

**Career advancement challenges facing people with
disabilities in South Africa**

by

Themba Mdumiseni Ximba

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Supervisor: Prof. I.L. Potgieter

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DECLARATION

I, Themba Ximba, student number 53207955, declare that this dissertation entitled “Career advancement challenges facing people with disabilities in South Africa” is my own work. All the sources that I have used or have quoted from have been acknowledged by means of complete references. The work has not in part or in whole, been previously submitted for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

I further declare that ethical clearance to conduct the research has been obtained from the Department of Psychology, at the University of South Africa. I also declare that the study was carried out in strict accordance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and that I conducted the research with the highest integrity taking into account Unisa’s Policy for Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism.

Signature

Date

Mr Themba Ximba

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to assess the perceptions of individuals with disabilities regarding the career advancement challenges they face and to determine whether the perceptions of career advancement challenges disabled individuals from different races, ages, genders and occupational levels differ. This study employed a qualitative approach to explore the career advancement challenges and also to achieve the empirical objectives. The empirical study was conducted with 15 employees with declared disabilities employed by two group companies in different sectors in the Gauteng Province. Probability, purposeful and snowballing sampling techniques were applied. The findings indicated that most people with disabilities experienced career advancement challenges, especially promotion opportunities. Managers and colleagues' lack of knowledge about disabilities have an adverse impact on the careers of individuals living with a disability. The findings of this study may help companies improve practices on the integration and inclusion of employees with disabilities and also on decision-making regarding their careers.

Key words: disability, legislation, career, career advancement challenges, Human Resource practices, discrimination, perceptions, integration, diversity, promotion

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CHAPTER 1: SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

Career advancement for people with disabilities is a current socio-political issue which needs further investigation. This research focused on career advancement challenges faced by people with disabilities in South African organisations. Chapter 1 outlines the background to and motivation for the research, the problem statement, the general and specific objectives, research design and methodology that was applied. Lastly, an outline of the following chapters and a chapter summary is provided.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO AND MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH

The context of this study is career advancement of the workforce living with disabilities. Specifically, the research focused on examining career advancement challenges people with disabilities face in South Africa. Current workplaces necessitate a paradigm shift from merely meeting Employment Equity prerequisites to creating an amicable workplace that is inclusive of employees with disabilities (Daya, 2014; Hasse, 2011). Race, age, gender and occupational levels in organisational structures influence the career growth of employees with disabilities which cause challenges such as underemployment, low-wages, bias and limited advancement opportunities (Beatty, 2012; Gowan, 2010; Ofuani, 2011). According to Lengnick-Hall and Gaunt (2007), employees with disabilities are assumed to be incompetent, not productive and create undue hardship for the business.

Smith (2012), and Sommo and Chaskes (2013) advocate that disability is a complex concept and its definitions vary from country to country. A comprehensive definition of what constitutes disability could prevent employers from recruiting candidates with “minimal disability” for the sake of equity targets and acknowledges competences for people with disabilities (Sing & Govender, 2007). This study adopted a definition found in the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (EEA) (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) which defines the disabled as “people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment”.

This study endeavoured to identify career advancement challenges that employees with disabilities face. Furthermore, the study suggests ways to improve the career prospects of people with disabilities thereby contributing to the discipline of Human Resources and Transformation.

The following sections focus on the context of international and South African legislation related to the career challenges people with disabilities face.

1.1.1 International context

The International Labour Organisation's (ILO) signatory countries table legislations in their countries on initiatives to prevent discrimination of employees with disabilities. This study briefly reviews these legislations which include the Disability Discrimination Act, Americans with Disability Act and the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons all of which were established to eliminate discrimination towards people with disabilities based on countries' development and economic influence. While the ILO signatory countries have legislations that promote the inclusion of employees with disabilities in employment, they are unable to enforce compliance to protect the employees with disabilities against discrimination which favours employees without disabilities.

1.1.1.1 Disability Discrimination Act

The United Kingdom (UK) is a developed ILO signatory which has implemented comprehensive initiatives to eliminate discrimination faced by people with disabilities called the Single Equality Act. This act promotes equality regardless of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (Gregory & Temperton, 2008). The UK developed a broad legislations, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) focusing on disability. Before inception of the DDA which surpassed other anti-discrimination laws, the UK applied a quota system (Gregory & Temperton, 2008) which was later repealed by the DDA (Gregory & Temperton, 2008; Keen & Oulton, 2009).

1.1.1.2 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended

The National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency trusted with the responsibility of reviewing, drafting or formulating policies and laws affecting

Americans with disabilities, proposed the establishment of a legislation to eliminate discriminatory practices against people with disabilities (Susser & Petesch, 2011). This led to the enactment of the American Disability Act 1990 (ADA) which favoured employment of people with disabilities (Susser & Petesch, 2011). Despite the enactment of the ADA, economic disparities between people with disabilities and their nondisabled counterparts still exist (Barclay, Markel & Yugo, 2012; Bruyère, Von Schrader, Coduti, & Bjelland, 2010).

1.1.1.3 The Law on Protection of Disabled Persons, 1990

China also provides legal protection for people with disabilities (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009) through a broad legislation that protects the rights of disabled people called Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled Persons 1990. According to this law, discrimination against employees with disabilities is not tolerated.

1.1.2 The South African Context

The preceding section focused on the International context whereas this section focuses on socio-politics pertaining to people with disabilities in the South African context.

The South African democratic government enacted legislations to redress employment inequalities experienced by people from the designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities). Legislations such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA 1996), the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, no. 4 of 2000 (SA. Department of Justice, 2000) were intended to transform organisations to be representative of all South African workforce demographics. Employers are guided by the Codes of Good Practice on how to successfully integrate people with disabilities and enable them to perform well in their roles.

1.1.3 Career challenges: Employment context regarding disability

The previous sections outlined the legal provisions for the workforce with disabilities internationally and in the South African context. This section focuses on career

challenges for people with disabilities.

Weak legislations do not enforce sanctions for the infringement of the rights of people with disabilities and fail to prioritise the skills and employment opportunities for them (Ofuani, 2011) while employers lack knowledge about disabilities and the legislative requirements (Wehman, 2011). The study conducted by Oosthuizen and Naidoo (2010) found that organisations only comply with Employment Equity (EE) legislative requirements in an “EE numbers chasing game” where employers are only concerned with increasing EE and Affirmative Action (AA) figures rather than improving their EE status quo through value adding investments. Oosthuizen and Naidoo (2010) argue that EE and AA progress should be measured on the criteria of numbers as well as their organisational climate.

The South African government has enacted legislations to combat employment discriminations. Nevertheless, people with disabilities encounter career advancement challenges in workplaces that hinder their career advancements (Hernandez, McDonald, Divilbiss, Horin, Velcoff & Donoso, 2008). According to Hernandez et al. (2008), most employees with declared disabilities occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions. Few disabled people occupy professional positions and many of these face restricted advancement or promotion. Many adults with disabilities are either unemployed or occupy positions characterised by low wages with little or no chance of advancement (Lindstrom, Doren, & Miesch, 2011). According to Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, Haslam and Rabinovich (2008), career advancement for professionals with disabilities is precarious due to unconstructive performance feedback and their exclusion from decision-making processes. Barriers to career advancement opportunities for persons with disabilities are misconceptions which jeopardise their advancement (Beatty, 2012). The study by Beatty (2012) found that employees with disabilities experience career plateaus where they remain in the same position for a long time because advancement to a higher level is unlikely.

Lack of professional training, architectonic barriers and discrimination based on functional potential hinder the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market (Guimaraes, Martins, & Barkokebas Jr, 2012). According to Gida and Ortlepp

(2007), ignorance, fear and stereotypes are the main reasons for a low representation of people with disabilities in the workplace. In the study conducted by Gida and Ortlepp (2007), it is shown that many organisations do not have a strategy or policy document for the employment of people with disabilities. The South African Human Rights Commission (SA, 2012) explains that the unemployment of candidates with disabilities is exacerbated by scarce employment opportunities and inadequate marketable skills .

Equal opportunities (both in developing and developed countries) between people with disabilities and people without disabilities have not been attained (Ofuani, 2011) and this adversely impacts on the disabled (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). Li and Goldschmidt (2009) stress that people with disabilities struggle to get jobs and that the physical conditions or social environment they live in affects their level of employment. Ofuani (2011) believe that the workforce with disabilities have low literacy levels and high job insecurities.

The Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) (SA. Department of Labour, 2012) refers to the representation of people with disabilities as the “same racial packing order”, meaning that, in employment, white people and males dominate over black people (African, Coloureds and Indians). The historical South African employment situation in the late 1990s showed that black people with disabilities experienced inferior conditions compared to their white counterparts (Watermeyer, Swartz, Lorenzo, & Priestley, 2006). Inequalities experienced during the Apartheid era were evident among both black and white disabled people because they were all discriminated against and marginalised (Watermeyer et al., 2006). Table 1.1 shows the representation of people with disabilities by race and gender in accordance with the CEE annual report (CEE, 2013). It is evident from Table 1.1 that more white males are employed than any other race or gender group.

Table 1.1
Representation Of People With Disabilities By Race And Gender (CEE, 2013)

Male				Female				Foreign Nationals		Total
A	C	I	W	A	C	I	W	Male	Female	
10.0%	3.4%	9.2%	54.7%	4.0%	2.4%	2.4%	12.1%	1.3%	0.3%	100%

*A = African, C = Coloured, I = Indian, W = White

Lindstrom et al. (2011) found that the careers of disabled women had chaotic patterns of advancement such as part-time and/or seasonal employment whereas the careers of disabled males had linear patterns of advancement and curbed growth opportunities. The CEE (2012) asserts that allocation, recruitment and promotion opportunities favour males and white people. The onus is on the employer to advance transformation by employing candidates from the designated groups into occupations with authority and decision-making powers (CEE, 2012).

The representation of employees with disabilities in public service is measured against a 2% target of the employers' total workforce. The public service failed to meet a 2% target in 2005 and 2010 (CEE, 2013; Milne, 2009). Christianson (2012) argues that HIV/AIDS and severe incapacity are possible causes for the decline in employment for people with disabilities. According to CEE (2012; 2013), the total workforce for employees with disabilities accounted for 0.8% in 2012 and increased to 1.4% in 2013. This is a positive progress towards a 2% target.

According to Gowan (2010) and Watermeyer et al. (2006), individuals with disabilities are underemployed and lack career advancement opportunities which are likely to be offered to persons without disabilities. The study by Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) found that people with disabilities encounter challenges to get promoted in their careers due to the perceptions or attitudes of the non-disabled. Training and development opportunities offered to people with disabilities are regarded as inferior, repetitive low-level training which minimises their chances of advancement (Van Niekerk & Van der Merwe, 2013).

The employment rate and educational levels of people with disabilities is lower than

the rest of the population, according to Watermeyer et al. (2006) who stress that the provision of skills advancement opportunities to disabled people will help to attain employment equity and that appointments should be based on competences (skills and abilities) rather than EE targets and goals. Konrad, Moore, Doherty, Ng and Breward (2012) argue that the appointment of experienced, qualified candidates with disabilities on corporate boards would bring expertise, diversify the total workforce and enhance the status for the employees with disabilities. Corporate executives should participate as board members for independent disability institutions in order to broaden their expertise regarding the workforce with disabilities (Konrad et al., 2012).

Employers are hesitant to employ people with disabilities to occupy vacant positions even if they meet all stipulated requirements (Ofuani, 2011). Christianson (2012) also noted that people with disabilities may have either or both the qualifications and the capacity to be employed, but that this decision depends on employers' willingness to provide reasonable accommodation for a disabled candidate. On the other hand, Sing (2012) shows that public service departments ignore candidates' competences and prioritise their disabilities. This disregards the poor response to vacancies targeting candidates with disabilities (Sing, 2012). According to Keen and Oulton (2009) and the DDA (1995), an employer's refusal to grant persons with disabilities training opportunities is deemed unlawful. During the recruitment stage, a refusal of employment due to a candidate's disability is viewed as disability discrimination (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009).

1.1.4 Perceptions of people with disabilities

Bourmaud, Rétaux, Jacobs and Soares (2012) believe that management is unwilling to initiate remedial measures to accommodate people with disabilities. Hernandez, et al. (2008, p. 157) agree with Bourmaud et al. (2012) that "employers are reluctant to hire people with disabilities". According to Bruyère (2000 as cited in Hernandez et al., 2008), top management buy-in is important because management perceptions can be a barrier to the employment of people with disabilities. Employers' attitudes can hinder initiatives to employ people with disabilities in the workplace (Donnelly & Given, 2010). Colleagues of employees with severe disabilities experience anxiety

and the onus is on managers to fight the stigma against employees with disabilities (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2011).

Many managers think that recruiting persons with disabilities would result in an increase in supervisory time, low productivity and frequent absence (Hernandez et al., 2008). Ofuani (2011) notes that employers believe employees with disabilities will underperform in their roles and that it is costly to accommodate them.

Despite the abovementioned career advancement challenges that people with disabilities face, there are also benefits associated with having them such as a diversified workforce, low absenteeism rate and long tenure. In addition, people living with disabilities are committed, reliable, loyal and hardworking (Hernandez et al., 2008). According to the International Labour Office (2011), a number of employers do not know the benefits of recruiting people with disabilities as they are not sensitised to disability matters. It also states that people with disabilities bring benefits such as good, dependable employees, untapped skills, creativity, high work ethic and, in addition, they enhance the company's public image.

It is evident from the previous discussions that employees with disabilities face career advancement challenges in the workplace. Employees with disabilities are generally not hired even if they meet the job requirements. Employees with disabilities are therefore under-employed and occupy positions with limited career advancement opportunities and low wages.

The employment of people with disabilities benefits the organisations because they earn Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) points and achieve EE targets which makes an organisation appear civically minded to the community in which it operates (Sing & Govender, 2007; Watermeyer et al., 2006). Transformed organisations therefore stand good chances to get lucrative contracts with the government or private companies because of their BEE and EE statuses. Perceptions of employees with disabilities are the greatest barrier that hinders transformation to include employees with disabilities. Management can play an active role in transforming organisations by changing perceptions of candidates with disabilities.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This research study broadens research on employment for people with disabilities by examining career advancement challenges people with disabilities face in South Africa. The literature does not provide the perspective of employees with disabilities regarding the career challenges they face. Nevertheless, the theoretical background shows that employees with disabilities have restricted opportunities to advance in their careers.

The current literature review on career advancement challenges people with disabilities face indicates that:

- the workforce with declared disabilities mainly occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions while few occupy professional positions and they have restricted advancement and promotion opportunities (Hernandez et al., 2008);
- allocation, recruitment and promotion opportunities favour males, white people and people without disabilities (CEE, 2012);
- individuals with disabilities are underemployed and career advancement opportunities are limited (Gowan, 2010; Watermeyer et al., 2006),
- employers are reluctant to employ people with disabilities even if they meet all stipulated requirements (Ofuani, 2011);
- management perceptions are a barrier to initiatives to employ people with disabilities and to provide reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities (Hernandez et al., 2008).

The aforementioned problems show a need for an empirical research study on career advancement challenges faced by people with disabilities. The findings from such research can contribute to Human Resource Management and Transformation disciplines in the establishment of Transformation and Employment Equity strategies focusing on employees with disabilities. Furthermore, the study will bring insights that may improve the Human Resource practices, the career prospects of people with disabilities and contribute to the discipline of Diversity and Transformation.

1.2.1 Research questions relating to the literature review

- How are people with disabilities conceptualised in the literature?
- How are the career advancement practices (recruitment, selection, training and promotion) conceptualised in the literature?
- What are the implications for career advancement practices relating to career advancement of employees with disabilities?

1.2.2 Research questions relating to the study

- What is the current state of career advancement challenges for the sampled participants in the South African context?
- Do participants from different race, age, gender and occupational levels differ regarding their perceptions of career advancement challenges?
- What suggestions can be formulated about the career advancement challenges people with disabilities face and for future studies in the disciplines of Human Resource Management and Transformation?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Pertaining to above, the research objectives are formulated below:

1.3.1 General objectives

This study explored the perceptions of individuals with disabilities regarding the career advancement challenges they face and determined whether the perceptions of career advancement challenges disabled individuals from different races, ages, genders and occupational levels differ. The findings of the study will be used to formulate suggestions for future research and the development of transformation agenda strategies relating to people with disabilities.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

Specific objectives relating to the literature review and the empirical study were:

- to conceptualise people with disabilities;

- to conceptualise career advancement practices which include recruitment, selection, training and promotions;
- to critically evaluate career advancement challenges people with disabilities face; and
- to critically evaluate the influence of race, age, gender and occupational levels on perceptions of career advancement challenges.

The specific objectives for empirical study were:

- to explore the career advancement challenges facing people living with a disability in sampled companies in the Gauteng Province;
- to explore whether people from various race, age, gender and occupational levels differ in their perceptions regarding career advancement challenges for people with disabilities;
- to formulate suggestions to address career advancement barriers facing people living with a disability; and
- to suggest topics for future research in the disciplines of Human Resources management and Transformation.

1.4 POTENTIAL VALUE ADD

1.4.1 Potential value on a theoretical level

Career advancement for people with disabilities has received considerable attention in recent years. However, attention has not been placed on career advancement challenges and their effect on career growth for employees with disabilities. This research examined career advancement challenges people with disabilities face and how individuals from different demographics differ regarding their perceptions of career advancement challenges. This research will contribute to Human Resource Management and Transformation in relation to disability studies.

1.4.2 Potential value on empirical level

The challenges that have been identified in the study can help companies improve their practices and make informed decisions regarding careers for people with disabilities. The study may give companies a competitive advantage regarding the integration of candidates with disabilities and make them aware of possible career challenges that could possibly hinder these employees' advancement. This study will enable companies to create an amicable workplace for employees with disabilities and eliminate discriminatory practices against potential candidates with disabilities.

1.4.3 Potential value on practical level

The findings of the research contribute to the disciplines of Human Resource Management and Transformation. The findings will help companies to instil a culture of inclusion towards people with disabilities through Employment Equity and Transformation strategies aimed to ensure the equitable representation of all demographics. The findings are also of value for future research concerning the field of Human Resource Management when dealing with disabilities in the workforce.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a strategy for resolving a research problem and it provides the overall structure for the procedures, the collection of data and the data analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). According to Kumar (2011), research design is a plan, structure and investigation strategy through which answers to research questions or problems are obtained. A research design is a blueprint, a procedural plan adopted by the researcher to objectively and accurately answer questions or resolve a problem (Kumar, 2011).

According to Denscombe (2010), research design

- describes the research approach, strategy and methods of data collection and analysis;
- provides a rationale for the chosen research approach, strategy and methods in relation to the research specific questions; and

- explains how the research components are linked.

The strategy and approach to resolve career advancement challenges is discussed in the following sections.

1.5.1 Research approach

A qualitative research approach with a focus on phenomenological strategy has been employed in this study to examine the career advancement challenges people with disabilities face and to achieve the empirical objectives. Kumar (2011) argues that the main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people. Qualitative methodologies have been employed in this study to reveal perceptions of the career advancement challenges and whether participants from different demographics (race, age, gender and occupational levels) differ regarding these challenges.

1.5.2 Research Strategy

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) define a phenomenological study as a research strategy that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation. According to Creswell (2007:57), "a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of the concept or a phenomenon". Phenomenology describes the interrelated experiences of the participants. This study is phenomenological because it focuses on the perceptions of participants with disabilities regarding their career advancement challenges.

1.5.3 Ethical considerations

"Ethics refers to the system of moral principles by which individuals can judge their actions as right or wrong, good or bad" (Denscombe, 2010:59). The study has complied with the research ethics policy and guidelines as set by the University of South Africa. The researcher did not expose research participants to physical or psychological harm (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Informed consent was obtained from the participants and their company authorities and they were informed of their voluntary rights to privacy and participation or withdrawal. Participants' rights to

anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation in the research were emphasised. An epoché or bracketing principle, whereby a researcher set aside his experiences about a phenomenon under study, was adopted in this study.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the approach used by the researcher to carry out the research project. This section briefly discusses research strategy, research setting, entrée and establishing researcher role, sampling, collecting the qualitative data, recording of data, data analysis and strategies employed to ensure quality data and reporting.

1.6.1 Research strategy

In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative research approach focusing on phenomenological strategy. This study used a transcendental/descriptive phenomenological approach. Employees with declared disabilities who are employed by two group companies in different sectors within the Gauteng Province were interviewed.

1.6.2 Research setting

The research setting refers to the place where the data will be collected. This study was conducted with companies in the retail and financial service sectors based in Gauteng Province. The interviews were conducted at the participants' place of work in a setting provided by the participants' employers. The research setting and physical environment is crucial as it can affect the outcome of the research (King & Horrocks, 2010; Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). Therefore, great care was taken to ensure the comfort, privacy and quietness of the interview location within the organisations that participated in the research.

1.6.3 Entrée and establishing researcher role

Initially, the researcher clarified the objectives and procedures with the key decision-makers within the selected organisations. The researcher requested permission to conduct the study. After permission was granted to enter the research field and to conduct the study, managers sent the requests for participation to employees with

declared disabilities. A specific employee (also referred to as a “gatekeeper”) was identified by the institutions and designated to help the researcher with logistical aspects of the research and to negotiate research relationships (e.g. communicating the research opportunity to employees, identifying possible participants and scheduling the interviews) (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 2011; Maxwell, 2005). The participants confirmed their interest in taking part in the research and arrangements were made to conduct interviews. The researcher, as an insider-researcher, elicited data that would have been difficult for the outsider-researcher to gather. To ensure that quality data was collected (Boyce & Neale, 2006), the researcher was trained appropriately in interviewing techniques (Neuman, 2003).

Reflexivity in quality research is also of utmost importance (Boyce & Neale, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006) therefore the researcher made time after each interview to reflect on the interview and recorded these reflections as part of the field notes.

1.6.4 Sampling

The study was conducted with participants with declared disabilities employed on full-time and contract bases by designated companies based in the Gauteng Province. The sampled companies were purposefully chosen. This study employed probability, purposeful and snowballing sampling. A purposive, voluntary non-probability sample of 15 employees with declared disabilities was included in this study. Only participants who had declared their disabilities with their employers, who complied with the inclusion criteria and were willing to participate were included in the sample. The number of participants in the sample was determined by data saturation (Burns & Grove, 1997).

1.6.5 Collecting the qualitative data

The data was collected through person-to-person semi-structured interviews. 15 individual, qualitative interviews were conducted and audio recorded. The interviews elicited data that provided insight about the phenomenon under study.

1.6.6 Recording of data

All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to ensure data quality. Electronic records were kept in a password protected voice recorder in order to

ensure privacy. Interviews were recorded and detailed field notes were taken (also referred to as “observation notes”). According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004), field notes provide a written account of the researcher’s experience through sight, hearing and thought during the interview process and can be categorised as methodology notes, personal notes and theoretical notes. All of the verbatim transcripts and field notes were prepared for data analysis. In order to maintain confidentiality throughout the process, the interviews, field notes and transcriptions were labelled by a coding system known exclusively to the researcher and transcriber involved. The anonymity of the audio files’ content, as well as of the transcription and field notes, was upheld for this purpose and all the data was stored in a secure place.

1.6.7 Data analysis

The data obtained was qualitatively analysed using content analysis methods. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004), content analysis refers to a systematic technique that gathers and compresses large bodies of text into specific and identifiable content categories which can be analysed. Content analysis focuses on content and contextual meaning of the text. In this sense, the analysed data helps the researcher to draw replicable and valid inferences (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Firstly, the researcher read the interviews several times thoroughly, in order to get a larger picture of the content. Thereafter, the responses of the participants (comprising the actual text) were categorised into meaningful units of sentences or paragraphs. These units were categorised or sorted into major themes. The study furthermore made use of the Tesch (1990) data analysis method. The researcher employed epoché techniques to bracket out any possible preconceptions to experience original lived experiences of the participants.

1.6.7 Reporting

The findings of the study are reported using a qualitative report style pioneered by Moustakas (1994). Analysis of the findings is furthermore discussed in a descriptive summary.

1.6.8 Strategies employed to ensure the quality and integrity of the data

This study applied measures to ensure quality and integrity of the research process.

This was to establish trustworthiness, credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability, confirmability, internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity of the data (Creswell, 2007). Leedy and Ormrod (2010) and Maxwell (2013) agree that the qualitative researcher is an instrument, equivalent to an oscilloscope, used to interpret the social phenomena under study. The following are the measures that were applied in order to ensure trustworthiness of the research process:

1.6.8.1 Credibility

O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2014) define credibility as the believable findings of the research question. Credibility is achieved when the researcher can prove that the data was collected from the participants who were familiar with the research problem (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The participants were required to provide first-hand experience, not hearsay. Rubin and Rubin (2012) argue that the conclusions arrived at by the researcher must be supported by the evidence from the interviews in order to ensure transparency.

For the purposes of this research, the credibility has been ensured through:

- theoretical literature applicable to the research topic, problem statement and objectives; and,
- the adoption of a triangulation strategy in order to compare varied sources of theoretical data for common themes. Triangulation compares the data with the findings of other studies on the same topic (Denscombe, 2010).

The authenticity of the study has been ensured by drawing conclusions from the participants who are representative of the total population of people with disabilities within South African organisations.

1.6.8.2 Confirmability

Creswell (2009) defines “use member checking strategy” as a mean by which a researcher can determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether the participants feel that the findings are accurate. The confirmability of the

study has been ensured through a participant validation strategy whereby the researcher took his conclusions back to the participants in the study for their confirmation and approval of the research findings based on their experiences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Confirmability for this study has been ensured through the following means:

- the researcher has taken a preliminary analysis of descriptions or themes to participants for their confirmation of the accuracy and validity of the analysis;
- the participants examined the preliminary analysis and provided feedback.

The research method adopted in this study was formed by the literature review and the empirical research design.

1.6.9 Literature Review

Literature review describes the theoretical background and previous research findings regarding a problem at hand (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The literature review defines the theoretical perspectives of previous research findings in relation to career challenges people with disabilities face, career advancement practices and career experiences in terms of race, age, gender and occupational levels.

The theoretical perspective was done to:

- define people with disabilities;
- define career advancement practices;
- define recruitment;
- define selection;
- define training;
- define promotion in relation to people with disabilities; and
- identify whether participants differed significantly regarding their perceptions of career advancement challenges in terms of race, age, gender and occupational

levels.

1.6.10 Empirical research

Empirical research done for this study comprised:

- Determination and description of the sample;
- Data collection methods: Semi-structured interview questions were used;
- Recording of data: The responses of the participants were recorded on an electronic spreadsheet;
- Data analysis: This study applied Tesch (1990) data analysis method (see Chapter 4);
- Reporting and interpreting the results: Findings are presented in tables, and the discussion and interpretation of the findings are presented in a systematic framework;
- Integration of research findings: The results of the empirical research are integrated into the findings of the literature review;
- Formulation of conclusions, limitations and recommendations;
- Conclusions are based on the results and their integration with theory;
- The limitations of the research are discussed and recommendations are made.

1.7 CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter 1: Scientific orientation of the research

Chapter 2: Meta-theoretical context: Legal and employment context regarding disability

Chapter 3: Career advancement

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Chapter 5: Research Findings

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion.

1.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 discussed the background to and motivation for the study, the problem statement, research objectives, research design and the methodology. The motivations of the study and research objectives are defined.

Chapter 2 discusses the meta-theoretical context on legal and employment context regarding disability.

CHAPTER 2: META-THEORETICAL CONTEXT: LEGAL AND EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT REGARDING DISABILITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section reviews the International and South African context regarding legal provisions for people with disabilities in employment. It reflects on legal provisions of disability discrimination in the workplace. The second section reviews the theoretical background related to the employment context regarding disability.

The democratic government passed various legislations to provide legal protection for the workforce with disabilities. During the Apartheid era, people with disabilities were not afforded equal and fair treatment in employment as they were considered second class citizens (Moeti & Zondi, 2010). Legislations have been promulgated intended to eliminate and combat disability discriminatory practices and policies in employment. Legal provisions are provided in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA 1996), Employment Equity Act 1998 (SA. Department of Labour, 2015), and other government publications such as the *Code of Good Practice: Key Aspects on the Employment of People with Disabilities* (SA. Department of Labour, 2002).

South Africa is a developing country which is enacting legislation changes to redress imbalances which resulted from the past. Apartheid was characterised by inequalities experienced by previously disadvantaged South African citizens. Prior to 27 April 1994, people with disabilities did not have legal provisions in employment. People with disabilities were deemed incapable of participating in the open labour market. A society sensitised to disability is prone to establish legislations that promote and protect the rights of the population with disabilities (Parlalis, 2013). South Africa (SA) is a signatory of the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2013), an international organisation devoted to the promotion of social justice. It has internationally recognised human and labour rights through its tripartite relations and complies with set labour standards and rights. According to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (SA. Department of International Relations and Cooperation 2013), South Africa was re-admitted as a member of the ILO on

26th May 1994 and pledged to comply with ILO standards to eliminate discriminations at work which arise on the basis of race, sex, colour or disability (ILO, 2013).

2.2 LEGAL PROVISIONS

2.2.1 International Legislations Review

The ILO signatory countries forbid discriminatory practices against employees with disabilities. Three legislations from ILO signatories who have economic influence on the global community are consulted in relation to people with disabilities: The Disability Discrimination Act, Americans with Disability Act, and The Law on Protection of Disabled Persons are discussed below.

2.2.1.1 Disability Discrimination Act

The United Kingdom (UK), an ILO signatory country, embarked on initiatives to eliminate unlawful discrimination referring to people with disabilities. According to Gregory and Temperton (2008), the UK works on a consolidated Single Equality Act which takes measures to eradicate the inequalities and unfair discriminations in legislations. The Single Equality Act intends to promote equality regardless of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, or other statuses. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was promulgated on the 2nd of December 1996 to repeal a quota system applied by the UK (Gregory & Temperton, 2008). The quota system focused on job reservation for people with disabilities to meet employment targets at the expense of a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to cater for the employment rights of people with disabilities. The DDA is a broad and comprehensive legislation intended to prohibit discriminating practices and policies regarding disabilities. Gregory and Temperton (2008), and Keen and Oulton (2009) agree that the DDA surpasses other anti-discrimination laws and that it created equal opportunities for the workforce with disabilities. The DDA (1995) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities on promotion and transfer opportunities and focuses away from the numeric targets in order to eliminate employment disadvantages employees with disabilities face.

