Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity Targets

by

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Declaration

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Abstract

Introduction: Gaining employment is an important life activity for everyone. However, employment statistics for persons with disabilities remain poor despite numerous policies and guidelines for employers being available. Disability in the workplace can present complexities that are difficult to encapsulate using only policy documents or guidelines. The achievement of employment equity targets in the disability category is an indicator that a company has successfully recruited and employed persons with disabilities. This study explores how a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape has managed to navigate these challenges successfully.

Aim of the study: To explore and identify factors which enable a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to meet their employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities.

Methods: A qualitative single, embedded case study was conducted that is exploratory in nature. Data collection methods included document review and semi-structured interviews. Interview participants, including Human Resources Employees (HRE) and Employees with Disabilities (EWD) based at the Western Cape branch of the State-Owned Entity were purposively sampled. An interview schedule was used to guide in-depth, semi-structured interviews. A total of seven participants, including three HRE and four EWD, willingly participated in the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data.

Results: The core value of diversity is embraced and embedded in the leadership of this company. Robust mechanisms have been put in place to monitor, report and be accountable for achieving Employment Equity Targets. Disability is a separate category within the Employment Equity Targets. An inclusive environment is created for PWD, in consultation with PWD. The company executes disability awareness and sensitivity training continuously, provides reasonable accommodation for PWD and creates a safe place for disclosure of disability. Talent acquisition takes place in a manner that is attractive and accessible to PWD. Support structures for PWD and partnerships with disability organisations facilitate the recruitment and sustained employment of PWD.

Conclusion: This study explored and identified the factors which facilitate the successful recruitment and employment of PWD. It also explored how barriers that have been encountered were overcome. Diversity as a core value is embedded into the leadership and brand of this company, which is attractive to PWD. Leadership implements strategies to ensure that policies are put to practice. To be successful in recruiting and employing PWD, inclusivity is designed within the company and the necessary support structures are put in place. The same type of leadership is called for in government to ensure policies are implemented to uphold the rights of PWD in broader society. This would further facilitate the workforce participation of PWD.

Recommendations: Provision of accessible transport for PWD should be prioritised at a governmental level. Increased tertiary education and skills development opportunities should be made available to PWD. Improved benchmarking should be implemented to ensure universally accessible public buildings, spaces and workplaces. Self-efficacy is a skill that all PWD should acquire to improve their employment prospects. It would also be beneficial for PWD looking for employment to register with specialised recruitment agencies, disability organisations and NGOs

Keywords: employment, disability, policy, inclusivity, recruitment, reasonable accommodation, facilitators, participation

Opsomming

Inleiding: Verdienstelikheid is 'n belangrike lewensaktiwiteit vir persone met gestremdhede. Ondanks die feit dat daar talle beleide en riglyne beskikbaar is, bly die indiensnemingstatistieke vir persone met gestremdhede swak. Gestremdheid in die werkplek kan ingewikkeldhede bied wat moeilik is om in beleidsdokumente of riglyne saam te vat. Die bereiking van diensbilikheidsdoelwitte in die kategorie ongeskiktheid is 'n aanduiding van sukses in onderneming vir die werwing en indiensneming van persone met gestremdhede. Hierdie studie ondersoek hoe 'n staatsonderneming in die Wes-Kaap daarin geslaag het om hierdie uitdagings suksesvol te benut.

Doel van die projek: Om die faktore wat 'n entiteit in staatsbesit in die Wes-Kaap inskakel om persone met gestremdhede aan te werf, om teikens vir gelyke diensbilikheid te bereik, te indentifiseer en te verken.

Metode: 'n Kwalitatiewe, enkele ingeboude gevallestudie wat verkennend van aard is, is uitgevoer. Metodes vir dataversameling het dokumentoorsig en diepgaande onderhoude ingesluit. Deelnemers aan diepgaande onderhoude het mensehulpbron-werknemers en werknemers met gestremdhede ingesluit. Deelnemers was werksaam by die Wes-Kaap tak van die maatskapy. 'n Onderhoudsskedule is gebruik om diepgaande, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude to lei. 'n Totaal van 7 deelnemers, insluitend 3 mensehulpbron-werknemers en 4 deelnemers met gestremdhede het vrywillig in die studie deelgeneem. Tematiese analise is gebruik om die data te ontleed.

Resultate: Die kernwaarde van diversiteit is ingebou in die leierskap van hierdie maatskapy. Robuuste meganismes is ingestel om die teikens vir diensbilikheid te monitor, raporteer en daarvoor verantwoordelik te wees. Gestremdheid word alleen beskou as 'n kategorie. Ontwerp vir inklusiwiteit word in oorleg met persone met gestremdhede geskep en dit sluit in gestremdheidsbewustheid en sensitiwiteitsopleiding, wat voortdurend 'n veilige ruimte skep vir die openbaarmaking van gestremdhede en die voorsiening van redelike akkommodasie. Talentverwerwing vind plaas op 'n manier wat aanloklik en toeganklik is vir persone met gestremdheded. Ondersteuningstrukture vir persone met gestremdhede en alliansies met

gestremdheidsorganisasies vergemaklik die werwing en volgehoue indiensneming van persone met gestremdhede.

Gevolgtrekking:

Hierdie studie het die faktore geidentifiseer en ondersoek wat die suksesvolle werwing en indiensneming van persone met gestremdhede vergemaklik. Dit het ook ondersoek ingestel hoe hindernisse wat teegekom is, oorkom is. Diversiteit as kernwaarde is vervat in die leierskap en handelsmerk van hierdie maatskappy, wat aantreklik is vir persone met gestremdhede. Leierskap implementeer strategieë om te verseker dat beleid toegepas word. Om suksesvol te wees om persone met gestremdhede te werf en in diens te neem, is inkusiwiteit binne die onderneming ontwerp met die nodige ondersteuningstrukture. Daar is vasgestel dat die regering dieselfde gevra moet word om die implementering van die beleid wat die regte van persone met gestremdhede in die breër samelewing handhaaf, te verseker. Dit sou die verteenwoordiging van persone met gestremdhede verder vergemaklik.

Aanbevelings:

Toegang tot vervoer vir persone met gestremdhede moet op regeringsvlak geprioritiseer word. Verhoogde geleenthede vir tersiere opleiding en vaardigheidsontwikkeling moet aan persone met gestremdhede beskikbaar gestel word. Verbeterde maatstawwe moet geimplementeer word om universele toeganklike werkplekke,openbare ruimte en geboue te verseker. Selfdoeltreffendheid is 'n vaardigheid wat alle persone met gestremdheid moet verwerf om die aspekte van indiensnemeing te verbeter. Dit sou ook voordelig wees vir persone met gestremdhede om by gespesialiseerde werwingsagentskappe, gestremdheidsorganisasies en nie-regeringsorganisasies te registreer.

Sleutelwoorde: gestremdheid, indiensneming, beleid, inklusiwiteit, werwing, redelike akkommodasie, fasiliterende faktore, deelname

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Definition of Terms

Persons with disabilities (United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities): "Those who have 'long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (United Nations (UN), 2006: 4).

Recruitment: "The attraction of capable candidates to a vacancy" (Searle, 2009: 151).

Selection: "The process of choosing from a group of applicants the individual best suited for a particular position" (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx and van der Schyf, 1998:174).

Reasonable Accommodation: "Necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UN, 2006: Article 2).

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List of Acronyms

CGP: Code of Good Practice

DOL: Department of Labour

DPO: Disabled People's Organisations

EEA: Employment Equity Act

EWD: Employees with Disability

HR: Human Resources

HRE: Human Resources Employees

ILO: International Labour Office

RA: Reasonable Accommodation

SOE: State-Owned Enterprise

TAG: Technical Assistance Guidelines

UNCRPD: United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

WHO: World Health Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

The South African government is committed to upholding disability rights. The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (Department of Labour (DOL), 2009) has set targets for companies to employ groups that have been previously discriminated against, including race, gender and disability. This study focused on disability. The target for employment of persons with disabilities (PWD) in companies is set relatively low, at 2% of the total workforce.

Targets have been met for gender and race groups, but not for the employment of PWD. The DOL (2007) has issued Technical Assistance Guidelines on the employment of PWD, including guidelines on reasonable accommodation (RA) and fair recruitment procedures, amongst others. Amidst improved governmental guidelines and policies, companies have still not recruited enough PWD to meet employment equity targets. According to the Department of Labour Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report (2020), the total national workforce representation of PWD was only 1.1% despite targets being set within companies at 2% of the total workforce. The employment equity act was legislated 22 years ago, and limited improvement in implementation has been recorded since then.

1.2 Problem statement

Shakespeare (2018) describes disability as a multi-faceted, diverse and often complex phenomenon. Disability includes many different types of impairments with varying degrees of severity. For recruitment and employment to be fair, RA needs to be made for PWD to enter the job market on an equal basis. There are many different jobs, each requiring differing levels of education and skills. The attitudes of leadership and co-workers regarding disability vary greatly. All these complexities and interfaces are difficult to encapsulate into policy documents and guidelines. It was hoped that this study would encompass more than acquiring a mandatory target. The use of the 2% target that has been met acts as a benchmark within a company to indicate a measure of success in the recruitment and employment of PWD. The poor employment statistics for persons with disabilities in South Africa indicate that there is still much to accomplish to ensure that

PWD can have equal opportunities for employment in the open labour market. Many studies I have encountered in literature focus on opinions about how the recruitment and employment of PWD can be improved (Smit, 2001; Wigget-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). These studies have, however, been implemented in companies where targets for the employment of PWD have not been met. This indicates that the attitudes and opinions expressed by HR managers do not necessarily translate into practice. A variety of perspectives and experiences of PWD were also not factored into these studies. For this study, persons with hearing and mobility impairments were focussed on.

I felt that there was much to learn from companies that *have met* employment equity targets to inform these challenges. Even though facilitating factors get reported on annually by the company, doing the case study allowed an in-depth exploration of how the company went about achieving employment equity targets. This approach has not been commonly encountered in available literature. Fewer studies have been done on how companies make sense of policies and implement policies to ensure that employment equity targets *are met.* My study was positioned to share these lessons.

1.3 Study aim

The aim was to explore and identify factors which enable a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape to meet their employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities.

1.4 Objectives

- Identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment.
- Explore barriers that have been overcome in the company to facilitate the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

1.5 Motivation

As a physiotherapist, I have been involved with the rehabilitation of clients who aim to return to work after injuries, illness or disabling events. At the start of my career, I had little knowledge about the practices within workplaces to ensure that the rights of PWD were met. My focus was on the physical capabilities of clients to perform a job specification. About three years ago, a close relative experienced a cerebrovascular accident that left her with impairment that improved progressively with rehabilitation. She was devastated after the loss of employment which she depended on to support her family. This happened despite her having gone through a comprehensive rehabilitation programme that included a work assessment. I became passionate about this topic after witnessing the depression and search for identity that accompanied her loss of employment. Through conducting this research, I hope to gain knowledge for myself and other rehabilitation practitioners to best prepare PWD to enter and return to the workplace.

1.6 Significance

A study which explores the reasons for tangible successes in a company that has met employment equity targets can provide meaningful and practical information, ideas and guidelines for other organisations to learn from. Ultimately, information gathered through conducting this research could inform employers about options to consider in their quest to improve employment for PWD.

1.7 Overview of chapters

This research report consists of six chapters:

Chapter one covers the background, problem statement, aims, objectives as well as the motivation for and significance of the study.

Chapter two reviews literature on the importance and economic implications of work for PWD, legislation and policy on employment of PWD, creating inclusive environments and factors influencing the recruitment of PWD.

Chapter three provides a detailed description of the methodological steps taken in this study. It includes the research methodology, study design, study population, inclusion and exclusion criteria, recruitment of study participants, data collection and analysis processes as well as ethical considerations and trustworthiness strategies that were followed.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study, including the document review, the company's commitment to achieve employment equity targets, design for inclusion, talent acquisition, alliances with disability organisations, barriers that were overcome and challenges still being faced.

