants expressed any negative concern regarding my able-bodiedness or sex. In fact, the participants spoke freely, sharing personal accounts and intimate details of their work experiences. This was however accommodated by spending more time with participants before and after the interview cementing rapport. I spent approximately 10 minutes before and after the interview asking participants about the universities they attended as well as bit about their upbringing. Secondly, given the multiple languages spoken within the population sample (1 Coloured, 3 Black and 2 White), participants were offered the opportunity to conduct the interview using their own language. All participants indicated English as their preferred language.

3.9 Summary

This chapter aimed to provide the methodological and ethical considerations followed while conducting the study. An interpretivist approach, utilising multiple case studies was followed during the as part of the research design. Sampling, research procedures and the research setting were also highlighted within this chapter. In-depth, individual interviews were collected from each participant. Data were analysed using thematic as well as discourse analysis. Finally, a reflection of my own experiences while conducting the research was presented within the reflexivity section. The following section presents the results and discussion of the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

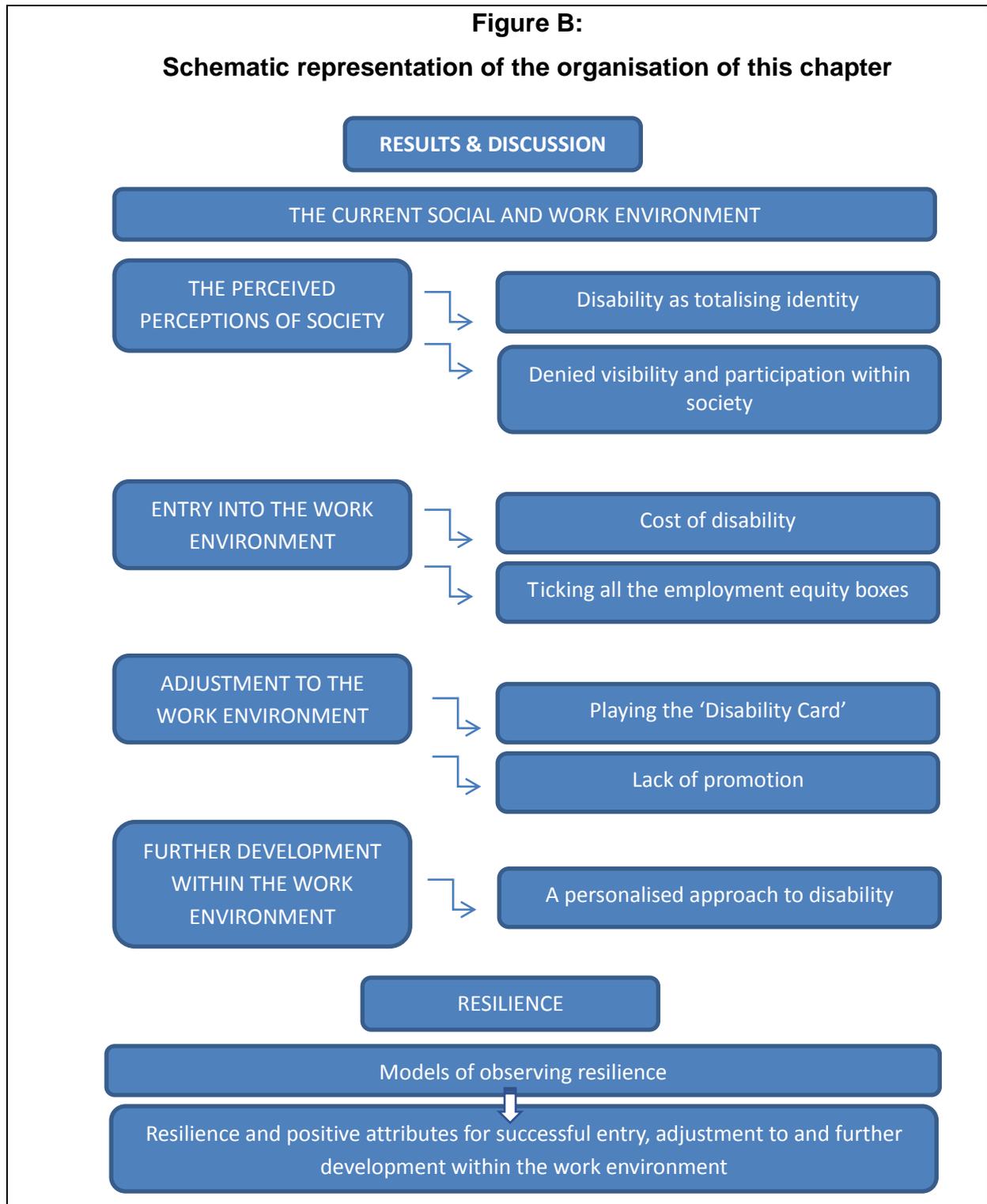
This chapter presents the study results first in the form of derived themes with a brief discussion of themes. In this chapter, participants' accounts of perceived current societal perceptions of disability is presented. Themes of disability as totalising identity as well as denied visibility and participation within society are presented. The chapter shows that one can understand workplace discrimination once one becomes mindful of the perceived social perceptions and history surrounding disability.

Next, the chapter overviews the key developmental milestones faced by GWDs as they enter, adjust and further develop within the work environment. This will cover the journey of the study GWDs as they navigate their way through their respective careers. The chapter also examines participants' construction of the work environment. Here, themes such as the cost of disability, ticking all the employment equity boxes, lack of promotion, finding a personalised approach to each disability are presented.

Even with the challenges encountered by participants within their social and work environment, one discovers resilience within their narratives and decision-making processes as they find ways to cope and rebound back. Within this section, available theories of studying resilience are presented. A self-devised conceptual model is presented based on participants' accounts as well as existing literature. The paper attempts to further unearth resilience utilising the proposed theoretical framework (positive psychology, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and the ICF biopsychosocial model) as to how to successfully enter, adjust and further develop within the work environment.

Themes are presented based on the sequence of societal perceptions, entry, adjustment and further development in the work environment, rather than from most to least prevalent. Due to limitations in word count, only two quotes per sub-theme will be presented (see Table 3 within the appendices for an exhaustive analysis).

The following presents a schematic representation of the organisation of this chapter:



4.2. THE PERCEIVED PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIETY

The analysis revealed two key areas where perceived society's perceptions of disability negatively affect the beliefs and perceptions of PWDs, and consequently GWDs. The areas included perceptions that: 1) Disability totalises identity, as well as 2) Denied visibility and participation within society.

4.2.1 Disability as totalising identity

One of the perceived societal perceptions that was prevalent from participants' responses as well as literature was that one's identity and character is preceded by one's disability (Lid, 2015; Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014; Watson, 2002). Identity formation departs from the concept and consequence of mainly being disabled (Grue, 2016). Totalising occurs as the individual is seen through essential characteristics of his/her disability (visual impairment) rather than individual personality. Two respondents referred to disability as totalising identity through membership categories, stereotyping as well as social narratives:

It's not the word itself [disability]. It's mainly how it's, it's the attitude around it neh! ... Some they say it in spite. ... Like, "these disabled people". Like what I was telling you earlier about trying to catch a taxi. A person refusing to offer you a seat in front, they'll be like, "these disabled people". The attitude behind it puts some spite in the word – P5.

From the above, P5 alludes to a membership category of PWDs within society (Riddel & Watson, 2014). They have an identity which is associated with "these people". One notices that PWDs are clustered or totalised as a similar group with no varying individual characteristics within this setting. Social categorisation here becomes another mechanism of identity formation as in-groups ("they'll") and out-groups ("these") become differentiated (Hughes, 2004).

Because they [employers] didn't have an idea that I have a personality, that I am a person. All they saw was a dude with no hands. I don't know what they

thought but maybe they felt that we're going to meet this guy and he is going to start complaining how difficult life is. How bad everyone is. But after we meet, I blew everyone away because that is not what I am about. You are not there to meet the disability. You are there to meet me. And I am a different person. The disability is that thing that lacks hands. Hands are not my brain. I don't have my brains located on my hands because I lost my hands, I lost my brain – P3.

P3s account demonstrates how his disability is assumed to be part and parcel of his personality (Vehmas & Shakespeare, 2014). Identity is predetermined by much of the existing myths and social narratives surrounding PWDs as full of complaints (Grue, 2016). Personality here is tied to the stigma, fears and prejudice society has constructed towards PWDs (Watson, 2002). P3, however, remains resistant towards this form of stereotyping.

4.2.2 Denied visibility and participation within society

Disability is a socially constructed phenomenon wielded by attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers (ableism) (WHO, 2011). Choice and spaces occupied by PWDs remains co-constructed by what society deems suitable for PWDs (Lid, 2015). This theme looks at how opportunity to participate in everyday activities remains restricted due to ableism. Two respondents highlighted the disability grant programme, social sanctions as well as the charity discourse as barriers to the visibility (social representation) and participation (social engagement) for PWDs within certain spaces:

Some people don't even understand why you are going to work, because they tell me that there are disability grants and I should be staying at home, "why are you working?" ... I get it ALL the time - crossing the streets, the driver might want to pass quickly, you should literally throw yourself out of the way because they do not understand why you hogging up the road as they say - P5.

P5s account shows how the movement and activity participation including employment of PWDs remains 'policed' by their able-bodied counterparts (Vehmas &

Shakespeare, 2014). P3s career options and movements within public spaces is problematised to what certain members of society deem fit for PWDs (Milner & Kelly, 2009). This draws heavily on the historical inheritance of the medical model of disability. The medical model assumes government should just provide state care (healthcare, housing and disability grants), in turn limiting agency and mobilisation from PWDs (Human Right Watch Report, 2016).

It's sometimes challenging and sometimes not easy being an entrepreneur. But I find that being disabled, you know, when it's time for payments and so forth, in the company people are less inclined to pay disabled business owners because there is a perception that it is a charity company and people don't really see a disabled person running a proper company you know where you get payments on time and these deadlines. And we run businesses like every other business - P2.

P2 points out that society has not become accustomed to seeing a PWD successfully run her own business. Part of this reason is that disability has historically been constructed within a charity discourse. The charity discourse relates to the social perception that disability can be addressed from a charity lens (Grue, 2016). Even today, companies partition funds to support charity causes which include disability outreaches (Cameron, 2016). More importantly, P2s account shows how hanging onto concepts of disability as merely a charity case is harmful as such concepts further limit the visibility and participation of disabled business owners. The next section considers entry into the work environment for GWDs.

4.3 ENTRY INTO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

In relation to entry into the work environment, the analysis revealed three key areas where GWDs still encounter barriers in negotiating entry into the work environment. The emerging themes included: 1) Cost of disability, and 2) Ticking all the employment equity boxes.

4.3.1 Cost of disability

Entry of GWDs into the work was considered on a risk and cost assessment by employers as to how much it would cost to accommodate the new graduate (Ivanova *et al.*, 2009). Four respondents suggested the cost of disability was considered based on company expenditure, the need for assistive devices as well as access to the built environment:

One needs to consider the cost of accommodating graduates with disabilities. I feel like there is a time when most companies out there specifically are looking for disabled people because they got that agenda that we need to make sure that we make the numbers. And there is a season for that... Because when you think of it, when you employ a disabled person immediately that person is a liability to you. They have not even started, you haven't even paid them, they are a liability because let's say you have a building that is two stairs. You've got no ramp, you've got no elevator. And a person on a wheelchair will cost you money to accommodate them in that building. So why hire them in the first place? – P3.