According to the DDA (1995), a person has a disability if s/he has a physical or

mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The DDA further defines a “disabled person” as a person who has a disability. The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) (which was a statutory body charged to oversee the DDA progress but was later replaced by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR)) recommended changes in the definition of disability to be inclusive of the social model aspect (Gregory & Temperton, 2008). The medical model concentrates on individual shortcomings and recommends medical interventions to overcome disabilities whereas the social model identifies disability as a social phenomenon caused by environmental and social factors (Du Plessis, 2013). The Disability Rights Commission advises the state on the means to eradicate discriminatory practices and the implementation of legislations (Lewis & Sargeant, 2007). According to Kirton and Greene (2000), the DDA is criticised because it does not have powers of enforcement.

Keen and Oulton (2009) assert that disability discrimination includes the employer’s failure to provide reasonable accommodation as well as direct discrimination or victimisation. According to Lewis and Sargeant (2007), the DDA states that the employer is liable for any discriminatory act occurring during the course of employment and the onus is on the employer to prove innocence of acts committed by the employer or another employee. However, employers will not be liable if they prove beyond reasonable doubt that they implemented reasonable practices to prevent such actions.

Since the inception of the DDA, attention accorded to disability by senior management has improved (Dibben, James, & Cunningham, 2001). However, critical components to integrate persons with disabilities such as consultations, monitoring, rehabilitation and provision of reasonable adjustments in the work settings are neglected in the disability management practices (Dibben et al., 2001). Negligence creates doubts about the readiness of the organisations to integrate candidates with disabilities in the workplace without creating barriers (Dibben et al., 2001).

2.2.1.2 *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended*

The National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency

accountable for reviewing, drafting or formulating policies and laws affecting Americans with disabilities proposed the establishment of a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to protect the disabled and to eliminate employment discriminating practices experienced by people with disabilities (Susser & Petesch, 2011). Prior to the enactment of the American Disability Act 1990 (ADA), there were various laws to prohibit employment-related discriminations that originated on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sex and national origin. None of the laws gave preference to people with disabilities in workplaces (Susser & Petesch, 2011). According to Susser and Petesch (2011), an amended definition of disability found in the ADA mirrors the definition in the Regulation Act of 1973 and section 802(h) of the Fair Housing Act. According to the ADA amendments (ADA, 1990), the term "disability" means, with respect to an individual,

a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Despite the tenure of the ADA and its endeavours to protect people with disabilities on employment rights, Bruyère et al. (2010) argue that there are still economic disparities between people with disabilities and their non-disabled counterparts but that the ADA intends to prohibit employment discriminations on the grounds of disability. According to Bruyère et al., (2010), women perceive multi-discrimination among the protected groups in the ADA. On the 6th March 1961, the former US President, J.F. Kennedy said that affirmative action should be implemented to redress unequal job opportunities which favoured people of a certain race and gender than others (Foley & Loescher, 2009). Affirmative action intends to redress visible and invisible barriers in the workplace while promoting constitutional and other legislation objectives (Mushariwa, 2012).

Keaty, Srivastava and Stewart (2005) state that the ADA has been prolific in enacting legislation to redress disability related discrimination in the United States of America. Jones (2008) stresses that there are contradictory research findings pertaining to the ADA as some reflect a decline in employment as a result of the ADA promulgation while others show positive results.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), a wing agency endorsed to provide practical guidance on the implementation of the ADA, clarifies and interprets the ADA to employers and employees (Keaty et al., 2005). Saucedo-Garcia and Kleiner (1995) explain that the EEOC has an obligation to apply the ADA in the workplace. The rights and preferences for persons with disabilities are prioritised in measures which combat discrimination based on disability (Ernst, 2002) but preferences do not imply that career opportunities will automatically be afforded to candidates from the designated groups (Deane, 2006). Irrespective of legislative provisions presented by the ADA, people with disabilities still have limited chances to work and be treated equitably (Barclay et al., 2012).

Disability rights campaigners have utilised the ADA and the DDA to promote the rights of people with disabilities (Konur, 2004). Despite the formation of the ADA and the DDA, people with disabilities still experience discrimination which may not be visible but is exacerbated because people with disabilities cannot afford lawyers to represent them (Vickers, 2009).

2.2.1.3 *The Law on Protection of Disabled Persons, 1990*

Like other countries that embark on strict criteria to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities, China also provides legal protection for people living with disabilities (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). They include the Legislation Protecting Disabled People's Rights and the Disability Discrimination in Employment. The Law on Protection of Disabled Persons, 1990, is a broad legislation with provisions for people with disabilities. According to Article 38 of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons, 1990, disability discrimination is prohibited and no discrimination shall be practiced against persons with disabilities in recruitment, employment, obtainment of permanent status, promotion, determining technical or professional titles, payment, welfare, holidays and vacations, social insurance or in other aspects.

The Chinese definition of disability does not include a medical or social aspect as it does in other countries. The legal provisions in China are too general to rectify employment inequalities, to state the grounds that constitute disability discrimination, to identify which acts are deemed to be discriminating or the procedures to be followed to lay discrimination charges or complaints (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). In

contradiction to the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons, certain industrial sectors explicitly refuse to employ people with disabilities in their workplaces. Employees with disabilities are only employed for tax exemption purposes (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). Li and Goldschmidt (2009) criticise the lack of effective disability discrimination protection by the law for job applicants who seek employment and perceive it as a “concept deeply embedded in many people’s unconsciousness”.

2.2.2 The South African context

The South African context focuses on legislations that have an effect on socio-economic issues pertaining to people with disabilities in the South African workplaces.

After the first democratic government elections in 1994, the South African government enacted legislations to redress past workplace inequalities experienced by people from designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) with the intention to transform all organisations to be representative of all South African workforce demographics. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA, 1996), the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000 (SA. Department of Justice, 2000) are the legislations aimed to eradicate employment disparities experienced by the designated groups, especially people with disabilities. A brief discussion of these legislations follows.

2.2.2.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA 1996)

The Constitution is a broad umbrella legislation to redress, prohibit and eliminate any form of unfair discriminatory policies and practices and promote the achievement of equality. “This Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic” (SA 1996: s1(2)).

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution states:

No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

2.2.2.2 *Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998*

The Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) aims to promote the constitutional right of equality, eliminate unfair discrimination and redress employment disparities in workplaces by promoting equal opportunities in the workplace and implementing affirmative action measures. Affirmative action measures are designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from the designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace. The principle of appointing a candidate with the right skills, qualifications and knowledge contradicts with the implementation of the affirmative action (AA) initiative (Sebola, 2009). The application of AA, without considering disadvantages experienced by the designated groups, may not transform SA workplaces to have a workforce that is representative of all population demographics (Sebola, 2009). Designated groups should be considered for job opportunities irrespective of their skills, knowledge and qualifications because they have been deprived but employers should not compromise the quality of their service deliverables to accommodate such groups for the sake of AA policy compliance (Sebola, 2009). According to Mushariwa (2012), employers who have reached employment equity targets are not required to further apply affirmative action but must maintain the current status quo.

According to the EEA (SA. Department of Labour 2015), suitably qualified persons possess formal qualifications, prior learning, relevant experience, or capacity to acquire the ability to do the job. Chapter 2 of the EEA (SA. Department of Labour, 2015), lists disability as one of the grounds that constitute unfair discrimination. The EEA (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) prioritises the equitable representation of the designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in workplaces. The Act defines people with disabilities as “people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment”. The EEA (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) has an ambiguous definition of disability because it lacks factors that constitute disability. The amended Employment Equity Act, No. 47 of 2014 (SA. Department of Labour, 2014) states that it is unfair discrimination by employers to differentiate the terms and conditions of employment for employees doing the same work, similar work or

work of equal value (CEE, 2014). This added provision is in compliance with the ILO mandatory principles.

The South African government introduced the Code of Good Practice: Key Aspects on the Employment of People with Disabilities (SA. Department of Labour, 2002) to be part of the broader equality agenda for people with disabilities to have their rights recognised in the labour market where they experience high levels of unemployment often remaining in low status jobs or earning lower than average remuneration:

2.2. The Code is a guide for employers and employees on key aspects of promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment for people with disabilities as required by the Employment Equity Act (the Act).

2.3. The Code is intended to help employers and employees understand their rights and obligations, promote certainty and reduce disputes to ensure that people with disabilities can enjoy and exercise their rights at work (SA. Department of Labour, 2002).

The code also helps to create awareness of the contributions people with disabilities can make and encourages employers to fully use the skills of such persons.

According to The Code of Good Practice: Key Aspects on the Employment of People with Disabilities (SA. Department of Labour, 2002), ignorance, fear and stereotypes are the barriers that have led to unfair discrimination towards people with disabilities in society and employment. The code states the grounds in which the workforce with disabilities are unfairly discriminated as follows:

- Unfounded assumptions about their abilities and job performance;
- Unjust advertising and interviewing arrangements that limit their career prospects;
- Discriminating selection tests;
- Inaccessible workplace; and
- Inappropriate training.

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000 (SA. Department of Justice, 2000) is a constitutional legislation enacted to promote constitutional rights and equality and to prohibit unfair discrimination based on the grounds of disability. According to the PEPU (2000, p. 8),

unfair discrimination constitutes:

- denying or removing from any person who has a disability, any supporting or enabling facility necessary for their functioning in the society;
- contravening the code of practice or regulations of the South African Bureau of Standards that govern environment accessibility;
- failing to eliminate obstacles that unfairly limit or restrict persons with disabilities from enjoying equal opportunities or failing to take steps to reasonably accommodate the needs of such persons.

The legislations and remedial measures are enacted in order to transform South Africa so that the needs of all citizens, regardless of their biographic variables, are met and they actively participate in socio-economic activities from which they were deprived (Selby & Sutherland, 2006). Booyesen (2007) asserts that South Africa should integrate EE and skills advancement plans to enable efficient workforce diversity initiatives. Daya (2014) and Malan (2010) explain that it is mandatory that large South African corporates who receive lucrative government contracts are expected to transform their organisations to be representative of their workforce demographics in terms of race, gender and disability. Verbeek and Groeneveld (2012) argue that setting numerical targets as a means to increase representation of minority groups in the workplace is overdue.

The South African democratic government, through legislative policy and institutional measures, introduced strategies to incorporate people with disabilities into the mainstream labour market (Sing & Govender, 2007). Discriminating practices faced by the prospective candidates with disabilities stem from poorly administrated Human Resource management practices (Sing & Govender, 2007). According to Booyesen (2007), AA and EE appointed candidates are tokens in non-value adding positions with no decision-making powers and are delegated tasks which restrict their career growth prospects.

Malan (2010) argues that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, a legislative mandate, promotes equitable representation of black people in all occupational categories and levels. The intention of Black Economic Empowerment is to transform organisations to be representative of black people who will manage, own and control businesses (Malan, 2010; Selby & Sutherland, 2006). Organisational transformation is aimed to change the face of enterprises to reflect the demographics of the South African population.

Eichler (1989) and Malan (2010) assert that “representivity” and “equality” are used in transformational strategies where representivity is a necessity or strategy to achieve equality. Equality is

- (a) “the proportional method” which refers to a proportionate representation of each demographic variable such as race, gender or disability;
- (b) “the equal opportunity model” which refers to the achievement of equality in employment where all candidates are afforded equal opportunities in all categories where they meet stipulated requirements; and
- (c) “the equal rewards mode” which means acknowledging the same contributions equally (Eichler, 1989, p. 54).

The equal opportunity policy describes an organisation’s commitment to afford equal opportunities, through affirmative action measures, to all irrespective of biographic variables such as gender, race and disability (Armstrong, 2009).

The promulgated legislations leverage the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities. However, economic independence for persons with disabilities is hindered by barriers which affect their economic empowerment such as physical built barriers and current attitudinal and communication barriers (The Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities, 2013).

2.3 CAREER CHALLENGES

The preceding discussions focused on the legal provisions for the workforce with disabilities in an international and South African context. Following are the career challenges people with disabilities face.

2.3.1 Employment context regarding disability

The legislations combat discriminations on the ground of disability, however, people with disabilities still face career advancement challenges (Hernandez et al., 2008). According to Lindstrom et al. (2011), career advancement for persons with disabilities is complex, non-linear and chaotic. Harpur (2014) explains that discriminatory attitudes towards people with disabilities are difficult to detect but they are entitled to an inclusive environment in which bigotry will not disable them (Harpur, 2014).

Hernandez et al. (2008) assert that the workforce with declared disabilities mainly occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions with restricted opportunities to advance or be promoted. Few disabled people occupy positions deemed professional. Many people with disabilities are unemployed or occupy positions with low wages and little or no chance for advancement (Graham, Ismail, Moodley, Munsaka, Ross, & Schneider, 2014; Lindstrom et al., 2011). Rural areas are a barrier to the employment of people with disabilities. People with disabilities in rural areas earn less and have high unemployment rates compared to people with disabilities in urban areas. People with disabilities in rural areas also have limited employment opportunities, low-paying and unskilled jobs (Statistics South Africa, 2014). According to Wilson-Kovacs et al. (2008), career advancement for disabled professionals is precarious due to their exclusion from decision-making processes, unconstructive performance feedback and lack of opportunities to perform. Misconceptions and pity become barriers to possible career advancement opportunities for persons with disabilities which lead to questions about their competency and subsequently jeopardise their advancement (Beatty, 2012). According to Beatty (2012), employees with disabilities experience career plateaus because they often remain in the same position for so long that progression to a higher level seems impossible. According to Botha (2011), people with disabilities, predominantly those occupying semi- and unskilled positions, have restricted opportunities for upward movement to senior positions. People with disabilities also do not advance to occupy management positions in the Public Service even though black people and women (as part of the designated groups) have gradually improved their representation (Moeti & Zondi, 2010).

Lack of training, architectonic barriers and discrimination based on functional potential are the difficulties that hinder the progress of people with disabilities in the labour market (Guimaraes et al., 2012). Gida and Ortlepp (2007) state that ignorance, fear and stereotypes are the reasons for the low representation of people living with disabilities in the workplace. According to Lengnick-Hall and Gaunt (2007), employers do not employ people with disabilities because of assumptions as depicted in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1
Evidence Of Potential Barriers To Employment For People With Disabilities

Assumption	Support from literature
1. People with disabilities lack inherent competences.	There is no literature evidence to support assumptions that people with disabilities lack the necessary competences to perform tasks. However, employers have mixed interpretations about the knowledge, skills and abilities of people with disabilities (Beatty, 2012; Lengnick-Hall & Gaunt, 2007). The lower educational level of people with disabilities adversely affects their opportunities for employment (Van Niekerk & Van der Merwe, 2013; Watermeyer, Swartz, Lorenzo, & Priestley, 2006).
2. People with disabilities have lower job performance and productivity than people without disabilities.	According to Hernandez et al., (2008) and Ofuani (2011), employers believe that people with disabilities underperform in their roles. Literature shows that there is no discrepancy in the performance and productivity between people with disabilities and people without disabilities (Lengnick-Hall & Gaunt, 2007). An assumption that people with disabilities have lower productivity standard is ubiquitous to employers who have not recruited employees with disabilities into their workforce.
3. People with disabilities entail higher costs than employees without disabilities.	The costs borne by employers to accommodate employees with disabilities are minimal or none (Lengnick-Hall & Gaunt, 2007; Ofuani, 2011). Employers assume that accommodating people with disabilities will create undue hardship for the business (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013).
4. Employers fear litigation associated with terminating employees with disabilities.	According to Lengnick-Hall and Gaunt (2007), employers are concerned about hiring candidates with disabilities because they claim that it poses vulnerabilities to lawsuits relating to unfair termination of employment.
5. Co-workers reactions.	Employers avoid recruiting candidates with disabilities because of fear of negative reactions towards people with disabilities by their colleagues (Zunker, 2006). Co-workers fear that disability may be contagious and that employees with disabilities are given preferential treatment and are therefore isolated in the workplace (Lengnick-Hall & Gaunt, 2007).
6. Customer reaction.	Lengnick-Hall and Gaunt (2007) assert that negative client reactions towards people with disabilities will adversely influence the organisation whereas this untapped pool could also positively affect business revenue. Co-workers' and customers' reactions signify similar plausible concerns.

The aforementioned potential barriers to employment of people with disabilities have not been proven and many of the assumptions about the abilities and performance of job applicants and employees with disabilities are unfounded (Engelbrecht, 2010; Lengnick-Hall & Gaunt, 2007). According to Zondi (2009), people perceive that people with disabilities are not able to do well in senior positions but, according to the World Health Organisation (2011), most jobs can be performed by persons with disabilities if all reasonable accommodation needs are provided. Carr-Ruffino (1999, p. 240) identified myths held about people with disabilities:

Persons with severe disabilities are childlike, dependent, and in need of charity or pity. Persons with disabilities are unable to live normal lives. Persons with disabilities can only do menial or entry-level jobs, and most do not want to work. Employees with disabilities create safety risks, increase costs, and are less flexible and productive than other workers. Employees with disabilities are difficult to work with.

The South African Human Rights Commission (2012) explains that the scarcity of employment opportunities and inadequate marketable skills exacerbate the unemployment of candidates with disabilities. Employers generally do not provide adequate assistive technology to the workforce with disabilities which is a barrier to their employment (Jakovljevic & Buckley, 2011). According to Smith (2011), disability is affected by poverty and limited access to education, employment opportunities and necessary resources. The economic and social independence of people with disabilities is limited because they are deprived of participation in education which adversely affects their employment, training and income-generating opportunities (Smith, 2011). Hashim and Wok (2014), on the other hand, assert that employees with disabilities are not exposed to prejudice and are provided with training opportunities to equip them to perform satisfactorily and feel welcomed in the work environment.

Eichler (1989) and Ofuani (2011) found that equal opportunities for people with disabilities (both in developing and developed countries) have not been reached despite improvements in fundamentals such as education. The employment discrepancy between the “disabled people community” and non-disabled people

adversely influences their employment opportunities (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). People with disabilities do not get jobs easily and the severity of the situation is determined by the physical conditions or social environment they live in (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). Ofuani (2011) advocates that employees with disabilities have lower literacy levels and high job insecurities. Graham et al. (2014) concede that South Africans with disabilities are mostly employed in insecure jobs without written formal contracts and UIF contributions. The DDA asserts that employers are not obliged to treat employees with disabilities more favourably than non-disabled people. Candidates with disabilities are therefore not given preference for employment opportunities over people without disabilities (Ngwena, 2005; Stankova & Trajkovski, 2010).

According to Graham et al. (2014), and the World Health Organisation (2011), people with disabilities have lower educational levels and therefore limited economic participation which is a result of barriers to access education and employment opportunities. These challenges are exacerbated in poverty-stricken communities where people with disabilities experience socio-economic disadvantages. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (World Health Organisation, 2011), the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities could be improved through the provision of equal education and training, the removal of barriers to employment and consultation with people with disabilities. The World Health Organisation (2011) stresses that disability sensitisation and the challenging of negative attitudes are initial critical steps to ensure an accessible and inclusive environment for people with disabilities.

Legislations are not empowered to enforce sanctions for the infringement of the rights and the failure to prioritise the skills and employment opportunities of people with disabilities (Ofuani, 2011). Organisations only comply with EE legislative requirements as an “EE numbers chasing game” where employers focus on increasing EE and Affirmative Action (AA) figures to improve their EE status through value adding investments (Oosthuizen & Naidoo, 2010). Oosthuizen and Naidoo (2010) state that EE and AA progress should be measured on the basis of numbers as well as organisational climate. Wehman (2011) recognises that employers lack knowledge about disabilities and the legislative requirements regarding disabilities.

Company policies concentrate more on race and gender equality rather than disability equality because employees with disabilities are not represented during the establishment of the policy (Jakovljevic & Buckley, 2011). According to Gida and Ortlepp (2007), organisations do not generally have strategies or policies for the employment of people with disabilities. Graham, Selipsky, Moodley, Maina and Rowland (2010) state that employment opportunities accorded to people with disabilities through the EEA (SA. Department of Labour 2015) are improving but at a slow pace.

According to the CEE (SA. Department of Labour 2012), representation of people with disabilities reflect “the same racial packing order” meaning that white people and males dominate the representation of people with disabilities over black people (African, coloureds and Indians) and female Africans. White people with disabilities have the highest employment rate (Statistics South Africa, 2014). According to Watermeyer et al. (2006), in South Africa, in the late 1990s, black people with disabilities experienced unpleasant work conditions compared to their white counterparts. Even though black people with disabilities were not treated equally to white people with disabilities during the Apartheid regime, all people with disabilities were discriminated against and marginalised as a result of their disability and had restricted access to socio-economic rights such as education, employment and welfare services (Watermeyer et al., 2006). Parlalis (2013) argues that discrimination based on the grounds of individual disability is a global concern. Table 2.2 shows the representation of people with disabilities by race, gender and occupational levels in accordance to the CEE annual report (CEE, 2013). It is evident from Table 2.2 that mostly white males are employed over any other race or gender group.

Table 2.2

Representation Of Employees With Disabilities By Race, Gender And Occupational Levels (CEE, 2013, P. 52)

Occupational Levels	Male				Female				Foreign Nationals		Total
	A	C	I	W	A	C	I	W	Male	Female	
Top Management	96	33	89	527	39	23	23	117	13	3	963
	10.0%	3.4%	9.2%	54.7%	4.0%	2.4%	2.4%	12.1%	1.3%	0.3%	100%
Senior Management	216	100	232	801	102	47	71	341	23	6	1 939
	11.1%	5.2%	12.0%	41.3%	5.3%	2.4%	3.7%	17.6%	1.2%	0.3%	100%
Professionally qualified and experienced specialists and mid-management	993	311	345	2 121	642	210	178	1 025	54	19	5 898
	16.8%	5.3%	5.8%	36.0%	10.9%	3.6%	3.0%	17.4%	0.9%	0.3%	100%
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen, and superintendents	5 733	1 336	780	4 218	3 397	989	479	2 682	189	21	19 824
	28.9%	6.7%	3.9%	21.3%	17.1%	5.0%	2.4%	13.5%	1.0%	0.1%	100%
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision-making	16 316	2 443	645	1 875	8 338	2 367	610	1 853	739	55	35 241
	46.3%	6.9%	1.8%	5.3%	23.7%	6.7%	1.7%	5.3%	2.1%	0.2%	100%
Unskilled and defined decision-making	9 056	974	146	421	4 614	904	84	255	597	11	17 062
	53.1%	5.7%	0.9%	2.5%	27.0%	5.3%	0.5%	1.5%	3.5%	0.1%	100%
TOTAL PERMANENT	32 410	5 197	2 237	9 963	17 132	4 540	1 445	6 273	1 615	115	80 927
	40.0%	6.4%	2.8%	12.3%	21.2%	5.6%	1.8%	7.8%	2.0%	0.1%	100%
Temporary employees	2 103	374	53	165	2 025	633	55	114	25	7	5 554
	37.9%	6.7%	1.0%	3.0%	36.5%	11.4%	1.0%	2.1%	0.5%	0.1%	100%
GRAND TOTAL	34 513	5 571	2 290	10 128	19 157	5 173	1 500	6 387	1 640	122	86 481

White people with disabilities obtain qualifications and technical skills (Sebola & Khalo, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2014). Sebola and Khalo (2010) assert that white males and females with disabilities occupy management positions while black people with disabilities mainly occupy low-level positions. There is also a small labour market absorption of persons with disabilities (Statistics South Africa, 2014, p. xii). According to Sebola and Khalo (2010), South African universities struggle to recruit and appoint people with disabilities, particularly suitable qualified and well trained people. Other employers are able to attract qualified, skilled and disabled candidates to enhance their human capital (Moy & Lam, 2004). Graham et al. (2014) state that the race profile for people with disabilities reflects that 83% are Africans, 8% Coloured, 5% White and 3% Indians and that 71% are males while 29% are females. Statistics South Africa (2014) asserts that there are more females with disabilities than males and that females experience severe challenges. Disability prevalence by race reflects that black Africans are the highest proportion of people with disabilities followed by white people (Statistics South Africa, 2014).

There are gender differences in career advancement for the workforce with disabilities (Lindstrom et al., 2011). The careers of women have chaotic patterns of advancement such as part-time and/or seasonal employment whereas the careers of males have linear patterns of advancement but with curbed growth opportunities (Lindstrom et al., 2011). Males without disabilities earn a higher income than those with disabilities. Among persons with disabilities, a similar pattern is depicted – males earn double what females earn regardless of the degree of disability (Statistics South Africa, 2014, p. 128). According to the CEE (2012), the allocation, recruitment and promotion opportunities continuously favour males and white people. EE discussions disregard disability issues which are characterised by a high representation of black people with disabilities (Oosthuizen & Naidoo, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2005). The onus is on the employer to advance transformation by employing candidates from the designated groups into occupations with authority and decision-making powers (CEE, 2012).

Various legal provisions consider less favourable treatment against someone as discrimination but, according to Christianson (2012), the numbers of charges related

to disability discrimination are low. According to Donnelly and Given (2010, p. 218), “less favourable treatment could include assigning less demanding or narrower work, resulting in reduced job satisfaction or opportunities for promotion”. Discrimination related to race, gender and religion has been accorded deliberate attention while disability discrimination has not been adequately addressed in the workplace (Marumoagae, 2012). Marumoagae (2012) advocates that disabled job applicants and employees endure employment discrimination while Rule and Zuma (2011) assert that cooperation between the government and civil society organisations could mitigate discriminatory practices faced by people with disabilities and promote the rights for people with disabilities.

Data pertaining to South Africans with disabilities is treated with circumspection because it is not trustworthy and current (Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities, 2013; Dickson-Tetteh & Ladha, 2000; Statistics South Africa, 2005). The statistics for people with disabilities is unknown and varies (Ngwena, 2005). Botha (2011) stresses that there are no trustworthy statistics regarding disability and that its definition varies from act to act. The statistical data pertaining to the employment of people living with disabilities is inconsistent (Zivitere & Claidze, 2012). The Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities (2013) states that the numbers of students with disabilities enrolling in and graduating from tertiary institutions is gradually declining but reliable data does not exist regarding disabled pupils denied access to schools and those who drop out of the educational system. Factors which impact the authenticity of the statistics relate to the definitions of disability, various methods used to collect data, prejudices towards people with disabilities and poor basic services (Statistics South Africa, 2005). The World Health Organisation (2011) claims that disability can be paralleled with incapacity and numerous countries do not have labour market statistics precisely on the employment of people with disabilities. Disability statistics facilitate measures that aim to mainstream disability in education, employment and measure the degree to which the rights of people with disabilities are exercised (Statistics South Africa, 2014).

An inclusive workplace comprises a workforce with various capabilities, equal opportunities and equal representation of all including people from minority groups

on all hierarchical levels (Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014). The SA workforce profile reflects an over-representation of white people (males and females) with disabilities in top and senior management levels especially in the private sector while African people are well represented in government (CEE, 2014). Africans and Indians with disabilities are the larger groups within a population of people with disabilities (Statistics South Africa, 2005). The representation of people with disabilities in the workplace is measured against a 2% target of the employers' total workforce as set by the SA government. The representation of people with disabilities will take time to reach a 2% target set by the government for a public service (CEE 2014). The South African public service failed to meet a 2% target in 2005 and 2010, but they have forecasted that it will be attained in 2015 (Department of Labour, 2013; Milne, 2009).

HIV/AIDS and severe incapacity cause the decline in employment of people with disabilities (Christianson, 2012). According to the CEE (2012; 2013), the total workforce for people with disabilities accounted for 0.8% in 2012 and increased to 1.4% in 2013 which is a positive progress towards a 2% target. Table 2.3 shows the representation of people with disabilities by their occupational levels concerning 2012 and 2013 CEE annual reports (2012; 2013). It is evident from Table 2.3 that most individuals with disabilities occupied skilled positions in 2012-2013. Selby and Sutherland (2006) advocate that there is a need for aggressive transformation strategies to transform organisations to be reflective of the designated groups in senior management level because few companies have achieved a desired target. Silver and Koopman (2000) suggest identification and "fast tracking" of potential candidates with disabilities be enabled to occupy management and executive positions for EE purposes.

Table 2.3
Representation Of Employees With Disabilities By Race, Gender And Occupational Levels (CEE, 2012; 2013)

Occupational level	2011-2012	2012-2013	Difference
Top Management	1.9%	1.8%	-0.1%
Senior Management	1.2%	1.6%	0.4%
Professionally qualified	1.0%	1.6%	0.6%
Skilled	0.8%	2.3%	1.5%

Gowan (2010) and Watermeyer et al. (2006) agree that individuals with disabilities are under-employed and that non-disabled skilled employees are more likely to be employed due to their training levels. Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) advocate that training and advancement opportunities offered to people with disabilities are shoddy, repetitive and low-level which minimises their chances for advancement. Botha (2011) argues that South Africans with disabilities are excluded from opportunities for education, training and employment. An open-minded approach could be beneficial to attaining a legislative required 2% representation of people with disabilities and to increase opportunities for people with disabilities. Employers use tactics like “dead souls”, which refer to people with disabilities who are on the payroll but do not actually work for them, to achieve the required quotas of people with disabilities (Denisova-Schmidt, 2011).

The employment rate and educational levels of people with disabilities is lower than the rest of the population (Statistics South Africa, 2005; Watermeyer et al., 2006). Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) stress that employment, advancement and training opportunities for people with disabilities are linked to their educational levels. Watermeyer et al. (2006) stress that the provision of skills advancement opportunities to all employees will achieve employment equity in the labour market. They further argue that appointments should be based on competences (skills and abilities) rather than meeting EE targets and goals. Konrad et al. (2012) state that the appointment of experienced, qualified candidates with disabilities on corporate boards would bring expertise, diversify the total workforce and enhance the status for the employees with disabilities. They also explain that corporate executives should

participate as board members for independent disability institutions in order to broaden their expertise regarding the workforce with disabilities.

Strong positive commitments from the chief executive, the board of directors and the senior managers must be vigorously disseminated to all levels of a company in order to create a supportive climate, which encourages, values and supports the employment of people with disabilities (Jones & Schmidt, 2004, p. 427).

In addition, disability sensitisation training for employees without disabilities could dismantle attitudes, fears or stereotypes held towards people with disabilities (Jones & Schmidt, 2004).

2.3.2 Perceptions of people with disabilities

Stereotypes and prejudices about people with disabilities are based on perceptions. Deku (2002) stresses that an individual's knowledge of people with disabilities influence how he/she perceives them. Employees with disabilities can dispel unfounded preconceptions regarding the capabilities of people with disabilities and eliminate myths (Wurst, 2005). Carr-Ruffino (1999) stresses that myths and stereotypes about persons with disabilities are distorted or partial truths and originate from people who are apprehensive or fear being disabled themselves. Vickers (2009) claims that stereotypes and stigmas attached to employees with disabilities is the reason for their high unemployment rates. Kirton and Greene (2000) assert that the attitudes held by non-disabled employers and colleagues need to be investigated in an empirical study to understand the barriers experienced by persons with disabilities in employment.

The Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities (2013) argues that the non-disabled society is ignorant of the rights of people with disabilities. Negative beliefs are perpetuated by cultural practices which segregate people with disabilities from the mainstream society (Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities, 2013). According to Majinge and Stilwell (2013), tertiary institutions should ensure the provision of universal services which include positive attitudes and inclusive educational systems to students with disabilities. These barriers are also prevalent in other developing countries. For example, in India, the government-funded development programmes failed to benefit the disabled and did not reduce

their high unemployment rates and confined occupational mobility (Mehrotra, 2013). Mehrotra (2013) asserts that the low level of literacy of persons with disabilities limits their access to employment, especially for women.

Barriers encountered by disabled people vary from social barriers (perceptions and behaviours), material barriers (inaccessible structures and information) to organisational barriers (legislation, organisational policies and procedures, economic factors and practices) (Crowther, 1999). Crowther (1999) asserts that the social model, which identifies disability as a social phenomenon caused by environmental and social factors (Du Plessis, 2013), intends to eradicate barriers in order to create an inclusive and balanced environment for people with disabilities. The medical model identifies disability as a curable deficit which confines a person's ability to perform a job because of illness (Pfeiffer, 2001). It refers to people with disabilities as a "problem" which is treated by medicine in contrast to the social model which considers society as the cause of disability (Rugwiji, 2012). According to Mehrotra (2013), cultural and social impediments disable and restrict people with disabilities and the success of a social model requires buy-in from the state and society to dismantle socio-cultural barriers (Ngwena, 2005).

The subject of disability has a considerable social and political agenda (Goodall, Pottinger, Dixon, & Russell, 2004). Society's perception of disability can be changed to the social model perspective whereby an environment is created that is inclusive, accommodative, provides equal opportunities and increases the participation of persons with disabilities in socio-economic activities while eradicating discriminatory practices directed against people with disabilities (Goodall, et.al., 2004). Goodall et al. (2004) state that people with disabilities may encounter discriminatory practices which confine them and that offers of assistance lower their self-esteem and dignity. Van Reenen (2002) points out that socio-economic deprivation marginalises people with disabilities and leads to poverty. Socio-economic disadvantages originate from architectural barriers which limit full participation of people with disabilities (Van Reenen, 2002) in the workplace. Violation of the socio-economic rights of people with disabilities can be challenged in court because, in South Africa, legislations on the socio-economic entitlements for people with disabilities is a constitutional right (Van Reenen, 2002).

According to Mahama (2012), future prospects for persons with disabilities are limited because of the traditional attitudes and stereotypes about the abilities of the disabled. In Ghana, people with disabilities are perceived as liabilities, less human, waste resources and are segregated from society (Mahama, 2012). Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite (2010) and Pfeiffer (2001) argue that sheltered employment (special closed establishments) provided to people with disabilities segregate them from interacting with society and this subsequently hampers their integration into society. According to Moreton (1992), the workforce employed in sheltered employment is not inclined to work in an open labour market because the environment is not receptive. A segregated environment such as special schools for people with disabilities creates barriers for integration with society (Buciuniene & Kazlauskaite, 2010).

According to Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite (2010), the integration of candidates with disabilities into organisations poses challenges such as the recruitment of applicants with disabilities, provisions of reasonable accommodation to meet their special needs and disability sensitisation of the current staff. Various authors contend that people with disabilities are the victims of negative stereotyping and are considered unproductive and dependent (Majinge & Stilwell, 2013; Mehrotra, 2013; Rugwiji, 2012). Colleagues and supervisors of the workforce with disabilities are the greatest source of these discriminatory practices because negative stereotypes or prejudices form invisible barriers which limit their potential and adversely influence their self-esteem (Zunker, 2006). Disability affects employees' productivity at work and its effect is determined by the extent of disability and the job responsibilities (Jones, 2008). Thus, an employer, by providing reasonable accommodation for disabled employees, may equate an individual's productivity to those without disability (Jones, 2008). Kumar and Mary (2001) stress that attitudes directed towards females with disabilities should be mitigated in order to dismantle prejudices they face within their subgroup.

An organisational culture that is amicable towards people with disabilities enables an organisation to attract, hire, and keep employees with disabilities (Hasse, 2011). Nevertheless, efforts to create a harmonious and inclusive workplace are hampered by employers who treat employees with disabilities as "special people" (Hasse,

2011).

Culture influences the ways in which people with disabilities are perceived. This impacts people living with disabilities because they may be perceived as outsiders (Deku, 2002; Stofberg, 2007). According to Mehrotra (2013), the definition of disability takes socio-economic factors into account because social and cultural attributes determine how different cultures define disability.

Attitudinal change is complex but disability sensitisations could change the negative attitudes which are borne from society's lack of knowledge about people with disabilities (Deku, 2002). The provision of a community-based rehabilitation programme could help fight stigma because stereotypes have behavioural effects that are challenging, discriminating, derogatory, limiting, negative, cynical, doubting and excluding (Moloto, Brink, & Nel, 2014). Stereotypes most prevalent in workplaces are related to race, age, gender and occupational levels (Moloto et al., 2014). Mehrotra (2013) and Woodhams and Danieli (2000) advocate that prejudices, stereotypes, marginalisation and segregation are barriers created by the society which limit the inclusion of people with disabilities in participating in education and employment.

Bourmaud et al. (2012) believe that there is management resistance to initiating remedial measures to accommodate people with disabilities. Hernandez et al. (2008, p. 157) and Donnelly and Given (2010) agree with Bourmaud et al. (2012) that employers are reluctant to hire people with disabilities. It is the perceptions held by management that lead it to disregard the under-representation of the workforce living with disabilities and the laws enacted to prohibit disability discrimination. According to Bruyère (2000, as cited in Hernandez et al., 2008), top management buy-in on issues concerning the workforce with disabilities is important because management is often biased against the workforce with disabilities. Barnes (1992) asserts that people deny that they discriminate against employees with disabilities but the ILO and its signatory countries found that employer perceptions create barriers for the workforce with disabilities to access the labour market (Marumoogae, 2012). In contrast, Hashim and Wok (2014) found that employers and co-workers of employees with disabilities are pleased with the contributions and dedication

displayed by the workforce with disabilities. According to Hashim and Wok (2014), employers and colleagues are comfortable working with employees with disabilities and claim that there is a positive atmosphere without negative perceptions in a workplace which caters for their special needs.

The contributions of potentially great contributors to society and the world of work may be lost simply because of prejudice and uninformed stereotypical assumptions not based in reality (Harpur, 2014, p. 7). While employers may provide people with disabilities with work that provides few prospects of future promotions, nonetheless, there are people with disabilities who are professionals with successful careers (Harpur, 2014).

Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) found that people living with disabilities encounter challenges to promotion in their careers due to the perceptions or attitudes of others. People's perceptions about the abilities of people living with disabilities are the main barrier to the empowerment of people with disabilities (Occupational Health Risk, 2005). Political will can dispel myths and preconceived perceptions about individuals with disabilities through diversity sensitisation programmes (Sing & Govender, 2006).

Some managers think that recruiting persons with disabilities would result in an increase in supervisory time, low productivity and frequent absence (Hernandez et al., 2008). Many employers believe that employees with disabilities will underperform and that it is costly to accommodate them (Ofuani, 2011). According to Zivitere and Claidze (2012), people with disabilities are excluded from the state development strategy and claim that disabled employees working for state institutions are regarded as incompetent because they believe that people with disabilities cannot work and should not work. This creates self-stigma which is a feeling of shame and lowered self-esteem or public-stigma which is linked to social participation restrictions and discrimination (Van Brakel, Sihombing, Djarir, Beise, Kusumawardhani, Yulihane, Kurniasari, Kasim, Kesumaningsih, & Wilder-Smith, 2012).

Colleagues of employees with severe disabilities may experience anxiety and the onus is on managers to fight the stigma against employees with disabilities (Grobler

et al., 2011). According to Stofberg (2007), recruiters' limited knowledge about disabilities makes them apprehensive about people with disabilities. Jakovljevic and Buckley (2011) argue that employers exhibit a feeling of discomfort around their subordinates with disabilities and assume that candidates with disabilities will be a disadvantage to a company. As a result of perceived prejudice in South African cultures towards disability, people fear disclosing their disabilities to employers (Jakovljevic & Buckley, 2011). Employees, except for employees in higher-level positions and with decision-making powers, fear losing their jobs if they disclose their invisible disabilities to employers (Hussein, Manthorpe, & Ismail, 2014).

According to Jakovljevic and Buckley (2011), non-disabled people should not consider people with disabilities as tokenism or "token placements" but as people with skills and values to add to the company. Companies should invest time and money in education and awareness programmes in order to address stigma and preconceived perceptions about persons with disabilities (Jakovljevic & Buckley, 2011). Aldersey (2012) asserts that perspectives of people with disabilities are not noticed sufficiently.

Dykema-Engblade and Stawiski (2008) concede that employing people with disabilities may be beneficial but also acknowledge challenges facing people with disabilities in the workplace such as ignorance and biases held by potential employers. Interability contact (communication between a person with a disability and non-disabled individuals) can mitigate stereotypes faced by people with disabilities (Dykema-Engblade & Stawiski, 2008). According to Jasper and Waldhart (2013), under-representation of people with disabilities at work is due to employers' perceptions that the work may not be suitable for employees with disabilities and that accommodating them will cause undue hardship and cost implications for the business.

Jasper and Waldhart (2013) claim that qualified applicants with disabilities are hard to recruit. Small employers encounter greater challenges than large employers when they employ candidates with disabilities and that behaviour (aesthetic anxiety) and unfounded beliefs are stumbling blocks to the full integration of the applicants with disabilities into workplaces (Jasper & Waldhart, 2013).

Despite the abovementioned career advancement challenges people with disabilities face, it is beneficial to have people with disabilities in a workplace because they contribute to a diversified workforce. They also have a low absenteeism rate and a long tenure; they are committed, reliable, loyal and hardworking employees (Buciuniene & Kazlauskaite, 2010; Hashim & Wok, 2014; Hernandez et al., 2008). The International Labour Office (2011) lists the benefits people with disabilities bring which are: dependable employees, a source of untapped skills and creativity, they have work ethics and enhance a company's image. The successful integration of disability programs within organisations facilitates BEE scores, mitigates risks around non-compliance of equity and skills regulations, and results in significant tax rebates (Botha, 2011). According to the International Labour Office (2011), a number of employers do not know the benefits of recruiting people with disabilities because they are not sensitised to disability matters.

2.4 CRITICAL EVALUATION AND SYNTHESIS

The literature review has shown that the ILO signatory countries employ corrective measures to redress discriminatory practices and employment discrepancies experienced by employees with disabilities in order to promote workplaces that are diverse and inclusive of people with disabilities (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2013; International Labour Organisation, 2013). While employers strive to create workplaces representative of the workforce with disabilities, their apprehensive behaviour and aesthetic anxiety hinder the process (Carr-Ruffino, 1999; Stofberg, 2007). The pace of transformation to have an equitable representable of the workforce with disabilities is slow as the allocation, recruitment and promotion opportunities still favour white people (CEE, 2012; Graham et al., 2010). Recruitment is still biased against applicants with disabilities on the grounds of their disabilities.

To create inclusive workplaces, employers should be sensitised about the legislative prerequisites to integrate job applicants with disabilities and eradicate preconceptions about the capabilities and competences of the disabled community (International Labour Office, 2011; Parlalis, 2013). Career advancement opportunities favour people without disabilities (CEE, 2012; Foley & Loescher, 2009)

which leads to career challenges for people with disabilities as opposed to other demographics such race and gender (Watermeyer et al., 2006). Preference of males is the same as of the general South African economical active population where there are more males employed than females. Lindstrom et al. (2011) stress that males with disabilities are regarded as more employable than their female counterparts who encounter nonlinear and uncertain employment opportunities. Mehrotra (2013), Moloto et al. (2014) and Woodhams and Danieli (2000) assert that preconceptions and prejudices hinder the inclusion of people with disabilities irrespective of their demographic variables such as age, race, gender and occupational level.

The literature reflects that organisations recruit people with disabilities in order to meet BBBEE and EE targets. Persons with disabilities believe that their career challenges are not well explored. The influence of Human Resource Practices on career advancement of employees with disabilities reflects that employees are disadvantaged because of their disabilities.

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the context of this study in two sections. The first section reviewed the legislation provisions in international and South African contexts while the second section discussed the employment context regarding disability.

The following specific objectives relating to literature review have been fulfilled in this chapter:

- to identify theoretical perspectives on career advancement challenges people with disabilities face; and,
- to identify whether individuals differ significantly regarding their perceptions of career advancement challenges in terms of race, gender and occupational levels.

CHAPTER 3: CAREER ADVANCEMENT

This chapter reviews the theoretical perspectives which form the basis of this research and clarifies concepts used in the study.

Chapter 2 provided the background on legislations and employment regulations regarding disability in the workplace. Chapter 3 provides the conceptual context regarding careers, career advancements, theoretical models, Human Resource practices, variables influencing career advancement and career implications.

3.1 CONCEPTUALISATION

This section provides the theoretical definitions of careers and career advancements.

3.1.1 Careers

Careers have three phases which individuals navigate through in their working life (Amaratunga & Haigh, 2014; Schein, 1990; 2006). According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2011), a career is an on-going learning and changing process of employment-related practices. A career is not limited to career mobility and individual career aspirations vary based on an individual's occupational levels. When employees advance in their careers, their career aspirations consequently change (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2012, p. 260) refer to career as

a significant learning and experiences that identify individual's professional life, direction, competences and accomplishment through positions, jobs, roles and assignments.

According to Savickas (2000 as cited in Maree, 2013, p. 411),

a career was considered as the pursuit of a particular occupation during a worker's working life marked by a gradual climb up the career ladder involving ever-increasing complexity levels and responsibilities.

The concept of a career refers to a process through which individuals progress and advance. Career describes an employee's work life, roles and experiences and develops autonomy and increases confidence at work (Baruch, 2004; Lofquist &

Dawis, 1969).

A career is not confined to upward or predictable moves at work (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Van Staden (2009) argues that careers have transformed from hierarchical careers (characterised by upward mobility, increased level of income, more responsibility, more authority and high level status) into dynamic careers characterised by flat structures. Baruch (2004) states that individual and organisational career perspectives have changed from a hierarchical structure with long-term relationships and job security to a dynamic boundary-less structure with short-term employment. Flat organisational structures enable lateral moves for employees to acquire more competences that increase their potential for promotion (Dickmann & Baruch, 2011). The competences (knowledge, skills and abilities) acquired by employees become their career assets (Van Staden, 2009). Changes in a career take place because of personal growth aspirations or structural changes in a current job. Personal growth aspirations are pursued by individuals for their personal career interests whereas structural changes are initiated by the organisation for reasons related to workforce redundancy and retrenchment (Chinyamurindi, 2012b).

Various authors acknowledge that the theoretical concept of a career is defined differently. According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2011) and Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2012), a career is characterised by continuous learning opportunities. The changes in career may be influenced by personal or business related factors. Individual career aspirations change as employees advance through occupational levels and therefore the tenure which the employees spend in their positions also differs.

3.1.2 Career advancement

Career advancement has no precise definition as different authors refer to it as career growth or career development (Arokiasamy, Ismail, Ahmad, & Othman, 2011; Meyer, Mabaso, Lancaster, & Nenungwi, 2004). According to Thuramy, Lo, Amri and Noor (2011), the concept of career advancement differs from one person to another.

Career development refers to a process in which an organisation and an employee participate on activities to enhance the contribution the employee makes to his/her occupation. Career advancement refers to a value acquired from given opportunities to improve a career in a given time (Arokiasamy et al., 2011). Bezuidenhout, Grobler and Rudolph (2013) consider career advancement as a reciprocal process whereby employees willingly avail themselves of career opportunities provided and employers willingly provide the resources to promote career development interventions. A career therefore requires synergy between an employer and an employee. Employee career development is considered to be the responsibility of an organisation in which the organisation invests in and develops its human capital. While organisations contribute to employee career planning and career managing, individuals own their careers (Baruch, 2004). Armstrong (2009) argues that career development consists of the provision of learning opportunities directed at growing an employee's current capabilities to equip him or her for the future with greater competences. Career advancement is a joint effort between the organisation and the employee (Schein, 1990; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Van Staden, 2009). It is an on-going comprehensive process in which one step equips an employee for the next stage (Khoza, 2010; Zunker, 2006). Schreuder and Coetzee (2011) and Werner and DeSimone (2006) define career advancement as an on-going process through which employees advance through a series of categorised phases, themes and tasks. In the context of this study, the term "career advancement" will be used.

Career advancement comprises two discrete phases which include career planning and career management. Career advancement can be vertical or horizontal and may include an increase in remuneration (Meyer et al., 2004). According to Thurasamy et al. (2011), an upward occupational mobility or an increase in pay is not automatically interpreted as a career advancement. Khoza (2010) argues that career mobility takes two forms: lateral movement (horizontal change of functions) or upward movement (vertical change in the hierarchical structure). Horizontal movement signals changes in the work a person performs while hierarchical movement, or upper ladder movement, brings changes to a job occupant (Schein, 1990; 2006). Changes vary and comprise an increase of salary, position or control (Schein, 1990; 2006). Lately, a career has been characterised by a flatter and less hierarchical

structure with linear opportunities to progress (Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). A flatter hierarchical structure provides an organisation with an opportunity to make decisions about an employee's career.

South Africa is faced with career development and advancement crises originating from EE and AA policies which afford people from the designed groups opportunities for career mobility while adversely creating tensions through initiatives aimed to embrace diversity issues. According to Khoza (2010), the career perspectives of black people have improved in a democratic South Africa which is evidenced by their increased representation in managerial positions. Legislations have enabled workplaces to value the contributions of black people by implementing transformation initiatives.

Career advancement has stages through which employees advance (Werner & DeSimone, 2006). The discipline of Human Resource articulates the hierarchical structure which employees follow in order to advance in their occupations. Career advancement aims to match a job occupant's needs with those of the organisation and this joint effort is facilitated by the relevant manager (Schein, 1990). Van Staden (2009) argues that the career advancement process follows a sequence which starts with setting career objectives, formulating career strategies followed by implementation and evaluation. Employees plan and share their career self-insights while the organisation ensures the provision of career development support in order to manage their career processes (Schein, 1990; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Organisations are enabled, through a career development system, to identify talent amongst their current workforce by matching workforce competences and career aspirations to organisational needs (Ababneh, 2013).

According to Schein (1990), organisations and managers are responsible for:

- creating flexible career paths and compensation systems;
- encouraging self-insight and self-management; and
- comparing the organisational needs to the individual needs.

Fernando, Amaratunga and Haigh (2014) assert that there are three career

advancement phases through which employees advance in their careers:

- **Career phase 1:** The idealistic achievement phase (early career). This is an early career phase in which career decisions are aligned to career goals in order to fulfil intrinsic needs.
- **Career phase 2:** The pragmatic endurance phase (mid-career). In this phase, an employee operates productively and his/her career motives change from intrinsic rewards to be influenced by people such as colleagues and family.
- **Career phase 3:** The re-inventive contribution phase (advanced career). In this phase, an employee is advanced in his/her career and reflects a re-inventive contribution towards the careers of other people, the community and the family.

Career stages may not apply to all employees because careers are hampered by several factors that restrict career growth. Career advancement practices (recruitment, selection, training and promotion) enable the workforce to advance in their careers (Lindstrom et al. 2011). Bernardin (2003) asserts that career advancement practices intend to enhance employees' career satisfaction and increase organisational effectiveness. Khoza (2010) states that education, networking, mentorship and career-related challenges enable employees to advance in their careers whereas a lack of succession planning creates barriers for the employees to grow their careers. An organisation promotes career growth by providing career advancement success factors such as educational qualifications, organisation support and training (Fernando et al., 2014). Factors associated with advancement in a job are: power, networking (mentoring and social contacts), recognition and autonomy on the job (Kelly & Marin, 1998). Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2009) and Wolf (2006) concede that networking is a significant factor in an employee's career advancement in the corporate environment. Wood (2006) identifies the factors which progress careers as: an ability to cooperate, network, advance educational qualifications, experience, personal competences and work commitment.

Organisational variables such as mentoring, social network and organisational support influence employee' career advancement (Arokiasamy et al., 2011; LaPierre

& Zimmerman, 2012). According to LaPierre and Zimmerman (2012), male mentors (as opposed to female mentors) play a vital role in an employee’s career advancement. Tharenou (2005, as cited in LaPierre & Zimmerman, 2012, p. 113) argues that “male mentors are more likely to advance in management than protégée’s of female mentors”.

Employability skills promote advancement within the corporate ladder. Heimler, Rosenberg and Morote (2012) identify leadership skills as the greatest employability skills to forecast an employee’s career advancement followed by thinking skills and work ethics.

Employability skills are clustered into four strategy categories (see Table 3.1) which are critical for upward mobility with “foundation strategies” listed the most significant and “being centred” the least (Laud & Johnson, 2012). Laud and Johnson (2012) stress that interpersonal skills, motivation, planning and leadership styles influence career growth. People from privileged backgrounds (higher socio-economic classes) have higher chances of advancement in their careers because of their education levels (Tlaiss & Kauser, 2011). According to Thurasamy et al. (2011), supervisors’ support, service tenure and gender are significant predictors for employee career advancement. Salary and job status are also determinant factors in career progress but when these factors are not met, an employee may consider leaving a job (Zhao & Zhou, 2008).

Table 3.1
Employability Skills For Employee Career Mobility (Laud & Johnson, 2012)

1. Foundation Style	2. Building Self-Brand	3. Seizing Opportunity	4. Being Centred
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal • Motivation • Planning • Leadership style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and education • Networking • Reputation and Integrity • Politics • Confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luck • Opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk taking • Balance • Communication • Work quality

Zhao and Zhou (2008) argue that inappropriate career achievement, stagnant upward mobility and hierarchical blocks for career growth influence an employee’s

turnover in various ways. Limited access to business networks where decisions are discussed, organisational politics, discrimination, stereotypes and the “glass ceiling”, an invisible but impermeable barrier, are critical factors which hinder career advancement (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2009; Sandhu & Mehta, 2007). According to Tlaiss and Kauser (2010), organisational culture and organisational practices can also hamper career progression but they find no evidence to affirm that networking and mentoring improve career advancement prospects.

Career advancement is affected by factors such as job performance, contextual performance, gender, characteristics of human capital, mentors, networking, commitment to career development, career orientations, satisfaction with the psychological contract, selection criteria and methods, organisational technology, Human Resource planning or organisational restructuring (Munjuri, 2011, p. 93). Career advancement requires cooperation between the employer and employee in order to ensure that an employee acquires the expertise needed to advance in a career.

The literature reflects that males have greater opportunities to advance in their careers than females. Males earn higher salaries, occupy higher positions and have more management control than females. The EE and AA transformation strategies have not benefited the majority of females. The literature shows that females do not progress as well as males and female mentors do not have the capacity to develop mentees because of family related matters that hinder them (LaPierre & Zimmerman, 2012).

3.2 THEORETICAL MODELS

“Career advancement theory is a set of concepts, proportions and ideas that provide insight on career advancement process” (Zunker, 2006, p. 24). Career theories develop from the tripartite interaction between the individual, work settings and the organisation which operates within a broader society (Dickmann & Baruch, 2011). Career development theories vary in focus to clarify perspectives on career development processes which form a foundation for future research (Zunker, 2006).

According to Zunker (2006), the Trait-and-Factor Theory studies the individuals,

surveys occupations and matches candidates with occupations. The Trait-and-Factor Theory compares a person's traits with the job requirements using job descriptions and job specifications to forecast an individual's occupational fit. In this theory, personal traits are a significant factor in career decisions. This influences the recruitment decisions because organisations recruit candidates with the required job traits (Zunker, 2006).

Schein (1990) identifies careers based on career anchors, a consolidation of individual perceived competences, career inspiration and principles of self-identity. In the context of this study, the concept of "internal career" denotes employee work progress and how an employee perceives career advancement within an organisation (Schein, 1990). Schein (1990; 2006) discusses the ten mandatory stages of an "external career" which are necessary in order to progress through occupational levels. Table 3.2 below reflects these career stages.

Table 3.2
Career Stages (Schein, 1990; 2006)

Stage 1: Growth, fantasy and exploration	This is a preparatory phase in which an individual has little or no knowledge about a field of interest but is willing to acquire necessary knowledge through education and training opportunities provided.
Stage 2: Education and training	Learning (education and training) takes place in this stage and a person makes necessary premature decisions which might change during a learning course in order to meet future requirements for an occupation.
Stage 3: Entry into the world of work	Occupational self-concept commences where a person experiences first hand work realities and has to adapt to them.
Stage 4: Basic training and socialisation	An individual is inducted to organisational culture and requires self-evaluation to identify his or her job and organisational fit.
Stage 5: Gaining of membership	A person realises his or her organisational and job fit and becomes a member. An incumbent has acquired necessary knowledge relevant to establish solutions to career challenges.
Stage 6: Gaining of tenure and permanent membership	Based on a person's tenure with an organisation, a decision is made pertaining to a person's future with an organisation. An employee may be offered a permanent job.
Stage 7: Mid-career crisis and reassessment	Job occupants do introspection to measure the impact and worth of the initial career decisions.
Stage 8: Maintaining momentum, regaining it, or levelling off	Findings of the introspection stage guide career plans about the career aspects that need deliberate attention to be fulfilled, adjusted or maintained.
Stage 9: Disengagement	A person's contribution in a career gradually declines because of the exit preparations.
Stage 10: Retirement	Lastly, the employee exits the occupation or the organisation.

According to Super (1957, as cited in Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007) a linear career stage model is a career theory that depicts career stages which individuals undergo in their careers. It consists of:

1. Exploration: An initial self-introspection stage characterised by self-exploration of career anchors and learning.
2. Establishment: A stage in which an employee is integrated into the workplace and specialises.
3. Maintenance: A stage in which an employee continues with work and expands competences.
4. Disengagement: An exit stage where an employee approaches a retirement stage.

The above sections discuss the career stages through which employees advance in organisations. The study by Schein (1990; 2006) provides the ten career stages while Super (1957, as cited in Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007) provides the four stages of a career. These two theories complement one another, however, Schein's ten stages (1990; 2006) are descriptive.

During recruitment, selection and induction, employers identify traits in employees which are necessary to ensure a productive workforce because employee fit-to-job, fit-to-organisation and fit-to-community are important characteristics of employment (Chinomona, Dhurup & Chinomona, 2013). Employee fit-to-job predicts a satisfactory job performance in a role where an employee's personal needs, goals and desires are linked to those of the potential job. Furthermore, an employee is considered fit for a job when his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities match those needed for the job. An employee fit-to-job correlates with employee performance and employee fit-to-organisation relates to job performance (Chinomona et al., 2013). According to Carmeli, Shalom and Weisberg (2007), employee job performance relates to career mobility. Thus, an employee who fits well into an organisation is likely to be more productive and embedded because his or her personal values, career goals, and future plans relate to those of the larger organisation. In addition, Chinomona et al.

(2013) found a positive relationship between employee fit-to-community and job performance. Employee fit-to-community is characterised by relatedness in attributes such as society, religion, culture, politics and acceptance. According to Takawira, Coetzee and Schreuder (2014), higher job embeddedness and work commitment decrease turnover in an organisation. Thus, job embeddedness (organisational fit and job fit) lower staff turnover (Takawira et al., 2014).

The preceding sections advocate that career theories focus on the individual employee, the work environment and the organisation. The Trait-and-Factor Theory is a career theory because it fulfils the principles of tripartite interaction between the individual, work settings and the organisation. The career stages provided by Schein (1990; 2006) and Super (1957, as cited in Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007) relate to employee fit-to-job, fit-to-organisation and fit-to-community because they provide greater opportunities to advance in a career and decrease turnover.

The integration of people with disabilities into socio-economic communities received varied responses. Society's religious and cultural superstitions of disability that believe that medication can restore capability hamper efforts to integrate people with disabilities. In a work context, disability is conceived as a decrease in employee capacities caused by physical or psychological conditions that may affect individual needs (Lofquist & Dawis, 1969). The degree of disability differs and may require an employee to be provided with adjustments in order for him/her to perform well. According to Lofquist and Dawis (1969), the Theory of Work Adjustment assesses individual capabilities, organisational fit and job fit and is done by a vocational rehabilitation expert.

3.2.1 Lofquist and Dawis's Theory of Work Adjustment

Dawis, England and Lofquist (1964, as cited in Edwards, 2008) developed the concept of work adjustment theory which assesses a person based on abilities and needs. According to this theory, abilities are measured by psychological and capability tests. The term "environment" refers to an employee's job fit and satisfactory performance. According to Edwards (2008), the person and the environment are connected to the abilities and needs. The focus is on the relationship between the person and the environmental abilities while the

environment focuses on the relationship between the person and the environmental needs. Edwards (2008) argues that the correlation between individual capabilities and needs and the environmental requirements and needs results in satisfaction. Work adjustment theory refers to the degree of satisfaction and is also a determining factor of the length of tenure (Edwards, 2008).

Person-environment fit matches candidates with the jobs. An organisational fit and job fit lower the rate of staff turnover (Takawira et al., 2014). Edwards (2008) asserts that recruitment and selection focus on the knowledge, skills and abilities of prospective candidates rather than person-environment fit. Prospective employees with disabilities may not be considered for job opportunities because of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for jobs rather than the job fit (Van Niekerk & Van der Merwe, 2013; Watermeyer et al., 2006). According to Schein (1990; 2006), employees realise their organisational and job fit when they have acquired relevant knowledge in their careers.

The Theory of Work Adjustment predicts employee satisfaction and the likelihood of remaining in the job therefore organisations should focus on employee satisfaction when they recruit and select candidates for employment. Uppal (2005) asserts that employees with disabilities have lower job satisfaction. The organisations should apply person-environment fit in order to mitigate chances of recruiting and selecting unsuitable candidates.

3.3 ORGANISATIONAL CAREER ADVANCEMENT HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

This section outlines organisational practices facilitated by Human Resources that influence employee career advancement opportunities.

3.3.1 Human Resource Standard Elements

Nyandiko and Ongeru (2015, p. 2) assert that

organisations are characterized by strategic Human Resource Practices which are meant to enhance the performance of these organisations in terms of matching the organisational capabilities and resources to the opportunities available in external environment, and ensuring that the different aspects of

strategic human resource practices cohere and are mutually supportive towards organisational performance.

Human Resource practices ensure that employees are satisfied at work and achieve high organisational performance (Azmi, 2015). According to Azmi (2015), high performance is vital to withstand the organisations' competitive advantage in an unstable market.