Chapter five presents the discussion which integrates new findings with prior evidence and incorporates the insights of the researcher.

Chapter six presents a summary of all the chapters, revisits the main findings, presents the limitations of the study, provides recommendations and reflections on the study and is followed by the research assignment conclusion.

1.8 Conclusion

The introductory chapter presents the background to the study which highlights the poor employment statistics for PWD in South Africa. This happens despite legislation, policies and guidelines being available to guide businesses. It presents my motivation for this study as a health care professional. The problem statement acknowledges that limited literature is available to learn from companies that have successfully reached employment equity targets. The significance of the study is to hopefully inform other businesses about possible options to improve recruitment and employment of PWD.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Employment holds significance to persons with disabilities (PWD) which has positive ripple effects in many areas of their lives as well as within broader society. The literature review explored the significance and important economic implications of work for PWD. It also includes an overview of legislation and policy that has been adopted globally and in South Africa to protect the rights of PWD in the workplace. Fair recruitment practices as described in Technical Assistance Guidelines (TAG) are outlined (Department of Labour (DOL), 2007). The creation of inclusive work environments and the factors which influence the recruitment of PWD were included.

The following databases were used to find literature: CINAHL, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, SUN Scholar, PubMed, MEDLINE. The key words used to search were Recruitment, Employment, Disability, Workplaces, Labour Law, Legislation, Policies, Inclusivity, Barriers, Facilitators, South Africa. I combined key words in various combinations to perform searches.

My literature searches covered the broader topics which were then narrowed down to include the more specific topic being covered in my research and positioning it in the context of available South African literature. This chapter gives a brief overview of the topics.

2.2 The importance and economic implications of work for persons with disabilities

According to the World Health Organisation (2010), gaining employment is an important life activity that allows PWD to contribute towards their family, household, community and society. It creates a sense of personal fulfilment and self-worth. Hanass-Hancock, Nene, Dehaye and Pillay (2017) state that dignity for employees with disabilities is maintained through being socially and economically independent. Solomon and Liebenberg (2017) acknowledged the necessary interaction between the basic rights of equality, freedom, dignity and socio-economic rights for PWD.

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At the meeting of the International Labour Office (ILO) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) in 2015, it was noted that countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation Development (OECD) were moving away from paying grants to PWD to encourage their participation in the job market. Access to employment opportunities for PWD was highlighted to be an important part of this process. A preference was voiced for finances to rather be invested in the integration and inclusion of PWD in mainstream society which includes places of work. Through integration to mainstream society, the dignity and rights of PWD can be upheld.

As Banks and Polack (2013) put it, there are additional expenses that an individual or household incurs as a result of disability. These costs include access to services, like special medical services, assistive technologies and additional transport costs. Hanass-Hancock *et al.* (2017) have indicated that, while access to services and assistive technologies allow PWD to participate in society on an equal basis, it is usually at added cost. However, exclusion from the workplace is similarly costly to society and ultimately transfers these costs to the PWD and their households. Unemployment results in governments having to pay grants and collecting no taxes from PWD. If PWD are unemployed, fewer funds are available for services and assistive technologies that can improve the quality of life for PWD and their families. It is for these reasons that countries need to create inclusive work environments to provide economic protection to the households of PWD. Governments should also offset extra costs incurred by PWD through the provision of accessible public transport, community amenities like wheelchair-friendly design of roads, sidewalks, offices, housing, religious and education facilities (Hanass-Hancock *et al.* 2017; Heinecke-Motsch, 2013). When government provides accessibility for all PWD to these amenities, it can mitigate the added disadvantage that individuals experience when disability intersects with racial, socio-economic, gender and cultural barriers.

2.3 Legislation and policy on employment of persons with disabilities

According to the UN (2006), The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) states that PWD have a right to employment conditions that are fair, favourable and just. The UNCRPD upholds the right of PWD to choose the nature, type, manner and place of work that they participate in. According to Nardodkar, Pathare, Ventriglio, Castaldelli-Maia, Javate, Torales and Bhugra (2016), the UNCRPD

brought about a historic paradigm shift from perceiving PWD as recipients of charity to people enjoying equal human rights. Recommendation No. 168 of the ILO states that PWD should have equal opportunity and treatment to gain access to, retain and advance in employment that corresponds to their own choice and that takes into consideration the suitability of employment for the individual.

South Africa, a signatory to the UNCRPD, has adopted a constitution that embraces diversity and aims to right the wrongs from apartheid. The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (South African Department of Labour, 2009) specifies that businesses are required to enforce affirmative action measures to ensure broad representation within companies which includes previously marginalised groups of people whose rights had been encroached upon before the end of apartheid. These marginalised groups include being classified as black, female and disabled. According to Basson (2017), affirmative action measures include the removal of barriers which negatively affect the above-mentioned groups, allowing for equality in representation and opportunity in the workplace. This promotes diversity and broad representation of suitably qualified people from the designated groups across all occupation levels in the workplace. The Affirmative Action Amendment Act of 2014 (Department of Labour, 2018) provides legal protection against obvious as well as subtle discriminatory practices against PWD in the workplace.

The South African Integrated National Strategy (DOL, 2002) and the Code of Good Practice (Office of the Deputy President, 1997), offer guidelines to manage disability in the workplace. These documents outline the creation of equal opportunities for PWD and the removal of unfair practices. The processes of recruitment, selection and the creation of job descriptions in a non-discriminatory manner are outlined.

Technical Assistance Guidelines (TAG) offer guidelines on Reasonable Accommodation (RA) (DOL, 2007). The Department of Public Service and Administration (2014) has described RA as the appropriate adjustments and modifications that get implemented within the workplace to ensure that PWD enjoy all fundamental human rights and freedoms on an equal basis with others. Ensuring that workplaces are accessible to PWD brings to mind the implementation of signage, universal design and the building of ramps. Accessibility for persons with psychosocial disabilities could however be as simple as changing work hours or the provision of quiet spaces that reduce stress. RA reduces the impact of impairment on the capacity of a person to perform the essential functions of a

job. Providing RA cannot be a one-size fits all solution but should be catered to the needs of the individual and should consider the working environment and inherent requirements of the job (Graham, Inge, Wehman, Seward & Bogenschutz, 2018). It is important for PWD to fully understand what RA he/she requires and be able to confidently request RA in the workplace (Sundar, O'Neill, Andrew, Houtenville, Phillips, Smith & Katz, 2018). This means that PWD should know their rights in the workplace. The only time that RA for an individual can be rejected is on the basis that it causes undue hardship for the employer in terms of cost and/or operational practicalities. RA varies greatly between different types of impairments with differing severity. Therefore, the person best able to make recommendations about accommodations that are needed to perform a job specification is the PWD him/herself. For instance, Padkapayeva, Posen, Yazdani, Buettgen, Mahood and Tompa (2017), in a study evaluating workplace accommodations for persons with physical disabilities, exemplifies that accommodations can be as follows:

a) Physical or technological modifications which would include alterations to the built environment at the workplace (e.g. ramps, railings, lifts, toilets) and workstation (e.g. ergonomic modifications such as changing height of desk, installing a blind, reducing the noise of air-conditioners); assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, special software, braille printers, computer assisted translators).

b) Workplace flexibility accommodations (e.g. adjusting working hours, allowing work-from-home options, modifications in job specification, providing quiet spaces).

c) Personal Assistant Services (e.g. providing a sign language interpreter, providing a driver, providing an assistant, making provision for guide-dogs). Assistants can be shared between a few employees.

RA should be provided during the process of recruitment and selection; within the working environment; in the execution, evaluation and reward of the way in which work is usually done and should be extended to the benefits, advancement and all other privileges of employment (DOL, 2007). This is applicable to candidates and employees with disabilities who have suitable qualifications for the job. Sometimes providing RA can be as simple as changing the height of a workstation or adjusting a person's working hours. This indicates that it is not necessarily a costly exercise, as affirmed by Sundar *et al.* (2018). Many times, accommodations can have a third-party benefit effect, meaning that other employees can benefit from accommodations as well. This would be the case when an employee becomes injured and temporarily benefits from using a lift instead of stairs.

Employees working in noisy environments can also benefit from noise reduction strategies that get implemented for hearing impaired employees.

The DOL (2007) presents the following TAG Guidelines on fair recruitment practices:

Advertisements

Advertisements should contain enough detail about the essential requirements of the job to enable candidates to determine whether they meet the inherent job requirements. Requests for accessible formats of advertisements should be provided if required. Where possible, advertisements with requirements should be forwarded to organisations representing PWD and specialised recruitment agencies (DOL, 2007).

Application forms

The ability to perform the essential requirements of the job should be the main focus of application forms (DOL, 2007).

Interviews

Interviews should be performed in an unbiased, sensitive, and objective manner. Questions should not be targeted at disability, but should be aimed at assessing the qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the candidate to perform functions that are essential to the job. Where it is required, reasonable accommodation should be provided at the interview. The interview venue should be accessible to PWD (DOL, 2007; McKinney & Swartz, 2019).

Selection

The same criteria for selection should be applicable to all applicants. When the suitability of an applicant for a job gets assessed, previous employers should not be contacted for information about the disability of an applicant. Selection should be based on the ability of the person to do the job. Selection should be based on the qualifications and experience of the applicant. The use of these criteria facilitates the positive integration of an employee into the organisation. This is beneficial to the sustained employment of the employee (DOL, 2007).

Medical and psychometric testing

Medical testing should only be performed if it is required from all applicants according to a job specification. RA is required for PWD to complete testing equally with applicants

without disabilities. In the past, there was an inaccurate link between disability, absenteeism and ill health. This led to PWD undergoing unnecessary medical testing which was discriminatory (DOL, 2007).

Disclosure of disability

Disclosure of disability is optional but should be encouraged when an application is made to guarantee that RA gets provided at the interview and during employment. Often, disability does not get disclosed for fear of marginalisation or for personal reasons. Employers will encourage employees to disclose disability to assist in reaching Employment Equity targets and to assist with the provision of RA where needed. Disclosure of disability cannot be forced, but employees cannot receive RA without disclosure (DOL, 2007).

2.4 Creating inclusive work environments

Balasooriya-Smeekens, Bateman and Mant (2016) have described enabling environments as fostering supportive and understanding attitudes towards disability and where employers provide the necessary accommodations for disability. According to Pillay, Taylor and Raga (2015), in order to transform organisational attitudes affecting PWD and to embrace diversity, attention should be directed towards the application of principles of equality and human rights. Over and above making physical accommodations for PWD, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2014) postulate that the removal of 'disabling attitudes' enables the acknowledgment of PWD based on their contributions, instead of perceptions about their capabilities. Supporting Warnich *et al.* (2014), both Waxman (2017) and Ndzwayiba and Ned (2017) speak about how inclusiveness can be created in an organisation:

1. The starting point to change an organisational culture is through organisational leadership and its commitment to recognising the business advantage of employing PWD both in productivity and corporate social responsibility.
2. This vision must be communicated down throughout the organisation.
3. The provision of general and targeted disability awareness training should include the significance of diversity to sensitize everyone to not perceive accommodation as special treatment.

Furthermore, Kalargyyrou (2014) has stated that practices and procedures (formal and informal) that guide and create open and trustful interactions in the work environment create an atmosphere that encourages growth. Gold, Oire, Fabian and Wewiorski (2012) found that an inclusive environment that emphasises relationships based on trust and mutual respect results in employee engagement that is positive, with better performance and a lower turnover of staff. Trust is an essential factor in an employee disclosing an invisible disability and an employer providing RA (Lindsay, Cagliostro, Leck, Shen & Stinson, 2019). The conclusion of the study by Lindsay *et al.* (2019) is that the proactive recruitment of PWD as well as the accommodations that happen as a result contribute to creating a non-judgemental work environment which could lead to increased trust in the company by all employees. Further benefits of creating an inclusive work environment include the ability to retain good quality employees, improving profits and avoiding costs involved with hiring and training new employees (Potgieter, Coetzee & Ximba, 2017; Sundar *et al.*, 2018).