P3s account shows hiring GWDs presents a “liability” to employers. New technologies such as specialised computer systems as well as assistive technology remain a major concern for most employers (Kaye, Jans, & Jones, 2011). Budgets must be expanded, while the work environment needs to be re-designed to be disability-friendly (Wilkinson-Meyers *et al.*, 2010). In other words, in a world of competing cheap labour, employers are pushed to consider the cost of labour in hiring a GWD as opposed to persons without disabilities (Kaye *et al.*, 2011).

You see that's why at times what happens some...go for learnerships. But also, let me put it this way, the employers they will go for employees or people with disabilities whom they think will not cost them in terms of assistive devices. For example, they say, “Ja, we've got learnerships for graduates with disabilities but only people who are on wheelchairs or only people who are using crutches are welcome. We don't employ, welcome blind people you know”. Because

why? They don't want to get assistive devices. But like what I was saying also you have situations whereby the employer puts you into switch board for life because what matters to the employer is that I've got a person with a disability that person is a stat for us – P1.

Another route of entry to the work environment has been facilitated by the availability of learnerships. This carries economic advantage to employers in terms of cost (Lorenzo, 2012). As P1 points out, learnerships often exploit GWDs without any promise of permanent employment opportunities. Due to push and pull factors (for example, high youth unemployment, insufficient livelihood assets and few entrepreneurial skills) (DOL, 2011), GWDs thus remain forced to accept underpaid work (Lorenzo, 2012). Instead, GWDs who cost less to accommodate usually become first to be hired. However, employers do not really have the right to deny employment to PWDs (Employment Equity Act of 1999).

4.3.2 Ticking all the employment equity boxes

Employment equity policy on recruitment has created both favourable and unfavourable outcomes for GWDs. On the one hand, many GWDs have gradually been able to enter the work environment (Maja *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, this legislative framework has promoted a culture of hiring PWDs for the sake of meeting employment quotas without empowering PWDs in the long term (Wordsworth, 2006). From the five respondents who referred to this trend in employment equity, two respondents' viewpoints are presented here:

I mean there are companies who do it for the right reasons because they see competence in you as supposed to [saying], "We need four disabled people by the end of 2018". What are they going to do, "Ah! We will dream of something", and they do. They dream of positions that don't even need anyone to fill. You know I got a call from a company that was looking for a disabled person with any qualification. My question was what kind of a job is that? What kind of a job required a disabled person with any qualification? It shows that that company has got absolutely no interest in hiring disabled people for their competence, it's

just for the numbers because there is no way that anybody can convince me that no it's a serious job, we really think you are competent and we want you here – P3.

P3s account highlights the underlying discrimination within employment equity quotas. P3 shows most qualified GWDs are hired for unsuitable and unbefitting positions (Wordsworth, 2006). The interest here is in fulfilling labour legislation on equal equity practices. While companies may enjoy the benefits of ticking employment equity targets, P3s account shows that these measures carry harmful implications for those perceived to be selected based on these targets (Wordsworth, 2006).

I think it remains crucially important that companies remain cognisant and committed to diversity in their staff. But it's incredibly important that it does not become a task of just ticking the equity employment boxes when you are doing your BEE quotas. ... Likewise, you cannot say I'm going to reserve ten jobs for somebody with a disability but they must be a receptionist. That's inappropriate to judge that somebody is incapable of doing something before you haven't even met them – P4.

P4s account shows processes taken to bring about diversity may actually hide trends in hiring GWDs (Marumoagae, 2012). Many work environments boast of diversity in hiring of their staff. However, the employees on the lowest ranks of these organisations remain GWDs (Wordsworth, 2006). While diversity aims to demonstrate the inherent potential of all employees, this remains unequally representative within all company ranks (Boucher, 2015). The next section considers adjustment to the work environment for GWDs.

4.4 ADJUSTMENT TO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Results showed adjustment to the work environment required immense perseverance against much allegation and stagnation. Two such prominent themes

that emerged from this analysis included: 1) Playing the 'Disability Card', and 2) Lack of promotion.

4.4.1 Playing the 'Disability Card'

Once located within the work environment, one of the accusations GWDs encountered within certain work spaces is how they gain sympathy by using their disabilities to solicit relief in situations of discomfort and high pressure (playing the 'Disability Card') (Byrne, 2000; Davis, 2006; Kitchin, 2000). Four respondents referred to the role of playing the 'Disability Card' within the setting of the home, society as well as the work environment:

Look, ahm! The Disability Card is the same as the Race Card or the Female Card. Ahm! You just play that card when things are not going your way. You can play a Race Card and call everyone a racist, that's the Race Card or you can say it's because I am Black that's the Race Card. The Disability Card is similar in a sense that I can get away with not doing a lot of things because I am disabled - P3.

The 'Disability Card' is a social construct that is utilised to explain the work ethic of GWDs (Davis, 2006). To get out of difficult and high pressure situations, family, friends and colleagues posit lack of endurance amongst GWDs to playing the 'Disability Card' (Morris, 2014). However, with close inspection, this concept reinforces constructions of dependence and incompetence which further perpetuates harmful discourses around disability (Morris, 2014). Once such concepts as the 'Disability Card' become part of everyday work vocabulary, language forms dominant discourses in othering GWDs, especially if such concepts are not critically interrogated (Byrne, 2000).

I think that the notion of the "Disability Card" is a myth. I don't think there is such a thing and to understand that you must go back to privilege. You cannot play a Disability Card without understanding that fundamentally someone who has a disability is severely disadvantaged and it's perceived as mistreatment of

able-bodied persons when they see a disabled person getting a form of support or accommodation and say, “Oh that’s not fair, what about me?”, without realising their own privilege. And privilege plays out in several ways and obviously... But specifically, when you are living with a disability, someone who is able-bodied doesn’t go through what you go through daily and in that they have no place to say you are getting special or unfair advantages – P4.

P4 highlights some of the misconceptions that able-bodied individuals produce when ascribing to the ‘Disability Card’ (Sampson, 2006). Reflecting on the privilege discourse (one group as advantaged by having certain characteristics or group membership status), P4 highlights how able-bodied individuals remain ‘blind’ to the daily living challenges which require special accommodation for PWDs to fulfil functional activities and roles within society (Byrne, 2000). P4 asserts that the idea of a ‘Disability Card’ is in fact a repressive concept that enables able-bodiedness to ‘police’ disabled individuals when one can claim disablement as well as the legitimacy of special consideration (Byrne, 2000).

4.4.2 Lack of promotion

Even with higher levels of education as well as extensive career-related experience, PWDs are often restricted to entry level positions (Randle & Hardy, 2016). This speaks to a glass-ceiling effect that corresponds to the feminist critique where a certain demographic (race, gender, ethnicity or in this case disability) keeps women from advancing beyond a certain level within an organisational hierarchy (Boucher, 2015). Five respondents referred to the career trajectory of GWDs as largely associated with exploitation, under-utility as well as career stagnation:

Because they’ll make you do a job that will not really pay the full amount or alternatively you will be very under-utilised, whereby they’ll say ok you are in a learnership don’t worry just make tea for us you know, even though you are a graduate. Or no man just sit here and analyse these policies for us but then you don’t even go out there to apply and understand who are you analysing or how they are impacting you - P1.

P1s account highlights a thread of exploitation, under-utilisation as well as career stagnation within most GWDs careers (Boucher, 2015). Even as a professional graduate, one finds themselves still occupying unskilled job duties such as “making tea”. Exploitation in the form of salary scales as well as job duties remains unguarded by unfair workplace policies which should protect the rights and privileges of all employees, including GWDs (Randle & Hardy, 2016).

You know he will post jobs like [friend in a non-profit disability recruitment agency]: Company looking for an Albino receptionist. To me that's a bit too specific. How many Albinos are you going to have in that interview? One, two? Like what did I have to do to deserve this job? All I had to do is to be disabled, not competent. How can you be so specific that you need an Albino on reception? What if that Albino is a qualified somebody on something else? They wouldn't want to be a receptionist. But you've already narrowed it down like this is a perfect position. But you'll never see such specific positions at management level. What are you doing there? You are disabled! You belong at the bottom at the learnerships and reception, that's where you belong - P3.

From a selection point of view, P3s account shows labour practice is sometimes geared to employ GWDs in temporary and semi-skilled job positions (Randle & Hardy, 2016). The earmarked positions are clearly specified to pigeon-hole GWDs in a state of precarious labour whereby one is forced to remain employed because of the perceived lack of other available opportunities (Vosko, 2006). Adjustment is thus negatively affected as there is no intended promotion that is targeted towards the career growth of GWDs (Randle & Hardy, 2016). The next section considers further development within the work environment for GWDs.

4.5 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

According to the majority of participants, addressing disability requires that each disability be tackled with an individualised approach, taking into account the uniqueness of each disability as well as the individual within their environment.

4.5.1 A personalised approach to disability

Each person with a disability encounters unique barriers and facilitators given their individual personality and contextual environment (Peterson & Quarstein, 2001). The majority of respondents referred to the barriers one encounters within day-to-day interactions as grounded within the interplay between the person and his/her environment (Paquette & Ryan, 2001):

A personalised approach simply means a person who is deaf does not have similar experiences as somebody else who is deaf but find themselves in a different circumstance. And this goes back to privilege by the fact that the experience of a White cisgender female [one conforming to society's gender role as expected of one's biological sex] who is deaf will differ from somebody who is transgender, Black, disabled, poor person who lives in a rural place. The assumption cannot be that we are going to send out an advert on LinkedIn without considering that these are two different circumstances. The White female cisgender female is going to find it easier to access the opportunity than the rural transgender who is not on the right side of accessing privilege. What am trying to say is that you cannot have a one size fits all approach – P4.

As highlighted earlier, despite the marked similarities, especially in the South African context, no person with the same disability faces the same opportunities and challenges (Livneh, 2001). P4s account suggests access to opportunity largely depends on one's socioeconomic circumstances (Milner & Kelly, 2009). A personalised approach remains cognisant that disability is a function of social, physical, informational and institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). Access to opportunities thus needs to consider participation and activity limitations hand in hand with the unique disability impairment as well as person-in-environment (Livneh, 2001).

And that's why what's happened now is that reasonable accommodation it used to get handled by the Transformation Office in the university structure is now

moved to the Disability Unit who have more or less of a context sensitive to the approach. Which is why now they'll pick up the phone and say what need is accommodation meeting? What discomfort is there that we are alleviating? And in what way has this disability comfort impacted on the productivity that would otherwise not be impacted on? - P6.

P6s account demonstrates the need for Transformative Offices (TOs) as well as Disability Units (DUs) within the work environment. The work of TOs or DUs remains part of employment equity or HR areas of specialisations within most private corporations. Building on the proposed personalised approach, TOs present the opportunity to advocate and recommend certain changes to accommodate GWDs within the work environment (Phillips, Deiches, Morrison, Chan, & Bezyak, 2015).