The South African Board for People Practices (SABPP, 2013) launched 13 Human Resource Standards to professionalise the discipline of Human Resource Management and mitigate inconsistencies and poor Human Resource practices (Meyer, 2014). The 13 Human Resource standards include: Strategic Human Resource management, talent management, Human Resource risk management, workforce planning, learning and development, performance management, reward and recognition, employee wellness, employment relations management (ERM), organisational development, Human Resource service delivery, Human Resource technology and Human Resource measurement.

3.3.1.1 Strategic Human Resource management

Strategic Human Resource management is a systematic method to create and apply Human Resource management strategies, policies and plans that empower an organisation to meet its objectives (SABPP, 2013). Human Resource strategies contribute toward the organisational priorities and should be aligned to the overall organisational strategy. The assessment of current Human Resource capabilities against the strategy objectives enable an organisation to identify skills gaps, prepare and implement strategies to advance the current workforce or hire new employees through a development plan aligned to Human Resource strategy (SABPP, 2013).

Strategic Human Resource management enables organisations to achieve strategic objectives by ensuring that the organisations recruit suitable candidates and have an appropriate talent pool. It also ensures that employees are happy and committed, and are up-skilled (Human Capital Management, 2006/7).

3.3.1.2 Talent management

According to the SABPP (2013, p. 6),

talent management is the proactive design and implementation of an integrated talent-driven organisational strategy directed to attracting, deploying, developing, retaining and optimising the appropriate talent requirements as identified in the workforce plan to ensure a sustainable organisation.

The employees responsible for the talent management should be provided with training, coaching and mentoring in order to advance their skills. SABPP (2013) argue that management should agree on the sourcing strategies for the workforce such as build (develop own employees), buy (recruit from external), outsource, create and bridge. The talent pool into which the candidates will be attracted must increase opportunities for career advancement and skills transformation. Talent management should be aligned to Employment Equity where the analysis of skills requirements for the current and future forecasted workforce must be in line with organisational strategy. Human Resource practices such as recruitment, performance management and reward processes should be linked to talent management strategy. Interventions that enable effective talent management comprise: sourcing, recruitment and selection, on-boarding, career advancement for specific targeted groups, performance development, reward and recognition, retirement planning, terminations and past employment.

Talent management refers to compensation, benefits, wellness programmes, redressing of performance matters and provision of continuous training to retain talented employees (Strydom, Schultz, & Bezuidenhout, 2014). According to Grobler and Diedericks (2009) and Strydom et al. (2014), talent management differentiates organisations from their competitors, improves productivity, reduces labour costs, and increases competitive advantage.

Grobler and Diedericks (2009) advocate that talent management is effective when:

- there is management buy-in on strategies for talent management;
- resources are provided to support talent management initiatives;
- talent management plans and programmes are aligned to the organisation's vision and strategy to ensure a successful outcome (Vinod, Sudhakar, Mihir, Varghese, Bobby, & Thomas, 2014);

- talent management system is used to manage people and their roles in the organisation;
- Human Resource function cooperates with line managers; and
- organisations have processes to create, manage and organise talent.

According to Grobler and Diedericks (2009, P. 5),

the key elements of a complete talent-management system will include an employer brand, recruitment and selection process, a training and development process, a performance management system that is tied effectively to a reward system and an information system that includes data on satisfaction, motivation, talent development, talent utilisation and performance.

According to Vinod et al. (2014, p. 474), “management and assessment of talent management can be done in four simple steps: talent strategy and planning, deploying and developing talent, retaining talent and acquiring talent.”

3.3.1.3 *Human Resource risk management*

This is a systematic method to identify and report workforce risks that may influence the achievement of organisational objectives (SABPP, 2013). Meyer, Roodt and Robbins (2011, P. 6) explain that

managing risk is a dynamic process and good governance practice requires an organisation to identify new risks, to eliminate some and to update control measures in response to changing internal and external events.

Meyer et al. (2011) argue that risk management measures eliminate uncertainty that may hinder Human Resource in the achievement of its objectives. The Human Resource function should be represented in organisation risk management practices and committees and may also advise on risks related to Human Resource practices such as talent management. Human Resource risk factors are identified in liaison with different disciplines and may include risks such as skills availability for current and future employees, performance management, employee relations and legal compliance.

According to SABPP (2013: p. 15), Human Resource risks are mitigated by Human Resource practices such as:

- Talent management and targeted skills development;
- Developing clear organisational value statements, code of ethics and disciplinary code;
- Wellness management;
- Employment relations.

3.3.1.4 *Workforce planning*

SABPP (2013) defines workforce planning as a method to identify and assess organisational workforce needs to safeguard the capable workforce in order to fulfil strategic and organisational objectives. Kigongo-Bukenya, Ikoja-Odongo and Kiyangi (2010) refer to workforce planning as a process of getting the right candidates with the right competences in the right role at the right time:

It is the process that relies on the analysis of present workforce competences; identification of competences needed in the future; comparison of workforce to future needs to identify competency gaps and surpluses; the preparation of plans for building a workforce needed in the future (2010, p. 108).

The workforce plan provides guidance on the succession plan to ensure the availability of the right pool of talent. Workforce planning relates to talent management, however, it focuses on the succession plans for the whole organisation (SABPP, 2013). The workforce plan should be aligned to Employment Equity Plan as per EEA (SA. Department of Labour 2015) and transformation strategy to reflect occupational levels, gender, race, salary scale, functional group and headcount. Workforce scheduling and recruitment are integral parts of the workforce planning. Recruitment is considered in a workforce plan where the appropriate sourcing method (either internal or external model) is chosen. The organisation should furnish a detailed recruitment process with job profile, job specification and job description. The assessment, selection process and promotion process are reviewed and agreed on by interested parties to identify candidates with

job-fit while the EE Committee can provide support. A workforce plan outlines strategies for employee career advancement opportunities, incorporates an Individual Development Plan and policies to support career development for employees related to study leave, study assistance, secondments and transfer arrangements.

3.3.1.5 Learning and development

According to SABPP (2013), learning and development practices provide work-based learning opportunities to advance the workforce competences and behaviour based on the workforce and organisational requirements (SABPP, 2013). Learning and development is intended to enhance the workforce competences by providing occupational-based learning opportunities. Learning and development plans develop the capabilities necessary to achieve the organisational objectives while measuring the success of the initiatives. The development plan is aligned to the Employment Equity to redress skills shortages. A learning environment optimises the individual, team and organisation learning in reference to talent management strategy and the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) (SABPP, 2013). Little (2014) asserts that some organisations provide learning and development activities that are “scrape learning” activities because the lessons are not applied in the workplace.

3.3.1.6 Performance management

This refers to a process of monitoring, aligning and enhancing workforce performance toward the realisation of organisational objectives (SABPP, 2013). Performance management entails the breaking down and alignment of organisational performance targets into individual and team performance targets. Performance management acknowledges good performance through fair, ethical and transparent Human Resource practices such as reward, recognition and development opportunities in order to attract, retain and value employees who perform well. Performance is measured against agreed individual and functional performance targets and support is provided, when necessary, to improve marginal performance.

According to Wright (2011), performance management comprises financial performance, organisation growth and employees’ performance in order to attain

organisational strategic objectives. The performance management system involves elements such as a balanced scorecard, job description, appraisal and measurement matrix (Wright, 2011). Performance management enables employees to perform according to expected or set standards in order to meet set objectives for a specific role (Mosoge & Pilane, 2014).

3.3.1.7 *Reward and recognition*

SABPP (2013) states that a reward system enables an organisation to value employee achievements and to provide fair compensation as an acknowledgment of the workforce contribution towards fulfilment of the set organisational objectives. The reward strategy must be linked to organisational objectives and take into account the individual and organisational needs. The reward system should be fair, equitable, sustainable and must follow sectoral and government principles and the codes of good practice under which the organisation falls.

According to Salie and Schlechter (2012, p. 2), reward and recognition programmes increase motivation and reduce staff turnover. Organisations use monetary rewards in order to attract the best talent because it appeals to skilled candidates (Schlechter, Hung, & Bussin, 2014; Snelgar, Renard, & Venter, 2013). Bothma (2013) argues that reward and recognition should be consistent and transparent as it influences employee morale, motivation, productivity and quality of life. Base pay or salary is a prevalent and most preferred reward factor for employees.

3.3.1.8 *Employee wellness*

SABPP (2013) argues that employee wellness is a strategy that creates an environment which is conducive for employees and also focuses on health and safety by complying with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and Practices. Employee wellness includes employer endeavours to provide effective programmes pertaining to employee physical, mental, spiritual, financial and social well-being in order to ensure that employees deliver according to organisational standards. This strategy eliminates adverse influences that may result from employee health and safety issues (SABPP, 2013). Employee wellness and Human Resource risk management serve a common purpose to reduce and prevent risks.

Lategan, Lourens and Lombard (2011) argue that organisations that implement employee wellness programmes, as part of the employee assistance programmes, benefit because employees' good health positively influences their productivity. A pleasant and amenable environment lessens stress, increases work commitment, promotes employee wellness and occupational health (Grobler, Joubert, & Van Niekerk, 2014; McGuire & McLaren, 2009).

3.3.1.9 Employment relations management (ERM)

ERM monitors the individual and collective employee relations in compliance with organisational codes of good practice (SABPP, 2013). Employment relations facilitate collective bargaining between the employers, managers, workers, trade unions and the state (Abel, 2014). ERM establishes a rapport with and synergy amongst the employees within the organisation. Relationships allow the organisation to create a harmonious and prolific workplace which creates a competitive advantage in the market. In order to do this, the organisation must provide structures such as collective bargaining for conflict resolution. ERM conforms to employment regulations such as codes of good practice (ILO and Department of Labour) and international standards.

3.3.1.10 Organisational development

According to SABPP (2013), organisational development enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation through the use of analytic data to establish and execute measures which enable the organisation to realise its objectives. Organisational development interventions are initiated at leadership level, but they need buy-in and synergy from all employees in order to be successful (Dike, 2014). Employees from different occupational levels and cross-functions must align their objectives against organisational goals in order to enhance the capabilities of individuals, teams and functions. Buy-in from stakeholders is critical to build organisational development capabilities that are linked to organisational vision. Organisational development complies with relevant practices.

3.3.1.11 Human Resource service delivery

This is a supporting approach in the provision of Human Resource-based services

within the organisation aimed to meet the workforce and organisational needs (SABPP, 2013). Human Resource service delivery ensures accuracy and efficiency in the provision of Human Resource services by utilising resources to deliver accordingly while complying with Human Resource practices (SABPP, 2013). Donnelly (2005) argues that Human Resource services integrate Human Resource interventions in order to reduce costs and improve the speed and accuracy of the Human Resource discipline. Human Resource service delivery priorities comprise: workforce stability, talent retention, sustainable transformation, business integration and performance management (Steyn, 2013). This element provides guidelines on the application of legislations and Human Resource practices within the organisation in which human capital is a significant component of the Human Resource service delivery system. Service delivery comprises measures developed to ensure appropriate Human Resource record-keeping, administration and also to evaluate employee satisfaction with the service rendered by Human Resource.

3.3.1.12 *Human Resource technology*

This refers to the appropriate use of technology to make data records accessible and secure for informed decision-making that is linked to organisational strategy (SABPP, 2013). Technology affords the Human Resource function a way to operate and access the required data easily while conforming to legislations and practices to ensure data privacy and security. The Human Resource data enables key decision-makers to meet their deliverables and implement changes through the use of effective technology with security measures to protect the organisation's information.

Today's HR technology goes way beyond being just a glorified data repository, the technology available can be used as a sophisticated tool for employers to analyse and manage the information needed to recruit top talent, retain this talent through appropriate training and advancement opportunities, and then to also manage the performance of this newly acquired talent within the organisation (Bothma, 2012, p. 36).

Foster (2010) and Nolan (2010) concede that Human Resource technology adds value into the organisation by:

- reducing direct or indirect operational costs related to Human Resource service

delivery that may be provided by third parties;

- enabling an organisation to increase employee productivity and performance and also to enhance managerial accountability; and
- providing strategic capabilities to the organisation through technology thereby creating a competitive advantage.

3.3.1.13 *Human Resource measurement*

SABPP (2013) defines Human Resource measurement as a process which collects, examines, interprets, monitors and reports quantitative and qualitative data to assess the influence of Human Resource practices on the attainment of organisational objectives. Human Resource measurement identifies appropriate methods to examine Human Resource practices within the organisation through the use of a measuring framework. Key performance indicators (KPI) are established and reported to Human Resource for the Human Resource service delivery. Human Capital Management (2004/2005) argues that Human Resource measurement is a mechanism through which Human Resource demonstrates that it adds value to the achievement of organisational objectives and therefore to the improvement of the economy. Human Resource contributions in the organisations may be overlooked and viewed suspiciously because Human Resource interventions cannot be quantified or measured in financial terms as do other functions (Human Capital Management, 2004/2005; McLean, 2005).

The abovementioned Human Resource Standard Elements relate to each other and assist in achieving organisational objectives. Strategic Human Resource management, talent management, workforce planning and learning and development are Human Resource management career advancement practices because they advance the workforce's capabilities and careers. More specifically, the Human Resource management practices of recruitment, selection, training and promotion are considered as career advancement practices.

All 13 Human Resource Standard Elements are specifically related to this study because they provide the workforce with opportunities to advance in their careers.

3.3.2 Human Resource management practices

Human Resource practices advance organisational capabilities in order to cope with current or future challenges. The discipline of Human Resource assists the organisation to keep up with innovative Human Resource practices to remain competitive in the industry (Goyal & Shrivastava, 2012). Human Resource practices are the daily functional work of Human Resource professionals (Meyer, 2014). Human Resource practices relate to Human Resource planning, recruitment and selection, induction, training and development, performance appraisal, career planning, fringe benefits, reward and recognition, welfare activities, environmental health and safety policy, promotion and transfers and exit policy (Abbott & Meyer, 2014; Armstrong, 2009; Goyal & Shrivastava, 2012). According to Scheepers and Shuping (2011), recruitment, selection and training are the Human Resource management practices that influence organisational performance and relate to organisational commitment or business performance that benefits the organisation (Abdullah & Ahsan, 2009; Obeidat, Masa'deh, & Abdallah, 2014). Human Resource management practices enable employees to adapt to work, improve commitment and reduce staff turnover. Yaacob and Then (2012) assert that recruitment, selection and training are Human Resources Management administrative and advancement activities.

Job description is a critical component in the hiring process which outlines the competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and personal qualities required to fill a vacant position (Gan & Kleiner, 2005; Min & Kleiner, 2001). According to Gan and Kleiner (2005), the job description clarifies a reporting structure, organisational organogram, level of authority, span of control and responsibilities. The job description outlines what the employee will actually do in relation to the duties and tasks that are required for the job (Garcia & Kleiner, 2001). A precise job description is critical for the success of selection procedures and other processes (Min & Kleiner, 2001). A job description is different from a job specification which is the description of the attributes needed from the candidate such as qualifications and competences in order to perform the work (Gan & Kleiner, 2005). According to Min and Kleiner (2001), job specification clarifies qualifications, experience, personal attributes needed from the job applicant and conditions of employment.

The recruitment and selection processes employed in the organisations focus on attraction and assessment by examining psychological variations between an applicant and his/her potential job performance and job fit (Searle, 2003).

The supply and demand of suitable labour force has changed. The recruitment policies and selection procedures must be customised to resemble the workforce changes (Cooper, Robertson, & Tinline, 2003). According to Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2010), the recruitment and selection can either be done internally or externally. External sources refer to recruitment sites, newspaper adverts and tertiary institution career fairs while internal sources are promotion from within, employee referral and promotion or transfer.

Job analysis is a cornerstone of the recruitment and selection process because it provides depth analysis into the needs of a vacant position in order to recruit and select a suitable candidate (Degenaar, 2005). Recruitment and selection are fundamental processes in an organisation because an unsuitable recruit can create adverse cost implications while effective recruitment may decrease staff turnover and increase productivity (Degenaar, 2005; Garcia & Kleiner, 2001). Popescu (2012) argues that organisations prosper if they recruit and train their labour force according to the correct procedures.

Human Resource practices are the mechanism to integrate people into the organisation (Searle, 2003). Goyal and Shrivastava (2012) refer to Human Resource practices as practices that advance competencies, commitment and build culture. Thus, Human Resource practices such recruitment, selection, training and promotion are relevant for career advancement. Gida and Ortlepp (2007) assert that Human Resource practices have not been reviewed to identify whether they discriminate against candidates with disabilities. The sections below outline each practice.

3.3.3 Recruitment

According to Rahmania, Akhter, Chowdhury, Islam and Haque (2013), organisations need competent and contented human resources in order to grow, develop and deal with current challenges. Organisations should implement efficient Human Resource management policies and practices because employees' performances depend on

their job satisfaction (Rahmania et al., 2013). A study by Rahmania et al. (2013) assessed the impact of Human Resource practices on employee satisfaction with a focus on attributes such as Human Resource planning, working environment, training and development, compensation policy, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal and industrial relations. The study found that the workforce under study was satisfied with Human Resource practices such as recruitment, selection and training and development.

According to Uppal (2005), workers with disabilities have low levels of satisfaction with their jobs compared to workers without disabilities and that males with disabilities are more dissatisfied with their jobs when compared to female employees with disabilities. Dissatisfaction is caused by discrimination at work, poor interpersonal skills and fear of job losses or layoffs. Hashim and Wok (2014), on the other hand, argue that employees with disabilities are satisfied with their jobs and that employers provide them with conducive work environments. According to Cascio (2012), job security, benefits, compensation or pay, opportunities to use acquired competences and job security are the factors which contribute to employee job satisfaction but these factors may differ according to demographic variables. Cascio (2012) also asserts that job or organisational commitment equates to emotional engagement through which individuals connect with an organisation.

Armstrong (2009) defines recruitment as a process of searching and engaging candidates for an organisation. Mathis and Jackson (2006, p. 573) define recruiting as “a process of generating a pool of qualified applicants for organisational jobs”. Recruitment is the process through which job applicants can be attracted to fill vacant positions (Armstrong, 2009; Bernardin, 2003; Noe et al., 2010). According to Degenaar (2005), recruitment is a process through which organisations find, attract, inform, orientate and motivate prospective candidates by applying relevant recruitment methods so that organisations can recruit and select from the candidates. The recruitment process comprises applications from suitable applicants and therefore constitutes a career advancement opportunity (Yaacob & Then, 2012).

Recruitment mainly focuses on the attraction of qualified applicants (Florea, 2010; Lim, Mathis, & Jackson, 2010; Mathis & Jackson, 2006). The intention of recruitment

thus is to get qualified candidates with specific requirements from which the organisation can select suitable candidates. A “qualified individual with a disability” is an individual with a disability who meets stipulated bona fide job requirements of a vacant position such as qualifications, skills and knowledge and is also capable of performing essential tasks either with or without provision of reasonable accommodation (Keaty et al., 2005; Saucedo-Garcia & Kleiner, 1995). Cooper et al. (2003) assert that recruiting suitable candidates during the initial recruitment phase adds value to the employer and also reduces the recruitment costs.

According to Searle (2003), recruitment entails filling a vacant position with a candidate from outside the organisation. Mustapha, Ilesanmi, & Aremu (2013) argue that recruitment is not only concerned with filling a vacant position but encompasses individual development which could be hampered by ineffective recruitment and selection processes. Unfair discrimination can occur during recruitment when a suitable candidate is chosen over another suitable individual from the designated groups (Roberts, 2005). Organisations are expected to adapt their recruitment activities to successfully attract, develop and retain the best talented people, preferably from previously disadvantaged groups. Recruitment is not concerned about the quantity of candidates but about the quality of candidates from which the organisation will choose (Florea, 2010). Recruitment is concerned with applying the selection process to a pool of candidates in order to increase the probability of recruiting a candidate with job fit and the required skills (Popescu, 2012). Florea (2010) argues that recruiters adopt a multi-channel approach to attract quality applicants because there is no “one size fits all” approach to attract a pool of qualified applicants.

Yaacob and Then (2012) stress that potential applicants can be attracted either via internal or external methods. External methods entail job posting, advertising, internet, walk-in applicants, internships, personal recommendations, bidding, company branding, head-hunting and recruitment agencies. Internal recruitment methods include employee referral and promotion (Min & Kleiner, 2001; Yaacob & Then, 2012). There are no set procedures to hire job applicants and recruiters set their own standards based on the organisation’s policy (Yaacob & Then, 2012). The recruitment policies and practices determine the quality of the workforce (Mustapha

et al., 2013). Mustapha et al. (2013) assert that the country's economic state determines the pace of employment which influences the recruitment and selection processes. The search for a new candidate is traditionally initiated by a senior employee or manager intending to add to the current workforce or fill a vacant position. The manager logs a formal request with a motivation as well as a job description and job specification (Mustapha et al., 2013).

Mustapha et al. (2013) recommend internal recruitment methods over external recruitment methods because internal recruitment gives preference to current employees to advance in their careers. Internal recruitment increases employee transfers or promotions from within. Recruitment guidelines and policies ensure compliance with recruitment processes that are fair, equitable, transparent and promote diversity commitments which should be a norm rather an exception to transform organisational workforce demographics (Mertz, 2011). Transformation creates a balanced playing field for participants from designated or previously advantaged groups. The diversity paradigm has shifted the focus from merely recruiting candidates from previously disadvantaged groups in order to have a representative workforce on paper to integrating competent candidates by ensuring a workplace climate that acknowledges and values individual contributions. Any diversity program that excludes disability is not complete (Hasse, 2011). Employers who recruit candidates with disabilities derive great benefits which equal or surpass those associated with the workforce without disabilities. Legislations such as the DDA and ADA promote access to work for people with disabilities, however, they do not protect their right to choose the kind of work they like (Hasse, 2011).

Daya (2014) advocates that the recruitment of persons from the designated groups is linked to diversity strategies to increase their representation in all occupational categories and levels. According to Ortlieb and Sieben (2014), recruitment practices serve to include people from the minority groups, such as people with disabilities. According to Ofuani (2011), employers are hesitant to employ people with disabilities irrespective of whether they meet all stipulated requirements to occupy vacant positions. Employers employ people with disabilities to get supplementary funding from the government (Parlalis, 2013). According to Christianson (2012), people with disabilities may have either or both the qualifications and the capacity to be

employed, but it depends on the employers' willingness to provide reasonable accommodation for them. Employers may receive applications from applicants with disabilities but they are at a disadvantage because employers focus on their disabilities rather than their qualifications (Sing, 2012). During the recruitment stage, disability discrimination is viewed as a refusal for employment due to candidate's disability (Li & Goldschmidt, 2009). Employees responsible for the recruitment process fail to realise the potential of applicants with disabilities because they base selection decisions on the individuals' disabilities (Moreton, 1992). Harpur (2014) advocates that people with disabilities experience disability discriminations and less favourable treatment during recruitment phases with prospective employers. According to Sing and Govender (2006), recruitment and selection practices utilised by the Public Service do not appeal to people with disabilities because they apply generic recruitment approaches. Employers willing to recruit candidates with disabilities tend not to know that certain jobs may be suitably occupied by people with disabilities (Dióssi, 2011). A right to work for people with disabilities implies that the work suits their individual capabilities (Stankova & Trajkovski, 2010).

People with disabilities are not generally preferred by organisations during recruitment due to their disabilities (Buciuniene & Kazlauskaite, 2010; Gowan, 2010; Harpur, 2014; Watermeyer et al., 2006). Recruitment opportunities favour white people and males with disabilities (CEE, 2012; Graham et al., 2010). Organisations employ recruitment practices merely to meet numeric targets without aligning recruitment to disability strategies through which candidates with disabilities are provided with meaningful work (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007).

3.3.4 Selection

Selection (as a Human Resource practice) follows recruitment wherein the job description and job specification are used as part of the selection criteria to match a candidate with a job (Abbott & Meyer, 2014). On the receipt of applications from interested applicants, selection commences. Selection is intended to choose the most suitable applicant for a job over others (Armstrong, 2009; Edenborough, 2007). The selection process entails pre-selection, interviewing, testing, assessments and reference checks (Degenaar, 2005).

Selection is the process in which the employer chooses, based on set recruitment criteria, the best candidate from the number of applicants who meet the job requirements (Degenaar, 2005; Noe et al., 2010; Searle, 2003). Bernardin (2003) defines selection as a process of information collation and evaluation in order to make an accurate decision about a prospective candidate. Roberts (2005) argues that selection is a threshold process that discerns a suitable applicant from the unsuitable applicants. According to Mathis and Jackson (2006), selection is a process of choosing candidates with qualifications required to fill vacant positions within an organisation.

Through selection, applications received from candidates are evaluated using a filtering process to match an applicant with the job based on set requirements and competences (Yaacob & Then, 2012). According to Cooper et al. (2003), selection is aimed to place a suitably qualified candidate in a job that matches his or her capabilities. People responsible for selection decisions tend not to analyse the inherent requirements of the job but merely use educational qualifications as a measure of capabilities which inevitably does not always forecast the candidate's fit-to-job criteria (Cooper et al., 2003).

Karim, Huda and Khan (2012) state that selection of the right candidates with enthusiasm and intellect benefits the organisation while the employment of unsuitable candidates adversely influences the organisation's morale because poor performers impact a team's collective self-esteem (Yaacob & Then, 2012). According to Sutherland and Wöcke (2011), employers realise errors in the selection process within approximately one to six months of a new candidate's employment. The selection errors displayed by unsuitable appointees may be: unsatisfactory performances, unexpected attitudes, avoidance of responsibilities, missing deadlines and incompetence (Sutherland & Wöcke, 2011).

According to Sutherland and Wöcke (2011), employers implement remedial measures in order to deal with selection errors. Remedial measures comprise counselling, constructive feedback, coaching or mentoring, warning and performance improvement programmes. The adverse effect of unsuitable appointments is felt by employees working with a new entrant (Sutherland & Wöcke, 2011).

The selection process is enhanced by effective selection methods and trained Human Resource personnel (Ekuma, 2012). Information about the person-job-fit, the person-organisation-fit and the criteria to assess the prospective appointees enable recruiters to minimise selection errors (Sutherland & Wöcke, 2011). Shandu (2006) argues that organisations strive to minimise the selection of unsuitable applicants. Selection is a two way process whereby applicants evaluate themselves to determine their suitability for a vacant position and employers select a candidate they believe is most suitable for a job (Shandu, 2006).

A selection decision is taken by an organisation in order to expand its current workforce (Noe et al., 2010). During this process, selectors ensure fairness in order to select a suitable applicant. Cooper et al. (2003) advocate that the selection process is about forecasting an employee's future job performance and therefore it is crucial that the relevant competencies are examined during the selection for a sound decision.

Methods applied to select a suitable applicant are subjective and intuitive and are the interviewers' own judgment and point of view (Rosa, 2008). Min and Kleiner (2001) illustrate a 7-step selection process to minimise the selection of a candidate who does not fit in an organisation or job:

- **Step 1:** State job specifications precisely to avoid lengthy and time consuming interviews with candidates who do not meet stipulated requirements.
- **Step 2:** Understand the inherent requirements from hiring managers' perspectives.
- **Step 3:** Decide which recruitment source is appropriate to fill a vacant position.
- **Step 4:** Utilise assessment methods to identify best fit candidates for the position through competences and personal qualities' assessments.
- **Step 5:** Conduct reference checks, credit checks, qualification verifications and employment history.
- **Step 6:** Conduct an interactive selection interview to probe candidate's

education, experience and interpersonal skills.

- **Step 7:** Shortlist applicants and compile their files to enable a hiring manager to make an informed decision.

The Code of Good Practice: Key Aspects on the employment of people with disabilities (SA. Department of Labour, 2002) asserts that discriminating selection practices deprive candidates with disabilities. The selection criteria and methods influence their career advancement opportunities (Munjuri, 2011). According to Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013), and Watermeyer et al. (2006), prospective employees with disabilities are not selected because employers consider their limitations rather than the job fit.

3.3.5 Training

Organisations are required to provide employees with training and advancement opportunities to expand their competences (knowledge, skills and behaviour) and to enable satisfactory performance in their roles (Degenaar, 2005; Noe et al., 2010). Training equips employees with competences applicable to their jobs while development entails broadening knowledge, skills and behaviour that advance employees' capabilities to deal with current and future work challenges and to advance in their careers (Noe et al., 2010).

Training improves current job performance and minimises the discrepancy between what an employee knows and what an employee should know or do (Chan, 2010). Mathis and Jackson (2006) assert that training is a process through which people acquire capabilities which enable them to perform their jobs. Cartwright (2003) stresses that training focuses on mastering a particular task or job. Training comprises formal processes to instil knowledge and assist the workforce to acquire skills that enable it to perform their roles better (Armstrong, 2009). "Training is a performance development process to foster learning new techniques and methods to perform a job with fullest efficiency and effectiveness" (Karim et al., 2012, p. 141). Karim et al. (2012) argue that effective training programs enable individual employees to realise their career goals which subsequently attain organisational objectives. Training evaluation measures the impact of the implemented training and

improves future training programmes (Karim et al., 2012). Evaluation determines the impact of training against expected deliverables and highlights areas of improvement. According to Karim et al. (2012), training boosts the workforce's confidence towards greater performance and improves the quality of its work. Stoneman and Lysaght (2010) assert that the provision of suitable training opportunities for people with disabilities enhances their employment prospects and increases their morale.

Training enables the workforce to perform better and expand its knowledge while preparing its members for senior positions (Karthikeyan, 2010). Ortlieb and Sieben (2014) stress that training affords employees with opportunities to acquire competencies which are utilised as allocative resources while employees expand their career prospects. Karthikeyan (2010) asserts that an organisation has to invest in training in order to have a competent workforce. Training improves employees' resourcefulness, affords them an opportunity to fully understand their jobs and improves productivity. Employees who are provided with training are more motivated, committed and satisfied, and this leads to skilled, competent, dedicated and experienced employees (Karthikeyan, 2010). According to Owoyemi, Oyelere and Elegbede (2011), training influences employees' commitment to work while creating a competitive advantage for the company.

Training yields benefits to both employer and employee even though it is costly in terms of money or time (Owoyemi et al., 2011). Training is also a risk to a business because trained and skilled employees may leave a company to join another once they have been developed (Okpara & Wynn, 2008; Owoyemi et al., 2011). According to Karim et al. (2012), training employees is a profitable and sustainable investment in the workforce because it increases employee motivation to excel. People with disabilities are often offered inappropriate training opportunities which minimise their career advancement opportunities (Engelbrecht, 2010). According to Keen and Oulton (2009) and DDA (1995), the refusal or ignorance of providing a person with a disability training opportunities is deemed unlawful. Stankova and Trajkovski (2010) assert that training entails social integration of the workforce with disabilities. Karim et al. (2012) state that training aims to:

- help employees know their roles, which results in job satisfaction;
- up-skill the workforce through job experience or on-the-job training;
- enable the workforce to perform better and meet individual career advancement needs; and
- boost the confidence of the workforce.