2.5 Factors influencing the recruitment of persons with disabilities

Only a few studies have been done in a South African context that deals with the recruitment of PWD into organisations. One study that was conducted in the Cape Metropole by Smit (2001) provides clear guidelines and recommendations for the recruitment and selection of PWD within companies. A follow up survey as part of the same study about recruitment and employment practices was completed by HR practitioners. Through evaluating responses, Smit further identified that companies do not follow proper recruitment and selection guidelines, were not sure about the needs of PWD at the start of the recruitment and selection process, were uncertain about what constituted reasonable accommodation and about providing descriptions of essential job functions. Similarly, Wigget-Barnard and Swartz (2012) conducted a survey within companies gathering information from HR managers about what they thought enables the recruitment of PWD into a company. The best facilitators were identified as the use of a specialised recruitment agency, development of a targeted recruitment plan, disability awareness training for employees and a special budget for accommodation. Mention was made by the authors that opinions and attitudes expressed in these surveys by HR managers would not necessarily translate into action. Despite guidelines and

recommendations being available, the target of 2% had mostly not been achieved in the companies being studied.

A case study by Ndzwayiba and Ned (2017) described facilitating factors that resulted in recruitment targets for PWD to be reached successfully in a private health-care company. These factors included, amongst others, disability awareness training programmes for staff, using a targeted recruitment plan, the encouragement of employees to disclose disabilities, learnerships targeting PWD and the establishment of partnerships with Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (DPO). Factors that acted as barriers within the organisation were also explored. Initially, staff were reluctant to disclose invisible or mild impairments because of a fear of marginalisation. The presence of social stereotyping for specifying jobs also acted as a barrier to the recruitment of PWD.

What came out clearly from the findings of the study by Ndzwayiba and Ned (2017) is that the recruitment and employment of PWD is much more complex than meeting a mandatory target set within a company to comply with legislation. It also establishes that setting legislative frameworks will not necessarily bring about the required social change needed within an organisation to create an environment where PWD are no longer marginalised. The study describes the many complexities and interfaces of disability within a work environment and how this company has addressed them. It recommends similar studies in different contexts that may facilitate the creation of models of best practice, informing the transformation of workplaces in terms of creating inclusion for PWD. This is the area where I identified a need for my research to take place.

2.6 Conclusion

South Africa has adopted progressive policies and implemented legislation that protect the right of PWD to obtain gainful employment in a manner that promotes equality in the workplace. Despite the employment equity act being legislated twenty-two years ago, limited improvement has been achieved to reach employment equity targets for the employment of PWD. Creating a work environment that demonstrates true acceptance and allowing PWD to perform their jobs to their full potential takes place through creating an environment that has removed barriers to equal participation. These practices cannot be described by guidelines, policies, and legislation. Reaching the 2% target in a company is a tangible measure of success for recruitment and employment of persons

with disabilities. I obtained information from the company through conducting research to answer the research question: What factors facilitate a SOE in the Western Cape to recruit persons with disabilities to meet employment equity targets?

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a description of the methodological framework that was adopted for this study. An explanation of the chosen study design is provided, and this is followed up by providing the reader with a description of the SOE that forms the setting in which the study took place. The study population inclusion and exclusion criteria are outlined, followed up by a description of the processes of recruitment and the selection of study participants. Data collection processes and instruments are described in this chapter too. This is followed by a description of the data analysis process and pilot study. Finally, issues of trustworthiness, rigor and ethical considerations as they pertain to this study are presented.

3.2 Methodological framework

For this study, I have adopted a post-modern view and a paradigm of subjectivism. According to O'Leary (2017), a post-modern view accepts different ways of obtaining knowledge and acknowledges multiple realities. Knowledge was obtained from different participants, and from different data sources. I adopted a paradigm of subjectivism because the knowledge produced in my study is based on the subjective personal experiences of the persons being interviewed. Based on my research aim, I decided to use a qualitative methodology approach. This methodological approach enabled a subjective evaluation of behaviour, attitudes, and opinions of study participants. It also relied on the insights and impressions of the researcher. According to Morse (2015), the researcher needs to be knowledgeable about underlying theory and literature to interpret what gets presented through the data. Qualitative research, according to O'Leary (2017), accepts multiple perspectives and realities. Value is placed on depth rather than quantity. Qualitative research seeks to explore and understand the lived experiences, processes and interactions that form part of an institution. This methodology encapsulated the most appropriate framework within which I could obtain the information relevant to my research aim. I used methods falling within this framework to gather and analyse data.

3.3 Study design

The study design was a single, embedded case study that was exploratory in nature. The case study design allowed the researcher to use multiple sources of evidence to add depth and breadth to assist in richness of data obtained. According to Flyvbjerg (2006), case studies produce concrete knowledge that considers the subjective meanings that people bring to their contextual situations. Examination of events takes place in a manner where behaviour cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2003). Through doing a qualitative case-study, I was able to obtain rich, concrete, in-depth insights from a variety of persons and sources about the recruitment of PWD into the SOE. The case for this study was "the factors enabling the recruitment of PWD into the SOE". Scholz and Tietje (2011) have described an embedded case study as a case unit that has been sub-divided into sub-units. This allowed me to organise different types of knowledge which presented different, salient aspects of the case. I obtained data for my study from two groups of participants, namely, Human Resources Employees (HRE) and Employees with Disabilities (EWD). I also used document review as a data source. These groups were classified as the sub-units of the case. Baxter and Jack (2008) state that the separate individual analysis of sub-units allows for the in-depth analysis of data of the sub-unit and across the sub-units. This allows for better understanding of a complex phenomenon through illumination of the case (Stake, 1995). Through analysing data from each group, I obtained information about the recruitment of PWD, indicating similarities and differences which provided a deeper and richer understanding of the case. Triangulation of multiple sources of data regarding the case adds to the validity of the research (Yin, 2003) and gets described below.

According to Creswell (2003), exploratory research provides insights to a case. The methodology chosen for exploratory research allows flexibility for all facets of the topic to be explored during the unfolding of the study. Information was obtained from multiple sources and this allowed flexibility to accommodate uncertainties about how the study would unfold. The flexibility that an exploratory study offered allowed all facets relating to the recruitment of PWD into this SOE to be uncovered as the study unfolded.

3.4 Research setting

The research setting is an SOE situated within the Western Cape Province. This SOE was chosen amongst a few other well-known SOEs in the Western Cape that have reached employment equity targets for the recruitment of PWD. Roughly 6 SOEs were considered eligible as the research company. This research company was flagged initially because the researcher had personally encountered stationery and marketing which championed this company as being inclusive of PWD. Had initial requests to conduct research at this company not been successful, other SOEs would have been approached. The SOE is majority owned by the South African government but operates legally and financially as a commercial company. It is a multinational company, and my research took place at the regional branch within the Western Cape. I chose to do conduct research at an SOE because it is partially government owned. Employment Equity is a government initiative and, for this reason, initiatives and targets would be given priority at an SOE. The regional branch of this SOE employs approximately 570 employees with occupations including, amongst others, top management, senior management, middle management, professional qualified (engineers, accountants, safety practitioners), skilled technically (security surveillance officers, security guards, emergency responders, electricians), semi-skilled (customer service agents) and unskilled (general workers, porters, cleaners).

3.5 Study population

The study population was the group of people from which the information based on knowledge and experience of the research topic could be extrapolated. It included Human Resources (HR) Managers, Human Resources Employees (HRE) and PWD who are permanently employed at the SOE in the Western Cape. HR practitioners are employees responsible for the recruitment and placement of employees. I did preliminary research for the feasibility of the study population from annual integrated reports and was able to confirm this once formal institutional permission had been granted.

I grouped the study population into two sub-groups, namely Human Resources Employees (HRE) and Employees with Disabilities (EWD). These two groups were formed because the knowledge and experience of recruitment were being explored from the different perspectives of each group.

3.6 Selection criteria

Table 3.1: Selection criteria for human resources employees and employees with disabilities

Selection Criteria	Human Resources Employees (HRE)	Employees with Disabilities (EWD)
Inclusion criteria	• Permanent HRE at the SOE. • HRE department with prior experience in recruiting PWD. • HRE between the ages of 18 and 60 years.	• Permanent EWD at the SOE. • PWD who have been recruited into the SOE. • EWD between the ages of 18 and 60 years.
Exclusion criteria		• Temporarily employed PWD. ***

- *** I excluded temporarily employed PWD because they do not add to the employment equity targets, and do not typically enjoy the benefits associated with being permanently employed at a company. They would not have had the full recruitment experience because they may be employed by labour brokers and on short assignments.

The study population all met the above criteria and were willing to participate in an interview autonomously.

3.7 Recruitment of participants

After obtaining ethics approval from the University of Stellenbosch (see Appendix A for ethics letter with reference number: S19/10/233), I applied for organisational permission from the study site (See Appendix B) to perform my research at the SOE. I introduced my research project and explained the purpose thereof in an e-mailed letter to the General Manager. I also requested permission to access information that was not available in the public domain. This included documents such as employment equity

plans, the reasonable accommodation (RA) policy and internal policies related to the recruitment of PWD. These documents served as secondary data. I outlined measures that would be put in place to assure the confidentiality of institutional information and individuals. These measures included me personally collecting all data. I outlined how all information gathered (audio and written) would be treated as confidential and protected. I explained how pseudonyms would be assigned to all participants to be used instead of names. I also included the description of a master list containing data collected, and how it would be kept and locked away in a filing cabinet at a physiotherapy practice to which I am affiliated. I explained how information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or oral presentations would always ensure anonymity. I concluded by leaving my contact details, telephone number and e-mail address, as well as that of my supervisor to respond to any queries. Institutional permission was granted (see Appendix C), and I was put into contact with the HR manager of the SOE.

The HR manager identified a key informant who helped me to identify study participants according to the outlined criteria for my study sample. According to O'Leary (2017), key informants are reflective and observant members of the community being researched. They are knowledgeable about the culture of the community and are willing and able to share this knowledge. I requested a person who has been working at the SOE for at least two years and who had the necessary insight and knowledge to help me identify study participants according to the stipulated criteria for my study sample. I was put into contact with a liaison person from the HR department who assisted me with this.

The HR manager introduced my study to the whole HR team as part of a meeting. The key informant forwarded letters of invitation (See Appendix D and Appendix E), which described the nature and purpose of my research. The expectations, risks and benefits of participation were explained, as well as the time commitment that would be required. Each prospective participant was made aware that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without any negative consequences for them. The letter also expressed that confidentiality would be assured. Prospective participants were informed of the use of recordings as well as about data storage procedures. The key informant obtained permission from prospective participants to share their contact details with me. This allowed me to introduce myself and the research study, as well as to answer any preliminary questions that prospective

participants had. Once I received a commitment from the participant to participate in the study, I scheduled appointments to perform telephonic interviews at a suitable time. Signed letters of informed consent were obtained from each participant to include them in the study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, most participants were working remotely, or were not working at all. Some participants did not have access to their work e-mails. In these cases, I needed to forward information to them electronically via WhatsApp or to a personal e-mail address.

3.8 Sampling of participants

I did a qualitative study. The answers that I was looking for were being held by a few people rather than many. I implemented **purposive sampling**. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2015) describe purposive sampling as a non-random technique of sampling that does not prescribe a set number of participants. A deliberate choice of participant was made based on certain characteristics that they possess. All participants who were chosen were able to contribute knowledge about the SOE as it related to my research topic. My goal was to seek insightful and rich engagement with participants.