Once again, it remains important to acknowledge that the cultural and socio-economic impact of experiences and challenges faced by PWDs (Livneh, 2001). Participants for example who are from wealthy backgrounds would not have the same type of challenges as those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Also, given the differences in the nature (congenital or acquired), type (physical, communicative, cognitive, and sensory or a combination of these) as well as access to intervention (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare) per individual, not all participants experience the challenges to achieving resilience (Milner & Kelly, 2009). For some, poverty, access, education could be one or a combination of challenges which affects successful career trajectories. This could be similar across able-bodied people located across different cultural and socioeconomic contexts enjoying better quality of life based on opportunities within their context (StatsSA, 2014).

4.6 RESILIENCE

This section aims to extend the discussion on participants' work experiences by asserting that despite the negative experiences encountered by some participants within their social as well as work environment, one discovers resilience within the narratives and decision-making processes as they find ways to cope and rebound

back from such experiences. The report presents various models that are available for studying resilience. Similarities and differences between these models are discussed. The report presents a self-devised conceptual model of positive attributes of workplace resilience (Figure D) as substantiated by participants' accounts (see Table 4) and literature. In utilising the proposed theoretical framework (positive psychology, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and ICF biopsychosocial model), this section attempts to unearth the suggested resilience through participants' accounts as well as literature. However, while utilising these robust theoretical frameworks, one discovers that these frameworks do not fully encapsulate the resilience demonstrated by some of the participants. Resilience is then critiqued by revisiting existing definitions of resilience. New meanings of resilience derived from this study is presented with implications for policy and interventions.

4.6.1 Models of observing resilience

Resilience is a dynamic, evolving, contested concept referring to aspects of optimal health, functioning, adjustment, personality, family, relationships, finances *et cetera* (Southwick et al., 2014). Researchers draw on multiple scales, indicators, descriptions as well as theories when evaluating an individual or a group's resilience (Rutter, 2008). Multiple models thus exist in evaluating resilience as well as its origins. The suggested origins of resilience include biological (biochemical influence, autonomic nervous system reactivity, epigenetics) psychological (traits, cognitions, learning) as well as social factors (family, community, culture) (Pembroke, 2015; Siebert, 2009; Southwick *et al.*, 2014). Figure C presents available models within literature of observing resilience amongst researchers and practitioners when studying resilience:

Models of observing resilience	Resilience as a stable trait of optimal functioning and wellbeing
	Resilience as a process to promote sustainable wellbeing
	Resilience as a continuum of differing degrees across life domains

Figure C: Models of observing resilience

Resilience as a stable trait of optimal functioning and wellbeing

For some researchers, resilience is considered an intrinsic, global and unique trait amongst certain individuals (Bonanno, 2014). According to Gavidia-Payne, Denny, Davis, Francis and Jackson (2015), some individuals may actually have inherited parental resilience. Researchers within this approach may emphasise inherent traits such as grit, hope, drive, efficacy and internal locus of control as consistent throughout resilient individuals (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007). For example, Dorsett (2010) showed the importance of hope in coping with an acquired disability such as a spinal cord injury. Boyce and Wood's (2011) study showed personality prior to disability determines adjustment in acquired disability, namely agreeable individuals recover lost life satisfaction sooner and more fully than non-agreeable individuals. The immediate shortcoming of this model is that maintaining that resilience is a stable trait disregards differences in nature (congenital or acquired), type (physical, communicative, cognitive, and sensory or a combination of these), as well as access to intervention (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare) the individual may rely upon to rebound back from adversity (Smith, Langa, Kabeto, & Ubel, 2005).

Resilience as a process to promote sustainable wellbeing

Resilience may also manifest as a product of multiple interacting systems, available resources and individual coping strategies (Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2010). The individual in this case responds to stressful situations by utilising resources in their environment as a consequent of the inherent capacity to adapt as well as through learning (Elliott *et al.*, 2002). For example, Sherrieb, Norris, & Galea (2010) study showed religion, social capital and bonds are all systems which serve as mechanisms of support, group cohesion and resilience. Tummala-Narra (2007) showed resilience within a traditional native group consisted of aligning cultural goals with available cultural resources, such as relying on elders' wisdom and guidance. Zautra *et al.* (2010) also showed resilient individuals respond to situations by changing their current pattern to cope with the stressful condition at hand. Resilience in this case becomes a process of exercising control over one's inner and external environment by utilising multiple systems, resources and coping strategies

(Southwick *et al.*, 2014). This model remains criticised for its methodological utility as assessing a process of interrelated systems, resources or individualised coping strategies is more challenging than observing a projected stable trait(s) (Burt & Paysnick, 2012).

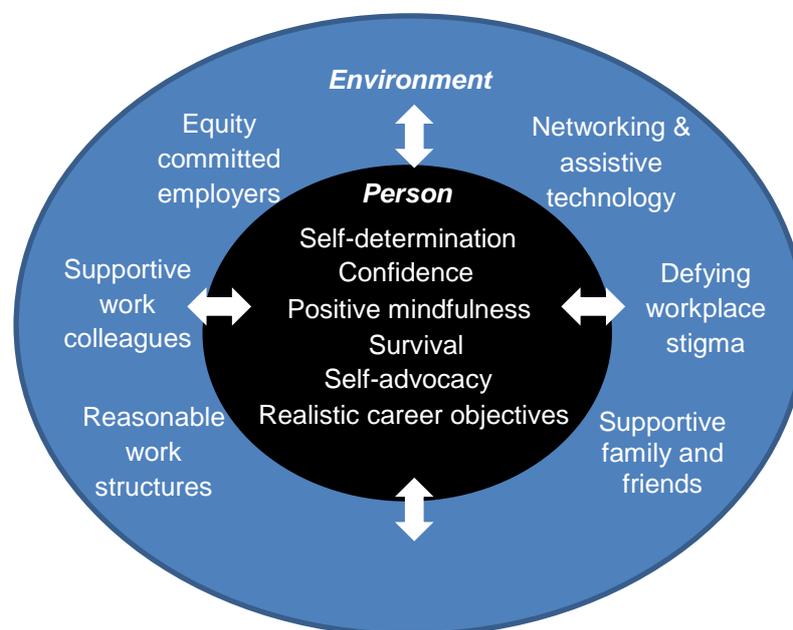
Resilience as a continuum of differing degrees across life domains

Resilience can also be thought of as existing on a continuum, within various degrees, across various functional life domains (Southwick *et al.*, 2014). The individual encounters various life challenges throughout the developmental span, some which he or she is relatively prepared or unprepared to face (for example, a car accident, divorce, or an untimely death of a loved one). Acquiring a disability due to cerebrovascular failure such as a stroke at a young age, for example, may require extensive support and assisted care (Stanton, Revenson, & Tennen, 2007). Also, as the individual matures, certain mechanisms for support, resources and coping strategies may become less available within a specific time of his or her life due to factors such as separation, bankruptcy, or acute stress. Thus, the individual may demonstrate 'hidden' resilience in one domain (health problems) and not others (academics, family, finances or work) (Pietrzak & Southwick, 2011). According to Southwick *et al.* (2014), it is thus not useful to rule such individuals as resilient or not resilient as resilience may be present in one domain and not others. However, critics maintain, suggesting that resilience may be present within differing degrees across multiple life domains implies resilience may be 'hidden', requiring specialised assessment and intervention as opposed to large-scale, economical state-funded programmes (Burt & Paysnick, 2012).

The models proposed above provide a useful departure in studying resilience. Although there is some degree of overlap, there are immediate criticisms which stem from adapting one model over the other (Burt & Paysnick, 2012). Southwick *et al.* (2014) suggest it would be rather useful to account for resilience utilising interdisciplinary, developmental, ecological, life-course models which exceed theoretical, methodological as well as level of intervention restrictions in observing resilience. Indeed, researchers can overcome the shortcomings of one model by extrapolating strengths from other models (Rutter, 2008). Researchers also must be

mindful of applying theories in contexts of diverse socioeconomic background, wherein cultural explanations of health and wellbeing may differ (Tummala-Narra, 2007). Another importance of these models is that they may assist in designing and explaining phenomena into new, simplified conceptual theories or models (Zautra *et al.*, 2010). The next section presents a self-devised conceptual model of workplace resilience based on participants' accounts and existing literature.

Figure D: Person-in-environment attributes to workplace resilience for graduates with disabilities



A conceptual model of workplace resilience

Person-in-environment fit

Figure D presents a conceptual model that configures workplace resilience from a person-in-environment fit (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). The person-in-environment fit relates to the extent to which personal (traits, interests, aptitudes) and environmental (organisational structure, processes, and culture) attributes fit (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Based on the model, the person possesses personal (for example, self-determination) as well as environmental (equity committed employers) positive attributes as channels of negotiating workplace resilience (Moxley, 2002). The model also demonstrates the bounded agency the person

exercises within the environment (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). However, one should note that the environment is also a product of the person interacting and shaping structures, processes and culture of the work environment (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Even so, given that the nature (congenital or acquired), type of (physical, communicative, cognitive, and sensory or a combination of these) as well as access to intervention (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare) per disability, one should consider the importance of these attributes may differ across individuals (Grue, 2016).

Table 4 below presents participants' experiential accounts based on questions asked throughout individual interviews. Guided by literature on workplace resilience (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011), attributes were selected per participant as significant person and environmental attributes which have positively contributed to their workplace resilience. Only at the end were participants asked if they considered themselves as resilient. The majority of participants did not show awareness of or claim ownership as being resilient. Rather, they alluded to certain attributes which assisted them to overcome adverse encounters within their work environments. The model suggests such personal (for example, self-determination, assertiveness and positive mindfulness amongst others) (Moxley, 2002; Scholl & Mooney, 2004; Shogren *et al.*, 2006), while environmental (equity committed employers, supportive work colleagues, reasonable work structures and others) (Hernandez *et al.*, 2007; Lewis *et al.*, 2013; Maja *et al.*, 2013) attributes function together to foster workplace resilience.

Furthermore, the model suggests resilience is not only a stable trait which directs optimal wellbeing (Bonanno, 2014). Personal attributes should rather be seen as a product of interaction with the environment as mechanisms of coping with negative experiences become internalised to assist the individual to thrive (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). The environment, on the other hand, supports the individual by providing structures (reasonable work structures), processes (supportive work colleagues) and work culture (equity committed employers) to enhance resilience (Hernandez *et al.*, 2007). Resilience, in this case, becomes a process of interlocking these systems to promote sustainable wellbeing (Zautra *et al.*, 2010). The fact that

none of the participants acknowledge that they were resilient could suggest “hidden” resilience as resilient may be present in one (health) but not all domains (work environment). Thus, the narratives and model shows resilience could feature on a continuum of differing degrees across life domains (Southwick *et al.*, 2014).