Hashim and Wok (2014) believe that employees with disabilities are afforded training opportunities in order to advance their competences but Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) argue that training opportunities provided to people with disabilities are shoddy, repetitive and minimise career advancement opportunities. The segregation of people with disabilities from participating in the mainstream society deprives them of opportunities to be equipped through training offered to the mainstream society (Botha, 2011). Effective implementation of training can result in better chances of promotion for disabled people.

3.3.6 Promotion

Tuwei, Matelong, Boit and Tallam (2013) and Go and Kleiner (2001) define promotion as an organisational practice to recognise and compensate individuals who perform above standard. Promotion is frequently characterised by changes in job title, an increase in pay, power, responsibility and autonomy. Noe et al. (2010) explain that promotion means an employee's assignment to a position with greater challenges, responsibilities and authority than a preceding position. Grobler et al. (2011) define promotion as a vertical, internal reappointment of an employee to a job higher in the hierarchy. Promotion is an employee's upward move to a higher position; it is recognition for an employee's previous performance which comes with better pay, benefits, authority and status which advances employee capabilities (Goyal & Shrivastava, 2012; Grobler et al., 2011; Lepak & Gowan, 2010).

According to Tuwei et al. (2013), promotion opportunities afforded to employees do not always correlate to employee job satisfaction. Nkereuwem (1996) argues that performance evaluation is a critical determinant factor in decisions to promote an employee. Ruderman, Ohlott and Kram (1995) found that promotion decisions are

taken on the grounds of an individual's competences and capacity to grow. Job promotion, which is referred to as job rewards, correlates to employee career commitment. Promotion encourages workforce attitudes and behaviour towards career commitment (Shah, 2011). Organisations acknowledge employee performance in numerous ways including promotion. Fairness in promotion practices is a great motivational factor and an incentive to the workforce (Takahashi, 2006). Promotion encourages good performance by rewarding employees with intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Carmeli et al., 2007). Mustapha et al. (2013) state that the advantages for promoting from within are:

- promoted candidates are familiar with the organisation and that predicts success in their new roles;
- it encourages loyalty and commitment; and
- it is not costly.

Mustapha et al. (2013) also state that the disadvantages associated with promotion are that there is a limited pool of talent to select from and also that it restricts access into an organisation.

Educational background increases opportunities for promotion to advance through hierarchical organisational structures (Belzil & Bognanno, 2010). Breugh (2010) found that employee past performance predicts suitability for promotion and correlates with employee promotability ratings. Employee tenure is also a predictor of suitability for promotion (Belzil & Bognanno, 2010). Gorjup, Valverde and Ryan (2008) argue that promotion is a Human Resources management practice afforded to the permanent workforce. Large employers offer more growth opportunities as they have more positions available (Gorjup et al., 2008).

Go and Kleiner (2001) state that decisions to promote are based on seniority or capabilities or both. Promotion or career advancement opportunities provided through in-house training equip employees with relevant skills. They stimulate an employee's performance by expanding his or her knowledge and skills. They also increase loyalty to the organisation. Promotion based on tenure is more valued than

a wage increase as it reduces employee dissatisfaction (Takahashi, 2006).

Promotion probabilities decrease with age while tenure has a minimal influence on promotions (Belzil & Bognanno, 2010). According to Breugh (2010), the age or gender of an employee is not a predictor of promotability ratings. McCampbell, Jongpipitporn, Umar and Ungaree (1999) assert that global businesses need to adapt merit-based promotion systems over senior-based promotion structures in order to remain competitive. Merit-based promotion enables the assessment of an individual's overall performance (Okpara & Wynn, 2008).

According to Wood and Lindorff (2001), employees must have relevant experience, qualities and qualifications in order to be considered for promotion. Okpara, (2006) concedes that employers should apply fair promotion decisions based on merit and performance because fair promotion inspires enthusiasm and commitment. Senior-based promotion is defined as a promotion system whereby employee tenure in the organisation is the only determinant to be considered for promotion (McCampbell et al., 1999). McCampbell et al. (1999, p. 320) argue that seniority-based promotion adversely influences company performance while a merit-based promotion system creates a company's competitive advantage and also has advantages such as:

- The ability to attract talented new recruits;
- The ability to promote talented workers into managerial positions;
- The ability to position highly specialised workers in their areas of expertise;
- Increased work productivity; and,
- Improved management control over performance measures.

The pace of transformation of the South African workplace reflects that white people are still favoured for promotion opportunities. The statistics show that white disabled candidates are promoted before black people with disabilities (CEE, 2012; Graham et al., 2010). Hashim and Wok (2014) assert that employees with disabilities are deprived in terms of career advancement as a result of work related training provided by their employers. "Having a supportive workplace culture, a supportive supervisor,

supportive co-workers, and a demanding job are related to ... having greater chances of promotion” (Perrucci & Banerjee, 2010, p. 161).

Human Resource practices reflect that employers are not knowledgeable about disability and this hinders the recruitment, selection, training and promotion of candidates with disabilities. Employers recruit employees with disabilities mainly for BBEE and EE targets rather than transforming their organisations to have equitable representation from the designed groups. Prospective candidates with disabilities are deprived in recruitment, selection, training and promotion practices because employers hire people based on the competences rather than the job fit.

3.4 CAREER ADVANCEMENT: CORE CONCLUSIONS AND SYNTHESIS

Chapter 3 conceptualised the context in relation to careers, career advancements, theoretical models and Human Resource practices. Career is an on-going practice with phases which depicts hierarchical movement in employment. Career advancement is a reciprocal process between the employer and employee which develops the competences needed to be competitive in the industry. Career advancement opportunities enable an employee’s performance to contribute to the employer’s competitive advantage in the industry. Career advancement has phases through which employees advance in their careers. The career advancement theory shows that there is a multifaceted relationship between the employee, employer and the workplace. Schein (1990; 2006) advocates that career advancement stages are linked to individual occupational levels from the time of entry into the organisation to retirement. The SABPP introduced Human Resource Standards to professionalise the Human Resource function in order to address inconsistent Human Resource practices (Meyer, 2014). The literature showed that Human Resource practices significantly impact career advancement opportunities.

HR practices enable people to advance in their careers, build employable competencies and improve performance (Goyal & Shrivastava, 2012; Nyandiko & Onger, 2015; Yaacob & Then, 2012). However, the literature depicts that people with disabilities are not accorded meaningful career advancement opportunities like their able-bodied counterparts. Wilson-Kovacs et al. (2008) assert that careers for

people with disabilities are precarious. Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) confirm that career opportunities offered to people with disabilities are shoddy and restrict people in the advancement of their careers. In addition, CEE (2012), and Foley and Loescher (2009) also found that career opportunities do not favour people with disabilities. It is thus evident from the literature that although HR practices enable people to advance in their careers, it is not equally applied to disabled and non-disabled individuals.

3.5 VARIABLES INFLUENCING CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Career advancement is a multifaceted process which is affected by psychological, sociological, educational, economic, geographic and other factors. Career advancement concerns affect individuals with disabilities because people without disabilities are selected above them and, as a result, they suffer from low self-esteem, poor self-concepts, external locus of control and low career maturity (Castellanos & Septeowski, 2004). According to Kameny, DeRosier, Taylor, McMillen, Knowles and Pifer (2014), people from the designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) face institutional, cultural, skills and personal career barriers.

Kameny et al. (2014) define career barriers as follows:

- Institutional barriers refer to the work environment barriers relating to institutional policies and practices such as lack of training and development, poor support, ineffective recruitment and mentoring.
- Cultural barriers refer to workplace barriers such as misconceptions and insensitivity about demographic variables based on race, gender and age. Women with disabilities do not participate in economic empowerment activities because they face cultural, social, psychological and physical barriers (Museva, 2012).
- Personal barriers relate to personal or intrinsic matters relating to family or affiliation issues.
- Skills barriers relate to the lack of skills, capabilities and mentorship support for

career guidance. Individuals with the relevant skills have more opportunities for career advancement in their organisations.

Promotion correlates with career advancement because decisions to promote are not merely confined to job performance as a determinant but consider an individual's contextual performance (altruism, compliance and overtime) (Carmeli et al., 2007). Carmeli et al. (2007) and Thurasamy et al. (2011) agree that tenure and education are variables that influence career mobility. Belzil and Bognanno (2010) argue that education, age and tenure are variables that influence decisions regarding promotion. Carmeli et al. (2007) found that demographic variables such as gender do not influence decisions for promotion. Career advancement is made up of career mobility and promotion prospects. Absenteeism, punctuality, overtime and job performance influence career mobility while performance and compliance influence promotion prospects (Carmeli et al., 2007). Job performance correlates with career advancement. Employers utilise skills tests, performance appraisals and personality traits to identify employees capable of advancing in their careers (Mishken & Juhasz, 2008).

Wood (2006) lists factors which hinder career success or promotion as: limited opportunities, rejection, politics, lack of career strategy, lack of networking or mentorship, not fitting into an organisation and bias based on demographic variables such as gender. According to Thurasamy et al. (2011), male employees are favoured during decisions regarding promotion. Nkereuwem (1996) asserts that an employee's career advancement prospects are influenced by his or her manager's preferences for a particular gender. A preconception that women are less efficient than males reduces their opportunities to advance in their careers (Nkereuwem, 1996). Breaugh (2010) believes that bias on the grounds of age and organisational tenure does not correlate with promotability ratings, however, it influences the decision-making process. Social-role theory shows discrepancies in career advancement aspirations based on gender where females perceive that they have fewer opportunities to advance in their careers while males aspire to advance and recruitment and selection practices favour males (Wood & Lindorff, 2001).

The influences of career advancement barriers vary according to individuals and the

work environment. Gender is a barrier to advancement and therefore women are especially affected by this. The institutional barriers, cultural barriers and skills barriers are stumbling blocks on the career path of people with disabilities. Organisations struggle to redress career advancement barriers because managers do not support the initiatives aimed at creating an accommodating workplace.

3.6 CAREER IMPLICATIONS

Previous sections discussed theoretical background regards disability, career, career models, organisational career advancement, Human Resource practices and the variables that influence career advancement. This section discusses career implications regarding people with disabilities based on the context covered above.

The ILO signatory countries promulgated legislations which provide legal provisions to redress workplace inequalities and discriminatory practices experienced by people with disabilities. In these signatory countries, disability is defined differently and this creates confusion about what constitutes disability. Employees with disabilities face discriminatory practices and prejudices which adversely influence their career advancement (Hernandez et al., 2008; Van Niekerk & Van der Merwe, 2013).

The representation of white people and males with disabilities in organisations shows that Human Resource career advancement practices (recruitment, selection, training and promotion) benefit males over females and white people over the designated groups (CEE, 2012). Career advancement opportunities for males are characterised by a linear progression while females' career advancement opportunities are chaotic and restricted (Lindstrom et al., 2011). It is evident that organisations do not implement effective transformation strategies (EE and AA) to ensure equal representation of people with disabilities irrespective of their race or gender (Selby & Sutherland, 2006; Silver & Koopman, 2000). Employees with disabilities who occupy senior positions with decision-making powers are more likely to advance in their careers compared to disabled people in semi-skilled positions (Hussein et al., 2014).

The literature shows that people with disabilities encounter challenges in their careers which create barriers that adversely influence their advancement through

hierarchical structures. Attitudinal barriers (perceptions, stereotypes, prejudices and myths) are greater barriers than architectural barriers to the career progression of candidates with disabilities (Beatty, 2012). Organisational remedial measures intended to promote and protect the legal provisions of the workforce with disabilities should be enforced (Selby & Sutherland, 2006).

It is evident from the literature that individuals from different race, gender and occupation levels differ significantly regarding the career advancement challenges they face. White people with disabilities do not encounter disability-related discriminatory practices to the same degree as do their black counterparts (CEE, 2012; Graham et al., 2010; Watermeyer et al., 2006). White people's career advancement opportunities stem from their privileged access to socio-economic rights while black people were deprived of this access during the Apartheid era. Lindstrom et al. (2011) argue that career prospects of males with disabilities have linear career growth opportunities whereas females' career progression chances are confined and random. Males and white people with disabilities are reasonably represented in hierarchical structures (CEE, 2014).

3.7 CRITICAL EVALUATION AND SYNTHESIS

Disabilities and careers have varied connotations. A lack of a universal definition of disability causes employers to recruit candidates with minimal disabilities in order to increase the headcount of declared disabilities. Various authors identify a career as an on-going process in which an employee acquires competences through various stages from when he/she enters the workplace until he/she retires. Career advancement is a joint effort between the employer and employee. Career advancement is horizontal or vertical depending on the organisational structure. Individual career aspirations vary according to their occupational levels. Different authors provide similar contexts regarding the career stages. Careers for employees with disabilities are characterised by confined career opportunities and insecure employment.

Career theories show that employee fit-to-job, organisation and the community in which he/she works optimises his/her performance. A perfect fit depicts a pleasant work environment in which employees are engaged in their work and are productive.

Candidates with skills, knowledge, qualifications and the right attitudes are determined to succeed in their careers because employers want applicants with job or organisational fit. Career advancement opportunities are influenced by variables such as tenure, qualification, performance and individual competences which are used as determinant factors for career progression.

Recruitment, selection, training and promotion are Human Resource Management Practices used for employee career advancement. Recruitment is process through which organisations attract potential and suitable applicants for employment opportunities. Selection is a process whereby a suitable job applicant is chosen from a pool of job applicants based on selection criteria. Training intends to equip employees with relevant competencies in order to perform efficiently. Promotion is an organisational practice to acknowledge employee performance by appointing an employee to a higher position with increased pay, responsibilities, benefits and autonomy. It seems as if Human Resource practices discriminate against employees with disabilities because they are underrepresented in the workplace.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 3 achieved the literature research objectives.

Specific objectives relating to the literature review were:

- to conceptualise people with disabilities;
- to conceptualise career advancement practices which include recruitment, selection, training and promotions;
- to critically evaluate career advancement challenges people with disabilities face; and,
- to critically evaluate the influence of race, age, gender and occupational levels on perceptions of career advancement challenges.

Chapter 4 will discuss the methodology; research approach and strategy applied in this study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter outlines the approach, strategy and methods that have been adopted by the researcher in order to execute the empirical research.

4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Smith (2010), qualitative research explores participant experience in order to understand the interpretation people assign to the phenomenon under study. Qualitative research is characterised by a narrative-based interpretation of the ideographic truth (knowledge discovered through unique, non-replicable experiences) (Smith, 2010). The researcher listens to participants' first-hand lived experiences about a phenomenon and then interprets its meaning. The researcher collects the data using interviews, and interprets it in order to provide thick description findings (Smith, 2010).

A qualitative research approach with a focus on phenomenological strategy has been employed in this study to examine the career advancement challenges people with disabilities face and also to achieve the empirical objectives. This study employed qualitative measures to investigate perceptions of the career advancement challenges and whether participants from different demographics (race, age, gender and occupational levels) differ regarding the challenges. Kumar (2011) asserts that a qualitative research intends to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a chosen group of people. Therefore, this study aimed to examine individuals' perceptions regarding career advancement challenges that people with disabilities face.

According to Chinyamurindi (2012a, p. 67), a qualitative approach is valuable for the careers field because:

- a voice is given to individuals who would normally have been neglected. This is specifically essential in South Africa as the field of career psychology favoured dominant groups in society;
- as a result of the social-political changes in post-democratic South Africa, the

voices of these neglected groups have been given the attention they deserve through government policy;

- a contextual understanding of careers has been obtained using a qualitative approach. The investigation has been based on subjective data.
- a qualitative research approach captures cultural and social nuances in more detail thus also taking into consideration the cross-cultural applicability of the information gained from the cases under investigation.

Draper (2009) asserts that qualitative research strives to ensure diverse representation of participants in order to leverage diverse perspectives of the population investigated. In this study, participants are diverse in terms of race, age, gender and occupational levels.

4.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Qualitative research advances knowledge by providing insight about lived experiences whereas the phenomenological approach discovers hidden meanings pertaining to the experiences of the participants (Grbich, 2013). The concept of phenomenology originates from the Greek word “phainomenon”, meaning appearance (Jones et al., 2013).

The phenomenological approach is a qualitative enquiry utilised in organisational studies to shed light on complex issues in order to establish solutions for the problems investigated (Goulding, 2005). “Phenomenology refers to the description of one or more individuals’ consciousness and experiences of a phenomenon” (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 444). According to Creswell (2007, p. 57), “phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of the concept or a phenomenon”. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) define a phenomenological study as a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation. Devenish (2002) identifies phenomenological explication as a “process of distillation” where data not relevant to the study is excluded and core-themes which fall within selected parameters are highlighted. Phenomenology is equated to a person’s perception of

the meaning of social realities (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; 2010). Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. Johnson and Christensen (2014) assert that phenomenology intends to explore perceptions of research participants in their life-worlds' experience and comprehend their lived experiences.

The phenomenological method is applied differently in a research enquiry as there are various phenomenological practices (Giorgi, 2008; Walsh, 2012). The phenomenological approach may be existential, empirical, hermeneutical, psychological, transcendental or classical. The phenomenological method is appropriate for a description of people's experiences gathered through interviews (Devenish, 2002). Traditionally, the phenomenological method intends to study behaviour, meaning and experience (Goulding, 1999; Holroyd, 2001) because people perceive and interpret their lived experiences differently (Budd, 2005).

Giorgi (2008) asserts that phenomenology is not against empiricism, but it is broader than an empirical philosophy because its method interrogates phenomena which are not always reducible to facts. According to Giorgi (2008), Husserl pioneered a phenomenology reduction method through which the researcher conforms to two principles: bracketing of personal past experiences and theoretical information. The researchers do not speculate about the phenomenon under study but let the phenomenon reveal the facts itself. According to Livingston (2008), phenomenology is a philosophically-oriented examination of the nature of objectivity. Objectivity refers to

discrepancies between a real, true, transcendental state of affairs that exists independently of us and our (human) perceptions and determinants of the properties of things (Livingston, 2008, p. 59).

Jones, Brown and Holloway (2013) assert that phenomenology focuses on people's perceptions or experiences as they appear to them. The phenomenological method examines a phenomenon under study and provides a description of people's experiences of the phenomenon (Aspers, 2009; Devenish, 2002; Ladikos & Kruger, 2006; Vandenberg, 1982). According to Saevi (2013), the phenomenological approach comprehends interpretations of human experiences by identifying common

individual and universal experiences of the phenomenon. A phenomenological text describes participants' subjective views regarding the matter being experienced (Saevi, 2013). Aspers (2009) argues that the phenomenological method focuses on the description of how people feel, perceive and think about a phenomenon under investigation. Sherwood (2001) asserts that the phenomenological approach explores the complexity of the participant's lived experience. Phenomenology is characterised by being reflective, fundamentally descriptive and culture-appreciative (Embree, 2014). Phenomenology reflects a participant's psychological experience of a phenomenon and provides individual or collective interpretations of the experience influenced by socio-historical norms (Embree, 2014).

According to McWilliam (2010, p. 230),

phenomenology has the potential to promote human development, enhance professional practice, advance the theoretical and practice foundations of disciplines, and inform programmes, services and policies in ways that promote positive change.

Transcendental/descriptive phenomenology advances the understanding of the phenomenon under study by discovering its nature and structure while the researcher's consciousness is bracketed out in order to avoid distortion of the participants' experiences (McWilliam, 2010). The understanding divulges discrepancies between actual lived experience and "thought to be experience" (McWilliam, 2010). Transcendental phenomenology is traditionally affiliated to the works of the pioneer phenomenologist, Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) (Jones et al., 2013; King & Horrocks, 2010).

The phenomenological method describes a first-hand experience of the phenomenon under study. In the phenomenological reduction (epoché), any assumptions are suspended in order to allow original reality to come into the world of the researcher or, alternatively, to empathise with (enter into) the world of another (as in existential psychotherapy) (Edwards, 2001). The phenomenological method is an intervening measure to assist people to adapt to a changed world in order to solve, improve or accept problems in their lives. The epoché strives to bracket out preconceptions (assumptions, bias, prejudice and theory) in order to freshly absorb

or experience original lived experiences (Walsh, 2012). Bracketing, in the data analysis, serves to discover unanticipated fresh aspects of the experiences of the participants being studied (Barnes, 2003). Gallagher and Francesconi (2012) state that the phenomenological epoché is not only concerned with the suspension of researcher's theories and preconceptions but also of participants' theories and preconceptions based on lived experiences. Theories, opinions or hearsay are not accepted as evidence of the lived experiences (Gallagher & Francesconi, 2012). Grbich (2013) explains that the process adopted by the researcher to bracket out experiences and preconceptions related to a topic under study is to:

- identify the phenomenon;
- identify the researcher's own latest experience of the phenomenon as he/she perceives it;
- use some characteristics of this experience to form the differences based on the bracketed phenomenon;
- keep practicing this until the essence of the research is reached.

The phenomenological epoché (suspension or bracketing) is applied to suspend a plausible relation to lived experiences reflected by participants of the subject under study (Barnes, 2003; Fay & Riot, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; 2010). Fay and Riot (2007) and King and Horrocks (2010) argue that epoché brackets the researcher's assumptions or preconceptions during the data analysis in order to avoid subjectivity so that the phenomenon may be perceived afresh. Bracketing requires a researcher to suspend his/her preconceived experiences relating to a subject in order to access the lived experiences of the research participants (Goulding, 1999).

This study is transcendental/descriptive phenomenological in that it focuses on the lived experiences of the individuals with disabilities regarding their career advancement challenges.

4.3 RESEARCH METHOD

Methods that have been employed in the qualitative research design are:

4.3.1 Research setting

The research setting refers to the place where the data will be collected. In this study, the data was collected from companies in the retail and financial service sectors in Gauteng Province. The interviews were conducted at the participants' place of work in a setting provided by the participants' employers.

4.3.2 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher plays different roles in the research. The insider-researcher exemplifies the characteristics of the sampled participants (Southgate & Shying, 2014). Unluer (2012) argues that the insider-researcher is privileged to access data which the outsider-researcher is deprived of accessing because the insider-researcher relates better to the participants. In this study, the researcher was an insider-researcher because he studied people with disabilities and is disabled himself.

The researcher made submissions to the managers responsible for Employment Equity requesting permission to conduct research at their organisations. On the receipt of approvals to conduct research, the researcher asked managers to send the requests for participation to employees with declared disabilities. Employees interested in participating in the research were required to respond to a request for participation by emailing their approvals to the researcher.

Once the researcher received the approvals from the interested participants, the researcher arranged and conducted the interviews. The researcher firstly explained the research process and obtained informed consent from the participants.

4.3.3 Sampling

Sampling refers to a process of selecting a small number of participants from a large group or population (Friesen, 2010; Walliman, 2011). The empirical study was conducted with employees with disabilities employed on full-time and contract bases by companies in different sectors based in the Gauteng Province. The companies employ 150 or more people with specified financial turnovers requiring them to comply with EE legislation as stipulated in EEA (SA. Department of Labour 2015).

The sampled companies were purposefully chosen on the basis of their dominance in their respective sectors and the total number of employees they have. The concept of “purposive” or “purposeful” sampling means that the research sample is selected based on the stated research purposes or aims (Jones et al., 2013). Due to fiscal and geographical constraints, the research only focused on the Gauteng Province. Goulding (1999) stresses that sampling for a phenomenological study is planned and purposive and the data analysis is in descriptive units to narrate participant lived-experiences. In a purposive sampling, participants are chosen because they match criteria needed for the enquiry of the phenomenon of interest (Draper, 2009; Jones et al., 2013). The participants met the selection criteria which were six months’ tenure in employment, declared disabilities with the employer and were between the ages of 18 and 65 years.

Jones et al. (2013) advocate that, in snowballing sampling or chain referral sampling, research participants nominate other participants believed to be able to provide data relevant to a research topic. The snowballing sampling method is applied in studies where participants cannot be easily reached or accessed and their participation is anonymous (Jones et al., 2013). The snowballing method was used because participants referred other participants for this study.

Goulding (2005) states that the data is collected through interviews with purposively sampled participants who have lived experiences of a phenomenon under study and is considered as fact. Phenomenologists rely on participants’ experiential descriptions as a primary source of authentic data (Goulding, 1999). The researcher relied on the primary data shared by the participants who experienced career advancement challenges.

Probability, purposeful and snowballing sampling were applied in this study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), probability sampling ensures that each element of the population will be represented in the sample. The selection of participants in the probability sampling is random (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Walliman, 2011). Purposeful sampling focuses on a particular purpose where a researcher examines certain qualities possessed by a sample (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009). Atkinson and Flint (2001) define snowballing sampling as a technique of identifying

research participants who are recommended to the researcher by a participant. Baltar and Brunet (2012) advocate that snowball sampling is appropriate in descriptive and exploratory qualitative studies where participants are few and hard to find. Baltar and Brunet (2012) argue that this method is often employed in studies of vulnerable and stigmatised people who are reluctant to participate.

This study assessed the perceptions of employees with disabilities and determined whether the participants' perceptions differed significantly in terms of race, age, gender and occupational levels. In this study, the researcher ensured that all elements (race, age, gender and occupational levels) were represented. Fifteen participants with disabilities employed by the sampled organisations were interviewed as representatives of all socio-demographic variables in terms of race, age, gender and occupational levels.

4.3.4 Criteria for inclusion/exclusion

Only participants who have declared their disabilities with their employers were included in the sample. The participants must have had six months' minimum tenure with the employer and be between the ages of 18 and 65 years.

The workforce with disabilities that render services to employers on an independent contract basis or outsourced services were excluded from the study.

4.3.5 Data collection methods

Creswell (2007) argues that phenomenological study data is collected through in-depth multiple interviews with participants who have experienced a phenomenon. The data for this study was collected and interpreted to explain the career advancement challenges people with disabilities face. Thus, lengthy person-to-person semi-structured interviews with participants with declared disabilities, who are representative of all workforce profiles in terms of gender, race, age and occupational levels, were conducted to collect the data. Interviews are a qualitative research method to elicit data that provides insight about a phenomenon under study.

There are five kinds of qualitative data: physical objects, still images, sounds, moving

images and written words (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). This study used sounds because the semi-structured interviews were audio recorded. Semi-structured interviews allow a researcher to jettison prepared research questions if the interviewee elicits new and relevant data during the interview (Friesen, 2010; Jones et al., 2013). Jettisoning, adding, modifying or omitting of prepared research questions applies when certain questions that the researcher planned to ask have been answered in other discussions (Jones et al., 2013). A semi-structured interview is characterised by a prepared interview guide that asks core open-ended questions in sequence form (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Reid & Mash, 2014). The interview guide uses main research question and sub-questions while taking into account the wording of the questions. In the semi-structured interview, questions are specific to a phenomenon under study and avoid one-word answers in order to elicit descriptive information. Face-to-face interviews enable a researcher to establish a rapport and increase cooperation with participants. Phenomenological interviews are characterised by informal, unstructured, or semi-structured, interactive processes using open-ended questions and comments with participants doing most of the talking and researcher doing most of the listening (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Moustakas, 1994). King and Horrocks (2010) explain that qualitative interviews are characterised by being:

- flexible and open-ended; using non-leading questions;
- concerned with participants' actual experiences rather than merely their beliefs and opinions; and
- making interviewer-interviewee relationships a significant part of the approach.

The phenomenologist asks question such as: “how do you perceive and interpret your lived experiences of the phenomena?” These questions enable a researcher to discover, analyse and understand the real lived experiences (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). Open-ended questions allow a participant to give a descriptive response to a question rather than choosing an optional answer from a given list (Draper, 2009). Walliman (2011) asserts that open format questions allow participants to respond in their own format or style to avoid bias. However, the participants' expressions are open to researcher interpretation. Draper (2009) argues that interviews are

appropriate in studies related to a range of individual perspectives and experiences. Evidence in phenomenological research is discovered during the process of answering questions in order to advance an argument (Walsh, 2012). Participants provide different lived experiences on the phenomenon under study based on their interpretations of events (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014). According to Tomkins and Eatough (2013), empirical phenomenology examines relatedness between a participant's lived experience and his/her comfort when articulating a story. Incongruence may be detected during such comparison.

Prior to the interviews, the researcher read a prepared opening statement to participants to create a relaxed and trusting atmosphere and then the researcher asked participants to share their perspectives regarding career advancement challenges they faced.

Moustakas (1994) suggests the use of the broad general open-ended questions which do not provide the research participant with pre-determined responses (Friesen, 2010). The data collected using these questions will lead to textural and structural descriptions of the experiences with common themes regarding participants' experiences (Creswell, 2007). Table 4.1 shows possible interview questions for this research:

Table 4.1
Interview Questions

Question	Rationale for including this question
What is the nature of your disability?	This question will help identify whether the participant has a disability.
What is your race, age, gender and occupational level?	This question will help identify the participants' demographics.
How long have you been employed in this organisation?	This question will help identify the likelihood for a participant to be provided with career advancement opportunities.
Since your employment in this organisation, what are the career advancement challenges you have experienced?	This question will help identify the career advancement challenges the participants faced.
How did the career advancement challenges adversely influence your career?	This question will help identify the effect of the career challenges.
What impact do your race, age, gender and occupational levels have on your career advancement opportunities?	This question will help identify if participants from different race, age, gender and occupational levels differ significantly regarding their perceptions of career advancement challenges.
How does your disability impact your career advancement opportunities in the organisation?	This question will help identify if participants' disabilities influence their career advancement opportunities.
What suggestions could you propose to management to overcome the career advancement challenges you are currently facing due to your specific disability?	This question will help propose the suggestions to management in order to redress identified challenges.

4.3.6 Recording of data

All the interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriber and then checked by the researcher. The interviews were audio recorded to ensure accuracy and quality of the data. Recording the interview ensures that the researcher gets the data correctly (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The transcripts were used in the data analysis process. Both the audio recordings and transcripts will be kept for future use.

The researcher used an Excel spreadsheet to record participants' demographics. Each row in the spreadsheet was assigned to a participant and each column to a

demographic variable (race, age, gender and occupational level) for each participant.