I sampled participants for my study based on their knowledge and experience. I placed importance on participants who were available, willing to participate and able to communicate their experiences in a reflective and expressive manner.

3.8.1 Human resources

I initially targeted one HR manager, one HRE involved with employment equity, and one other HRE. I based this on information available to me on the SOE's website. I aimed to recruit an HRE who had been involved with recruitment of PWD for more than two years to provide deeper insight especially with regards to changes that have occurred at the SOE over time. There was more than one HRE with recruitment experience as prospective study participants from which to choose, and I specified the amount of time working at the company for this selection. Investigation showed that there was only one HR manager employed at the SOE at the time. Based on this information, I therefore recruited this participant irrespective of the amount of time employed at the company. The key informant advised me that the talent acquisition officer at this company was very involved in disability related issues and knowledgeable about employment equity at the company. She would be able to provide me with rich and valuable information based on

her interest and experience. For this reason, I targeted the talent acquisition officer to be part of my study.

3.8.2 Employees with disabilities

I aimed to include five to six EWD working within the company with different types of disabilities and at various occupational levels. The key informant was given these criteria to identify potential participants. The actual participants disclosed their disability to me during the interview process. This allowed me to gain information from a variety of different perspectives about the recruitment process.

According to Tongco (2007), purposive sampling methods place a primary importance on saturation. He further states that to obtain a comprehensive understanding about the research problem, sampling needs to continue until no new substantial information is acquired. According to Morse (2015), saturation allows rich data to be built. Saturation is brought about by depth and replication of information, which allows for theoretical aspects of the study to be built. Data saturation was reached at the sample size of seven participants (three HRE and four EWD), which was sufficient for a qualitative case study. This sample size allowed me to gain an in-depth description of the case. Given the qualitative nature of the study as well as the chosen design, the sample size was small enough to give intensiveness (in-depth) rather than extensiveness (superficial) which is based on larger samples (Rule & John, 2011). Table 3.2 presents the demographic details of participants.

Table 3.2: Demographics of interview participants

Participant name	HRE/ EWD	Impairment/ Type	Gender	Age (years)	Date of interview
Sandy	HRE	No	Female	59	15/08/2020
Mary	HRE	No	Female	37	31/08/2020
Maurice	HRE	No	Male	45	25/09/2020
Maxwell	EWD	Physical	Male	34	23/09/2020
Samuel	EWD	Sensory	Male	48	15/09/2020
Nadine	EWD	Sensory	Female	50	17/09/2020
Mason	EWD	Physical	Male	37	18/09/2020

3.9 Data collection

Data collection took place through semi-structured interviews and document review.

I separated the interview participants into two groups, because the nature of data collected from each group was different. The two groups were:

- Human Resources Employees (HRE)
- Employees with Disabilities (EWD)

Research methods are presented in the following table for ease of reference:

Table 3.3: Research methods

Research methods	Semi-structured Interviews Human Resources Employees (3 participants)	Semi-structured Interviews Employees with Disabilities (4 participants)	Document Review
Nature of Data	**Primary Data** Narrated experiences of: • Practices that they have implemented to facilitate the recruitment of PWD. • Changes and progression that has occurred while working in the company to facilitate the recruitment of PWD.	**Primary Data** Narrated experiences of: • The process of being recruited into the company. • Factors attracting PWD to being employed at this company. • Challenges (observed or experienced) that have been overcome in the workplace that have improved the recruitment of PWD.	**Secondary Data** • Information gathered by researcher that is relevant to the research topic.
Data Collection Method	Semi-structured Interviews	Semi-structured Interviews	• Desktop Search • Document Review
Data Analysis	Thematic Analysis	Thematic Analysis	Thematic Analysis

Data Collection Tools	• Interview Guide for HRE (*See Appendix D*)
	• Audio Recording Devices
	• Notepad and Pen
		• Interview Guide for EWD (*See Appendix E)*
		• Audio Recording Devices
		• Notepad and Pen
			• Computer
			• Internet
			• Policy Documents:
			  ○ Employment Equity Policy
			  ○ Reasonable Accommodation Policy

3.9.1 Data collection strategy

3.9.1.1 Primary data collection

According to O'Leary (2017), primary data is data that is collected by the researcher through the research process. This data does not exist outside of the research process. My data collection strategy for both groups involved semi-structured interviews. According to Galleta (2012), semi-structured interviews allow for interaction and responsiveness between the interviewer and participant. It provides a focussed structure to conduct the interviews but allows for flexibility in the discussion and for a natural progression of the discussion. I wanted to add structure to the questions being asked, to ensure that all aspects of the research topic were covered. I also wanted to maintain some flexibility to enable the exploration of interesting information uncovered during the interview. I scheduled telephonic interviews with participants in both groups at a convenient time chosen by the participants. All interviews were conducted in English, which was the standard business language at this SOE. If a participant had preferred to speak a different language, provision would have been made for a translator to be present. It was not a requirement for translator to be used for any of the participants. The key informant advised that no reasonable accommodation measures would be necessary while performing telephonic interviews.

3.9.1.2 Secondary data collection

Secondary data is data that already exists without the research process taking place. I received guidance from HRE about which internal documents could provide valuable insight to my research topic. I requested access to employment equity plans for the company, as well as internal policies relating to RA. I obtained permission to access this data. I managed to gain access to the employment equity plans and policy as well as the reasonable accommodation policy. I used this data as a means of triangulating data obtained through interviews. This provided a method of verifying and confirming some of the information that was obtained through the primary data collection process.

Triangulation, according to O'Leary (2017), is using more than one source of data to confirm the authenticity of each source. Sources of data for triangulation included:

- EWD
- HRE

- Annual integrated reports (publicly available)
- Company websites
- Internal policy documents

This information to allowed me to provide a thick description of the context in which the study took place.

3.9.2 Data collection tools

I made use of an interview schedule, which included a set of written questions produced prior to the semi-structured interviews. The format of these questions covered the various themes which needed to be discussed. Kallio. Pietila, Johnson and Kangasniemi (2016) states that it is important to develop an interview guide that will produce rigorous data collection to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. The data collection tool links the data collection method to the research question. To do this, the interview schedule was developed through research and understanding of the research topic, as well as familiarisation with the relevant literature. Questions were prepared in a logical manner that aimed to create a sense of ease for the respondents during the interview. I used a sequence of open-ended main questions with follow up questions. I tested my interview schedule through doing a pilot study before using it in the actual research study. See Appendix F for Interview Schedule for HRE and Appendix G for Interview Schedule for EWD.

Secondary data was collected using my computer and internet to access the company website and annual integrated reports for the years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. This data was available in the public domain. I also used the policy documents made available to me by the company.

3.9.3 Data collection process

I made use of voice recording devices for the semi-structured interviews, one main audio recorder and one for back-up in case of a malfunction occurring. Recording equipment was tested and set up beforehand.

A notepad and pen were used to record any interesting and relevant observations that I made during the data collection process. This involved reflections regarding theme development and any other points of interest.

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This data is securely stored in a filing cabinet at a physiotherapy practice to which I am affiliated. All electronic data is password protected. This password is available only to me.

Interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes, as recommended by Reid and Marsh (2014). The date and time were scheduled in advance with each participant. I arranged to speak to study participants telephonically. Initially the plan was to do face-to-face interviews, but due to Covid-19 related restrictions that were in place, telephonic interviews were necessitated. I encouraged participants to choose a quiet space, without interruptions and that would allow a private conversation to take place.

Information sheets and informed consent forms (See Appendix G and Appendix I) were sent to participants before the actual interview. I explained the need for recording and obtained a signed informed consent form from all participants except one who gave electronic consent using WhatsApp. Informed consent for participation in the study included permission to do audio recordings of the interviews.

I explained the background, purpose of the study, as well as the role that participants had in the study. I assured them that there were no right or wrong answers that they did not need to answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable and that confidentiality would be assured.

For secondary data, I reviewed the above-mentioned documents and searched for information that was relevant to my research topic.

3.10 Data analysis

Inductive analysis happens when theory is developed from data, as described by Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014). This is the way in which data analysis took place in my study. I made use of thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a process that actively creates meaning from data. According to Braun and Clarke (2019), shared patterns of meaning get created around central themes. Applied to my study, themes revealed interpretive stories about data that was revealed in a rigorous and systematic manner. It required prolonged, deep data immersion, reflection, application of theoretical knowledge, and transparency from me as the researcher. Prolonged engagement referred to the amount of time that I spent engaged with data from various sources. It allowed for a complex, rich and detailed

description of data. Thematic analysis took place according to the following six steps as described by Braun and Clarke (2006):

Step 1 involved immersion and becoming familiar with the data collected. I personally and manually transcribed all the voice recordings that I obtained. An orthographic transcription took place giving a verbatim account of all verbal communication. I read through this data repeatedly and actively, searching for meanings and patterns in the data.

Step 2 involved the generation of initial codes. After reading and familiarising myself with the data, I identified the most basic elements that were contained in the raw data and coded them accordingly. These elements were the segments of data or information that were assessed in a meaningful way to answer the research question. I made use of colour coding.

Step 3 involved searching for themes. I considered how these different codes combined to form overarching themes.

Step 4 involved reviewing themes. I was able to get a good idea about the different themes and how they fitted together to make sense of the case.

Step 5 was defining and naming the themes. I reviewed each of the themes to consider what story was being told by each theme and to determine if there was any overlap between themes. I also identified sub-themes which provided structure to large and complex themes as well as establishing a hierarchy within my data.

Step 6 involved producing a report that aimed to be concise, logical, non-repetitive and interesting, that represented the story that the data told within and across themes as it related to the research topic.

I brought different data sets together, firstly through identification of themes present in each data set (HRE, EWD and individual documents). I then looked for common themes present across all data sets.

3.11 Pilot study

According to Kim (2010), piloting ensures the practicality, applicability, and appropriateness of the interview guide. A colleague, who is employed in HR at an SOE (other than the study site) and has the knowledge and experience to answer questions

appropriately, graciously assisted me with the pilot study. He also put me into contact with a work colleague with a disability, who volunteered to assist me with the pilot. Although the contexts were different, these participants had the necessary knowledge and experience in a similar environment to answer the questions adequately. For practical reasons I could not select participants for the pilot study from my study population. The population size for the study was relatively small, and I did not want to further encroach on this. The main reasons I conducted a "pilot" were to:

- Perform self-evaluation as a researcher. It allowed me to practise performing the interview as well as to uncover ethical and practical issues that were not immediately apparent.

- Test the Interview schedule to ensure that it made sense and followed a logical and understandable sequence. I was able to establish a rough estimate of the time that it would take to get through the questions.

- Establish cultural appropriateness as suggested by Kim (2010). Through conducting the pilot study, I established that questioning EWD would be different to questioning HRE. I realised that when probing and asking follow-up questions I needed to be more sensitive to the lived experiences of persons living with disability. This prepared me to question the two different groups appropriately and adequately.

- It allowed me to reflect on my role as a researcher. I identified (through journaling), instances where I may have responded to answers and prompted participants with preconceptions and/or biases.

Modifications were based on feedback received, quality of data generated and reflections. I found that going through the pilot study provided me with some practical insights when performing my actual study. These practicalities included, setting up the recording equipment adequately, practicing active listening and prompting adequately according to responses that I received. It also gave me an idea of how participants would respond to questions asked and gave me added confidence when I needed to conduct my actual study. I found that the questions in my interview guide were appropriate, logical, complete, and were completed within the anticipated time. The responses that I received answered my research questions, and no further changes needed to be made to the interview guide.