Table 4: Participants' experiential accounts of person-in-environment attributes to workplace resilience for graduates

Personal attributes	Self-determination	<i>"When I wanted a job, I had to make it happen. You [had] to fight and get rejected twenty times and have to go that twenty first time, pushing yourself beyond that rejection and negativity" - P2.</i>
	Assertiveness	<i>"Let me tell you, you know resilience issues of assertiveness and confidence those are the things that I think as a person with a disability you need to build" - P1.</i>
	Positive mindfulness	<i>"Ahm!, for me it's always about adapting to instead of having it changed perfectly for me ... You, you don't use your brain as much as I use mine I mean like in that the sweetest of ways. ... Because you just do things naturally your hands do things but there's that part of me I grew up with hands so there's that part of me that knows how I would do that with hands. And then there's a part of me that says but we need to figure it out without the hands" - P3.</i>
	Survival	<i>"I wouldn't [consider myself as resilient], I have heard a lot of people feel that's okay but for me it's always been what other option do I have. Everyone wakes up in the morning and say they are going to work so that they can live better lives or they can have better opportunities. Why can't I do the same without calling it survival" - P5.</i>
	Self-advocacy	<i>"The most important thing that you have to do as a person with a disability is for you to be your own advocate.... You cannot be an advocate if you don't know what can make life easier for you ... If you're not doing that, you're holding yourself at a disadvantage" – P4.</i>
	Realistic career objectives	<i>"One of the key challenges, if you want to call it a challenge, is that there are certain job types that might not be suited to your ability" - P6</i>
Environmental attributes	Equity committed employers	<i>"So you have to balance the equation, you have to hire those people, deserving people, all those black people from previously disadvantaged areas. But at the same time you are looking for people who are going to be able to generate profits for the company" - P5.</i>
	Supportive work colleagues	<i>"One thing that I realised soon after I got there was that I had the responsibility to teach people ... People didn't know how to act around me. So then I had that same responsibility to teach them that first I am P3. So like me or don't like me as P3. The disability is a part of me, not my personality. If you get used to that then you will understand how little this disability issue is in my life" - P3.</i>
	Reasonable work structures	<i>"I was lucky enough to study here as a student at the Wits university and I got amazing support which continued as a staff member at both the Transformation Office and the Disability Rights Unit. I was given the accommodation I needed in terms of being given a telephone I could hear on clearly and I was able to explain in different situations to face me, don't cover your mouth, you need to kind of meet me halfway if I'm on a very bad telephone line etc. I've received amazing support and I am very grateful for it" - P4.</i>
	Defying workplace stigma	<i>"I think when your difference is or what is different or what you can and cannot do is pointed out to you by somebody else in that context it perhaps stings a bit more. But it doesn't necessarily mean you are not resilient because at the end of the day like I said to you I drew a line in the sand and said well if this is how it's gonna be I cannot do anything about what I can and cannot do, the only thing I can do is do the things I can very well" - P6.</i>
	Networking and assistive technology	<i>"Get familiar with what is happening what is it that people with disabilities are doing out there especially blind people, if you are a blind person like me you need to know how are other blind people surviving the working place, talk to them if you are for example a person on a wheelchair you cannot come and say well no my employer is it bring me to work you know, take me home and bring me to work" - P1.</i>
	Supportive family and friends	<i>"It was definitely the people I was surrounded by. I have always had successful friends. My family has never seen me as disable" – P2.</i>

Unearthing workplace resilience through proposed theoretical framework

Positive psychology

Positive psychology arose from the need to move away from a preoccupation with deficit to inherent potential and growth (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). As noted earlier, this aspiration of positive psychology encompasses three pillars within positive psychology literature: (a) positive experiences (optimism, satisfaction and vitality), (b) positive personality (utilisation of personal strengths, virtues and self-determination), and (c) people and experiences embedded in a social context (positive social relationships and cultural norms which facilitate positive social engagement) (Schalock, 2004). Indeed, the discussion above shows some of the participants within this study show elements which do not align with the move from a preoccupation with deficit to a move to growth and potential (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Yet, as indicated earlier, resilience can manifest on a continuum, through various degrees, more so in one domain of life than others (Zautra *et al.*, 2010). For example, in Table 4, when asked whether he would consider himself as resilient, P5 demonstrates decision-making and an individualised coping style which enables him to overcome adversity:

I wouldn't [consider myself as resilient], I have heard a lot of people feel that's okay but for me it's always been what other option do I have. Everyone wakes up in the morning and say they are going to work so that they can live better lives or they can have better opportunities. Why can't I do the same without calling it survival? - P5.

This may however not be reflected within his day-to-day interactions with others as he might feel resilient from one day and not the next, hence his reference to survival above. This shows a shortcoming within the framework of positive psychology as it provides a distinct, cross-sectional, circumscribed appraisal of global resilience (Masten, 2001; Rutter, 2012; Ungar, 2003). Although there might be different schools of thinking within positive psychology, resilience from this framework is largely considered as fixed and bounded, rather than operating on a dynamic, life-course continuum (Rutter, 2012). Indeed, the implication of this is that GWDs who do not necessarily fit within these 'ableist', outcomes-oriented definitions

of resilience may further be considered outside the resilience cusp (Hutcheon & Wolbring, 2013a; Lashewicz, Lo, Mooney, & Khan, 2012; Patterson, 2002). In considering the three pillars within positive psychology literature, some participants' experiences also did not fully fit within these pillars, for example:

I think when your difference is or what is different or what you can and cannot do is pointed out to you by somebody else in that context it perhaps stings a bit more. But it doesn't necessarily mean you are not resilient because at the end of the day like I said to you I drew a line in the sand and said well if this is how it's gonna be I cannot do anything about what I can and cannot do, the only thing I can do is do the things I can very well - P6.

In this case, P6 demonstrates (a) positive experiences in his current job duties, (b) positive personality attributes as illustrated by the optimism, satisfaction and vitality towards his work, but not (c) people and experiences embedded in a social context fostering a sense of positive social engagement (Schalock, 2004). Again, applying the three pillars, his experiences would not be sufficient to be considered as fully resilient. However, with that said, it should be noted that the three pillars should be considered more as guidelines to assess functioning, rather than a rule of considering the absence or presence of resilience (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Researchers may thus use these pillars as guidelines to identify and recommend areas of possible intervention (Schalock, 2004).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model

Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach (1989) encompasses a systems model of environmental subsystems which interact with the person's individual characteristics. The conceptual model of person-in-environment fit is theoretically aligned with this model, particularly with its emphasis on the person as interacting with norms, relationships and subsystems within his or her environment (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). For example, the diagram fits within the ecological model at micro- (supportive work colleagues), meso- (equity committed employers), exo- (reasonable work structures), macro- (networking and assistive technology) and chrono-subsystem (defying workplace stigma) with the person's attributes (self-

determination, assertiveness, positive mindfulness) interacting with these subsystems to produce workplace resilience (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Based on the participants' accounts and Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, the individual attains optimal functioning and wellbeing as he or she utilises personal attributes in conjunction with supportive environmental subsystems, for example P2 notes: *"When I wanted a job, I had to make it happen. You [had] to fight and get rejected twenty times and have to go that twenty first time, pushing yourself beyond that rejection and negativity"*. Later, she also notes: *"It was definitely the people I was surrounded by. I have always had successful friends. My family has never seen me as disabled"*.

P2 illustrates a person-in-environment fit as underlined within Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Based on the above remarks, this fit can be seen within the micro- (supportive family and friends), meso- (her family choosing not to see her as disabled within Table 4), exo- (her environment accommodating her needs), macro- (the spirit of her times demanding the best from all job applicants) and chrono-subsystems (her willingness over time to teach others about her disability) with the person's attributes (self-determination) as she interacts with these subsystems in response to everyday challenges (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). However, one notices a shortcoming stemming from Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1989), namely that all subsystems must be seen as interacting in unison (Engler, 2007). For example, the absence of one such subsystem (for example, the meso-system, say P2s parents were deceased), the model does not provide the extent to which the role of key players in this system is a prerequisite to attaining resilience. Furthermore, the model also does not acknowledge the innate capacity of certain individuals to overcome adversity through self-determination, assertiveness positive mindfulness, and not necessarily the combination of other subsystems (Engler, 2007). Even so, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model remains one the most comprehensive, well-supported theories of human development (Engler, 2007).

ICF biopsychosocial model

The ICF biopsychosocial model strives to advance a social, inclusive and empowerment model of disability (WHO, 2011). As noted earlier, this model sees

disability as a product of body functions and structures, activities, and participation intersecting with corresponding levels of disability (impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions) (WHO, 2001). Most importantly, the legacy of the model remains its recognition of disability as a function of social, physical, informational and institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). As a result, the model thus presents a social call for the protection and empowerment of PWDs from all stakeholders and institutions within society (WHO, 2011). The ICF biopsychosocial model is a model emphasising classification of optimal functioning within an individual's biopsychosocial facets (Mitra, 2014). Here, disability is seen as a product of attitudinal, environmental as well as institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). For example, negative attitudes, inaccessible built environments as well as social discrimination remain barriers creating disablement (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). Advocates of the ICF biopsychosocial model maintain, once such barriers can be removed, PWDs can also enjoy greater visibility and participation within the social and work environment (Human Right Watch Report, 2016). However, recognition of overcoming these barriers in attitude, environment and institutions was present to various degrees across participants, for example:

One thing that I realised soon after I got there was that I had the responsibility to teach people ... People didn't know how to act around me. So then I had that same responsibility to teach them that first I am P3. So like me or don't like me as P3. The disability is a part of me, not my personality. If you get used to that then you will understand how little this disability issue is in my life - P3.

The extract above shows P2 overcoming at least attitudinal barriers within his work environment (Moxley, 2002). His outlook towards life remains geared towards visibility and greater participation within his environment (Scholl & Mooney, 2004). However, it should be noted that P3 and other participants still experience disability from social, physical, informational and institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). Again, in this case, resilience may also be present on a continuum, of various degree, across one (his own internalised coping strategies) domain but not others (society and other institutional structures). Nonetheless, one of the shortcomings emanating from the ICF biopsychosocial model is its over-emphasis by researchers that social conditions

surrounding the individual (fear, stigma and prejudice) need to be first favourable for the individual to experience agency, mobilisation and by extension resilience (Mitra, 2014). On the contrary, as argued thus far, looking at the study participants' narrative and decision-making processes in overcoming negative experiences within their social and work environment shows a sense of resilience, be it in some cases on a continuum, within various degrees, across certain domains (Moxley, 2002). For example:

Ahm! For me it's always about adapting to instead of having it changed perfectly for me ... You, you don't use your brain as much as I use mine I mean like in that the sweetest of ways. ... Because you just do things naturally your hands do things but there's that part of me I grew up with hands so there's that part of me that knows how I would do that with hands. And then there's a part of me that says but we need to figure it out without the hands - P3.

Despite the co-occurring challenges within his environment, P3 demonstrates coping within his work and other environments. These environments are constituted of prejudice and hostile attitudes towards PWDs. Yet, the narratives and decision-making processes adapted by P3 shows resilience in the face of adversity (Yehuda, 2014). Although the ICF biopsychosocial model provides invaluable insights in terms of removing barriers in attitudes, environment and institutions, it can also alleviate the individual's responsibility as an agent of change (Mitra, 2014). Even so, it should also be noted that proponents of the ICF biopsychosocial model suggest the model should be viewed within a continuum with other models that are more individualised as opposed to its social justice agenda of removing social, physical, informational and institutional barriers which ultimately contribute to the equity, empowerment and inclusion of all PWDs (WHO, 2011).

By analysing the results in relation to the theoretical frameworks yielded unique insights. Positive psychology and its move away from preoccupation with deficit and its focus on potential and growth showed the three pillars within the theory may be used more as guidelines to assess functioning, rather than a directive of ruling for the absence or presence of resilience (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The absence of

positive experiences, positive personality or positive social engagement may provide immediate areas of intervention (Schalock, 2004). Bronfenbrenner's (1989) ecological model suggests the presence of supportive environmental sub-systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, chrono-subsystems) is recommendable, but not imperative as individuals may optimally function despite the absence of one or more subsystem (Engler, 2007). Although the ICF biopsychosocial model takes a strongly social justice agenda, it may however alleviate responsibility, agency and mobilisation from the individual (Mitra, 2014), and should rather be seen on a continuum as opposed to more individualised models (WHO, 2011). The selected theoretical framework therefore provides different starting points in conceptualising, planning and designing programmes for enhancing resilience. Yet again, the holistic, contextual and multi-stakeholder nature of situating the individual within interacting systems which impact their functioning remains fundamental across all frameworks.