4.3.7 Strategies employed to ensure the quality and integrity of the data

To establish trustworthiness of the qualitative research, the terms: credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability and confirmability are used as equivalents for internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (Creswell, 2007). Leedy and Ormrod (2010) and Maxwell (2013) explain that the qualitative researcher is an instrument, equivalent to an oscilloscope, due to the researcher's ability to interpret and make sense of any social phenomenon under study. In order to ensure trustworthiness of this research process, the following measures were applied by the researcher:

4.3.7.1 Credibility

For the purposes of this research, the credibility was ensured through:

- theoretical literature related to the research topic, problem statement and objectives; and,
- triangulation strategy that was used as a measurement instrument for interpreting the theoretical data. According to Creswell (2014) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010), triangulation collects and compares various sources of data in a search for common themes to support the theory. In triangulation, the researcher uses different data perspectives in order to answer the research questions (Flick, 2009).

4.3.7.2 Authenticity

Authenticity refers to a process to identify whether the research evidence or document is genuine (Flick, 2009; Shaw & Holland, 2014). The document may either be a primary or secondary document. This study ensured authenticity by drawing conclusions from the primary evidence collected from the research participants who were representative of the total population of people with disabilities in Gauteng Province workplaces.

4.3.7.3 *Transferability*

Transferability refers to a process in which the researcher infers how the research findings link to other studies (Denscombe, 2010). According to Denscombe (2010, p. 190), “transferability is the imaginative application of findings to other settings”.

4.3.7.4 *Confirmability*

The confirmability of the study was ensured through a participant validation strategy whereby the researcher took his conclusions back to the participants in the study for their confirmation and approval of the research findings based on their experiences (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Creswell (2009) defines “use member checking strategy” as a means by which a researcher determines the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report, specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether the participants feel that they are accurate.

Study confirmability was ensured through:

- the researcher took the final report to participants to do member checking;
- the participants examined the report and provided their interpretations of it.

4.3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study is compliant with the research ethics policy and guidelines as stated by the University of South Africa. The researcher did not expose research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Informed consent was obtained from the participants and their company authorities. The participants signed the consent forms before the interviews commenced to acknowledge that they understood the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation. The researcher gave the participants a signed copy of the informed consent agreement. The participants were informed of the voluntary rights to privacy and participation or withdrawal. Participants’ rights to anonymity due to the confidential data and voluntary participation in this research were emphasised. The researcher continuously strived to remain honest and objective regarding the research findings. An epoché or bracketing principle was adopted in this study.

4.3.9 Data Analysis

Prior to data analysis, the data collected was transcribed and analysed using a qualitative method. Data analysis is a process in which the data is broken down into smaller meaningful pieces in order to interpret and conceptualise it (Smit, 2002). The researcher ensured that preconceptions did not distort the meaning of the data (Smit, 2002). The content of this study was analysed by applying a categorising technique. Smit (2002) argues that categorisation refers to open-coding through which the data is categorised into respective sections. Similar data was grouped together and conceptualised before axial coding was employed. According to Smit (2002), open coding refers to categorising or grouping of similar data whereas axial coding links various data categories or groups formed in open coding to form sequential sections of a whole picture. The analysis of the qualitative research methodology using a phenomenological approach allowed participants' descriptive realities to reveal themselves and the participants' (individual and collective) descriptive experiences were interpreted (Edwards, Sherwood, Naidoo, Geils, Van Heerden, Thwala, Davidson, & Edwards, 2013).

According to Tesch (1990), qualitative data analysis is a process of interpretation of the descriptive data. Tesch (1990) uses the following eight steps:

- **Step 1:** The tape-recorded individual interviews with employees with declared disabilities will be typed. Notes will be made as they come to mind.
- **Step 2:** The complete, interesting and informative interviews will be selected and the researcher will write remarks in the margins. The researcher will organise feasible data from the comprehensive interviews into the main codes.
- **Step 3:** A list composed of all different topics will be gathered and similar topics will be clustered together. Then, topics will be clustered into major topics, unique topics and left-overs.
- **Step 4:** These topics will be abbreviated as codes. The codes will be used to formulate an interpretational preliminary analysis.
- **Step 5:** The descriptive wording that appears frequently on various topics will

be analysed and themes will be formulated. Related topics will be linked.

- **Step 6:** A final decision to abbreviate each theme will be made and the codes alphabetised.
- **Step 7:** Each theme's data transcripts will be collected and linked with the theme.
- **Step 8:** The data will be recorded and findings reported.

4.3.10 Reporting style

Moustakas (1994) pioneered a highly structured qualitative reporting style, such as that used for a journal articles, and a summary report that presents the research findings in a thick descriptive format. A qualitative report will comprise a discussion of the research problems, research design (e.g. data collection and analysis methods), it will draw a conclusion regarding challenges facing the participants, relate the study findings to an existing body of knowledge and discuss any implications of the findings. Figure 4.1 shows these phases in the research. Participants' demographic information is presented in a tabled form in conjunction with thick textual description.

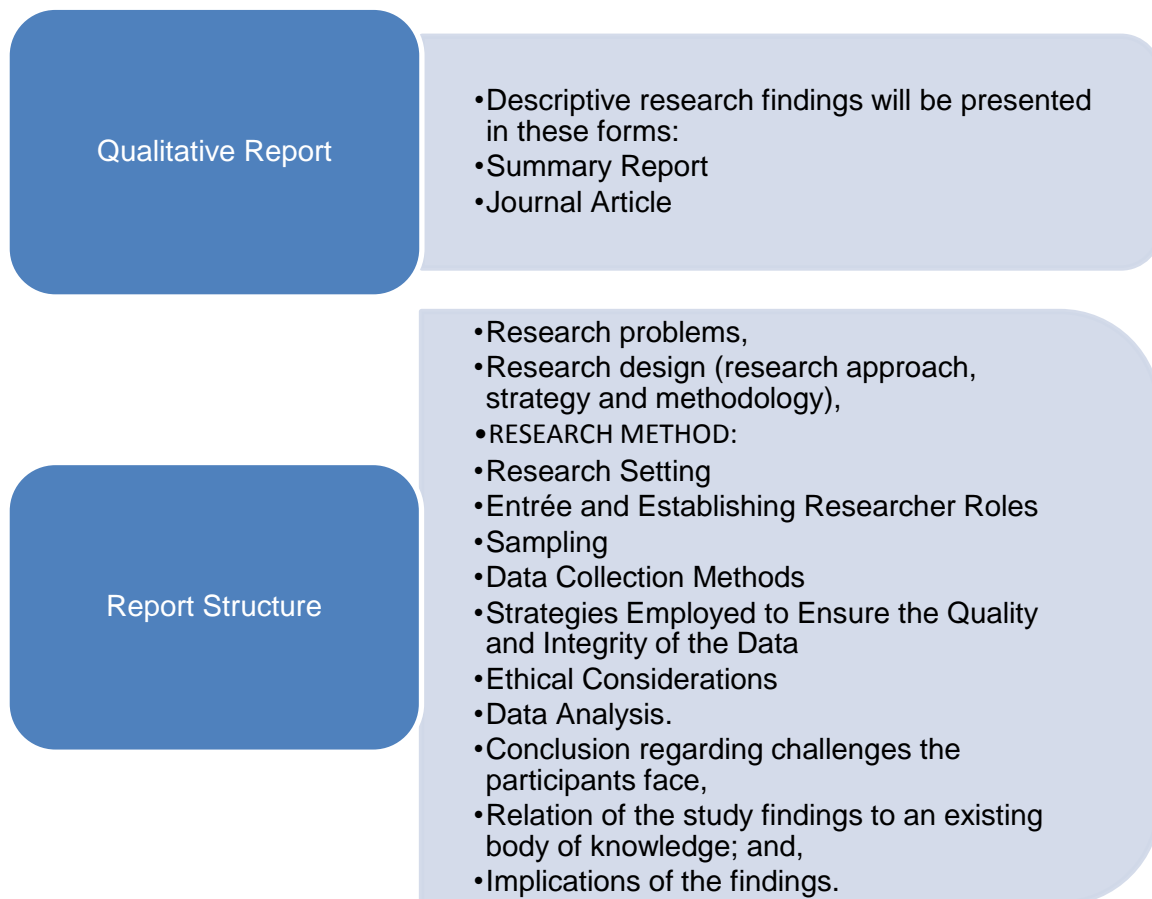


Figure 4.1. Research phases

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined a qualitative approach, phenomenological strategy and methods that were adopted by the researcher in order to execute an empirical research.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of Chapter 5 is to discuss the findings of the study in order to enhance understanding of the perspectives faced by people living with disabilities in South Africa with regards to career advancement challenges. In this chapter, the researcher provides descriptive research findings from semi-structured interviews with participants living with disabilities in the Gauteng Province. The findings relate to the research questions that guided the study.

This study aimed to assess the perceptions of individuals with disabilities regarding the career advancement challenges they face and to determine whether the perceptions of career advancement challenges disabled individuals from different race, age, gender and occupational levels differ. More specifically, this chapter aims to answer the research objectives which are:

- to explore the career advancement challenges facing people living with a disability in sampled companies in the Gauteng Province;
- to explore whether people from various race, age, gender and occupational levels differ in their perceptions regarding career advancement challenges for people with disabilities;
- to formulate suggestions to address career advancement barriers facing people living with a disability; and
- to suggest topics for future research in the disciplines of Human Resources management and Transformation.

This chapter will focus on the biographical characteristics of the participants and the discussion of the findings. Conclusions, contributions of the study, limitations and recommendations will be discussed in Chapter 6.

5.2 BIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Tables 5.1 to 5.3 below discuss the distribution of all participants by demographics

(race, age, gender and occupational level) at the time of the study. The participants were contacted by the gatekeeper using snowballing sampling (Brunet, 2012; Jones et al., 2013). Each company had equitable representation of participants in terms of race, age, gender and occupational level.

Table 5.1 shows the distribution of participants by age at the time of the study.

Table 5.1
Distribution Of Participants By Age

Age Groups	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-64	Total
Frequency	3	1	8	3	0	15

According to Table 5.1, the participants comprised three (20%) aged between 18 and 30, one (7%) aged between 31 and 40, eight (53%) aged between 41 and 50 and three (20%) aged between 51 and 60. It can be seen that the participants were diverse in terms of age but that most of the sample consisted of individuals between the ages of 41 and 50 (maintenance phase of the career). The different ages provided different perspectives of the challenges. The participants were in the brackets of Economically Active Population (EAP) applicable in South Africa, 15-64 years old (Statistics South Africa, 2013).

Table 5.2 shows the occupational levels, race and gender of the participants at the time of the study.

Table 5.2
Distribution Of Participants By Race, Gender And Occupational Levels

Occupational Levels	Male				Female				Total
	A*	C*	I*	W*	A*	C*	I*	W*	
Top management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior management	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	3
Professionally qualified and experienced specialists and mid-management	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	4
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen and superintendents	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision-making	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	7
Unskilled and defined decision-making	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	2	0	0	3	3	2	1	4	15

*A = African, C = Coloured, I = Indian, W = White

According to table 5.2, five (34%) participants were Africans, two (13%) Coloureds, one (7%) Indian and seven (47%) Whites. The participants included ten (67%) females and five (33%) males. There were no Coloured and Indian male participants. Most of the participants occupied semi-skilled positions. None of the participants occupied unskilled or top management level positions.

It could be concluded that the research participants were representative of all races and genders.

These conclusions of are also supported in the views of the following authors:

- Hernandez et al. (2008) and Botha (2011) assert that the employees with disabilities predominantly occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions.
- Commission for Employment Equity (CEE, 2011, 2012 & 2013), found that

white people dominate the representation of people with disabilities over black people.

- Sebola and Khalo (2010) argue that white males and females with disabilities occupy management positions while black people with disabilities mainly occupy low-level positions.
- Statistics South Africa (2014) asserts that there are more females with disabilities than males.
- Daya (2014) and Malan (2010) assert that it is mandatory that large South African corporates who receive lucrative government contracts are expected to transform their organisations to be representative of their workforce demographics in terms of race, gender and disability.

Table 5.3 provides an understanding about the participants' tenure of employment with their current employers at the time of the study.

Table 5.3
Distribution Of Participants By Tenure Of Service

Tenure of service	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years
Frequency	4	2	3	2	2	2

Table 5.3 indicates that, at the time of the study, 11 participants had been with their employers between 6 and 30 years and 4 between 1 and 5 years.

The conclusions are also supported by the views of the following authors:

- Hashim and Wok (2014), Hernandez et al., (2008), as well as Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite (2010) assert that people with disabilities have a long tenure; they are committed, reliable, loyal and hardworking employees.

5.3 REPORTING FINDINGS

This study assessed the perceptions of individuals with disabilities regarding the career advancement challenges they face and determined whether the perceptions of career advancement challenges of disabled individuals from different races, ages,

genders and occupational levels differ.

Four main themes and subthemes were identified using Tesch's (1990) method of content analysis. From the main and subthemes that were identified, the answers to the research questions and the data content were obtained to achieve the objectives of the research as per section 5.1.

The data and findings of this study were obtained by applying the methods and research processes as outlined in Chapter 4. Fifteen semi-structured individual interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached. The participants had declared their disabilities to their employers. The participants were employed by one of two group companies which operate within different sectors in the Gauteng Province.

The results will be presented and discussed in this chapter in the same sequence as the research questions and research steps set out in Chapter 4.

The eight (8) research questions were:

- What is the nature of your disability?
- What is your race, age, gender and occupational level?
- How long have you been employed in this organisation?
- Since your employment in this organisation, what are the career advancement challenges you have experienced?
- How did the career advancement challenges adversely influence your career?
- What impact do your race, age, gender and occupational levels have on your career advancement opportunities?
- How does your disability impact your career advancement opportunities in the organisation?
- What suggestions could you propose to management for overcoming the career advancement challenges you are currently facing due to your specific

disability?

The sections below discuss the findings per question in the sequence they were asked.

5.4 THE MAIN THEMES DISCUSSED IN THE INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight open-ended questions (see section 5.3 above). All eight questions were asked during the individual interviews. The data that was collected from the participants was analysed. The demographics of the participants are indicated in Tables 5.1 to 5.3 above.

The sections below discuss themes that were identified. The researcher included the verbatim evidence that had relevance to the themes identified.

5.4.1 Theme 1: Explanation of disability

Theme 1 question: What is the nature of your disability?

Subtheme of Theme 1: Explanation of disability.

The explanation of disability is shown in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4
Explanation Of Disability

Main question: What is the nature of your disability?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
Participant 1: "I have something called Meniere's syndrome. It has caused hearing loss in my left ear, so I have lost eighty per cent of the hearing in my left ear, but it also affects my balance and I think the challenge I have is that I have tried hearing aids but when I use the hearing aid it actually triggers vertigo attacks so I become very dizzy. So I do not use a hearing aid." Participant 3: "I am hearing impaired." Participant 7: "I have a few disabilities. One, I am an epileptic. I suffer from epilepsy. Second, I am deaf in one ear and third I have had a brain tumour operation which has left some of my function less than normal. What I mean by that is I am paralysed ... and some of my cognitive ability is not as strong as it was prior to the operation." Participant 9: "My nature of my disability is I am hard on hearing. It was due to meningitis."	Hearing impaired

<p>Participant 11: "It is a partial loss of hearing. So I have a forty per cent loss of hearing. So I am not deaf but I have hearing impairment."</p> <p>Participant 12: "I have no hearing in my left ear."</p> <p>Participant 14: "My disability it's my left ear.... I had stroke so it affected my left ear. So I use the hearing aid because that I lost hearing on the left ear."</p>	
<p>Participant 2: "It is an amputation. So it falls under an amputation though it is physical disability."</p>	Amputation
<p>Participant 4: "It's a mood disorder. I am bipolar."</p> <p>Participant 6: "I have bipolar mood disorder. Before I had schizophrenia. It's under control."</p>	Bipolar or other psychological disorders
<p>Participant 5: "My nature of disability is a physical disability in my legs. I had polio when I was young and so my lower limbs, if I may put it that way, are not functioning."</p> <p>Participant 10: "I have been in a car accident so some of the tendons and muscles were cut ... I have only got twenty per cent of functionality left."</p> <p>Participant 15: "So my nature or the nature of my disability is called osteogenesis imperfecta."</p>	Physical disability
<p>Participant 7: "I have a few disabilities. One, I am an epileptic. I suffer from epilepsy. Second, I am deaf in one ear and third I have had a brain tumour operation which has left some of my function less than normal. What I mean by that is I am paralysed ... and some of my cognitive ability is not as strong as it was prior to the operation."</p>	Epileptic and brain tumour.
<p>Participant 8: "As a child I had meningitis. So I had a series of childhood illnesses, meningitis, encephalitis, which when I was healed now the doctors said I will be a vegetable but luckily I ended off with a short-term memory that was the worst that happened. ... it takes me a bit longer to learn routine, to learn tasks. So it's basically a short-term, weak short-term memory."</p>	Learning disability.
<p>Participant 13: "I am partially sighted. I have a condition known as retinitis pigmentosa. It's a degenerative condition of the eye whereby I'm slowing going blind."</p>	Partial sighted

In Table 5.4, the participants described the nature of their disabilities. Seven individuals reported hearing impairments, three have physical disabilities, two have bipolar or other psychological disorders, one is epileptic and has a brain tumour, one has a learning disability, one is an amputee and one is partially sighted.

Conclusion

The participants were knowledgeable about the nature of their disabilities. There did not seem to be a lack of understanding about their impairments. The interviews could therefore continue.

5.4.2 Theme 2: Career advancement challenges

Theme 2 questions:

- Since your employment in this organisation, what are the career advancement challenges you have experienced?
- How did the career advancement challenges adversely influence your career?

Subthemes of Theme 2:

- Explanation of career advancement challenges.
- Impact of career advancement challenges.

The explanation of career advancement challenges is shown in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5
Explanation Of Career Advancement Challenges

Main question: Since your employment in this organisation, what are the career advancement challenges you have experienced?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
Participant 1: "I do not think I experience challenges. I think (<i>company name</i>) has always given opportunities. So when I first got the Meniere's I let my manager at the time know and he was always very supportive. So in the eighteen years I have been able to move in the organisation despite whatever difficulties I had had. So what I appreciate is that (<i>company name</i>) did give me an opportunity to change and grow in my role..."	No career advancement challenges
Participant 2: "I think with me depending on my disability I have not found any challenges in this company. I have not found any challenges but I think maybe if you have interviewed some people maybe in the wheelchairs and with different disabilities you will get different answers from my one because with my one I did not even need anything to help me or their help."	
Participant 7: "I do not believe there are challenges or at least I have	

<p>not experienced them. People are aware that I am disabled. There are certain things that I need to get around. Being deaf in one ear I do sometimes struggle to hear at large meeting rooms, a lot of people talking, and so I need to make an extra effort to pay attention or ask questions at that time or if that is not given, afterwards to go and clarify things. So there is a lot of extra work that needs to be done. I make people aware and people are cognisant of that and if I do not use it as an excuse to say, please, you got to consider this because of that. Not. I see myself as normal, I act normal. However I do make people aware that if something does come, guys, please just speak up, I am struggling to hear, I am deaf in one ear, then people will realise I am not making an excuse out of my disability. I have found that those [who] do make an excuse out of their disability are often seen less favourable and hence may see as challenges to their career advancement but those that have embraced and come up appear to be as normal as possible, irrespective of the disability, I have not found any disadvantages to career advancement.”</p> <p>Participant 10: “I was not disabled all the time, I have only been disabled since 2005, but before then and after that I have had absolutely no challenges whatsoever because hard work will take you places in (<i>company name</i>).”</p> <p>Participant 12: “I did not experience any challenges. They are very fair. It is about your capability and your performance. So there were no career advancements due to my disability and I also was not favoured because of my visibility disability. It is fair.”</p>	
<p>Participant 3: “I guess I blame myself partly also for, in terms of my advancement, I only got my managerial level you can say in 2008. Twenty years in the (<i>company name</i>) then only I became a manager. So before that it was quite a slow progress for me and I think it is because I never really wanted to disclose my disability because in those years things were, I used to find people are ignorant and people can discriminate against you and all of that. I did not feel comfortable disclosing.”</p> <p>Participant 4: “Yes, definitely challenges mostly caused by being absent. So when you are absent obviously you are not delivering and when you are not delivering you do not get increases and bonuses and promotions.”</p> <p>Participant 8: “To be quite honest, I had my whole career smooth. It was only when I declared my disability that my challenges started. So my whole (<i>company name</i>) career was smooth and then in 2011 I got the opportunity to go through to a branch ... Now the job challenged my abilities because I told you I have got a short, a weak short-term memory and there you need to juggle a whole lot of tasks. I am better at jobs where I need to concentrate on one thing ... and so the manager that time said if you declare your disability, we can help you and I have not seen that help.”</p> <p>Participant 9: “My career advancement challenges that I have experienced is that I am still in the same position as I came in. So</p>	<p>Slow/no promotion opportunities</p>

<p>there are not a lot of opportunities for disabled people within the organisation especially when you only have a matric.”</p>	
<p>Participant 5: “If you work in an organisation like this it is set up not for a person with disability, that I must say, and it is a totally not set up for a person with a disability and if you are going to be here you need to have the nerves to be in the organisation and have the ability to cope with whatever that is happening.”</p> <p>Participant 11: “The challenges are from sheer corporate ladder mobility perspective, I have never had those types of challenges. However, when you say in terms of growth and training and enhancements of skills what it means is that when I attend training, and, for instance, they show videos and there are no subtitles, I battle. I have raised it a number of instances already with our training centre saying, please could you put subtitles when you show videos? Corporate videos, whatever-whatever, all these training materials, that is, let’s say video or ... based it is very difficult for me. If it is a presenter or if I go to a conference, you will always find me in the front rows. I am one of those who does not mind going to the front row because I do a lot of lip reading, not that I have learned but ... so if it’s a one-on-one ... if it is presented easier but if it’s videos it’s a nightmare for me. I just switch off because it requires such a degree of concentration that I battle. I would rather drive to (other office) to have a meeting face-to-face and come back than do a telecom. People say why do you not do a telecom? Because I need to see the person. It is easier for me. So those are the type of challenges that I face and especially with the evolution of audio and video conferencing is a challenge for me.”</p> <p>Participant 14: “... it has been quite challenging for me now because right now I am in a call centre and I have got a problem with my left ear. To sit on that call and ... sometimes you get customers that are very irate, because I cannot blame them also to say I have got a situation and, at the same time, you feel intimidated. As a breadwinner in the house, you cannot complain and say I am struggling in this position, I am struggling, because sometimes I find it very difficult to hear the customer. If maybe I am asking the customer to repeat, they get annoyed. So, also at the same time, it is a challenge for me not to say I cannot say I am facing this challenge because of my condition. I do not want to make my condition an issue ... So that is the challenge for now but I am hoping that there will be a solution because lastly, I heard the team leader saying that I pick up that you are struggling on the calls. So they are thinking of bring back that administration because that is what I am good at, in a sense, administration skills, I am perfect. It’s just that when it comes to the calls, it is really my hearing that affects my performance.”</p> <p>Participant 15: “So when I started my employment here (<i>company name</i>) thought it was very accommodating. They thought that [they] could really handle us but unfortunately they could not. So obviously the first challenge off the bat is wheelchair facilities when it comes to the bathroom because ... and I would not blame (<i>company name</i>) in</p>	<p>Environment not conducive for people living with a disability.</p>

<p>that sense but there was never ... there had never really been any specifically disabled people working at (<i>company name</i>), we were the first, and people ... there were wheelchair bathrooms as such, bathrooms for the disabled, but people were just using them not knowingly and then that was the very, very first challenge that we faced.”</p>	
<p>Participant 6: “I have applied to close to about two hundred and thirty-four jobs and out of those ones, I have been to about five interviews since that time and I have given up looking for a job ... I lose concentration. I make a lot of mistakes basically. So I think that is the reason why I cannot get a job elsewhere because I am not competent enough because I am always making mistakes and they have not fired me yet, which is good ...”</p>	<p>No employment opportunities/not being selected.</p>
<p>Participant 11: “The challenges are from sheer corporate ladder mobility perspective I have never had those types of challenges. However, when you say in terms of growth and training and enhancements of skills what it means is that when I attend training and for instance they show videos and there are no subtitles I battle. I have raised it a number of instances already with our training centre saying, please could you put subtitles when you show videos? Corporate videos, whatever-whatever, all these training materials that is let’s say video or ... based it is very difficult for me. If it is a presenter or if I go to a conference you will always find me in the front rows. I am one of those who does not mind going to the front row because I do a lot of lip reading, not that I have learned but ... so if it’s a one-on-one ... if it is presented easier but if it’s videos it’s a nightmare for me. I just switch off because it requires such a degree of concentration that I battle. I would rather drive to (other office) to have a meeting face-to-face and come back than do a telecom. People say why do you not do a telecom? Because I need to see the person. It is easier for me. So those are the type of challenges that I face and especially with the evolution of audio and video conferencing is a challenge for me.”</p> <p>Participant 13: “Once people leave there is a lack of re-employment. One person needs to do three people’s jobs and all that stress and all that extra things were put on a person or onto the individual. That is very difficult for me ... and my sight has been deteriorating over this time made my job difficult. It started making my job difficult because whatever we needed to do on paper, I cannot. When I started out here, it was known from HR that I cannot work with paper or paperwork, admin type of work, and now I was forced to be in a situation where I have to go around begging, asking people help me fill this in, help me read that, help me do XYZ and it became very uncomfortable because people were starting to talk, people were starting to complain, I am taking up other people’s work time. It felt like I became somewhat of a burden but then when management saw that this was happening and they then decided it would be a good thing for me to do (<i>current job</i>). I do not have so much admin to do. So I do not have to waste much time with lots of paperwork and so forth although I think also, on a personal level, is once people</p>	<p>Lack of disability awareness from the organisation/lack of understanding.</p>

<p>are aware this is your condition, they do not want to be educated. They think they know more than you as to what you need or what you should have or what you should see. They do not come and ask and really ... you will find the positive and the negative people or the left or the right people shall I say. There is an extreme between the two. One of the bunch would may be over sympathetic. They over want to help and over want to compensate and it is like you cannot think for yourself. You are now so stupid. You do not know where you are. And then there are the people who just stay away and avoid the situation and rather complain and say she is disturbing us, she is a nag, she is whoever because they do not want to be involved. They do not want to get involved in helping or asking or assisting or they are too shy to know more.”</p>	
<p>Participant 7: “The only disability would be my race. I am a pale male, as people would call it. I am a white Caucasian and because of affirmative action and we need to meet certain targets set by the Department of Trade and Industry, it’s been quite clearly made known that we are looking for black people to fill that role and so that is not really disability, that is just historical situation to the country. That is the only area where I have seen limitations in progress in some areas but that is part and parcel of where we are. I am not bemoaning the fact. I embrace the whole thing that needs to take place and I look for other avenues to use my talents. I have operated as everybody else realising I need to work maybe a little bit harder in some areas because of the disability challenges.”</p>	<p>Employment equity requirements</p>
<p>Participant 9: “My career advancement challenges that I have experienced is that I am still in the same position as I came in. So there are not a lot of opportunities for disabled people within the organisation especially when you only have a matric.</p> <p>Participant 10: “I would not say all the disabled people but if you ... depending on the qualification that you have.”</p>	<p>Educational level</p>

Conclusion

From Table 5.5, it can be concluded that the most common career advancement challenges individuals living with a disability face is a lack of awareness or understanding in their company and that the environment is not conducive for people living with disabilities. Furthermore, the participants reported that they experience slow or no promotion opportunities and are less likely to be selected for a position due to their disability. Five participants reported that they do not experience any career advancement challenges within their companies.

It appears that the participants who received support from their management and colleagues did not experience career advancement challenges. Participants 1, 2, 6,

7, 10, and 12 found their work environment to be inclusive, accommodating and supportive. Employers focused on participants' capabilities and performance rather than their disabilities.

Other participants who experienced challenges shared different perspectives from the above. Some of the challenges that were mentioned include uncondusive work environment, trust issues and the reaction of colleagues after declaration of their disabilities. Participant 8 indicated that his career advancement challenges started when he declared his disability and that management could not provide reasonable accommodation. Furthermore, participant 8 was reassigned and demoted to a lower role. This new role has limited career growth opportunities because it has less value adding responsibilities. Absence from work due to incapacity leave or hospitalisation influenced a participant's pay increase, bonuses and promotions. According to participants 5 and 14, the call centre environment does not accommodate persons with disabilities, especially those with hearing impairments.

It was clear from Table 5.5 that persons with partial hearing impairment have challenges with access to information. Participants 7, 9, 11 and 14 argued that they found it difficult to understand information being communicated either in meetings or telephonically and it was often necessary to ask for clarity. Participant 7 said that he had not experienced challenges but that he needs to work harder because of the disability challenges. According to participants 9 and 13, people lack understanding of disability. Participant 8 stressed that people are unsympathetic because they lack awareness and education about people with disabilities but that disability declaration helped participants to get support from their managers.

In Table 5.5, it could be further concluded that not all participants experienced career advancement challenges. It is evident that a call centre environment is not a suitable workplace for people with disabilities, especially people with hearing impairments.

The study further indicated that legislations aimed to redress historical inequalities in the workplace posed career challenges for white people. Educational levels also adversely impact career growth.

These conclusions of theme 2, subtheme 1, are also supported by the following

authors:

- Wehman (2011) states that employers lack knowledge about disabilities and the legislative requirements.
- Beatty (2012) found that employees with disabilities experience career plateaus where they remain in the same position for a long time and that advancement to a higher level is unlikely.
- Zondi (2009) mentioned that people perceive that people with disabilities are not able to do well in senior positions
- Wehman (2011) recognises that employers lack knowledge about disabilities and the legislative requirements regarding disabilities.
- Van Niekerk and Van der Merwe (2013) stress that employment, advancement and training opportunities for people with disabilities are linked to their educational levels.
- Deku (2002) stresses that an individual's knowledge of people with disabilities influences how he/she perceives them.
- The Department of Children, Women and People with Disabilities (2013) argues that the non-disabled society is ignorant of the rights of people with disabilities.
- Crowther (1999) argues that barriers encountered by disabled people vary from social barriers (perceptions and behaviours), material barriers (inaccessible structures and information) to organisational barriers (legislation, organisational policies and procedures, economic factors and practices).

Table 5.6 outlines how career advancement challenges influenced participants' careers.