3.12 Trustworthiness

I used trustworthiness as a criterion to ensure rigor in my study. This was supported by Guba and Lincoln (1989), who described trustworthiness as a more appropriate criterion of rigour than the measures of validity and reliability applied previously. The following strategies were used to ensure trustworthiness of data:

3.12.1 Credibility

I ensured credibility through prolonged engagement with data, reaching data saturation, purposive sampling and data triangulation (consulting various sources of data). Duffy (1993) has described the way in which data triangulation allows each piece of data to strengthen or confirm patterns of agreement from multiple data sources. I performed member checking. Findings were summarised, and participants were given the opportunity to check the accuracy of findings. This contributed to the accuracy of data that was reported. I also made use of external peer debriefing through consultation with my supervisor throughout the processes of data collection, data analysis and reporting of data. These methods improved the credibility of my study.

3.12.2 Transferability

I cannot assume that research findings will be transferable from one context to another. Through providing a rich contextual description and detailed, thick descriptions of the methodological steps of my study, readers can decide whether the findings are transferable.

3.12.3 Dependability

Dependability in my study was assured by maintaining an audit trail of all research processes and activities. I documented decision-making processes influencing data collection and analysis. These processes are clearly outlined in chronological order for them to be examined by peers and to make them replicable for other researchers.

3.12.4 Confirmability

According to Morrow (2005), the integrity of findings is based on valid data. The reader must confirm that findings are adequate according to the way in which data and analytical processes are tied together.

I have kept records of raw data, field notes, transcripts, and a reflective journal. I used a reflective journal to record any biases or preconceptions that I had while conducting the study. I was constantly mindful of how this may influence the study.

When writing up my research, I made use of quotations from participants to substantiate my interpretation of data which I have analysed.

3.13 Ethical considerations

Throughout my study, I have applied the following three principles as described by the Department of Health (2015), International Declaration of Helsinki and Medical Research Council (2015) guidelines:

3.13.1 Beneficence (maximising benefit) and non-maleficence (minimising harm)

I have interviewed employees about *facilitating factors*, which is positive in nature. It is hoped that participants will feel good about contributing towards a body of knowledge that could assist with the future employment of PWD. HR participants and the company may benefit from the knowledge produced through this research which may further assist and improve the recruitment of PWD in the company. The results from the study will be reported on and shared with the SOE. Anonymity can however not be ensured with such a small sample. Confidentiality was upheld by not naming any participant directly and using pseudonyms. Dissemination of the results of the study to the SOE and participants will take place through presentation of the case, rather than reporting on findings from separate groups of participants.

This study is positive in nature, and no intervention was performed. This was still regarded, however, to be a medium risk study, given the study population involved.

3.13.2 Distributive justice (equality)

All EWD formed part of my study population. Through performing purposive sampling, I was hoping to include PWD from different occupational levels and disability types. I did this to ensure broad representation. I did not purposely exclude persons based on disability type. The type of disability that participants had was disclosed to me by participants during telephonic interviews. As the study unfolded, especially with so many

employees working remotely due to COVID-19 related restrictions, I needed to also recruit participants according to who was available and willing to participate in the study.

3.13.3 Respect for persons (dignity and autonomy)

I did my best to always act respectfully towards all persons while conducting this research project. All participants acted with self-determination to voluntarily participate. An information sheet was given to each participant to provide written information about the study. It explained that withdrawal from the study was possible at any stage, and that there would be no negative consequences for this choice. Confidentiality was also explained. Only essential personal information needed for contextualisation of information was obtained. All information collected (audio and written) was treated as confidential and protected. The identity of participants and that of the SOE is anonymous. Pseudonyms were supplied which were used instead of names and used on all documents and recordings. A master list, together with audio recordings and transcriptions, were locked away in a filing cabinet at a physiotherapy practice to which I am affiliated. Electronic information received while research was being conducted was saved on my personal computer and password protected. Information used in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations always ensures anonymity. I provided information and answered any questions that participants had before obtaining a signature on the informed consent form. Identification of participants in HR may be inferred from job descriptions, and this was explained to these participants before obtaining their signed informed consent.

3.14 Ethical clearance and relevant permission (SUN, 2011)

Ethical clearance was applied for and approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee: University of Stellenbosch (see Appendix H). The reference number S19/10/233 was provided.

The researcher received written permission from the General Manager of the SOE to perform the research at the company (See Appendix I).

Findings of this study will be reported on and forwarded to all study participants who indicated that they would like to have access to this information.

3.15 Integrity of publication (SUN, 2011)

All research which is reported on will be presented in an honest manner. The researcher has aimed to include accurate and correct data. Member checking took place to ensure accuracy of data being reported on. Research supervisors also assisted in this regard. The researcher read, signed, and adhered to the plagiarism declaration when conducting this research project.

3.16 Summary

The aim of the study was to identify and describe the factors which facilitate an SOE in the Western Cape to recruit PWD in order to meet Employment Equity targets. An exploratory qualitative study was conducted to achieve this aim. A single, embedded case study design was used. Research methods included document review and semi-structured, telephonic interviews. The research population for the semi-structured interviews was divided into two groups which consisted of HRE and EWD, according to selection criteria. Seven participants willingly participated. Data collection tools included an interview guide, notebook, voice recorder and pen for use when conducting telephonic semi-structured interviews. Document review took place using my personal computer and internet access. A pilot study was conducted in a context similar to the main study. Data analysis was done using thematic analysis. Ethical principles were adhered to when conducting this study.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study as they relate to the main objectives of the study. To answer these objectives, section 4.2 presents a document review and section 4.3 presents the findings that describe the commitment of the company towards reaching employment equity targets. Sections 4.4 and 4.5 look at design for inclusion and talent acquisition respectively. Section 4.6 presents the findings on alliances with disabled people's organisations (DPOs) and specialised recruitment agencies. Section 4.7 looks at how various barriers were overcome and finally 4.8 looks at challenges still being faced.

4.2 Document review

When looking at website information, annual integrated reports and internal policies, I took into consideration my research aim, and looked for information that provided a meaningful contribution to the aim of my study. I was directed by HR participants to internal policy documents that could provide meaningful information regarding my research question, aim and objectives. Table 4.1. presents documents that were analysed and the key results as it relates to research objectives.

Table 4.1. Overview of document review

Document Type	Organisational/ National Policy	Policy/ Procedure/ Report	Results from document	Relation to research objective
Website Information	National	No	• The company embraces diversity as a core value • Commitment to socio-economic transformation of the country to be representative of demographics • Prioritisation of ensuring that services and facilities are accessible to customers. • Recipient of National Disability Champion Award due to sponsorship of community disability initiatives	To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment
Annual integrated report document analysis for 2019/2020	National	Report	• Increase in total workforce of PWD during the year 2019/2020 due to: • Disability awareness programmes • Dedicated task team for accessibility, disability inclusion and RA. • Recommendations made nationally, about RA by PWD. • Quarterly support group sessions • Engagement with DPOs, keeping abreast of disability developments • Policies aligned to requirements recommended by PWD.	To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment
Policy to ensure procedures are followed to	National	Policy	• Clear definition of disability and outlining of different impairments.	

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comply with the Employment Equity Act			- Fairness in recruitment and selection processes are prescribed. - Training and development prescribed to be equitable. - Action plans prescribed to be drawn up to monitor and evaluate progress to achieving EE targets. - Mandates quarterly meetings with representation from leadership and equity groups. - Individuals accountable for achieving EE targets regionally and nationally. - Achievement of targets gets linked to performance of individuals and departments.	
Policy to ensure the provision of RA	National	Policy	- Special budget provided for RA - Provision of RA void of stigmatisation or discrimination - PWD to be involved in decision making around RA - Dispute resolution to be put in place. - Review of policy to take place according to changes in regulations and environment. - Audits conducted to ensure compliance in provision of RA. - Responsible persons appointed regionally and nationally to be held accountable for RA.	To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment

4.2.1 Desktop information

This SOE affiliates closely to "Brand South Africa "and embraces diversity as one of its core values. Excellence is another of its core values. Performance contracts of senior managers are directly linked to these core values. Accordingly, it has won more than 50 international awards and was awarded "Top Employers" status in the public sector nationally for ten consecutive years. The SOE was also a recipient of the National Disability Champion Award. This SOE is committed to aid in the socio-economic transformation of the South African population to be representative of the country both nationally and regionally. As part of their socio-economic development programme, this SOE has been involved in various initiatives involving the impoverished communities within proximity to where the SOE operates its various branches. Most of these initiatives involve skills development. Additionally, they are involved in sponsorship of the South African National Deaf Association (SANDA). SANDA is a human rights and advocacy organisation for people who are deaf. The SOE has also trained 80 employees in sign language in order to communicate and interact with persons who are deaf as part of reasonable accommodation offered to PWD. They have also been in partnership with the Department of Social Development in sponsoring Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes. They continue to support the training of care-based assistants and sponsoring assistive devices for children with disabilities. Support was also provided to the SMILE foundation (which performs facial reconstructive surgeries for children with facial deformities from disadvantaged backgrounds in different provinces).

They make it a priority to ensure that their services and facilities are accessible to all customers, including customers with disabilities.

4.2.2 Annual integrated report document analysis for 2019/2020 on employment of persons with disabilities

In the year 2019/2020, the representation of PWD increased from 2.4% to 2.5% of the total workforce, nationally. The advancement of PWD as a previously disadvantaged group was mentioned to be a key focus area. This improvement in employment of PWD nationally was attributed to the following factors:

- creation of awareness about inclusion of PWD according to PWD employment strategy;

- dedicated task team devoted to accessibility, inclusion and reasonable accommodation;

- annual declaration campaigns are run, and sensitisation initiatives are held regarding disability matters;

- recommendations are made regarding reasonable accommodation requirements nationally by PWD;

- the PWD network support group sessions which are held quarterly focus on issues affecting PWD and offers a platform to determine best practice strategies and solutions;

- engagement with disability sector organisations to stay abreast of disability developments and implementing best practice for employment of PWD; and

- disclosure and reasonable accommodation policies have been aligned to address requirements as recommended by PWD.

A breakdown of these figures was not available for the Western Cape on the website. Figures were closely aligned to national figures and targets as confirmed by HR participants of the study.

4.2.3 Internal policy document analysis

Internal policy documents were analysed as they align to the recruitment and employment of PWD in the company.

4.2.3.1 Policy to ensure procedures are followed to comply with the Employment Equity Act

Organisational strategic objectives are set according to an analysis of workforce demographics to ensure progress towards reflecting the South African demographic profile within all categories of employment within the company. Within the policy document, disability is given a clear definition and various impairments are outlined. Recruitment and selection processes are prescribed to be fair and to avoid discrimination. Training and development were outlined to be prescribed in an equitable manner. The policy document enforces action plans to monitor and evaluate progress made to achieve

employment equity targets. The document mandates quarterly meetings with representation from designated equity groups and leadership of the organisation. Individuals are held responsible and accountable for achieving employment equity targets both regionally and nationally. Achievement of these targets is linked to performance of individuals and departments.

4.2.3.2 Policy ensuring procedures to provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities

This policy was compiled to ensure the development of processes to ensure the respectful and equitable treatment of persons with disabilities throughout the company.

It outlines disclosure of disability and the accompanying protection of confidentiality and personal information. It specifies a special budget to be made available for the provision of reasonable accommodation, monitoring of compliance and ensuring a non-discriminatory workplace.

The provision of Reasonable Accommodation (RA) is prescribed to be done in a manner that will not stigmatise or disempower PWD.

The policy encourages PWD to be involved in decision-making around RA.

It also prescribes that dispute resolution processes should be put in place. All procedures regarding provision of RA are drawn up according to the policy.

This policy gets reviewed according to changes in the environment and regulations. Audits are conducted to determine compliance and implementation of RA.

Responsible persons are appointed and held accountable for RA both regionally and nationally.

4.3 Semi-structured interviews

Table 4.1 presents an overview of the main findings from semi-structured interviews, broken down into themes and sub-themes as they relate to the relevant research objectives.