All in all, this study showed that resilience may be more of an unbounded concept than previously suggested, in need of re-defining, than previously suggested by existing definitions and theoretical frameworks (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014; Masten 2001; Ungar, 2008). Instead, resilience assumed different conceptualisations across some participants (Ungar, 2003, 2004, 2008). Some of the participants showed resistance against being classified as exceptional or resilient persons. Instead, some participants saw their mobilisation of positive attributes as a means of adapting to the work environment. One participant justified his agency as a means of survival instead of possessing exceptional attributes, despite the experience of risk, adversity and challenges. He explained: *"Everyone wakes up in the morning and say they are going to work so that they can live better lives or they can have better opportunities. Why can't I do the same without calling it survival?"* - P5. Another suggested her fortitude was inspired by supportive family and friends, rather than asserting her own determination at times. *"It was definitely the people I was surrounded by. I have always had successful friends. My family has never seen me as disabled"* – P2. The following new meanings of resilience derived from this study can thus be summarised in Figure E:

New meanings of resilience derived from the study	Resilient persons may not necessarily be aware, or see themselves as resilient
	Resilient persons may see their agency, mobilisation and adjustment as a means of 'survival' instead of possessing exceptional attributes
	Resilience may be linked to positive personal and/or social experiences with others
	Resilience may be fostered or hindered given the differences in the nature (congenital or acquired), type of disability (physical, communicative, or a combination of these) as well as access to intervention and socio-economic status (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare)

Figure E: New meanings of resilience derived from the study

Based on the above results and discussion, a new definition of resilience based on participants' experiences can also be formulated. This definition may entail:

Resilience encompasses those personal, social, or hidden experiences or processes of maintaining agency, mobility and adjustment to survive or cope with life's demands in the midst of risk, adversity, or challenges, following the intersection of personal attributes, such as the nature (congenital/acquired), type of disability (physical, communicative, cognitive, and sensory or a combination of these) as well as environmental attributes, such as access to intervention and socioeconomic status (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare) within multiple contexts as the social and work environment.

The new definition underscores how resilience can and cannot be retrieved within one's immediate experiences. Resilient individuals may thus be unaware of how they interlock personal and environmental attributes to sustain agency, mobility and adjustment to survive or thrive in the face of risk, adversity or challenges. This follows from the definition of resilience as a process(es) available over time and various life domains which the individual claims to ensure survival, coping or merely to sustain optimal wellbeing. Given the shared similarities and differences of GWDs within the SA landscape, this definition will surely present various implications for research, policy and intervention to be discussed next within the conclusion.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate resilience and report on positive attributes amongst GWDs who have successfully entered, adjusted to and further developed within the work environment. To explore this proposition, the study drew on the intersection of disability and society, higher education and the employment sector. In terms of disability and society, the study found perceived negative perceptions of disability from society. With regards to higher education, the study found a few GWDs attain higher education. In terms of employment, the study aimed to track resilience and reported positive attributes as contributing to successful entry, adjustment to and further development of GWDs within the working environment. By tracking resilience, the study aimed to assist future GWDs to also achieve greater things by internalising and fostering the reported positive attributes earlier in their careers to enjoy successful career trajectories.

Concluding summary

The perceived perceptions of society

Two themes emerged from this main theme, namely that disability totalises identity, and denied visibility and participation within society. Participants' perceived perceptions clearly indicated that one's identity and character was preceded by one's disability. In other words, identity formation departs from the lens of one's disability. Disability was assumed by society to be part and parcel of one's personality make-up. This created a totalising process as the individual was seen through the fear, stigma and prejudice attached to his disability (visual impairment) rather than individual personality. Furthermore, the choices and spaces GWDs could occupy remained policed by what society deems suitable for PWDs. Discourses around the disability grant programme, social sanctions as well as the charity discourse were discussed as one of the barriers to the visibility (social representation) and participation (social engagement) for PWDs within certain spaces.

Entry into the work environment

As the earlier literature and narrative of Grace suggests example (see section 1.4), much societal fear, stigma and prejudice is expressed in hiring PWDs. One of

the presenting themes considered within this section is the weighted cost of disability to company profit in terms of reasonably accommodating the new graduate. Consistent with literature on the lack of entry amongst PWDs, participants also pointed to resistance in company investment in reasonable accommodation in the form of assistive devices and an accessible built environment (Harris & Roulstone, 2010; Hernandez *et al.*, 2007; Moxley, 2002). Entry of GWDs within the work environment was mainly to facilitate ticking of employment equity targets with no promise of further promotion. Rather, the cost of accommodating new GWDs was considered a “liability” on company expenditure.

Adjustment to work environment

One of the highlighted themes within adjustment was how the career trajectory of PWDs remains mostly in semi-skilled, unskilled and temporary job positions such as “making [staff] tea” or remaining “on switchboard for the rest of your life”. This suggests a glass-ceiling effect exists which hampers the promotion of GWDs. However, given the prevailing labour discrimination practices in SA, organisations have to hire GWDs, resulting in GWDs occupying unsuitable and unfulfilling job positions. On the other hand, participants made reference to policing of behaviour implied within playing the ‘Disability Card’. This implies PWDs are often considered as lazy, complacent and use excuses in high pressure situations. In this case, precarious labour, which thrives through unstandardised salaries, employee benefits, indefinite job demands, as well as desperation based on the fear of losing one’s only source of income, forces GWDs to remain in vulnerable and unprotected working conditions.

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Further development within the work environment

Looking at the way forward, participants suggested the successful entry, adjustment to and further development for PWDs depends on the addressing of each disability from a personalised approach. This was suggested given that resilience may be fostered or hindered due to differences in the nature (congenital or acquired), type of disability (physical, communicative, or a combination of these) as well as access to intervention and socio-economic status (assistive devices, family support and private healthcare). The majority of participants maintained a personalised

approach to disability acknowledges the fact that disability is a function of social, physical, informational and institutional barriers (WHO, 2011). In other words, access to opportunities thus needs to consider participation and activity limitations hand in hand with barriers and opportunities within the environment to assist individuals to achieve resilience within the social and work environment.

Resilience

The study indicated that despite the negative experienced within the social and work environment, participants demonstrated resilience in their decision-making processes. Based on participants' accounts and literature, a self-devised conceptual model resilience and positive attributes was proposed of person-environment fit. However, the resilience observed did not fully reflect the existing Western, positivist, and ableist definitions, which neglect the importance of context-bound, emic/insider perspective, and culture-specific assets utilised by participants in marshaling through hardship. Consistent with literature which problematises taken for granted notions of resilience as often "chasing the positive/dwelling in the negative dichotomy" (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014, p.1386), the study supported findings that existing definitions of resilience reflect competency-based outcomes rather than consider unique approaches to resilience as suggested by participants such as viewing resilience as a process of survival instead of as a present or absent state. The study recommended the need for definitions that fully encapsulates resilience as a plural, fluid, developmental, and localised phenomenon (Ungar, 2003, 2004, 2008). Unbounding or re-defining resilience showed new meanings can be derived with various implications for research, policy and intervention.

Contributions of the person-environment fit model

In terms of contribution to practice and existing theory, the model extends the need for integrated models to disability in which holistic intervention, policy-driven outcomes as well as rigorous monitoring and evaluation in engaging with Disability Rights (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). In terms of existing theory, the model in part supports the three proposed theoretical frameworks (positive psychology, Bronfenbrenner's ecological model and ICF biopsychosocial model). However, the model also advances new meanings which can be derived from unbounding

resilience (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014). Following this unique group of graduates, the model promises a social contribution to youth unemployment as based on the suggested positive attributes which can be incorporated in the design of interventions to increase school retention, graduate turnover as well as job entry particularly among young PWDs (Elliott *et al.*, 2002; Dorsett, 2010; Shogren *et al.*, 2006). In future research, the model can be extended into a life-course model to monitor and evaluate progress in workplace resilience (Maja *et al.*, 2013; Moxley, 2002; Scholl & Mooney, 2004). Furthermore, the model suggests the integration of positive attributes into enabling policy and intervention strategies such as the Code of Good Practice on Disability in the workplace promises opportunity for PWDs to acquire and internalise these positive attributes to achieve greater things within their work environments (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011).

Theoretical implications

Within closer inspection, the results show that the existing definitions of resilience, which often emphasise positivist (Ungar 2004), Westernised competency-scales (Masten, 2001), and ableist behavioural-based norms (Masten 2001) may not adequately reflect the various context-bound, individualised and cultural viewpoints which underscore unclaimed assets employed by individuals and groups while navigating hardship (Black & Lobo 2008). Context within this study has been shown to overlap with the various life domains in which resilience may be present, in various degrees, when resilience is considered on a continuum (Southwick *et al.*, 2014). Given that no participant specifically referred to culture, the role of culture within resilience could not be analysed. However, what the results show is that there remains a need for complicated definitions of resilience which require the consideration of resilience as a plural, fluid, developmental, and localised phenomenon (Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2015). Also, the fact that the majority of participants did not show awareness of or ownership of resilience shows a missing key element – that they are not only making use of it, but they also do not even appear to realise its importance. Then again, this finding could suggest that the topic of resilience is something they have not reflected on before, or they do not consider themselves any more resilient than anyone else - it is just part of their personality. Or maybe they do see themselves as resilient, but do not think about it relative to the

concept of resilience itself. Nonetheless, this finding presents future research with a number of directions to explore multiple, evolving, culture- and context-bound pathways in which resilience may inform research, policy and practice.

Implications for research, practice and policy

In terms of research, methodologically, if participants did not identify themselves as resilient within individual qualitative interviews, this may suggest that resilience might not be observed within most quantitative measures. This might suggest that researchers need to develop multiple methods, scales as well as qualitative probes which could tap into “hidden” resilience. Also, researchers should consider multiple definitions when designing programmes inclusive of various context-bound, individualised and cultural viewpoints which underscore unclaimed assets employed by individuals and groups while navigating hardship. In terms of practice, practitioners could also design programmes with the suggested conceptual models’ positive attributes for new GWDs to internalise these attributes within the entry phase of employment to enjoy successful adjustment and further development within their career trajectories. Furthermore, organisational development programmes such as coaching and mentorship programmes can also be instituted to enhance resilience amongst existing GWDs to further effectiveness within long-term, permanently employed GWDs. With regards to policy, based on the stigma and ableism observed within this study, there is a call for the Minister of Labour to reinforce fair policy in a direct manner by appointing labour inspectors to rigorously monitor and evaluate the application of such policy not only in annual equity reports, but from their actual offices and corridors. HR and the Minister of Labour are also encouraged to work alongside expert disability representatives and advocacy bodies in forging appropriate labour legislation.