Table 5.6
Impact Of Career Advancement Challenges

Main question: How did the career advancement challenges adversely influence your career?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
<p>Participant 3: "I would have felt more comfortable to declare my disability. I was just scared and not trusting of people and I did not want to be discriminated against. I was scared of that. Just did not have the confidence."</p> <p>Participant 11: "I hate my hearing aid with a passion and I think what made me eventually accept them is the day I realised that our chairman at that time was wearing hearing aids. That was for me a big ah-ha moment which helped me accept them but my mind-set has never been I am disabled or I have a partial disability ... if I chair the meeting and we need to have minutes I will ask someone else to take the minutes for me. I would say the only issue I have really ever faced was when I was an advertising manager. As an advertising manager, you have to go to radio recordings, radio adverts recordings, which is obviously audio which means that I quite often always try to take someone else with me to make sure that I was doing the right thing and listening to the right thing because obviously I was responsible for making sure that the ad was going to be right ... It was very stressful for me. I think also what happened is I never used to talk about, I used to hide it. If I did not hear something but I saw people were laughing I would laugh even though I had not understood what they were laughing about or I would pretend that I was not paying attention which then I realise was actually not a good thing because made me look like an idiot.</p>	<p>Hindered disability declaration.</p>
<p>Participant 4: "I was not getting the increases, bonuses and promotions that my colleagues were getting. I think what I am experiencing is that I am now at a lower grade than I would have been otherwise."</p> <p>Participant 8: "So I found that when I declared disability, as I mentioned earlier on, I am now call centre agent one. I was the grade nine, which was quite a high basic level of management and it was a high level and I went right back to a one. A call centre agent one. So it put me back. So all the experience that I had, all the years' experience that I had, it's like it meant nothing."</p> <p>Participant 9: "I will say that they influence my career because now I am still in the same position and I am not permanent. So it is really influencing my career in a way that I feel like I am not going forward. I am not given opportunities or chances to try something new within the organisation ... I have not got the permanent position and I am still a contractor so which influence my career in a way that I am thinking of leaving the organisation and going back to school and come back when I am better equipped to advance myself. To try and move things within the organisation or try new position that are available within the team and I do not have a direct job specification ... So because, when I am a contractor, I help around the team, I help with the admin. So anyone within the team can ask me to do</p>	<p>No increase, bonuses and promotion. Was Demoted.</p>

<p>anything, not that I mind but I feel I should have a role that I play.”</p>	
<p>Participant 5: “When, for example I want to apply for a job. Because I had missed a day because I could not come to work and, as a result of the system that is working where I cannot ask for a leave in a short space of time, as a result, I find that, no, I cannot come to work ... Then you leave, you do not come to work, that is going to count when you are applying for a job because now you have not come to work and you were supposed to be at work and it is called compliance and if you are not complying with what is supposed to take place, it is a negative in your record and it is not a very nice thing ... So there are small things but they will count when you are applying for a job. So it is those things that we have to go through each and every day and ... but anyway opportunities they say that they are there but when you look at what is given on that as a specification for that job you find that the bar is too high and you might not get there. So those are things but anyway ...”</p>	<p>Job specifications or company policy not conducive for people living with a disability.</p>
<p>Participant 6: “I do not feel I have to go to school to get something so that I can be something because I went to school, got an NQF, and I am not working in that department so it is pointless ... So I have decided I am fine with my job ... And even if I get concentration I am not trying to be a manager because I cannot even manage the chickens and the pigs in my yard or my son. So how am I going to manage people? I can handle my stress. I am not trying to exert myself any further than I have. I feel I have accomplished everything that I need to accomplish. I am just going to sit back and relax.”</p>	<p>No influence</p>
<p>Participant 11: “I hate my hearing aid with a passion and I think what made me eventually accept them is the day I realised that our chairman at that time was wearing hearing aids. That was for me a big ah-ha moment which helped me accept them but my mind-set has never been I am disabled or I have a partial disability ... if I chair the meeting and we need to have minutes I will ask someone else to take the minutes for me. I would say the only issue I have really ever faced was when I was an advertising manager. As an advertising manager, you have to go to radio recordings, radio adverts recording, which is obviously audio which means that I quite often always try to take someone else with me to make sure that I was doing the right thing and listening to the right thing because obviously I was responsible for making sure that the ad was going to be right ... It was very stressful for me. I think also what happened is I never used to talk about, I used to hide it. If I did not hear something but I saw people were laughing I would laugh even though I had not understood what they were laughing about or I would pretend that I was not paying attention which then I realise was actually not a good thing because made me look like an idiot.”</p>	<p>Rely on colleagues’ assistance to perform core responsibilities.</p>
<p>Participant 13: “It has influenced ... like I said I just came to a point whereby I was thinking I am working to survive. I do not have any vision anymore. I do not have drive anymore. I do not have something that I can say whereto from now? No creative ideas anymore. You just do what you do. You stay, you learn and you do</p>	<p>Negativity and no aspiration</p>

what you do and you go on and it is really saddening for a person like me whereby I know there are opportunities out there but then it is scary as well. You become afraid and you become an introvert because you do not know what to expect from whoever but you know why you are there and that is how situations just present themselves ... Demotivated, no self-esteem or low self-esteem. ... a person can become very depressed because with becoming depressed there were times that I actually got sick of just depression because I don't have a way out or anything."

Participant 14: "It makes one to feel that you are not productive and another thing, right now, I do not think of even looking forward to apply for any positions because of the struggle, the challenges that I am facing currently with my disabilities. So what I told myself is that I will sit here until maybe something comes along that I see that I can go for this but at the moment it is really a challenge. That is all I can say that it is really a challenge for me. With this environment, there are only few people who have got disabilities and it is all different disabilities and the treatment that we receive it is not the same. It is not the same treatment that we received and so that, on its own, it gives you that thing to say I have declared my disabilities but if I want to move to merchant services for in case they deal more with administration but, at the same time, with my disability, you think that maybe they will not give you a chance."

Participant 15: "So it had a negative impact by me not necessarily wanting to work for a company that did not really want to cater for the persons with the disability needs. Unfortunately. So, in my mind, I was thinking I want to progressively progress within my line of work. I love what I do and it is just what I am given to do, what are the facilities that I am given? It is just not there. It has a negative impact to you emotionally and you just do not want, you say to yourself you want to become a general manager here one day. What is going to happen? Is this toilet thing still going to go on? Are you going to be standing and waiting in front of everyone while everyone else is walking in and out of the toilet? You want to sit there and wait to go to the bathroom which is not necessarily, which is not a luxury whatsoever. It is an everyday need. Another thing that I came across was the ramps that they had, some of them very steep. It is all good to get a ramp but it is not all good when the ramp's decline is like that (*steep*). It needs to be level. It needs to be in a position whereby your body and your wheelchair do not feel as if it is falling or roll forward or roll backwards in fact."

Conclusions

From Table 5.6, five participants (1, 2, 7, 10 and 12) did not experience career advancement challenges. Therefore, the research question was not applicable to them. Participant 7 asserted that "I have been able to grow in this organisation, I have been given opportunities for growth. The organisation has treated me well and I have been surprised at some of the opportunities that have come my way."

Participant 5 indicated that the employer does not provide a parking for wheelchair users. Therefore, he cannot drive himself to work because of a lack of parking. As a result, he is not able to work late shifts. Participant 5 stated that absence from work that was not approved because it was short notice adversely affects employee records when applying for external job opportunities. Leave with short notice was inevitable at times due to the nature of the disability.

There seem to be emotional consequences caused by the career advancement challenges the participants faced. It can be concluded that some participants were not completely aware of these influences that the researcher elicited during the interviews. Three female participants indicated that they were tolerant of the career challenges because they have families to support, otherwise, they would have left.

These conclusions of theme 2, subtheme 2, are also supported by the views of the following authors:

- Jakovljevic and Buckley (2011) mention that employees fear to disclose their disabilities to employers because of perceived prejudice towards disability.
- Hussein et al. (2014) assert that employees, except for employees in higher-level positions and with decision-making powers, fear losing their jobs if they disclose their invisible disabilities to employers.
- Article 38 of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons (1990) prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities on different grounds including pay increases, promotions and bonuses.
- Jones (2008) asserts that an employer may equate a disabled individual's productivity to those without disability by providing reasonable accommodation.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Impact of demographics on career advancement opportunities

Theme 3 questions:

- What impact do your race, age, gender and occupational levels have on your career advancement opportunities?

- How does your disability impact your career advancement opportunities in the organisation?

Subthemes of Theme 3:

- Impact of race, age, gender, and occupational level.
- Impact of disability.

Table 5.7 below summarises the answers to the main interview question on how the demographics impact career advancement.

Table 5.7
Impact Of Race, Age, Gender, And Occupational Level On Career Advancement Opportunities

Main question: What impact do your race, age, gender and occupational levels have on your career advancement opportunities?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
<p>Participant 1: "I am happy where I am right now at this stage and I am really enjoying what I am doing, so I do not want to change where I am in my career right now. I do realise that there needs to be an opportunity for someone younger to take over the reins and start learning to take over the (<i>role</i>) function. I think the challenge for me is to start thinking about what do I want to do next."</p> <p>Participant 4: "None at all. No, I have experienced no racial discrimination, no age discrimination, no gender discrimination, occupational levels. I have advanced as well as I could. So I have had the normal training opportunities. No, I cannot say there has been any discrimination on any of those grounds."</p> <p>Participant 10: "No, I have actually always, always had the support of the management I worked with. Again, before and after the accident, no impact to my advancement opportunities whatsoever."</p> <p>Participant 11: "At the moment, I do not believe my race had any impact, to be honest. Obviously I am white, but I do not, never had, positive or negative, either way. I have never not been given a role because I was white. So I have never been.</p> <p>No, my age has not had an impact either on my career advancement.</p> <p>I do not think that being a female ever had an impact. Not within this organisation. Neither occupational level. To be honest I have never had these types of problems. I have created my own opportunities. I have proven that I work. I think it might sound boastful but I am a top achiever, I am at my age (<i>51-60 age group</i>) still recognised as talent funnily enough. So it has always been driven around my performance and I just happen to be a white female of a certain age.</p>	<p>No impact</p>

<p>So I think that the teams I have always worked with have always seen more the performance as opposed to the person.”</p> <p>Participant 12: “Anywhere I work and where I always worked in the areas, I did not experience it with people with a disability or not. I [was] always treated fairly in that way and, as I said, it was always based on your performance and what you deliver. Your skills and that. It is not about my race or my gender or my disability or that. It was fair, you benefited because you delivered and you have the expertise and the skills to fulfil the function.”</p>	
<p>Participant 2: “All I think about this is when it comes to BEE score ... because I am a woman and I am black and I have a disability I am considered first. So that is how the BEE score works. So, most of the times they will consider us first and then, if there is an opportunity, we are considered first. And I am still young. When you are young, you are around twenty-five and not above thirty-five, there are more opportunities for you to work or to get promoted. So I think, considering that, that is what (<i>company name</i>) looks at. Even when I am doing the interviews, when I am doing the screening and everything for the learnerships or for permanent employment for people with disabilities, we consider that. If you are black and you are between the ages of eighteen to thirty-five and you [are] a female, even your pay and mine are not the same as mine because I am a female and your pay and the pay for a white normal guy is not the same because of that.”</p> <p>Participant 5: “... call centre is a very ugly cruel thing that you can think of if you talk about a career and things like those. Once you reach a certain stage of life, age more than anything, and maybe you do not have the qualifications, as for example, they would say that, for example, if you are applying for this job, you must be having a degree, for example, or you must be studying for or have a certain period of time in the same position. Now looking at everything besides the disability, they may be wanting me but then I do not have the degree or I am not studying for the degree and then that takes out everything before we even come to the age ... what I am thinking and understanding is that the call centre is for people that are young and not for me (<i>41-50 age group</i>). I am just there because I do not think that there are more people with disabilities that are available that can be able to cope with the job.”</p> <p>Participant 6: “My race, being black, I do not want to work for government, that is where black people work ... So whether you are disabled, you are not disabled, if you are an uneducated black person, you think things are free and you feel you are obligated to get things for free and you are not willing to work for things. So my age, (<i>31-40 age group</i>), is old. So I cannot get a job anywhere else unless I go to school. By the time I finish school, it will be pointless because I will be competing with young people and when they retrench I am probably going to be the first person they dismiss. So I am not even trying to go there.”</p> <p>Participant 7: “It is, as I said to the answer to the previous question, I am white, I am a senior male and considering the transformation strategies that the (<i>company name</i>) does have, one understands</p>	<p>Age</p>

<p>that there is preference given to equally qualified individuals of the previously disadvantaged races and I do not bemoan the fact. So that is the only other impact that may have had was the race and age.”</p> <p>Participant 9: “I will say that when it comes to my age (<i>18-30 age group</i>), I might be seen too young to have responsibilities within the organisation. So I also think that I am still kept as a learner because my age has to do with it because I am still (<i>18-30 age group</i>) and I think I still have a lot to learn.”</p> <p>Participant 14: “When it comes to those opportunities within the current position, age does count. It does count because most of the call centre, they go for young, younger generation. They want those young generation because they are more vibey, they are more live than older people but that is me ... I am thinking like that to say because, if you look at the moment, I am the oldest person within the call centre. Yes, I am the oldest one. So most of the people who are there, they are younger. They are twenty-six/twenty-seven. ... if you look at the most of the call centres, obviously they go for a younger generation and people who are fresh from school. Those are the people they put on the call centres. So it does have an impact when it comes to age.”</p>	
<p>Participant 2: “All I think about this is when it comes to BEE score ... because I am a woman and I am black and I have a disability I am considered first. So that is how the BEE score works. So most of the times they will consider us first and then if there is an opportunity we are considered first. And I am still young. When you are young, you are around twenty-five and not above thirty-five, there are more opportunities for you to work or to get promoted. So I think considering that, that is what (<i>company name</i>) looks at it. Even when I am doing the interviews, when I am doing the screening and everything for the learnerships or for permanent employment for people with disabilities, we consider that. If you are black and you are between the ages of eighteen to thirty-five and you a female even your pay and mine are not the same as mine because I am a female and your pay and the pay for a white normal guy is not the same because of that.”</p> <p>Participant 7: “Male I do not see it being a problem.”</p> <p>Participant 8: “Gender, once again, if you look at white male it is not a preference in the work space nowadays”.</p> <p>Participant 9: “So when it comes to the gender, I do not think the gender is anything to do because we are treated equally when it comes to the gender, male and female”.</p> <p>Participant 13: “As a female it is difficult with a disability, a female with a disability. It is a little difficult because, to some extent, males have a thing where they would accept and embrace each other with certain defects but if a woman come along and there is a defect and they class you or they place you in a box of some sort you are female.”</p>	Gender

<p>Participant 2: “All I think about this is when it comes to BEE score ... because I am a woman and I am black and I have a disability I am considered first. So that is how the BEE score works. So most of the times they will consider us first and then if there is an opportunity we are considered first. And I am still young. When you are young, you are around twenty-five and not above thirty-five, there are more opportunities for you to work or to get promoted. So I think considering that, that is what (<i>company name</i>) looks at it. Even when I am doing the interviews, when I am doing the screening and everything for the learnerships or for permanent employment for people with disabilities, we consider that. If you are black and you are between the ages of eighteen to thirty-five and you a female even your pay and mine are not the same as mine because I am a female and your pay and the pay for a white normal guy is not the same because of that.”</p> <p>Participant 3: “I am not sure how ... because if I am here that long in the (<i>company name</i>), twenty-seven years ago, those years things were still very tense in terms of race. If you were not a certain race, it was more difficult and then obviously when things started changing in terms of politics and all of those things, then with BEE and all of those things, they had to start looking at advancing people of other races, age, gender. They had to take all of those things into account. So again, in my case, I cannot answer for certain if my race was a big factor, it probably was. I would think it was at those years. ... when I started in the (<i>company name</i>), things were still very political and tense and whatever but then when they started taking on more in terms of BEE, Indian, coloureds, Africans, etcetera, then I would say it was a case of ... I would not say that my age was a problem.”</p> <p>Participant 7: “It is, as I said to the answer to the previous question, I am white, I am a senior male and considering the transformation strategies that the (<i>company name</i>) does have one understands that there is preference given to equally qualified individuals of the previously disadvantaged races and I do not bemoan the fact. So that is the only other impact that may have had was the race and age.”</p> <p>Participant 8: “Race, let’s start with race. I hate to play the race card but, yes, especially white males do not get promotions anymore.”</p> <p>Participant 15: “... on an unfortunate side it does really have big effect because obviously due to the fact that I am a white male, and a white disabled male, it becomes very, very difficult. Not even for career advancement but to actually get the job first-hand because in job speculations and whatever it must be BEE compliant. There is all these factors that come in and since the laws are now eighty/twenty, if I am not mistaken, we fall short of that twenty even more because that is not ... that is just able body. Where to be a physically challenged white male is very, very difficult within the society to think about even just getting a job but when it comes to career advancement, you already got the job.”</p>	<p>Race</p>
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Conclusions

It is evident from Table 5.7 that participants have different perspectives on career advancement challenges. The inception of BBBEE brought changes in employment. Black participants indicated that BEE accorded them employment opportunities while white participants had limited opportunities. It was found that call centre work was not suitable for persons with various disabilities but good for the younger generation. Table 5.6 further indicated that call centres do not provide advancement opportunities.

The findings indicated that females with disabilities work harder than their male counterparts.

Table 5.7 indicated that five participants did not experience career advancement challenges. It could be concluded that the participants experience challenges irrespective of their demographics.

These conclusions of theme 3, subtheme 1, are also supported in the views of the following authors:

- Watermeyer et al. (2006), mentions that black people with disabilities experience inferior conditions compared to their white counterparts.
- Sing and Govender (2007) and Watermeyer et al., (2006), stress that employment of people with disabilities benefits the organisations because they earn Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) points and achieve EE targets which makes an organisation appear civically minded to the community in which it operates.
- Watermeyer et al. (2006) stress that the provision of skills advancement opportunities to all employees will achieve employment equity in the labour market. They further argue that appointments should be based on competences (skills and abilities) rather than meeting EE targets and goals.
- Hernandez et al. (2008) argue that managers think that recruiting persons with disabilities would result in an increase in supervisory time, low

productivity and frequent absences.

Table 5.8 outlines the impact of disability on career advancement opportunities.

Table 5.8
Impact Of Disability On Career Advancement Opportunities

Main question: How does your disability impact your career advancement opportunities in the organisation?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
<p>Participant 1: “So my experience at (<i>company name</i>) has been that I have always disclosed it (disability) to any manager and my managers have changed many times over the eighteen years and so far I have not encountered an obstacle or resistance or concern from any of the managers that I have disclosed this to. I think the focus is on can you do the job as opposed to you have a disability and that, so that has been the focus, and I think obviously, in terms of what do I do next, I am not going to volunteer to go train a group of thirty people because I will not be comfortable doing that and I do not think my manager would expect me to do that. So I think there is a mutual understanding and I think the organisation is quite supportive in terms of people with disabilities in my experience. Maybe someone else has had a different experience.”</p> <p>Participant 3: “Right now, at this point where I am in my career, I cannot say it impacts me greatly. It is challenging, yes. I am not sure how to answer that one.</p> <p>That fact that not everybody knows. My colleagues know, my boss knows. Very few people know about my disability so I cannot say people are using that against me if I do not advance, no, but how does it impact my career advancement is the fact that I still do struggle. So if I am sitting in big meetings and all of that with lots of people, it becomes difficult to follow conversations in its entirety sometimes and then so it affects your performance. So I would think going forward, should I have to move out of where I am now ... I think I am also in a comfort zone, I have an understanding boss, understanding colleagues, I can ... I am more in a controlled environment so I can manage but I cannot advance in terms of my career where I am now and that is not because of my disability but that is more because of scope and opportunity, etcetera.”</p> <p>Participant 7: “I have not felt, no. I just need to be aware of myself, I need to be aware of my surroundings, I need to play to my strengths rather than to my weaknesses and by doing so there are many people in the organisation that when I do tell them that this and this disability they say what? I would not have guessed.”</p> <p>Participant 10: “Again there initially when I was not used to using my arm, it impacted me only. Everybody knew that I was competent but</p>	<p>No impact.</p>

<p>suddenly I could not plug in, for example, a projector myself, I could not carry stuff up and down the escalator which is why I have got a tag now for me to use the lifts ... I never used to ask anybody to assist me with anything. So that was really the only adjustment where sometimes I had to ask a team member: can you please just help me carry the projector or can you help me to get ... where you need both your hands to screw stuff in, sometimes then you have to ask for assistance but, other than that, again it had nothing to do with career advancement impact to me at all. It is just little frustrations because now you actually have to ask someone for help ... It does not impact anybody but me. So from career advancement opportunities I cannot say that I have been impacted.”</p> <p>Participant 11: “So I do not believe they impacted. They do not impacts on positively or negatively because obviously it not ... the reality is that you could play up your disability which I do not from a BEE but also I do not qualify and it is not my style, to be honest, but I said for me it has not impacted. The only time it ... actually, it is more a personal choice. So, like I said, I would never become an advertising manager again because I do not want to put myself into that type of stress. There are other opportunities. There are other things I could do that would not have to rely on audio and therefore make my own personal life more complicated but it does not ... it has not impacted on my career advancement opportunities from an employer perspective. It is a personal choice.”</p> <p>Participant 12: “... mine is not so visible. It does not impair me where I am not mobile and the only reason why people will know about it is that I would mention it because of making a conversation, improve a conversation or give them the understanding when they do speak to me that I have that disability. It is just to make it practical ... my disability does not impact on my delivery of my work.”</p> <p>Participant 14: “I do not want to lie. I have not tried to say maybe tried to move to other places as yet since I have the disability but I do not also think that it will hinder me if I want to move to other position. The only place that I see it will be a challenge it is the call centre. That is the only place that I see it will be a challenge for me but other position I do not see and I do not foresee any problems to move into other positions but I have not also tried to see if I can move to other positions.”</p>	
<p>Participant 2: “No, I think looking at (<i>company name</i>), let’s say with my post now, there are a lot of people wanted this position but because they specifically wanted someone with disability ... with a certain department there need to be certain people with disabilities. So sometimes they will try it by all means to get someone with a disability for that post so that it balances out but even though ... remember, when you are applying for the positions, as I said before, if you are disabled, your CV is considered first unlike normal people. They will consider yours first and see if you meet the criteria of what they are looking for.”</p>	<p>Preferred for employment.</p>
<p>Participant 9: “... if I say I want to apply at the call centre because</p>	<p>Limiting job scope and</p>

<p>with the matric, it is very normal, I can get a job in the call centre. I will have a problem now because I am hard on hearing and my hearing aid is not suitable for the phones. So it is going to be a challenge for me to work there because of my disability.”</p> <p>Participant 2: "... when I was doing the survey and asking people around with disabilities I have never had a normal individual saying this is my fourth learnership or my fifth learnership but go to people with disabilities, they will tell you this is my seventh learnership and can you see how painful that is? They are rotating and now, instead of using a learnership as an opportunity to grow and become someone in life, they are now using a learnership as a source of income of which it must not be like that. Instead of them (learners), taking a learnership as an opportunity to grow and get experience and stuff, they are now doing it so that they get money just to rent out the place and that is not nice."</p>	<p>opportunities.</p>
<p>Participant 4: "Now this is the point at which one would talk about prejudice maybe? Prejudice against mental illness. ... [prejudice] makes managers nervous. It is maybe harder for a manager to accept than a physical disability which is physical, it is tangible, it is measurable, it does not affect the personality of the person. Bipolar is not a personality disorder, it is a mood disorder, so it is not in the same category as schizophrenia, for instance, or psychosis. It is not what you might call madness, but employers do not always understand that difference and mental illness is bracketed with all kinds of other mental illness which, of course, cause a lot of stigma. Definitely stigma. It becomes a trust issue. Partly, they (managers) do not know if they can trust you to be reliable and, in my case, that is a perfectly well-founded fear because my absences would prevent me from delivering which obviously disadvantages the manager too. ... thinking about it, it indirectly affects the manager's performance because they get managed on their delivery and their delivery is only as good as the team's delivery. You follow the logic? But apart from the nervousness about whether you can deliver or not, there is definitely a stigma about mental illness as well which causes perhaps something uncomfortable in the relationship with the manager. It is not a normal relationship like you would have ... like a male manager might have with a male colleague and they go for beer together and they understand that they are like people. So there is a stigma where the manager realises that you are not, I do not want to say not normal, but they cannot relate to you the way they would relate to a perfectly non-disabled friend."</p>	<p>Stigma and limited knowledge influence personal relationships</p>
<p>Participant 5: "I do not know how to put this one. If you have a disability ... there are certain signs that you will see that they are working for you and they are not. ... for example, a director may say that I want a person with disability in that department but then, in terms of the conditions that are set up, for example, in that area, you look at them and you say should I apply for that job? No way that that department is going to have A, B, C, D which might be, for example, the hours that are not going to be conducive for me to be able to cope. For example, there is a department where they have a</p>	<p>Lack of reasonable accommodation.</p>

<p>rotation of a day and night and you might be ending up with a day shift and then with a night shift ... so even if that was an opportunity for me but then it takes out anything that I would have liked to do with that department.”</p> <p>Participant 13: “Yes. Because we are still very paper-based where there is admin involved and there is numbers involved, you need precision, and with my condition, at times precision is not my high big point because numbers can look a bit different so I might make a mistake. You need to be precise on things like that and on that has an impact. Especially also systems. Some of the systems they use ... like maybe the team leader has some specific system. My reader, my software package, does not read that program. So that will now set me back. I will not be able to become a team leader because my reader does not read XYZ or there is some certain functions ... I need to look at people’s paperwork when they bring it in and okay it or ... and send it off to finance and things like that. So that hinders my growth in the workplace or workspace. So it has an impact in that way. If I have to think of becoming a team leader in my area, so now I have to think out of the box to move in an area where I can become something else and that is what I am saying. Where I saw the light at the end of the tunnel and maybe something else I can do but everything is still paper-based in my area. So that makes it difficult for me.”</p>	
<p>Participant 8: “... my route is not the same as everybody else and I need a bit more help from management. In other words, them offering me a training programme or so but I cannot do it on my own. Since I am here, it is almost like I am on my own.”</p> <p>Participant 15: “The problems that I foresee facing when it comes to career advancement will be the travelling because it requires you to travel to the books of businesses ... or not the books of businesses but your clients such ... You have to be solely independent. You cannot always have a colleague tag along or whatever. You need to be in that space whereby you can do things yourself and that is the one challenge which I foresee facing but, with modern technology, to be honest, with cars allowing the wheelchair to be put on the roof or you can dismantle the wheelchair yourself and put it in, next to you in the car or something, that might be the answer to that question. That might be the answer to the challenges that we face but those are the only challenges.”</p>	<p>Limited support and training opportunities.</p>

Conclusions

It is evident from Table 5.8 that the most prevalent impact disability has on career advancement according to the employees includes that they are sometimes preferred for a position (the position is thus reserved for an individual with a disability). The disability impacts on the responsibility provided to them and they are provided with limited opportunities. Employees with disabilities perceive that there is

a stigma against them and that it negatively influences their relationships. They experience a lack of reasonable accommodation and feel that they are provided with limited support and training opportunities.

There seem to be different challenges caused by disability in workplaces. It could be concluded that not all colleagues of people with disabilities provide assistance; some are not comfortable and are not inclined to offer assistance.

These conclusions of theme 3 are also supported in the views of the following authors:

- Belzil and Bognanno (2010) mention that education, age and tenure are variables that influence decisions regarding promotion, scope of the position and opportunities.
- Hussein et al. (2014) confirm that employees with disabilities who occupy senior positions with decision-making powers are more likely to advance in their careers compared to disabled people in semi-skilled positions.
- Hussein et al. (2014) believe that employees fear losing their jobs if they declare disabilities.
- LaPierre and Zimmerman (2012) indicate that females do not progress as do their male counterparts.
- Vickers (2009) claims that stereotypes and stigmas against employees with disabilities are the reason for their high unemployment rates.
- Deku (2002) mentions society's lack of knowledge about people with disabilities.
- Hernandez et al., (2008) indicate that management perceptions are a barrier to initiatives to employ people with disabilities and to provide reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities.
- The World Health Organisation (2011) claims that most jobs can be performed by persons with disabilities if all reasonable accommodation needs

are provided.

5.4.4 Theme 4: Suggestion to management

Theme 4 questions:

- What suggestion could you propose to management for overcoming the career advancement challenges you are currently facing due to your disability?

Subtheme of Theme 4:

- Suggestions to management.

Table 5.9 discusses the suggestions proposed by the participants to management in order to redress the challenges they face.

Table 5.9
Suggestions To Management

Main question: What suggestion could you propose to management for overcoming the career advancement challenges you are currently facing due to your disability?	
Verbatim evidence	Sub-theme code
<p>Participant 1: "... I have been very fortunate in the managers that I have had but I do not know that across the organisation all managers are necessarily sensitive enough to people with disabilities and I think what we can do is create more awareness around, across the entire organisation. It is not only with the managers to be sensitive to it but also I think we could do more to start making people feel more comfortable. ... I am not shy to disclose that I have a disability and I think the more people do that, the more comfortable people will be to disclose their disabilities. So it becomes not a big thing at all."</p> <p>Participant 9: "The suggestion that I could now propose to the management is take time to understand our disabilities. You should not just employ us because they want to say that (<i>company name</i>) use disabled people, we are treating people equally, but try to understand the background, the nature of our disabilities, try to make the environment more suitable for us ..."</p> <p>Participant 12: "... we are also proud people and is to be employed because of my skills and what I can deliver not because I am disabled and get the charter right or favour me because I have disability or have to be sensitive to my disability to say the understanding not to treat me awkwardly. Treat me like the other</p>	<p>Provide disability sensitisation</p>

people but also to be sensitive.”

Participant 13: “I think management firstly should really be taken through sensitisation and they should have a special course for team leaders and management on how to deal with people with different or various disabilities and they should be taught what are disabilities. They do not understand that concept and then there is also a thing because these are the people that we are all supposed to look up to. How you speak and how you act in your role makes a difference to someone else to say that is where I want to be. It has an impact. So they need that sensitisation, that disability training or session or something, whereby they can really understand ...

... from a HR point of view, when people are employed, and it is people with disabilities, try to find out what is happening in their lives. Do they have husband and wives, children, partners? Their social aspects. You do not have to know in detail what is happening.”

Participant 14: “I am just hoping that your report maybe will enlighten management to say people with disability, it is there. It happens. It can happen to anybody. So they can be more aware of it ... So it (disability) tends to be ignored in a way but not necessarily not that they do not know it but it puts [it] there at the back of the head and only when something happens then they will only think about that to say, by the way, this person has this condition. So I am just hoping that the report will make management to be fully aware and try to be more supportive. Not to say we are taking our conditions and making excuses because of our conditions, but try to be more supportive and also, on their side, maybe find out if there is any ways that they can ... because we are depending on this work. So if they can also try and see or monitor on once a year to see are you still coping or is there anything else that we can help you with, assist you or things like that. Just to show that they understand our situation. Not to say all the time, they nail you down to say you do not do this, you do not do that, but knowing exactly that you have a challenge as well.”

Participant 15: “... I think they should attend some type of workshop which explains how to treat someone with a disability in their environment. I do understand that there are some similar things but that only happens to a selective few people.”