Table 4.2: Overview of main findings from interviews

Research Objectives	Related Themes	Related Sub-themes
To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment	Company's commitment to achieving Employment Equity targets	• Commitment and support demonstrated from senior management • Implementation of legislation and the Employment Equity Act • Monitoring of Employment Equity progress • Reporting on Employment Equity progress
To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment	Design for inclusion	• Embracing diversity through creating inclusion • Disability awareness and sensitivity training • Creating a safe space to disclose disability • Provision of reasonable accommodation
To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment	Talent acquisition	• Advertisements and company brand attractive to persons with disabilities • Forming alliances with DPOs and specialised recruitment agencies • Targeted recruitment

To identify and describe the facilitating factors which enabled the company to effectively recruit persons with disabilities for employment	Support structures available for persons with disabilities	• Support groups for PWD • ICAS
To explore barriers that have been overcome in the company to facilitate the recruitment of persons with disabilities.	Barriers that have been overcome	• Overcoming structural barriers • Changes in perception amongst line managers about employing PWD • Persons with different disabilities and severity of disability experience the built environment and reasonable accommodation provided by the company differently • Emotional ability to cope with challenges of the workplace
To explore barriers that have been overcome in the company to facilitate the recruitment of persons with disabilities.	Challenges	• Covid-19 • Transport

4.4 SOE's commitment to achieving employment equity targets

Participants described the ways in which the SOE demonstrated commitment to achieving employment equity targets.

4.4.1 Commitment and support demonstrated from senior management

HR participants indicated that the buy-in and support from senior management structures of the company is crucial to facilitate the recruitment and employment of PWD.

"What we've done is to get the buy in of both our general manager and our AGMs you know managers."

''And I think that's made it much much easier having the buy-in from both the general manager and the assistant general managers that we have.''

(Miranda, HR employee, 31/08/2020)

Maurice added:

"So I think it was more about the change management, I think getting the support from the business to make it happen and the also um also taking pride in being a company that supports equal opportunities for everyone."

(Maurice, HR employee, 25/09/2020)

4.4.2 Implementation of legislation and the Employment Equity Act

Participants revealed that the company has set employment equity targets in line with legislation and the Employment Equity Act at a regional level, as well as nationally. Targets are set according to a three-year cycle. HR participants also reveal that the company always tries to exceed the targets that are set. Samuel explained the following:

''We very much focus on persons with disabilities we've got an employment equity plan and that focuses on targets relating to persons with disabilities as per the employment equity legislation."

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020*)*

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"We have legislation to ensure that certain things are in place from our employment equity act, as well as we have our internal employment equity targets that we have to abide by, at a regional level as well as nationally, and those are set within a three-year cycle and every three years it needs to get relooked and we need to make sure that those targets both locally and nationally."

"We obviously try to ensure that we go above the actual targets that are set.''

(Miranda, HR employee, 31/08/2020)

4.4.3 Monitoring of employment equity progress

Findings from participants indicated that an essential part of reaching employment equity targets in this company are the monitoring processes that are in place. Participants described quarterly employment equity meetings that take place. These meetings are attended by senior managers, line managers and employment equity representatives (including PWD), who raise employment equity issues in a transparent way. This was succinctly explained by Samuel:

'"The role of the committee is to keep the company and the employees abreast of the changes in the organisation in terms of employment equity what are the measures they put in place to improve employment equity.''

"…....it's represented by HR as well as senior management and the employees so it's a collective structure that allows the transparent flow of information and for each other to keep abreast of what's happening.''

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

4.4.4 Reporting on employment equity progress

Participants indicated that performance is made visible through the BBB-EE scorecard. An important part of achieving employment equity targets for PWD is that each group, including race, gender and disability, is reported on separately. Senior managers are held personally accountable to national structures and, as an SOE, are held accountable to government for failing to meet employment equity targets.

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4.5 Theme conclusion

Responses from participants indicate that commitment from the company to achieve employment equity targets is crucial. The buy-in from senior management of the company to employ PWD was identified as essential. Accordingly, mechanisms for reporting and monitoring progress takes place to ensure that targets for employment of PWD are being met. Findings indicate that reporting takes place in a manner that is transparent.

4.6 Design for inclusion

Participants described how the work environment has been designed to facilitate inclusion for PWD.

4.6.1 Embracing diversity through creating inclusion

The participants described the company as one that embraces diversity and that markets itself as an employer that is inclusive of PWD. HR participants described that creating equity in the company has come with challenges because it left some people feeling excluded. Sandy has added:

"*Employment equity was quite difficult to implement because, um, because a lot of people felt excluded after that. So now we do a lot more work about people feeling that they are at home and have a place in the organisation.*"

(Sandy, HR employee, 15/08/2020)

The focus on diversity was redirected to creating inclusion for all persons working in the company. Participants explained how this was done through workshops which focuses on learning about each other's cultures but highlighting how much more similarities people have than differences. Sandy continued to add:

 "*You can't talk about diversity without talking about inclusivity.*"

"*Understanding each other's cultures and what we found that in doing that is that we make people realise more about how similar they are than about how different they are.*"

"*So, a lot of the workshops that we've done now are a lot more about inclusivity than diversity.*"

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(Sandy, HR employee, 15/08/2020)

"I work with people from diverse cultures, people with different abilities. I would say that it's actually the first company that I've worked for where I have on a regular basis been in contact with persons with disabilities, so that definitely shows that the company has taken a step in the right direction."

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

A EWD described how he felt at home in the company. He described how working at the company feels like belonging to a family. Even though diversity is present, colleagues socialise well with each other and show a genuine interest in each other.

Maxwell described the following:

"They certainly try to make the best selection for a fit, not only for the company, but also for the group of people that the person will be working with and that shows, we are really one big family be it interdepartmental, be it to share an office space. But you can feel it when you walk in our relationships generally don't just end when we leave the building. It carries on, we socialise with one another, we show general interest in each other's lives and that is always good."

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

In terms of ensuring that equal opportunities and inclusion are provided to PWD, HR participants described the mainstreaming of skills development within the organisation. Sandy explained how PWD are covered in the workplace plan for talent management, training and performance management like everyone else:

"So we have training and development um, the B-EE requires you to show that you have been training your people with disability, but we don't send them on special programmes we just make sure that in the workplace plan they are adequately covered, with training and they would be part of our performance management like anyone else, they would be part of our talent management like everyone else functions, we need to make sure that we get them there, we have to make sure that the function rooms will cater for them as well."

(Sandy, HR Employee, 15/08/2020)

The presence of employees with disabilities already employed and active within the company creates a feeling of belonging for new PWD entering the company, as described by Maxwell about a frontline person with disability who introduced him to the company:

"She was certainly there to guide the way and that certainly made it easier.''

"*Because you will be dealing with someone who speaks from experience and I think that that makes it easier for someone with a disability. It actually puts one at ease quite a bit*.''

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

4.6.2 Disability awareness and sensitivity training

Disability awareness and sensitivity training has been highlighted by participants as being important for creating inclusion for persons with disabilities. Annual workshops and awareness sessions are held at the company to ensure that the colleagues of PWD understand how different types of impairments can affect individuals daily and why reasonable accommodation is necessary. Awareness is also raised through electronic processes, such as news flashes that come through automatically on computers.

HR participants indicated that a key focus in these awareness sessions is highlighting how all people have core similarities in the workplace, but that some differences are acknowledged. Miranda made this comment:

"So, we've been very specific and mindful in regards to creating awareness within the organisation of PWD and how we are all the same, but we have some difference.''

(Miranda, HR Employee, 31/08/2020)

Participants acknowledged that disability awareness is necessary to allow colleagues to be more sensitive towards PWD, both in understanding and in how to deal with disability in a respectful manner.

This was acknowledged by Samuel:

"It's really just about your colleagues being more sensitive towards people with disabilities and trying to accommodate them."

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(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

Nadine also noted the following:

''You know sometimes when people are not understanding your disability and they lack awareness when you say you need to hear something; they will just shout at you like you are some kind of an idiot. And because they lack awareness.''

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

Participants explained how the use of inappropriate language can be offensive towards PWD and how this negativity can affect an individual in the workplace. Miranda explained the following:

"Just that people be sensitised how do you call do you say like a disability because sometimes our language can be very offensive.''

"PWD is also coming into a new environment and they are also, they are also on their journey and then it's difficult and they have to navigate this new environment."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

According to participants, another role that disability awareness plays is to create an understanding of the challenges that PWD face daily through living with impairment. Nadine explained the role that disability awareness had on her colleagues in understanding the challenges that she faces daily living with a hearing impairment:

"They don't understand the actual disability and how it impacts on you as an individual.''

"It (disability awareness programmes) really plays a huge role, because people didn't really understand what we go through on a daily basis and they think when you hear them it's kind of easy to hear the devices.''

"The hearing devices come with a very huge negative on the individual and it irritates you it gives you headaches, it's a lot of things that you tolerate because of something that you cannot change in you.''

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

In the following section, contents covered in these workshops are described, as explained by participants.

Understanding from colleagues about the purpose of reasonable accommodation gets addressed in disability awareness sessions. It is intended for colleagues to understand that RA is not preferential treatment, but necessary for PWD to perform a job efficiently.

Miranda explained the following:

"*I think when it comes to colleagues; we had a lot of colleagues saying that it's not fair that my colleague doesn't do this task, yet I have to do this task. So it's just that it creates awareness and ensuring that people know in regards to what does this accommodation mean.*"

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

Creating an inclusive work environment required education and awareness training about disability, especially for line managers who are directly involved with recruiting and managing PWD within their operational spaces.

Miranda explained the following:

"*Having a culture of inclusivity, of being inclusive our line managers are aware of how they can also be inclusive in their recruitment process.*"

"*We do workshops so that the line managers can make decisions to ensure that they are inclusive in their hiring practice as well, so we do run different workshops with different line managers to ensure that they are aware.*"

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

4.6.3 Creating a safe space to disclose disability

HR participants explained how the company did a lot of work to create a safe space for the disclosure of disability. The company continuously provides existing employees with various opportunities to declare invisible disabilities. Employees can disclose disability in a manner where they feel comfortable to disclose, either in person or through completing a form. It was deemed important for employees to not feel targeted or singled out, and for this reason the topic of disclosure gets brought up in a variety of different contexts including electronic processes, during meetings within divisions or one-on-one, depending on the situation.

Miranda explained the following about disclosure:

"There was a lot of hard work that happened, we spoke to line managers to not to force, just to bring it up in safe platforms."

"For people so that people are not being singled out, so that just ensuring that you bring it up in a forum that you have in your division, in department meetings, sometimes on a one-on-one basis just to ensure that people don't feel, that they are either being side-lined or that they are targeted because it can get very tricky."

"So, we have to be very cautious about that. I think we really had a big campaign of trying to make people comfortable with disclosing. We ran very hard with it over a period of a year."

"This is to help any person that might need any help along the way now and in future."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

It was reported by participants that employees are often reluctant to disclose a disability due to their own personal reasons. These reasons were described as possibly fearing marginalisation, or not wanting to identify as being disabled. HR therefore educates employees about RA, and how they can be supported to perform their jobs more efficiently. They make employees aware that they can benefit from RA by disclosing disability either presently or in future.

Sandy explained the reason disclosure becomes necessary:

"A lot of people don't even consider their circumstances as being disabled. They made a plan to live in the world and they don't even consider themselves disabled."

"Once you get to a stage where they need some kind of accommodation… then it becomes more, more necessary for them as individuals then to declare."

(Sandy, HR Employee, 15/08/2020)

Miranda added:

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"People were more to come forward and disclose knowing that there won't be any discrimination towards them."

(Miranda, HR Employee, 31/08/2020)

It was reported that as disability gets encountered more frequently in the workplace, people are more willing and comfortable in disclosing disability. HR feature success stories involving PWD in magazines and in electronic media to highlight the positive image that the company has of PWD succeeding in the company. This also helps to dispel the notion that marginalisation will happen because of disclosing disability.