Limitations and recommendations

One of the chief limitations of this study was the lack of diversity within the participant sample. The recruited participant sample had few spectrums of disability type (visual, hearing and physical impairments) and thus drawing tautologous from it would be limited in terms of application to the broader population. In this case, the results may best be interpreted as limited to individuals sharing similar nature and

type of disability as well as cultural and social contexts. Each disability type presents with its own barriers in terms of resilience and positive attributes. While the study found that resilience and positive attributes as demonstrated by the participant sample did not adequately reflect the existing definitions of resilience; this may not be the case across other congenital/acquired, partial/profound, and single/multiple disabilities. Another presenting study limitation was potential bias, which the report discussed in chapter three within the researcher's reflexivity. In Chapter 3, the researcher identified potential bias areas and proposed strategies to deal with potential bias while ensuring objectivity during data collection and analysis. Time was also a fact as study participants were distributed across different areas within the Gauteng province and the project was required to be completed within a year. Consequently, this resulted in a very short time to complete the research and write the report. Time constraints led to changes in the number of the participant sample as well as the procedures of data collection. The study recommends further research on a larger scale incorporating the issues and concerns which have been outlined here.

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APPENDICES:

TABLE 3: THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Participant Number	Nature of Disability	THE PERCEIVED PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIETY		ENTRY INTO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT			ADJUSTMENT INTO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT		FURTHER DEVELOPMENT INTO THE WORK		
		DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY	DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY	COST OF DISABILITY	TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES		PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'	LACK OF PROMOTION	A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY		
P1	35-45 year old Black male. Visual disability: Legally blind since birth. Employment Equity Officer within a private organisation.	It is unfortunate that unfortunately people don't see beyond your disability until in a situation where by either you have to stand in front of them and do a particular job or alternatively they give you a particular thing and then you do it for them, you do it you've kind of assisted them for that matter because that's another thing I mean people ask you how are you gonna! type you know? I mean its... you have to type for them and you give them the document, even if for example you have to go	Stigma But then let me tell you, there was a challenge sort of a bit of a challenge when I was doing my postgraduate diploma, the two of us we were blind guys we wanted to do the postgraduate diploma. ... So the guys there were saying to us we are not sure if you are going to make this course ... If you fail we are going to refund you your money and we are not gonna! do anything, but we take you out of the course. I say wow these guys it's so unbelievable how can they say that. And luckily we proved them	You see that it why at time what happens some of the people they have learnerships they go for learnerships. But also let me put it this way, the employers they will go for employees or people with disabilities whom they think will not cost them in terms of assistive devices. For example they say ya we've got the learnerships, which are some of these learnerships because I see them, we've got learnerships for graduates with disabilities but only people who	I mean I can't even imagine like being put in a "switch board" for life I mean... that is like what?. I can't even comprehend that situation but remember employers neh! they some of the employers and I think many actually, they don't hire people with disabilities because they like them you know they hire people with disabilities because firstly it's the law, you have to hire employees with disabilities. You see that it why at time what happens some of the people			OK, OK. So you were saying gore! vele! does it begin with you the individual? yes it begins with you as an individual so if you go out there as a graduate with a disability and say ya! well I've graduated and I deserve a job because the government says you need to employ people with disabilities then you are going to get a shock of your life because people are gonna! say oh well no we are not gonna! employ you or they will employ you they will put you in a switch board for life you know because they want their			

		<p>and facilitate like I would do I've heard people say ya! but how are you gonna! stand there and run those sessions? How are you gonna! run that slide presentation you know?</p>	<p>wrong because we passed</p>	<p>are on wheelchairs or only people who are using crutches are welcome. We don't employ, welcome blind people you know. Because why, they don't want to get assistive devices. But like what I was saying also you have situations whereby the employee the put you into "switchboard" for life because bona what matters to the employer is that I've got a person with a disability that person is a stats for me.</p>	<p>they have learnerships they go for learnerships. but also let me put it this way, the employers they will go for employees or people with disabilities whom they think will not cost them in terms of assistive devices.</p>			<p>stats to go higher and you will be so frustrated. So I think it's a question of as a graduate you need say yes the employment act but what is it that I can offer you know.</p> <p>Learnerships and exploitation Because they'll make you do a job that will not really pay the full amount or alternatively you will be very underutilised, whereby they'll say ok you are in a learnership don't worry wena! just make tea for us you know, even though you are a graduate or wena! no man just sit here and analyse the policies for us but then you don't even go out there to apply and understand who are you analysing, so how re they impacting you. So for me really I</p>		
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							will say to them do that in the department of Labour. Get your report out there to investigate what is happening as far as the law is concerned.		
P2	<p>35-45 year old Coloured female.</p> <p>Physical disability: Arthorygroposis (congenital joint contractures in two or more areas of the body) since birth.</p> <p>Entrepreneur.</p>	<p>DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY</p> <p>Disability and identity, shifting societal perceptions of PWDs</p> <p>I: I wanted to talk about identity and the identity of being classified as the two percent in the company.</p> <p>P: Well, today we are. Disability is not valued the way it was when I started in government back in 2006. People used to speak highly of the deaf person in that department. There is a blind guy who is doing this. People would</p>	<p>DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p> <p>Charity case stigma of disabled business owners, pseudo company</p> <p>it's sometimes challenging and sometimes easy being an entrepreneur but I find that being disabled, you know, when it's time for payments and so forth, in the company people are less inclined to pay disabled business owners because there is a perception that it is a charity company and people don't really see a disabled person running a proper company you</p>	<p>COST OF DISABILITY</p> <p>Accessibility in university and work environment, built environment as an obstacle</p> <p>I: tell me more about your experiences, is there any good or bad memory from this experiences?</p> <p>P: from work everything was good, the only problem I've had one of the biggest reason why I left the company was because of public transport. Transportation as disabled person becomes a bit of a challenge so you have the</p>	<p>TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES</p> <p>Culture shift, todays BEE scoring, ticking all the employment equity boxes, learnerships</p> <p>I: You talked about a culture shift.</p> <p>P: Jah, it's like when you when you work for a company as a person with a disability they make a backup plan. In my young days, there was no backup plan. There were no learnerships, CSI or BEEE scoring or points for having a disabled</p>	<p>PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'</p>	<p>LACK OF PROMOTION</p> <p>Access, lack of promotion, transportation as an obstacle</p> <p>I: did you find any challenges in terms of accessing employment not now; I am also asking you to maybe in general maybe the stories you've heard</p> <p>P: for me it was easy, it was ok because I started in a front line position and I ended up in the group human capital management position ... in terms of disability but the average person I do get lawyers accountants who</p>	<p>A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY</p> <p>Forcing policy to reluctant companies, start with those who want to see change</p> <p>I: What do you think could be done in terms of workplace policy? You talked about a virtual reality space. What do you think can be done in terms of policy and intervention?</p> <p>P: One never should use policy to force people to do this. If you are not keen then you should not go for this option. If you are the person who wants to see their staff everyday, then go for this option.</p>	

		<p>say WOW! the determination, the effort, the ethic that person puts into their work. Now, it's oh that disabled person is there because our company wanted to reach a particular BEE score. So is there person there because of determination or their skills or is there person there to be a stats on a piece of paper.</p>	<p>know where you get payments on time and these deadlines. And we run businesses like every other business. So that is the more challenge thus far.</p>	<p>Gautrain, which is perfect, perfectly accessible for me not for other disabilities maybe. And getting from the train station to my work place was a challenge because then you would have to get cabs or climb on buses and for me physically I can't, running to get on the bus because of the steps and so forth. So for me it was the minor little things that made such big decision making impacts on my career in the corporate world.</p> <p>... I went to an able bodied school first in my primary school and I had to go to a disabled school because the classrooms were upstairs. So the accessibility for me was quite a mission, and I think that's also played a role in</p>	<p>person in place. You had to fight; you had to make sure you are ten times better than the four abled bodied persons next to you in that interview room. Whereas today you are more likely to get employed because of the low BEE scoring in that company. That's what I mean by the culture.</p>		<p>are in a reception position for the last 5 years and when do ask and find out the person is not doing well in the company why is there no opportunity for promotions and so forth, it always boils down to the accessibility of the building or they would hold the restrains that the person doesn't have a car and is not able to get to meetings. You know which I found is not really a suitable, you could always ask them to come to the person. So these are the things that companies still have today, those stigma reasons and excuses why they would not promote a disabled person into a senior position.</p>	<p>But if you are the kind of person who is output driven, you wanna! grow the company financially. You wanna! see more jobs being created but you are not sure of how you want to employ another two hundred people in a twenty seated company, that's the company I wanna! approach. I want to implement this fore company who want to make a change, a company who wants to see disabled people achieving things. So I would avoid the legislative side of implementing such a thing but I would introduce change for people who want to see change. Change is sometimes not good.</p>	
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				me not going to university. I did apply to want to go study law but I think I opted for working immediately as an easy route because I needed to make money quickly and so forth. There's a lot of expenses and accessibility has always been something that has held me back						
P3	<p>25-34 year old Black male.</p> <p>Physical disability: Double hand amputee - acquired at age 9 due to contact with electric street wires.</p> <p>Attorney within a private corporation.</p>	<p>DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY</p> <p>Because they don't have no idea that I have a personality that I was a person All they saw was a dude with no hands I don't know what they thought but maybe they felt that We going to meet this guy and he is going to start complaining how difficult life is How bad everyone is But after we meet I blow everyone away Because</p>	<p>DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p>	<p>COST OF DISABILITY</p> <p>I feel like there is a time when most companies out there specifically looking for disabled people because they got that agenda that we need to make sure that we make the numbers And there is a season for that And then any other time is like we don't need them what are they going to do here Because when you think</p>	<p>TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES</p> <p>Interviewer: She says that back in her day as a person with disability if you made to manager or HR People really respected you cause it was hard back in the day So now, are you also seeing that ahm! this trend of ahm! you put there just filled the numbers That's what she said</p>	<p>PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'</p> <p>Interviewer: Ahm! you've talked about something that I've never heard before The disability card right</p> <p>Participant: Look ahm! the disability card is the same as the race card or the female card you know Ahm! we just play that card when things are not going your way you can play a race card and</p>	<p>LACK OF PROMOTION</p> <p>You know he will post jobs like Company looking for an Albino receptionist To me that's a bit too specific How many Albino's are you going to have in that interview? One, two? Like what did I have to do to deserve have this job? All I had to do is to be disabled not competent How can you be so specific that you need an Albino on receptionist?</p>	<p>A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY</p> <p>Interviewer: Ahm! in term of other people with unique disabilities What do you think that could be done to perhaps accommodate them better?</p> <p>Participant: You can have everything in place to try and accommodate people but then someone else can't do completely disabilities and you've got zero</p>		