Participant 2: “... we had some people with disabilities who were on the wheelchairs. Those people, they cannot go anywhere where there is stairs, no lifts and like that. So some of them, the disadvantage that I noticed was they were left behind here in (*company headquarters*) ... instead of going to that side (to a branch). Let us say that is an opportunity in (*the branch*) they cannot even apply because the environment does not accommodate them. They cannot be up and down that side.”

Participant 5: “My suggestion would be first a thorough research as to how to accommodate a person with disability in work environments to be done. It has not been done as yet, that is my

Provide reasonable accommodation

<p>feeling at the moment. It has not been done or maybe, if it was done, it was not done like, for example, talking to a person with disability.</p> <p>And policies, that is what I always say, policies are designed by a person and that person must design the policy in order to accommodate the employee and that person, if he is clued or has the idea as to what it is that is happening, then he will be able to understand what it means and that is why I am saying research first and then everything will come together and then people with disability will be able to go to work and have no problems.”</p> <p>Participant 11: “So what I have recommended is that we introduce subtitles in any video-based training material. I have also suggested that when we have important internal broadcast, so for our annual results or big announcements in the (<i>company name</i>), that they also put subtitles because you can hire people to do immediate text thing, a telecast ... Other recommendations I made which had been adopted is funnily enough that I could not hear the fire alarm at the emergency exit. The emergency alarm I could not hear it because of the type of sound that it was and it was ... I could not hear, it was very shrill and that is the type of sound I do not hear. So what the (<i>company name</i>) has introduced was then, at the same time, having someone (evacuation officers) say this is an emergency exercise. Please exit. Not just rely on the siren ... You could make your light flicker so people realise there is a difference ...”</p> <p>Participant 15: “So the very first one which has been on my mind for quite some time is having a company which specialises in disability audit to come in to the company and have an audit of disabilities, have an audit of the parking, the bathrooms just so that the current company can have a guide on what they are doing wrong and what they are doing right.”</p> <p>Participant 15: “So when it comes to sick leave and whatever, I think, from that perspective, it must be just re-looked at from a physically challenged person’s point of view. And also in saying that when it comes to maybe working from home, why cannot a physically challenged person ... the internet can do anything these days when it comes ... myself I have attended some Skype meetings whereby I have been off ill and I desperately needed to attend an urgent meeting with one of my clients. You Skype them. Video chat. We have all ... we have the technology, we just have to use it, and for the company to allow us to do that. So if you find a case whereby, let’s say for instance, someone cannot sit in a chair for more than five or six hours a day, let him work half day if possible ... Let someone work half day here and then half day at home. If it is data capturing let him work from home. As long as he is meeting his target, as long as he is doing what his KPIs are, I do not see why that should be a problem for him not to be working at home. So I think from that aspect, the company must really look into that ...”</p>	
<p>Participant 2: “And I think the other thing that they should continue doing is employing people with disabilities, permanent post not learnerships. For permanent positions, not learnerships, because we</p>	<p>Provide permanent employment opportunities and</p>

<p>get, we understand what they are trying to do because they say some people do not have experience but how about those people with experience. They deserve more than a learnership. They can be appointed for permanent positions.</p> <p>...you hardly find a post that says this is permanent post for someone with a disability. It is either it is a contract or it is a learnership. I am telling you now, I would not want someone to call me for a learnership. For what? I want the permanent post and if they are not creating those permanent roles for people with disabilities, who is going to do that? No one. And I think it will also increase the BEE scorecard for them. It will.”</p> <p>Participant 9: “The suggestion that I could now propose to the management is take time to understand our disabilities. You should not just employ us because they want to say that (<i>company name</i>) use disabled people, we are treating people equally, but try to understand the background, the nature of our disabilities, try to make the environment more suitable for us ... And employ more disabled people.</p> <p>But they should not just employ us because now they are trying to make us feel equal but because they need us within the organisation. Not just to fill up their numbers and make the company reputation look good so that outside people seeing it is a company that value everyone but while inside our disability are not being understood.</p> <p>They need us and they should give us roles within because most of the disabled people within the organisation, most that I know, they are in the roles where they are assistants or they do administrative work. So they should not give us work but give us something that will challenge us.</p> <p>As a disabled person, speaking from a disabled person, when you are given an administrative work, an admin work, for me it feels like, speaking for me only, I am not sure about the other disabled people how they feel ... I feel like people think that because I am disabled that is the only work that I can do, paperwork where I do not engage with the customers or engage with our partners. Always be on the backseat because now I feel it is because of my disability.”</p> <p>Participant 12: “... we are also proud people and is to be employed because of my skills and what I can deliver not because I am disabled and get the charter right or favour me because I have disability or have to be sensitive to my disability to say the understanding not to treat me awkwardly. Treat me like the other people but also to be sensitive.”</p>	<p>increase responsibilities</p>
<p>Participant 3: “So I am going to try them (management) and go via them and see how they can help me if I want to find something else in terms of career path in the (<i>company name</i>), if they can assist me or point me in the right direction and get me in touch with the right people who I can go to help me to advance my career without</p>	<p>No suggestions</p>

<p>having to go through all the difficult challenges that I face, taking that into account and accommodating me. That would be an opportunity.”</p> <p>Participant 4: “Off the top of my head, and obviously it is not the first time I have thought about this, suggestions to management are to congratulate them on the way they handle incapacity leave. So I think their incapacity leave policy is good. Suggestions for improvement. I do not know if they could have improved on the way they have treated my disability because any adverse effects I have experienced are simply natural consequences of my disability. So they could not have made allowances for me and said you were hospitalised therefore we expect less delivery from you. You cannot. This is a business. So, no, I have no suggestions for improvement.”</p> <p>Participant 6: “I do not have any suggestions. I just suggest that they keep up the good work.”</p> <p>Participant 7: “As I say I do not really see the challenges. My suggestion would be more for the individuals that have challenges not necessarily for management. My suggestion would be is: do not keep blaming your disability for work that you struggling with. Do the very best to understand your disability, understand its reaches and work to the very best of your ability to maximise what you can do. Always have a positive attitude.</p> <p>Based on my own experience, yes, the environment is very conducive. I have declared my disabilities, I am on the disability register of the (<i>company name</i>), they know that, I have been invited to their disability meetings and such but yet I have not seen any detrimental effects on my career advancement in the (<i>company name</i>). So I believe the (<i>company name</i>) is conducive, they are cognisant of those things from personal experience. Those that feel that the (<i>company name</i>) is not conducive, those that I have interacted with, I believe that maybe their attitude is not quite right about where they want to work and how they want to work and about themselves.”</p> <p>Participant 10: “There are really none. I am actually fine. I probably should say thank you very much to (<i>company name</i>) for allowing a person like me to realise their full potential. I know that most people look ... it has something to do with me as an individual and my attitude towards the disability firstly. I do not regard it as a disability. I rather regard it as there is a new way of having to do things and you have accepted it so just move on. You cannot sit and wallow in pity or think somebody else must come to your rescue. If you need anything, tell people.”</p>	
<p>Participant 8: “The suggestion is not to look in an interview who is the strongest person like in people in my case now. Offer that training opportunity and offer that coaching on the side-line so that if something opens up that you are ready to go in there because I do not believe I am supposed to always sit at a call centre level agent one. It is not always about grades, it is not always about salary but, yes, you want that opportunity.”</p>	<p>Provide development opportunities</p>

<p>Participant 8: “I know team leaders and managers are busy people but they should connect more with their staff. Connect more in a sense whereby you set aside five minutes just to chat and to touch base and get to know your people so you know what their aspirations are or you know what the difficulties are. So it is not all about black and white just to say these are the figures. Yes, you are good or, no, you are not good. It is not as clear cut as that.</p> <p>Get down onto the human level. ... it gets preached that we need to treat our customers with the human level but why is this not applied to our managers and team leaders? Because we all work with people. I have got my external customer, they have got their internal customer.”</p> <p>Participant 13: “... from a HR point of view, when people are employed, and it is people with disabilities, try to find out what is happening in their lives. Do they have husband and wives, children, partners? Their social aspects. You do not have to know in detail what is happening.”</p>	<p>Connect with employees</p>
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Conclusions

Table 5.9 discussed the suggestions to management in order redress the identified career advancement challenges. These suggestions are solely the views of the participants. As per the above table, participants 4, 6, 7 and 10 had no suggestions.

From Table 5.9 the participants indicated the following suggestions for management:

- provide disability sensitisation,
- provide reasonable accommodations,
- provide permanent employment opportunities and increase responsibilities, and
- connect with employees.

5.5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Data analysis of the interviews data yielded four themes relating to career advancement challenges people with disabilities faced. The following themes were identified using Tesch’s (1990) method of content analysis: (1) explanation of disability; (2) career advancement challenges; (3) impact of demographics on career

advancement opportunities; and (4) suggestions to management.

5.5.1 Explanation of disability

In Theme 1, the participants reported disabilities of all natures. Seven individuals reported hearing impairment, three have physical disabilities, two are bipolar or have other psychological disorders, one is epileptic and has a brain tumour, one has a learning disability, one is an amputee and one is partially sighted. Due to limited knowledge about various disabilities, the researcher asked the participants to explain their disabilities.

The literature reported that there is a lack of a universal definition of disability. Every country has a different definition of what constitutes disability. Nonetheless, it is significant that there is a paradigm shift from the medical model of disability (where disability is identified as a curable deficit which confines a person's ability to perform a job because of illness) to the social model of disability (which identifies disability as a social phenomenon caused by environmental and social factors) (Crowther, 1999; Du Plessis, 2013; Pfeiffer, 2001). According to Rugwiji (2012), individuals with disabilities in the medical model are identified as a "problem" that needs to be treated by medicine, whereas the social model considers society to be the cause of individual disability. Du Plessis (2013) finds that the social model intends to eradicate barriers in order to create an inclusive and balanced environment for people with disabilities. Mehrotra (2013) further argues that cultural and social impediments disable and restrict people with disabilities and the success of a social model requires buy-in from the state and society to dismantle socio-cultural barriers (Ngwena, 2005).

In this study, the participants were knowledgeable about the nature of their disabilities. Thus, the interviews could therefore continue.

5.5.2 Career advancement challenges

The study identified the following most prevalent career advancement challenges individuals with disabilities face:

- lack of awareness or understanding,

- the environment is not conducive for people with disabilities,
- slow or no promotion opportunities, and
- low opportunities to be selected for a position due to disability.

Some participants reported no career advancement challenges. It is thus evident that not all people with disabilities face career advancement challenges.

These findings are also supported in the views of the following authors:

- Wehman (2011) advocates that employers lack knowledge about disabilities and its legislative requirements.
- Hernandez et al. (2008) argue that people with disabilities encounter career advancement challenges which hinder their career advancements.
- Hernandez et al. (2008) find that majority of employees with declared disabilities occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions and are restricted to advance or be promoted.
- Lindstrom et al. (2011) argue that many adults with disabilities occupy positions characterised by low wages with little or no chance of advancement.
- Wilson-Kovacs et al. (2008) are of the view that career advancement for professionals with disabilities is precarious due to their exclusion from decision-making processes and unconstructive performance feedback.
- Beatty (2012) states that barriers to career advancement opportunities for persons with disabilities are misconceptions and pity which jeopardise their advancement. Beatty (2012) further argues that employees with disabilities experience career plateaus where they remain in the same position for a long time and that advancement to a higher level is unlikely.

The challenges faced by the participants in the study indicated that their disability adversely influences them in the following ways:

- The negative reaction from management and colleagues hindered the declaration of their disabilities.
- They received none or very limited increases, bonuses and promotion opportunities.
- One individual was demoted after declaring his disability.
- No job specifications or company policy to create a conducive workplace for people with disabilities.
- Some of the participants relied on colleagues' assistance to perform core responsibilities.
- Negativity and no aspiration to perform well in their jobs.

Hussein et al. (2014) also found that employees fear losing their jobs if they declare their disabilities. Donnelly and Given (2010) confirmed that attitudes and perceptions of managers and colleagues hinder initiatives to employ individuals with disabilities and they are often overlooked during promotion and bonus decisions.

It is evident from the findings that Human Resource and Transformation have a significant role to play. Human Resource practitioners need to monitor the careers of people with disabilities in relation to Human Resource practices and ensure fairness of career opportunities. Transformation needs to create a conducive environment through disability sensitisation initiatives and protect the persons who declare their disabilities from victimisation.

5.5.3 Impact of demographics on career advancement opportunities

The sample comprised different age, gender, race and occupational levels. The ages of the participants were within the brackets of the economically active population, ranging from 21 to 59 years old. The findings indicated that ten (75%) females and five (25%) males participated in the study. Low representation of males could have influenced the findings, hence the findings showed 75% perspectives of female participants. Participants' profile per race indicated that there were five Africans, two Coloureds, one Indian and seven Whites. The participants occupied positions from

semi-skilled to senior management with no representation at unskilled and top management. Seven (47%) of participants were at semi-skilled levels. Seven (47%) of participants were White and that could have influenced the findings of the study because the researcher was exposed to more White perspectives.

Another theme that emerged from this study is the impact that demographics have on career advancement challenges. The findings indicated that:

- The inception of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (BBBEE) accorded black people more employment opportunities while white participants had limited opportunities due to Employment Equity (EE) and Affirmative Action (AA) requirements. It is evident that these legislations are perceived not to benefit all the designated groups equally.
- Females with disabilities perceive themselves as working harder than their male counterparts.
- Most of the participants indicated that they experienced challenges irrespective of their demographics.

The participants furthermore indicated that their disability had a major impact on their career advancement. They were of the opinion that a lot of employers only appoint individuals with disabilities in order to meet their BEE and EE targets. Because of their disabilities, they are provided with jobs with limited scopes and opportunities. The participants were further under the perception that stigma and limited knowledge from their managers and colleagues negatively influence their personal relationships at work. Reasonable accommodation is not always provided to them in order to do their work sufficiently and effectively and they are provided with limited support and training opportunities.

These findings are in contrast to the views of several authors. Watermeyer et al (2006) found that black people with disabilities experience inferior working conditions compared to their white counterparts. Sebola and Khalo (2010) further found that white males and females with disabilities occupy management positions while black people with disabilities mainly occupy low-level positions.

It is the responsibility of Human Resource practitioners to limit the possible adverse impact caused by the demographics in the work environment. The findings indicate that Human Resource and Transformation has not ensured fairness in decisions relating to demographics, particularly disability.

5.5.4 Suggestions to management

The participants provided several suggestions to address the identified career barriers people with disabilities face. The suggestions were directed to management or people with influence in decision-making. The most prevalent suggestions were:

- to provide disability sensitisation,
- to provide reasonable accommodation,
- to provide permanent employment opportunities and increase responsibilities, and,
- to connect with employees.

These findings are also supported by the views of the following authors:

- Disability sensitisation is an initial critical step to ensure an accessible and inclusive environment for people with disabilities (World Health Organisation, 2011).
- Most jobs can be performed by persons with disabilities if all reasonable accommodation needs are provided (World Health Organisation, 2011).
- Disability discrimination includes the employer's failure to provide reasonable accommodation (Keen & Oulton, 2009).

The above recommendations signify that Human Resource needs to connect with employees. Transformation will assist by creating an inclusive and accommodative atmosphere through disability sensitisation.

The study achieved the first three empirical objectives stated in Chapter 1, section 1.3.2. The specific objectives for empirical study were:

- to explore the career advancement challenges facing people living with a disability in sampled companies in the Gauteng Province;
- to explore whether people from various race, age, gender and occupational levels differ in their perceptions regarding career advancement challenges for people with disabilities;
- to formulate suggestions to address career advancement barriers facing people living with a disability; and
- to suggest topics for future research in the disciplines of Human Resources management and Transformation.

The section below summarises the discussion of this chapter.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to analyse and interpret the primary data collected from the participants. The researcher, as a primary research instrument, used qualitative data analysis techniques to provide descriptive findings through evidence from participants using raw data or quotes. The researcher applied the phenomenological epoché (suspension or bracketing) in order to avoid subjectivity and suspend plausible relationships to lived experiences reflected by participants (Barnes, 2003; Fay & Riot, 2007; King & Horrocks, 2010; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; 2010). The data was analysed according to the sequence of research questions and the relationships between the themes.

In this chapter, the researcher presented the findings of the study. The researcher used semi-structure interviews to collect the data. All participants met the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. It could be concluded that the purposes of chapter 5 were fulfilled.

In the next chapter, the researcher will present the overall conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 discussed the findings and compared them to the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3. In this chapter, the conclusions, contributions, limitations and recommendations for future research are discussed.

The objectives of this study were to:

- explore the perceptions of individuals with disabilities regarding the career advancement challenges they face; and
- determine whether the perceptions of career advancement challenges disabled individuals from different races, ages, genders and occupational levels differ.

The study produced insightful findings and interpretations on the challenges people with disabilities face in the workplace. The findings created a body of knowledge in the field of Human Resources and Inclusion and Diversity.

The literature in Chapters 2 and 3 allowed the researcher to gather data related to the problem and the objectives of the study. The researcher used snowball sampling to gather data and interviewed 15 participants. The researcher conducted individual face-to-face interviews until data saturation was reached. The participants were from different functions and worked for different companies.

The researcher used Tesch's (1990) data analysis method. Strategies employed to ensure the quality and integrity of the data (see section 4.3.7 of Chapter 4) were confirmability, transferability, authenticity and credibility.

Below are 4 main themes that were developed from the data analysis (see section 5.4 of Chapter 5):

- Explanation of disability
- Career advancement challenges

- Impact of demographics on career advancement opportunities
- Suggestions to management

Subthemes also emerged from the main themes during data analysis.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Two sets of conclusions are presented in this section. The first focuses on the literature review while the second focuses on the empirical study.

6.2.1 Conclusions from the literature review

The objectives of the literature review were:

- to conceptualise people with disabilities;
- to conceptualise career advancement practices which include recruitment, selection, training and promotions;
- to critically evaluate career advancement challenges people with disabilities face; and,
- to critically evaluate the influence of race, age, gender and occupational levels on perceptions of career advancement challenges.

The study fulfilled all the literature review objectives stated above. The literature review indicated that there was a need for empirical research about the phenomenon. The researcher found that the current literature about the career challenges people with disabilities face was not sufficient and deliberate. The literature was not a reflection of the perspectives of individuals with disabilities regarding the challenges they face, specifically within the South African context.

In the literature review, the researcher found that different countries have different legislations that protect and promote the rights of people living with disabilities in order to eliminate discrimination. The legislations encourage organisations to be inclusive of and provide reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities. In the international legislations review, the researcher discussed the following

legislations: The Disability Discrimination Act, Americans with Disability Act, and the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons. In the South African context, the researcher discussed The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA, 1996), the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (SA. Department of Labour, 2015) and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000 (SA. Department of Justice, 2000).

It seems evident that weak legislations do not take into account the skills of persons with disabilities. According to the literature, there is a lack of understanding of disabilities and the legislative requirements to accommodate them. Employers appear to be more concerned about meeting the quotas of the employment of people with disabilities rather than with advancing the lives of employees and considering the value that employees with disabilities can add to the organisation. It was furthermore found that employers are reluctant to employ people with disabilities even if they meet all stipulated inherent requirements. The literature revealed that employees with disabilities face challenges that hinder their career growth. The researcher founded that the majority of employees with declared disabilities occupy entry-level and semi-skilled positions characterised by low-wages and repetitive low-level training which minimises advancement opportunities. Employees with disabilities easily reach career plateaus. Misconceptions, lack of career development, architectonic barriers, inadequate marketable skills and the lack of disability policy affect the unemployment and career advancement of people with disabilities. The literature indicated that the representation of people with disabilities within the labour market is unequal as white males dominate over black people and females.

The literature revealed that it makes economic sense to employ people with disabilities in a workplace. People with disabilities contribute to a diversified workforce, have a low absenteeism rate and a long tenure. They are committed, reliable, loyal, hardworking and dependable employees; they are a source of untapped skills and creativity; they have work ethics, enhance a company's image and facilitate BEE scores. It is, however, clear that most employers do not recognise the benefits of employing people with disabilities.

People have stereotypes and prejudices against people with disabilities which have an adverse impact on the way they interact with them. Preconceptions, myths and stereotypes about people with disabilities are unfounded, distorted or partial truths. Negative perceptions commonly come from people who are apprehensive or fear being disabled themselves and they influence the employment of people with disabilities. Disability sensitisations could change the negative attitudes which are borne from society's lack of knowledge about people with disabilities.

The literature review defined the theoretical perspectives of previous research findings in relation to career challenges people with disabilities face, career advancement practices and career experiences in terms of race, age, gender and occupational levels. The theoretical perspective was done to:

- define people with disabilities;

In the literature, the researcher found that ILO signatories have no common definition of the concept of disability. Each country (China, UK, USA and SA) has different meanings attached to the concept. Nevertheless, the legislations provided guidelines on what constitutes disability.

- define career advancement practices;

The literature revealed that the concept of a career is an on-going learning process characterised by a gradual climb on the career ladder but not limited to upward movement. A career has changed from being hierarchical and characterised by long-term relationships, to dynamic careers with flat and boundary-less structures and short-term employment.

In the literature, career advancement was referred to as a value acquired from given opportunities to improve a career and improve an employee's current capabilities to prepare for the future. Career advancement may be lateral or upward movement comprising career planning and career management. Career advancement theories are referred to as a set of concepts, proportions and ideas that provide insight on career advancement processes. The discipline of Human Resource Management plays a significant role in HR practices in order to ensure that an organisation

remains competitive in the industry.

The researcher discussed career advancement practices (recruitment, selection, training and promotion) in detail. In the literature, recruitment was referred to as a process of finding a suitable qualified candidate with job fit to occupy a vacant position. A qualified candidate should have the relevant qualification, skills, knowledge and/or experience and should be capable of performing essential tasks for a specific role. Effective recruitment practices help to diversify the workforce and, at this stage, the employer should avoid discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Selection is the process of choosing the best suitable applicant whose capabilities and competences meet the set selection criteria. It is a twofold process whereby the applicant assesses his suitability for a role while the employer focusses on job fit. It was evident from the literature that employers were reluctant to select individuals living with a disability because they focused on these individuals' disabilities rather than their capabilities.

Training is a performance development process to foster learning new techniques and methods to perform tasks and responsibilities with the fullest efficiency and effectiveness. Training fosters learning by equipping individuals with competences applicable to their roles. The literature revealed that training opportunities provided to people with disabilities are shoddy, repetitive and minimise career advancement opportunities.

The literature defined promotion as an organisational practice that recognises and compensates individuals who perform well. Promotions are typically characterised by an upward move in the structure or hierarchy of the organisation to a higher position. Promotion is commonly characterised by changes in job title or grade, an increase in pay, power, responsibility and autonomy.

Although the literature indicated that employees living with a disability have limited career advancement challenges, limited research is available on the perceptions of the individuals living with a disability with regards to their career advancement, specifically in a South African multicultural context.

6.2.2 Conclusion from the empirical study

The objectives of this empirical study were:

- to explore the career advancement challenges facing people with disabilities in the Gauteng Province;
- to explore whether people from various race, age, gender and occupational levels differ in their perceptions regarding career advancement challenges for people with disabilities;
- to formulate suggestions to address career advancement barriers facing people living with a disability; and
- to suggest topics for future research in the disciplines of Human Resources and Transformation.

The empirical study fulfilled all the objectives stated above. The section below summarises the core conclusions drawn from the findings chapter in relation to the themes.

Theme 1 provided an explanation of the participants' disabilities. The participants reported various disabilities: seven have hearing impairments, three have physical disabilities, two have bipolar or other psychological disorders, one is epileptic and has a brain tumour, one has a learning disability, one is an amputee and one is partial sighted. It was evident that the participants are knowledgeable about the nature of their disabilities and therefore the researcher relied on the participants' explanations of their disabilities.

Theme 2 provided insight of career advancement challenges the participants faced and the impact of these career advancement challenges. The participants, who received support at work, did not experience career advancement challenges. Those who experienced career advancement challenges reported that they adversely impacted on pay increases, bonuses and promotions. The female participants indicated that they tolerate career challenges in order to provide for their families.

Theme 3 indicated that the inception of BBBEE accorded black participants

employment opportunities while limiting the employment opportunities of white participants. The legislation is intended to close employment discrepancy between the designated groups and white dominance in the economy resulting from the Apartheid system.

Theme 4 reported the suggestions to management to redress the career advancement challenges and create inclusive and accommodative environments. Suggestions of disability sensitisation and reasonable accommodation were prevalent however participants felt that management connections with employees can create a trusting environment where persons with disabilities feel valued for their contributions.

The section below discusses the integration of literature and empirical findings in detail.

6.2.3 Conclusion from the integration of the literature review and empirical study

There were several findings from this study. The discussion below is an integration of the literature review and the empirical study.

The study found that not all people with disabilities face career advancement challenges. Five (33%) participants indicated that they have not faced career advancement challenges in their workplaces.

Some advancement challenges were reported. The perspectives of the participants regarding the challenges they faced were similar to those indicated by the literature. The literature indicated that disability challenges hinder career advancements in the workplace (Hernandez, et al. 2008). Beatty (2012) argues that employees with disabilities experience career plateaus.

It is evident that employees living with disabilities perceive that most managers and colleagues are not knowledgeable about disability. Wehman (2011) argues that employers lack knowledge about disabilities and the legislative requirements regarding disabilities. The participants suggested that people should undergo a disability sensitisation to learn about disability so that an inclusive, diverse and

accommodative environment can be created.

The study found that Human Resource practices, especial promotions, do not favour disabled participants. The participants indicated that promotion opportunities are prolonged or not suited to their disabilities. One participant even indicated that he was demoted after declaring his disability while one argued that it took her longer to be promoted because the environment was not conducive for declaration. Several authors also found that promotion is one of the most evident advancement challenges faced by individuals living with a disability (Hussein et al., 2014; LaPierre & Zimmerman, 2012; Vickers, 2009).

The study found that there is prejudice against invisible disabilities and people are generally unsympathetic. The participants indicated that they do not want to use their disabilities as excuses for incapacity or pity, but want to be recognised for the contribution that they can make. Hernandez et al. (2008) confirmed that management perceptions about the abilities of disabled employees are a barrier to their employment and to the provision of reasonable accommodation for them.

The findings indicated that people from different race, age, gender and occupational levels differed, to some extent, in their perceptions regarding career advancement challenges. Females perceived themselves to have higher career advancement challenges than their male counterparts. The CEE (2012) report also indicates that females are less represented in the labour market and it can thus be assumed that males are provided with more employment and advancement opportunities. White employees perceived they had fewer advancement opportunities due to EE and AA policies. This is, however, contrary to the CEE (2012) report that indicates that white people dominate the representation of people with disabilities in the workplace. Sebola and Khalo (2010) also found that white males with disabilities occupy management positions while black people and females with disabilities mainly occupy low-level positions.

Hussein et al. (2014) advocate that employees with disabilities who occupy senior positions with decision-making powers are more likely to advance in their careers compared to disabled people in semi-skilled positions. This implies that White people are not prone to facing career advancement challenges when compared to black

people because they have decision-making influence.

The participants provided the suggestions to address the identified career barriers people with disabilities face. The suggestions were directed to management or people with influence in decision-making. The most prevalent suggestions were to provide disability sensitisation and reasonable accommodations.

6.3 POTENTIAL VALUE ADD

Potential value on a theoretical and empirical level was discussed in detail in Chapter 1. The summaries of potential values are discussed below.

6.3.1 Potential value on a theoretical level

Limited literature is available regarding the perspectives of people with disabilities about their career advancement challenges. Therefore, there is a need to understand these perspectives, specifically within the South African context.

The findings of this study provide insight about career advancement challenges facing people with disabilities which enriches the body of knowledge in the discipline of Human Resource Management and Transformation in relation to disability studies.

6.3.2 Potential value on an empirical level

Different organisations may find the findings helpful to create an inclusive and diverse workforce free from career advancement challenges against employees with disabilities. Employers and colleagues of people with disabilities may gain insight on how to create an accommodative and amicable workplace for employees living with a disability. This will give organisations a competitive edge in their respective industries and become the employers of choice for candidates with disabilities.

6.3.3 Potential value on a practical level

The findings of the research may contribute to the disciplines of Human Resource Management and Transformation. The findings will help companies to instil a culture of inclusion towards people with disabilities through Employment Equity and Transformation strategies aimed to ensure the equitable representation of all demographics. The findings are also of value for future research concerning the field

of Human Resource Management when dealing with disabilities in the workforce.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study provided rich in-depth contributions with regards to the perceptions that employees living with a disability have in terms of career advancement. However, some important limitations are worth mentioning. Firstly, employees in this sample were selected from two different sectors within the Gauteng Province. The perceptions recognised and explored in this study are thus only representative of these particular organisations and their cultures. However, the participants' responses may still be typical of what disabled employees in South African workplaces experience, thereby allowing for the transferability of the findings (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Furthermore, the sample was relatively small and could have influenced the findings in terms of meaningfully comparing and identifying the perceptions of individuals living with disabilities. Future studies incorporating more participants from different sectors, regions and cultural or language groups might reveal additional perceptions on career advancement challenges.

The researcher's academic and employment background could have increased the researcher bias in the study, but the researcher prevented the bias by making use of bracketing, reflexivity and intuiting techniques throughout the study. Most of the participants' first language was not English, but the researcher prevented bias by conducting the interviews in English collecting accurate data without the researcher's own perceptions.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In Chapter 5, the researcher discussed the recommendations of participants to management on how to overcome the career advancement challenges they are currently facing due to their specific disabilities. In this chapter, the researcher formulates suggestions to address career advancement barriers facing people with disabilities and suggests topics for future research in the disciplines of Human Resources and Transformation.

6.5.1 Recommendations for future studies

This study highlighted the career advancement challenges people with disabilities

faced in South Africa. The researcher recommends that future studies be conducted based on the following:

- The effectiveness of disability sensitisation to address career advancement challenges, and
- Plans to advance careers of employees with disabilities.

A recommendation for further study could involve a bigger and more diverse sample group of employees working in different sectors and in different regions in order to explore the perceived career advancement challenges.

6.5.2 Application of the findings to organisational practices

Employers or management need to be sensitised on disability. This will equip them to create an inclusive and amicable workplace where employees with disabilities will be accommodated and their talent or contributions valued.

Employers should employ candidates with disabilities in meaningful roles for their skills. Employment should precede the Employment Equity and BBBEE targets. The targets may be irrelevant or change in due course while skills are critical for the sustainability of businesses. This will avoid rotation of candidates with disabilities in learnerships and lower level positions without career growth.

6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a brief discussion about the conclusions, contributions, limitations and recommendations of this study.

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