"We feature people every now and then in the magazine and those sort of things about what people are busy doing, special projects or something like that.''

"*You see now then as people see that there is no harm coming to people, people are feeling more and more comfortable.''*

(Sandy, HR Employee, 15/08/2020)

4.6.4 Provision of reasonable accommodation

As an introduction for RA, a statement that Samuel made conveys the essence of RA, which is in effect the removal of barriers for PWD in the workplace.

"I don't think that disabled people should really feel that they are disabled."

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

This statement was supported by something that Miranda said:

"The last thing that you want is someone coming to work and feeling I can't access the door, or I can't, so they almost feel like they have double barriers to overcome."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

RA is deemed important by HR for both talent acquisition and job retention for PWD, as explained by Maurice.

"It's an ongoing process, so it's not just about the talent acquisition, it's also about how the current people are performing or functioning in their role."

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

HR consults with PWD on a frequent basis to find out in which ways they can be accommodated or further supported.

 Samuel explained:

"A lot of activity in the last few years with HR engaging me and these sort of things becoming more commonplace these discussions, so I've had people phoning me and asking me do I feel like I need a little bit more assistance or not I think in last year I had somebody to meet me from HR, a consultant that has been appointed by HR asking me if there is more that (the company) can do."

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

According to participants, RA gets provided to accommodate individuals in a variety of different ways. This involves not only the physical adjustment of surroundings or the provision of assistive technologies, but also adjusting a person's roles or schedule to allow the person to perform their job to the best of their ability.

"What they were able to do is to for the first 3 hours of the day, I would assist on the floor I'm standing on my feet, but the other part of the day, I can work in the call centre, where I would be off my feet."

"It allows you to do your job to the best of your ability without you feeling as if you are a burden or as if you are not contributing."

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

Reasonable accommodation, although it may seem extensive for a few employees, once provided, paves the way to accommodate more persons with similar impairments in the future. Samuel observed the following:

 "We've done some of those things in our main boardroom, but you know there's only 3 or 4 people that have hearing issues."

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

Subsequent to Samuel's observation, Nadine had a positive experience to share about her initial impression of the company and the accommodations that were made for previous employees with similar impairment:

"*When I looked at that boardroom, I saw that they had all that sound blocker around the wall and I I knew that they were really uhm in that level of accommodating people like myself where they would have meeting rooms of that nature*."

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

Participants shared that various structural changes are in place to ensure accessibility for PWD. Design ensures that inclusion takes place through EWD completing surveys to assist in making further recommendations for RA. Upon approval of these recommendations, PWD are approached to give their input into the design and planning of these projects.

"We had a tour, fortunately I was also in that meeting with employment equity, there was a tour where we were at some time touring around the (company) to check and see if the physical, the building, the bathrooms the places are compatible for any disability."

"Where we identified all the stumbling blocks or the factors and everything was noted and discussed on a senior level of the national employment equity and I am hoping that there will be results thereafter."

"We went to a renovation of our uhm, administrative building a couple of years ago and they retrofitted the meeting room to allow for better hearing, for better design, and during that process, there was consultation with those that were disabled, saying that we'd appreciate your input into the design."

"So at least there was consultation and that's to be applauded".

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

Reasonable accommodation takes place from the initial advertisement being accessible to persons with different impairments to the interview venue and processes, as well as the recruitment and selection processes which accommodate PWD in a manner that provides equal employment opportunities for all candidates.

Participants found that accessibility for PWD is improved during advertisement and interviewing processes through consultation with disability orientated organisations. Guidance gets offered from these organisations about RA required during the interview process.

"So we advertise on our website, that's our main central that you can get the ad and then depending on the response levels if needs be we will then either go external to engage with associations or NGOs also if we require a recruitment agent to source, or more specifically target persons with disabilities."

"They do give us guidance in terms of what is required, uh if the individual needs specific requirements, they will guide us on that in terms of the interview process."

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

HR participants described that all candidates are treated equally during the interviewing and selection processes through taking focus off disability, and rather focussing on the ability of a candidate to perform a role.

"So, I would like to think that one could be able to have anyone walk in MAYBE be on crutches, maybe not crutches, maybe in a wheelchair, maybe not in a wheelchair. And that possibly one would even do the interview without being able to see the person if I were to try to describe it in that way and you describe the job to them, and they must be able to indicate that they wouldn't have any issues to be able to do that position."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

4.7 Theme conclusion

An inclusive environment for PWD has been created through inclusivity workshops that acknowledge differences amongst employees, but that place more emphasis on similarities rather than differences. During recruitment and employment, emphasis is placed on ability rather than disability. Inclusivity is promoted through disability awareness and sensitivity training. A safe space is continuously created for the disclosure of disability. Awareness and education about the reason for and benefits of disclosure are provided in a variety of different contexts to ensure that employees do not feel

targeted or singled out. The planning and design of an inclusive environment and provision of RA takes place in consultation with EWD.

4.8 Talent acquisition

The participants have described that acquisition of new talent takes place in a way that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

4.8.1 Advertisement and company brand attractive to persons with disabilities

The participants shared that the company brands itself as being attractive to PWD.

 "We advertise, we indicate a wheelchair type icon on there and we say we welcome applications from people with disabilities. Newspaper adverts, website. Both internally and externally. So, you can market your organisation as an employer brand that you are successful in that way. And then good news stories, you know very often the press look for good stories."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

At the same time, it is important to find the right person for the job, both in terms of skill, experience and being part of a team.

Miranda described criteria for appointment in any position:

"*…. the same criteria will be in place in regard to the person must have certain qualifications, or a certain amount of experience as associated with the same job."*

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

Nadine confirmed this by stating the following:

 "… and not only for statistical reasons, when you are already part of the team you feel you are recognised, you are respected."

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

Mason voiced his need for job stability and growth, which is offered at this company:

"'I don't recognise my disability at that time, I only recognise I have a need to work and I need to provide for my family."

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"… I needed to upgrade my level of work experience."

(Mason, EWD, 18/09/2020)

4.8.2 Forming alliances with disability organisations

Participants indicated the importance of forming alliances with various Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) representing persons with different impairment types. They also make use of a specialised recruitment agency. When positions become available, they inform these organisations, and lists of suitable candidates are then put forward. This allows accessibility to persons with different types of impairments if they are registered with these organisations.

These alliances provide support in establishing what types of accommodation are needed for candidates with different impairment types, both for the interview and for employment afterwards. This was described by Miranda:

"*We normally before even an interview, ask either the candidate or the agency or the organisation what kind of accommodation does this person need in order one, to come to the interview and also then for them to work successfully with us. So we do give a very detailed description of this is what this role is going to bring on a daily basis, what kind of reasonable accommodation do we need?*"

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

Assistance is also given by DPOs in presenting disability awareness workshops and disability sensitisation sessions at the company.

Support is given to PWD in preparation for interviews from specialised recruitment agencies, as Maxwell described:

"*The recruitment agency will help you all the way up until it's time for you to interview and of course that's where they will say okay from here on it's all you.*"

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

EWD who gain employment at a company through a recruitment agency that specialises in recruiting PWD have the added assurance that employment equity is taken seriously.

As a result, they know that they will not be discriminated against based on disability and would have equal opportunities for growth. The following was described by Nadine:

"I *was coming from an employment agency that specifically looks after people like myself stability and there is growth the growth is there; the development and they are not discriminating against PWD. They will consider the employment equity of the time in their recruitment.*"

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

HR participants have indicated that making use of a specialised recruitment agency allows the company to attract the necessary skills that are needed. The following was explained by Maurice:

"If we don't get the necessary persons or the quality of the individual is important, engage a specific organisation that works with persons with disabilities, it makes it easier because then you've got a partnership and understanding a little bit of the background."

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

4.8.3 Targeted recruitment

The company, together with DPOs have targeted specific jobs and roles for PWD. This does not exclude PWD from applying for other jobs, but certain roles have been specifically allocated for PWD. Samuel described that the camera surveillance room was identified as a space where employees are seated, monitoring cameras for most of the time. This was identified as a space in the company where persons with mobility impairments could be targeted for employment:

"Our camera room for instance is an ideal environment for people that are wheelchair bound".

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

Sandy added about the targeted recruitment project that was successful in recruiting PWD within a particular space in the company:

"We partnered with False Bay College at the time of work readiness programme was that they helped to check to make sure that the work environment was ready, and we made various adjustments."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

Miranda also said the following:

"When a position becomes available, we try and facilitate and just speak to line managers with regards to where they can include persons living with disability into their environment."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

4.9 Theme conclusion

Attracting and recruiting PWD who have the necessary skills to fill vacant positions takes place through the company marketing itself as being inclusive to PWD. Advertisements are placed in a manner that is accessible and encourages PWD to apply. Alliances that have been formed with DPOs and specialised recruitment agencies also facilitate the recruitment of suitable candidates.

4.10 Support structures available for persons with disabilities

Other than the support obtained from managers and HR, support structures are available to provide PWD with additional support.

A national support group has been established and meets monthly to discuss challenges and various disability related issues. PWD face unique challenges and this allows PWD to feel supported.

Nadine explained the following:

"There are other platforms like support groups which is a national people where we meet, and we discuss our challenges…. In that support group, we meet monthly."

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

Maurice added:

"We've created a support group for them as well, where they do meet. They just had one last week as well on the online portal, where they meet and talk as, as individuals and just to see what kind of support it is that they require. So, we are trying to ensure that we are supporting the PWD as much we possibly can across our environment."

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

ICAS is a support programme available to all employees that can aid PWD when dealing with different issues that may impact their lives. It encompasses the holistic wellbeing of a person and includes personal, relationship, psychological and financial guidance. This is a valuable resource that is available for all employees.

Miranda explained the following:

"We bring in there's counsellors, that are ICAS counsellors in place that ensures that they can call in at any stage because sometimes you can be overwhelmed if you don't know how to go."

"So, it's very important for us to ensure that your wellbeing as an individual, not only as an organisation, but especially that the individual is looked after."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

"We have an ICAS programme where you can make use of that platform to speak to a counsellor regarding a lot of issues, work, relationships, legal advice and all these types of things."

(Mason, EWD, 18/09/2020)

4.11 Barriers that have been overcome

Participants have described barriers that have been overcome over a number of years.

4.11.1 Overcoming structural barriers

An HR participant who has been employed at the company for a very long time has described how the company has made quite a few structural changes over a number of years to make the buildings more accessible to PWD. This remains, however, an ongoing project, especially to ensure that employees with disabilities who are currently employed are suitably accommodated. Regular building audits are conducted to ensure that the building remains physically accessible. A recommendation was made that better benchmarks are required in future to ensure that buildings adhere to universal accessibility standards.

"So, when we started and when we first embarked on this project, the people who built the building told us that it was built according to specifications of SABS I think it is. And that everything is fine."

"I mean when we actually went in, we found that things like the toilets were too low. We were told, no that is the way which the SABS has it. No, can't be. The doors weren't opening the right way, so we needed to change the way the door opened. So, toilets were a big issue. So, any ramps, you have to be careful that they are properly, that there are proper guard rails so wheelchairs can't slip off."

"But in general, we found that what, what the project people tell you they've built and what is functional is something that is very different."

"We require better benchmarking in terms of what is required."

"So, there are different standards that people have. So that's why you actually need to check or have an auditor who does a walk through and a couple of reports. We have done those a couple of times through the years, once with an outside company and once with someone with a more sort of internal eye."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

4.11.2 Changes in perception amongst line managers about employing PWD

HR participants have described that it was a challenging process to get operational managers to recruit PWD initially. Reaching employment equity targets within divisions acted as a starting point. Both line managers and PWD get offered support from HR. This

coupled with disability awareness and education about how different impairments can be accommodated within operational spaces has brought about a powerful change to much more supportive attitudes towards PWD.