		<p>that is not what I am about You are not there to meet the disability You are there to meet me meet me And me is a different person The disability is that thing that lacks hands are not my brain I don't have my brains located on my hands because I lost my hands I lost my brain</p> <p>The disability is that thing that lacks hands Hands are not my brain I don't have my brains located on my hands because I lost my hands I lost my brain The head is still intact, that's what a brains are So pre judgment is killing us</p>		<p>of it When you employ a disabled person, immediately that person is a liability to you They have even not started, you haven't been paid them They are a liability because Let's say you have a building that is two stores You've got no ramp You've got no elevator A person on a wheelchair will cost you money to accommodate them in a building So why hired them in the first place Cost saving</p>	<p>Participant: Of course that's what it is, most of the time, I mean there are companies who do it for the right reasons cause they see competence in you As supposed to, we need four disable people by the end of 2018 What are they going to do, ah will dream of something, and they do They dream of a positions that don't even need anyone to fill You know I got a call from a company that was looking for a disable person with any qualifications My question was, what kind of a job is that What kind of a job required a disable person with any qualification? It shows that, that particular company has got absolutely no interest in</p>		<p>call everyone a resist, that's the race card or you can say is because I am black that's the race card The disability card is similar in a sense that I can get away with not doing a lot of things because I am disabled</p>	<p>What if that Albino is a qualified somebody on something else They wouldn't want to be a receptionist But you've already narrow it down like this is a perfect position. You will really see positions that I never see Such as specific position at management level What are you doing there you are disabled You belong to the bottom, at the Learnerships At the reception, that's where you belong</p>	<p>idea on how to help that person So really the best way to accommodate them is to first allow as many as them to university as you can and then learn from each one Because I don't think you know one disability is exactly the same as the other</p> <p>University accommodation. Interviewer: Okay at Wits what I see is that, it almost seems from my point of view are very structured So you have units, you have ramps, you have bell everywhere like bell signs and things like that So is it that way is it accommodative as we normal people will say might be Participant: ...Having rail on writing and the lift makes no difference in my life because I can see, but the best person to ask</p>
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					<p>hiring disable people for their competence, is just for the numbers because there is no way that anybody can convince me that no it's a serious job we really think you are competent and we want you here</p>				<p>Will be someone who is blind to say did you this place is sufficient to your accommodative to your disability Then they will tell you yes or no Someone on a wheelchair a ramp at the main entrance, maybe there are other key places of the buildings the various buildings where you might need ramps but they are not there ... So because there are so many different disabilities out there We are all impacted differently our surroundings I also think is very difficult to try and accommodate every single person</p>	
P4	<p>25-34 year old White female.</p> <p>Hearing disability: Partially deaf since birth.</p> <p>Receptionist within a Disability Rights Unit.</p>	<p>DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY</p> <p>Negative societal perceptions - indifference</p> <p>The assumption in somebody's head when I say hey please don't</p>	<p>DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p>	<p>COST OF DISABILITY</p> <p>Cost of disability Consequences of RA</p> <p>Reasonable accommodation a lot of people would see as such a task, got</p>	<p>TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES</p> <p>Lack of promotion, the need for disability, one size does not fit all, ticking</p>	<p>PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'</p> <p>Playing the disability card. Myth, society uses the concept to evade from their privilege</p> <p>I think that the</p>	<p>LACK OF PROMOTION</p> <p>Workplace culture of intolerance, lack of patience and understanding, without reasonable accommodation</p>	<p>A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY</p> <p>One size does not fit all, Adapting a personalised approach towards disability</p> <p>Participant: Every</p>		

		<p>cover your mouth when you talk or please don't turn around I can't read your lips, let's go somewhere that has nice lighting, let's go out of the crowd I want to hear what you have to say and the most frustrating thing somebody else can say is "oh never mind". I'll say "please tell me you know I am interested in what you have to say, and somebody responds,"Oh no never mind" and that can be very dismissive.</p> <p>Normality discourse A lot of people take for granted the fact that they think Tish can hear as a "normal" person and I use normal in inverted commas because it's problematic to use the word normal.</p>		<p>to spend money, time, get people in, and most times it's a simple thing, simple conversation with somebody who needs to go perhaps for treatments every few weeks and they just need some flexible work hours. Having that conversation will increase their productivity, improve your workforce and at the end of the day ultimately you're going to have an employee who feels now that they are care for in your specific place of employment and that is important to keep in mind, reasonable accommodation is not necessarily a huge task that people have to undergo to make a workplace accessible.</p>	<p>all the employment equity boxes, negative prejudice I think it remains crucially important that companies remain cognizant and committed of diversity in their staff. But it's incredibly important that it does not become a task of just ticking the equity employment boxes when you are doing your BBEE quotas. What remains crucially important is that there is no one size fits all approach to hiring somebody with a disability. Likewise, you cannot say I'm going to reserve ten jobs for somebody with a disability but they must be a receptionist. That's inappropriate to</p>		<p>notion of the "disability card" is a myth. I don't think there is such a thing and to understand that you have to go back to privilege. You cannot play a disability card without understanding that fundamentally someone who has a disability is severely disadvantaged and it's perceived as "mistreatment" of abled bodied persons when they see a disabled person getting a form of support or accommodation. They say oh that's not fair what about me without realising their own privilege.</p>	<p>In my previous experience working as a promoter I would have a lot of anxiety about getting phone calls from the supervisor who would see okay you're selling your product properly, do you have enough stock? Because often id be in a noisy often busy supermarket and would struggle to take that call, they didn't want to come to the party and meet me halfway there, and they would get frustrated when I couldn't hear them.</p>	<p>single approach with a disabled person needs to take a personalised approach.</p> <p>Researcher: What do you mean about that? What's a personalised approach?</p> <p>Participant: A personalised approach simply means a person who is deaf does not have a similar experience as somebody else who is deaf but find themselves in a different circumstance. And this goes back to privilege by the fact that a White cisgender female who is deaf, somebody who is transgender black, disabled, poor person who lives in a rural place. The assumption cannot be that we are going to send out an advert on LinkedIn without considering that these are two</p>
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		<p>Researcher: Is it the fact that you have an implant that they assume that what's it there for? You know you obviously can hear.</p> <p>Participant: Yes yes, of course. They don't realise the limitation, you're relying on two microphones in each side to pick up everything that the full spectrum of hearing will cover, you're relying on a computer to process information that goes thousands of bits if not millions of bits per second and computers don't always get it right.</p> <p>Stigma – people choose when and how you can be disabled, you should learn to control your disability, damaging imagery of</p>			<p>judge that somebody is incapable of doing something before you haven't even met them. I think it's crucially important for companies to pursue excellence in their employment equity.</p>				<p>different circumstances. The White female cisgender female is going to find it easier to access the opportunity that the rural transgender who is not on the right side of accessing privilege. What am trying to say is that you cannot have a one size fits all approach.</p>	
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		have a student who has a disability and if you are giving them reasonable accommodation, you are giving them an "unfair" advantage.								
P5	<p>25-34 year old Black male.</p> <p>Physical disability: Juvenile chronic arthritis (disorder affecting joints, including symptoms of joint pain and stiffness), gradually developing since age 12.</p> <p>Recruiter within a software developing firm.</p>	<p>DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY</p> <p>Another problem with the word disabled is that, like I said people choose when and how you can be disabled. People like to say this is my, this is "uXolani", his disabled. When we're going somewhere, people say we'll be coming with a disabled guy. I don't mind most of the time but it's when I have to say I'm disabled. When people now start to tell you, no no no, you can't say that, you're the same as everyone which is something that</p>	<p>DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p> <p>Sometimes you also find that some people [in a taxi] don't understand why you are even going to work because they will be telling you there are disability grants so you should stay at home. Why are you working?</p> <p>Interviewer: How do you address a situation like that [being told to stay home and collect a disability grant]?</p> <p>Participant: I always choose not to. I get it ALL the time. Crossing the</p>	<p>COST OF DISABILITY</p>	<p>TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES</p>	<p>PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'</p> <p>Interviewer: Mhmm!...this actually brings me to another topic... This whole issue around the disability grant, have you had experiences of being accused of playing the 'Disability Card'?</p> <p>Participant: Yes, a lot of times, it's even at home. ... Someone might want you to walk with them somewhere and you might not have the energy to. Then they'll accuse you of throwing the 'Disability Card'. But you might want to go</p>	<p>LACK OF PROMOTION</p> <p>Interviewer: When you add disability [to race]</p> <p>Participant: when you add disability you find out that people of both sides have been disadvantaged a lot of times. You find that white people they have been having those odd jobs, like disabled people are allowed at admin work, were they know you will be sitting down in front of a computer. And most of times disabled people do not want to be just that, so it is jobs you just take because it's the only jobs you</p>	<p>A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY</p> <p>Interviewer: Okay I think you have answered my last question of what would you tell the Minister of Labour, first of all education, what would you tell the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour and Social development about the whole issue around what you talked about, youth unemployment amongst persons with disabilities? So like around this whole issue.</p> <p>Participant: What I would tell him is that rather than having one person represent a group of people</p>		

		<p>always pisses me off. Because people understand that I am different than other people but then they'll choose to tell no you can't say it but its fine for everyone else to say it.</p> <p>Interviewer: So you have been using this word 'a person with a disability', do you have a problem with that word or are there any feelings around that word? ...</p> <p>Participant: It's not the word itself. Its mainly how it's, it's the attitude around it neh! ... Some they say it in spite. ... Like, "these disabled people". Like what I was telling you earlier about trying to catch a taxi. A person refusing to offer you a seat in front, they'll be like, "these</p>	<p>streets. A driver might want to drive past quickly. You have to literally throw yourself out of the road because they don't understand why you're there...why you're hogging up the road.</p> <p>People choose when and where you can be disabled; they choose how you can be disabled. Like with my...let's say friends, I mentioned them earlier, some friends will expect you to do everything yourself, even those things that they see are very difficult for you. Because they expect that they are encouraging you to fight our disability. A lot of people think that all disabilities are curable, they will see one person with a disability, maybe undergoing physiotherapy,</p>			<p>somewhere and someone might decide for you that you cannot go there because you are a person with a disability.</p>	<p>can find.</p>	<p>with disabilities, right there in the government addressing all our issues, rather go for Progression, go for companies like that to address these issues. Because now I get hired in the government, the government does its best to alleviate all the struggles, I get a wheelchair, I get a driver, I get a place closer to work, all those struggles that other disabled people have, the government thinks it is going to be as easy as that to address. There is a blind person, there is so much more that a blind person could do, there is a person who cannot just move out of Tembisa, they still have to stay there.</p>	
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		disabled people". The attitude behind it puts some spite in the word.	and actually be able to turn things around and then they will see you in the same light that you will also be able to.							
P6	<p>White male</p> <p>Physical disability: Cerebral palsy (permanent movement disorder marked by poor coordination, stiff muscles, weak muscles, and tremors) since birth.</p> <p>Head tutor within a Student Development and Learning Unit.</p>	DISABILITY TOTALISING THE IDENTITY	<p>DENIED VISIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p> <p>Cultural explanations of disability – shunning There are definite cultural demarcations within disability's rights. So your Black African community might very well be treated differently to your White Protestant community. Even White Jewish communities they have a particular way of treating people with disabilities in their custom, you know... they believe that people are born with 100% of their faculties so they can prove their worthiness to God to go to heaven. People</p>	COST OF DISABILITY	<p>TICKING ALL THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BOXES</p> <p>I mean look...when I put in an application I like to always think that my application would stand on merit without the fact that there is a disability. At least that's why I would like to think I got the job. That is merely an accidental property that helps BEE further down the line. So much so that within my previous employment I was only asked to claim my status three years after being in</p>		<p>PLAYING THE 'DISABILITY CARD'</p> <p>I think you also need to look at the intent behind playing the card, like I said to you I feel...there are some cases in which if you live with the disadvantages you shouldn't feel bad for having certain advantages that might be bestowed upon you, like not having to stand in the queue in the IEC elections for example. I walked in and walked out within 5 minutes, right now that is not necessarily playing the card when I tell the person I have a disability, I</p>	LACK OF PROMOTION	<p>A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO DISABILITY</p> <p>Interviewer: Someone else was mentioning the same thing...there's no one disability which is the same to the other, this whole one size doesn't fit all?</p> <p>Participant: And that's why what's happened now is that reasonable accommodation it used to get handled by the Transformation Office in the university structure it's now moved to the Disability Unit who have more or less of a context sensitive to the approach. Which is why now they'll pick up the phone and say what need is accommodation</p>	

			<p>with disabilities in their mind are seen as people that are much closer to perfection so they do not need their bodily or motor functions. Like I said to you I think that there is a definite cultural disjuncture as to how these things are treated. There are some cultures in which if you are born with a disability you will be tossed out at birth"</p>		<p>service. Because it was only then that they were doing equity reports. And they said to me look you know...based on the university's employment equity targets it would help if I declare my disability and would I mind doing it under those conditions? And it was fine with me</p>		<p>mean what happens if I could stand in the queue for three hours and then the next day I can't get out of bed because I stood for so long? I think when you play the card to play on people's emotions for example and to get some sort of undue benefit that's when you might wanna draw the line...</p>		<p>actually meeting? What discomfort is there that we are alleviating? And in what way has this disability comfort impacted on the productivity that would otherwise not be impacted on?</p>	
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Appendix A – Participant information sheet

Hello,

My name is Lindokuhle Ubisi and I am a Masters student completing my degree in Social and Psychological Research at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research project towards the completion of my degree in Social and Psychological Research entitled “Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities”. My research involves the exploration of self-reported positive attributes which have assisted persons with disabilities successfully enter, adjust and further develop in the work environment, through in-depth interviews working persons with disabilities. In order to conduct this research, I will be interviewing persons with disabilities with a minimum of 5 years working experience, and would like to invite you to take part.

Should you decide to take part in this study, it is required that you sign a consent form, or verbally acknowledge consent. Should you agree to participate, you will be required to participate in an in-depth interview. The interview will be voice recorded in order to keep an accurate record of the information that is received within the interview. After analysis, these recordings will be destroyed. Should you not agree to the recording of the in-depth interview, you will be exempt from participation. These recordings will remain confidential and only I will have access. The transcripts and audio recordings will be kept in a password-protected computer. In the write up of the study, with your permission, as indicated within a separate informed consent form, the researcher may use anonymised quotes whereby all identifying information will be removed. The interview will take place at a time

specified as convenient to you. The interview will be no longer than 1 hour to an hour and a half.

Participation within this study is voluntary, and should you choose to take part and share your experiences with me, you are not bound to continue participating. If you wish to withdraw from the process anytime, you may do so without any negative consequences to yourself.

Should you have any enquiries regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 074 2394 315 (email 1259577@students.wits.ac.za), or my supervisor, Dr Joanne Neille on Joanne.Neille@wits.ac.za or 011 717 4574.

Researcher

Lindokuhle Ubisi

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Supervisor

Dr Joanne Neille

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Appendix B – Participant information sheet for Deaf participants

Hello,

My name is Lindokuhle Ubisi and I am a Masters student completing my degree in Social and Psychological Research at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research project towards the completion of my degree in Social and Psychological Research entitled “Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities”. My research involves the exploration of self-reported positive attributes which have assisted persons with disabilities successfully enter, adjust and further develop in the work environment, through in-depth interviews working persons with disabilities. In order to conduct this research, I will be interviewing persons with disabilities with a minimum of 5 years working experience, and would like to invite you to take part.

Should you decide to take part in this study, it is required that you sign a consent form, or verbally acknowledge consent. Should you agree to participate, you will be required to participate in an in-depth interview. **Please note that a sign language interpreter will be present to assist with data collection in the form of translation and explaining instructions of the study. This translator will be required to sign an agreement of confidentiality which stipulates that he or she cannot discuss any contents or topics from the interview outside the interview.** The interview will be voice recorded in order to keep an accurate record of the information that is received within the interview. After analysis, these recordings will be destroyed. Should you not agree to the recording of the in-depth interview, you will be exempt from participation. These recordings will remain

confidential and only I will have access. The transcripts and audio recordings will be kept in a password-protected computer. In the write up of the study, with your permission, as indicated within a separate informed consent form, the researcher may use anonymised quotes whereby all identifying information will be removed. The interview will take place at a time specified as convenient to you. The interview will be no longer than 1 hour to an hour and a half.

Participation within this study is voluntary, and should you choose to take part and share your experiences with me, you are not bound to continue participating. If you wish to withdraw from the process anytime, you may do so without any negative consequences to yourself.

Should you have any enquiries regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 074 2394 315 (email address: 1259577@students.wits.ac.za), or my supervisor, Dr Joanne Neille on Joanne.Neille@wits.ac.za or 011 717 4574.

Researcher

Lindokuhle Ubisi

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Supervisor

Dr Joanne Neille

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Appendix C – Participant informed consent form

Title of the research: Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities

Name/s of principal researcher: Lindokuhle Ubisi

Department/research group address: Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand.

Telephone: 011 717 4574

Email: 1259577@students.wits.ac.za

Name of participant:

What is involved?

Risks:

Participants may recall past negative experiences and thus become re-traumatised. Should participants experience any emotional trauma they will be referred for counselling at the University of the Witwatersrand, Emthonjeni Centre (Telephone number: 011 717 4513) or any nearby counselling centre such as LifeLine (Telephone number: 011 728 1331), Families South Africa (FAMSA) (Telephone number: 011 788 4784) which the researcher will provide details before the start of the interview. Alternatively, telephonic counselling services of LoveLife (Telephone number: 083 323 1023) will be recommended which requires participants to send a please-call-me to get an available counsellor.

Benefits:

Your input will enable a better social understanding of what positive experiences/attributes contributed to your resilience as well as how these may be adapted so as to better your own and others employment experience within the employment sector.

I acknowledge the following (Please cross (x) the relevant category):

- I agree to participate in this research project.
- I agree to have this interview audio recorded.
- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research on condition that my privacy is respected, subject to the following:
- I understand that no identifying details will be included in write-up of the study
 - I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.
 - I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.

Signature of participant:

Name of participant:

Date:



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Appendix D: Agreement of confidentiality for the interpreter

Title of the research: Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities

Name/s of principal researcher: Lindokuhle Ubisi

Department/research group address: Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand.

Telephone: 011 717 4574

Email: 1259577@students.wits.ac.za

Hello,

My name is Lindokuhle Ubisi and I am a Masters student in Social and Psychological Research at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research project towards the completion of my degree in Social and Psychological Research entitled “Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities”. My research involves the exploration of self-reported positive attributes which have assisted persons with disabilities successfully enter, adjust and further develop in the work environment, through in-depth interviews working persons with disabilities. In order to conduct this research, I will be interviewing persons with disabilities with a minimum of 5 years working experience, and would like to invite you to take part as an interpreter.

As the interpreter, I would like to employ your paid services to assist with data collection in the form of translation and explaining instructions of the study. You will be paid in line with the university guidelines for paying research assistants. Should

you decide to take part in this study, it is required that you sign an agreement of confidentiality form which prohibits you from sharing any contents or topics discussed within the interview(s). The interviews will be an hour and a half long and your presence will be required at all these times. These interviews will be audio-recorded to keep an accurate record of the information that is received within the interview.

Should you have any enquiries regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 074 2394 315 (email address: 1259577@students.wits.ac.za), or my supervisor, Dr Joanne Neille on Joanne.Neille@wits.ac.za or 011 717 4574.

Agreement to participate:

I acknowledge that I may know the participant's personal identity. However, in order to ensure confidentiality, I understand I will be required to sign this agreement. Upon signing below I agree that you will keep all comments made during any interview confidential and not discuss what happened during any interview outside the meeting. Please tick to indicate your response:

- I have reviewed the information in this letter and have had any questions about the study answered to my satisfaction.
- I am agreeing to have the interview audio-recorded.
- I agree to maintain confidentiality of information shared within the interview with anyone outside.

Signature of interpreter:

Name of interpreter:

Date:



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Appendix E - Demographic questionnaire for participants

Title of the research: Successful entry, adjustment and further development in the workplace: Resilience and its positive attributes for graduates living with disabilities

Name/s of principal researcher: Lindokuhle Ubisi

Department/research group address: Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand.

Telephone: 011 717 4574

Email: 1259577@students.wits.ac.za

Name and surname (please note that you can provide a pseudo name):

Age (or birth date)

Q. Age: What is your age? Please cross (x) the relevant category.

- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65-74 years old

Sex

Q. Sex: What is your sex? Please cross (x) the relevant category.

- Male
- Transgender
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Other.....

Ethnicity

Q. Ethnicity origin (or Race): Please specify your ethnicity.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colored | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... Education | |

Q. Education: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

- Trade/technical/vocational training/diploma
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

Household Composition

Q. Marital Status: What is your marital status?

- Single, never married
- Married or domestic partnership
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Separated
- Prefer not to answer

Professional or Employment Status

Q. Employment Status: Are you currently...?

Employed for wages

- Full-time
-

Self-employed

Part-time

Geographic location

- Gauteng
- Eastern Cape
- Free State

- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga

- Northern Cape
- North West
- Western Cape



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Appendix F – Guiding questions for semi-structured interview

The questions followed were not rigid. They were simply created for guiding the interviews. They were asked in any order. These questions were not limited to being the only questions asked as the researcher wanted to gain insight into people's lives through narratives, not contrived questions or answers.

Outline of guiding questions:

- 1) Tell me about your working experience thus far or within your current company?

Interview prompts:

- Any memorable good or bad experiences?
- How have things changed during the period when you first started and now?
- How is the environment accommodative to your needs as a person with a disability?
- Tell me more about your relationships with your work colleagues as well as managers?

- 2) Tell me more about your educational background?

Interview prompts:

- Any type of support (family, teachers, and assistive technology among others) which made it easier for you to complete your studies? If yes, please explain.
- What about any challenges?
- Did you feel the school or university you attended prepared you well enough for employment? If yes, please explain.
- What would you say could be done differently in future?

3) Tell me about your experiences in finding work?

Interview prompts:

- How would you say your personality or the work environment played a role?
- Tell me more about the changes that your organisation may institute to enable the acquiring and further developing of these attributes?
 - Any possible policy changes?
 - Any workplace programmes or skills development training?

4) What would you tell an HR manager or Minister of Labour on how to address the employment issue with PWDs?

5) Would you consider yourself resilient? If so, what are some of the positive attributes would you say have shaped your resilience?



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Appendix G: Description of Consent procedures

Participants will be given ample opportunity to ask questions about anything they do not understand. After participants have understood the instructions and reasons study as well as the nature of informed consent, the form of information sheets about the study (Appendix A or Appendix B for Deaf participants) and provided informed consent form (Appendix C) will be signed.

A sign language interpreter may be hired (if needed) from the University of the Witwatersrand Disability Rights Unit. The interpreter must be competent in South African Sign Language. Also, the interpreter will also be paid according to the recommended hourly rate. He or she must be willing to sign a confidentiality form to not disclose any information discussed within the interview. A sign language interpreter may be hired if necessary. The appointed sign language interpreter will be required to sign a non-disclosure/agreement of confidentiality which stipulates that none of the topics discussed within the interview should be shared outside the interview (Appendix D).

Participants with visual impairments will be allowed to give verbal assent if they are unable to sign a consent form. In order to ensure clear understanding, the information sheets and informed consent forms will be in braille or read to them with the help of an interpreter if necessary.