"I think that the big thing still is that we very often need to be very persuasive in the line. Everyone agrees what the wonderful idea it is for us to meet our targets, yes, we must do this that and the other."

"But when it comes to them in their area, then they have a problem."

"It's one of those, yes, it's a good idea, but not in my backyard."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

"We as any other policy that we have there from affirmative action, so it is a policy that we have to represent not only the country, but we also represent people locally. Across the country we have people living with disabilities, so we showcase, we have to look like how our country looks nationally, but how our country looks locally as well. So, we do have a tool in place, yes."

"but that is to ensure compliance, because sometimes unfortunately we do have managers that are not there yet that actually have more of a journey with they actually."

"Listen if they have any questions, ensuring that we answer all the questions, explaining (that) this is the person's disability, this is how the disability impacts them on a daily basis and based on this are your roles, if we put these accommodations in place, would you be fine?"

"*So, once you have that in place it just makes it less maybe daunting….*"

"They (PWD) come into the organisation and they are like Miranda this person is amazing, like I don't know why I was fighting the whole time or sometimes it could be, it's a bit challenging but what is it that we can do to support this person because it could be that I don't understand, or there are things that we may not be aware of and so what is it that we can do to support this person?"

"I've had managers go from an outright NO, to DEFINITELY, just through awareness."

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(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

4.11.3 Different experiences of reasonable accommodation by persons with disabilities

Participants with different disabilities and severity of impairment had different experiences of RA provided by the company.

A participant with mild physical impairment made these positive observations about the built environment and physical adaptations:

"The lay-out of the buildings are fairly straight forward, so it is fairly easily accessible to people with disabilities. Also, with staff transport they are also accommodated, and the staff transport picks up our people with disabilities and those vehicle themselves have lowered vehicles with the ramps for the lifts."

"… and you can see the changes are evident from where our controlled accesses are for instance at other companies where I've seen people with disabilities, they would only have normal lifts that people with abilities would use, but in (company) they actually have the wheelchair lift set up at the stairs and for me personally that shows the fact that the company is geared towards employing persons with disabilities which also gives you peace of mind."

(Maxwell, EWD, 23/09/2020)

Mason, a participant with a more severe physical impairment, made these more critical observations about the physical environment:

"The only thing is there is disabled toilets there but it's not up to the standard that we would like it to be, but they are making provision."

"Unfortunately, my electric wheelchair is now standing broken at home, I'm using a manual wheelchair where I physically need to push myself everywhere where the company needs me to go to HR or wherever and HR is quite a distance away if I'm pushing my wheelchair, I am quite, very slow."

"It was provided from the company but it was our responsibility to see that it is maintained and the challenge that I had was that most of the money that I need for the wheelchair must go for the house, because I am the only breadwinner in the house."

 (Mason, EWD, 18/09/2020)

Participants described annual audits that take place to ensure that the individual experiences of PWD are addressed. The most recent audit that took place was performed by an external company. EWD were interviewed to find out about experiences of RA. Recommendations were then put forward to the company for consideration.

"So, we've analysed all the surveys, we've included into a particular report for a particular department and then we would then follow up with the line managers if these things were implemented er, and if there are any barriers currently that we need to review."

"We're meant to do it on an annual basis the one that we did was last year, so we appointed an external occupational expertise, so we had someone who did a process survey and interviews and, and yeah."

"Then we obviously balance, look they will give a full recommendation, but we would then balance it in terms of what we can assist with, and what we can't."

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

4.11.4 Difficulty to match skills in a specialised environment

Finding candidates with suitable skills in a specialised environment often proves difficult. This barrier was overcome by using a specialised recruitment agency, where a suitable candidate was matched to the requirements of the job. EWD also attended specialised training and learnerships to gain the necessary skills. The following was described by HR participants:

"The reality though is that you often find um that people with disabilities don't try as a matter of course, that is the problem. So, we find that what we have to do, we have to specifically go to institutions or recruitment companies that specialise in having people with disabilities on their books."

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"And then depending on the disabilities we would tell those institutions that we will go to the agencies and give them all our positions and if they have anybody that can do that position, they can put that person forward."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

"I mean the biggest challenge is possibly because within the (company) space, operations are very different, so it's just challenges of varying degrees, finding a person that is already has such qualifications within (the company) operations space."

"And so, the barriers that we do have are within the operation space, hence a lot of the times we will maybe look at a learnership, or bringing a person in through via learnership, then they can acquire those certain skills for them to be able to work within a work environment. Regarding the different regulations regarding the (SOE) space. It's a very highly regulated space."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

4.11.5 Emotional ability of PWD to cope with challenges in the workplace

An HR participant relayed experiences where certain EWD in the past could not effectively deal with difficult work situations. The participant described how all employees experience a certain level of frustration when encountering a barrier or a difficult situation within the work environment. The participant noted, however, that some EWD could not deal with these frustrations maturely. Support needed to be provided to supervisors and line managers to identify and remove possible barriers in the environment for EWD. Where needed, employees are offered job coaching to better be able to cope with difficult situations that often arise within the work environment.

"You have to consider when employing disabled people is that very often, and it relates to back to the work environment, but it was also seems to be something in general, but we find that the candidates don't always have the level of maturity and EQ that you normally would find in the workplace."

"And so, levels of frustration sometimes boil over and sometimes part of the disability is not being able to deal with your emotions. So, we have to do a lot of work in both helping the supervisors and management to deal with that."

"To be able to coach the EQ, and then also to work on the employees themselves and then also try and understand what was setting people off and if we could deal with that, sometimes that helps. But also, we found that it was a matter of maturity and understanding that, you know, how can I put it, the workplace. You know, you have to be able to help yourself in the workplace. Sometimes they pick up a victim mentality, and that is not something that you can tolerate in the workplace. So, there is a lot of work-readiness and coaching around that."

"… but I think it very often manifests itself as people then come across some of the barriers or frustrations that any employee would come across. They have difficulty."

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

EWD indicated that it was very important for them to be resilient and able to confidently communicate their needs to colleagues:

"It starts with you, it starts with myself. I have to be very resilient you have to, still am the one that is causing that, stand up and say I need to hear and it's not because of you, it's because of me. I am the one that is causing that, so better, if we communicate in this way, for example I will prefer people to look at me, because I lip read."

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

Another participant added:

"It's up to me to make sure that I overcome any impediments to my ability to perform."

"As opposed to, it's the company's problem and they need to fix the world for me. I don't know if it extends to a lot of other people. I can't imagine anyone walking into the organisation saying, look I'm disabled, you need to fulfil a quota, I'm your man."

(Samuel, EWD, 15/09/2020)

4.12 Theme conclusion

The company overcame barriers which included changing perceptions of line managers about employing PWD within their operational spaces through providing support, guidance and disability sensitisation and awareness training. Regular surveys and audits

are conducted to ensure that the individual needs of EWD are being met. Matching PWD with appropriate skills to jobs available has been facilitated through the alliances formed between the company with DPOs and specialised recruitment agencies. Operating within a specialised environment is made possible by accommodating EWD on specialised learnerships and training sessions. While the company provides accommodation and support as best as possible, participants have described self-efficacy as an important factor for EWD when entering the work environment. Employees are offered EQ training and job coaching where this is lacking.

4.13 Challenges in recruiting PWD

While participants described this company as doing very well in terms of factors which facilitate the recruitment of PWD, they also indicated a few challenges. Participants have highlighted transport to be a concern for EWD, especially those who are wheelchair users. Another huge challenge currently being experienced is the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially on the industry of which this SOE forms part. This has far reaching effects and will affect the recruitment of PWD as well as implementation of recommendations for structural changes that have been planned.

 "I think the biggest thing that is problematic in Cape Town at the moment is the transport. I don't know if you know the Dial-a-ride which was a fantastic resource, and they went bankrupt."

"So, I think that is one of our biggest, one of my big worries."

"And those vehicles, the vehicles that Dial-a-ride had are uhm, um, we don't have the same level of hydraulics."

"To be able to lift the wheelchairs. So, they've got basically ramps".

(Sandy, HRE, 15/08/2020)

"The way our transport system works is to pick up people from, not from their home, but from a specific spot".

"They pick them up from a specific spot during early hours and not like during the day. So, if for example we have a person living with disability who doesn't have accessible

transport, all the time, that sometimes could be a bit of a …. I mean we've managed so far but lots still have to try and find their own transport because our a lot of our transport might not be for example wheelchair friendly."

(Miranda, HRE, 31/08/2020)

Maurice noted difficulties encountered to appoint EWD during the Covid19 pandemic to continue meeting EE targets:

"*So, in this last quarter we couldn't appoint any people because of COVID space but had we been open to appoint, we would have maybe targeted another two people even a maximum of three people. Yeah."*

(Maurice, HRE, 25/09/2020)

Nadine noted that the pandemic would probably cause a delay to implement the changes suggested to improve RA in the workplace:

"*If the company can take into consideration all the aspects that were raised, and if it can continue with the reasonable accommodation session that we had but I can vouch to say that the pandemic pushed away most of the stuff in term of those timelines.*"

(Nadine, EWD, 17/09/2020)

4.14 Chapter conclusion

This company embraces diversity. The leadership is committed to transformation and achieving employment equity targets in line with the Employment Equity Act. HR displays commitment by implementing practices that ensure that these targets are met through monitoring and tracking. The creation of an environment that is inclusive for PWD takes place through workshops that focus on inclusivity, disability awareness and sensitivity training, creating a safe space for the disclosure of disability and the provision of RA that has a specific budget. Recruitment of PWD takes place through marketing and placing of advertisements that are accessible and attractive to PWD. Alliances with DPOs and specialised recruitment agencies assist with suitable talent acquisition as well as offering guidance on reasonable accommodation needed for PWD that have different impairments. DPOs also assist in presenting disability awareness and sensitisation

workshops in the company. While this company is doing very well at facilitating factors to recruit PWD, there remain a few challenges, amongst which are the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and transport.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

Introduction

The following section responds to the research question being asked about which factors facilitate this SOE in the Western Cape to recruit persons with disabilities to meet employment equity targets.

Findings from document reviews and semi-structured interviews highlight that this SOE is committed to making a meaningful contribution towards the socio-economic transformation of people with disabilities. This takes place through involvement with various initiatives within communities, but also internally, trying to ensure that the demographics of its disability workforce are representative of the population of our country, both nationally and regionally. The adoption of the shared value of diversity as one of its core values is included in the performance contracts of senior managers to embed values-based leadership. This contributes to an enacted culture of embracing diversity to drive various initiatives and behavioural strategies. Leadership prioritises the implementation of and adherence to the Employment Equity Act. Internal policies were developed to ensure that equity was achieved in terms of race, gender and disability.

Disability has its own category and should be addressed as a diversity issue alongside race and gender (Ndzwayiba & Ned, 2017). In this SOE, disability is focussed on, reported on, and managed separately. The internal employment equity policy is supported by an internal reasonable accommodation policy. Habeck, Hunt, Kregel and Chan (2010) have acknowledged the need for policies to retain PWD to coincide with policies for recruitment of PWD. The annual integrated report of this organisation shows that internal policies are modified and aligned to the needs of PWD. PWD who are employed by the company similarly express these needs during audits and through surveys. This brings to mind the well-known slogan "Nothing about us without us" which is commonly used to uphold the human rights of PWD and representation. This was clearly illustrated in findings such as where PWD are involved in problem identification, and problem solving and project planning to ensure reasonable accommodation designs which are inclusive and practical. PWD and senior management are also well represented at employment equity meetings.

Senior leadership is held accountable by national structures and government to implement initiatives and to achieve set targets. Numerous strategies were then developed to achieve set targets. According to Nxumalo (2019), transformational leadership is required to effect meaningful change in a business. Sheshi and Kercini (2017) described that transformational leadership not only focusses on workplace requirements, but also cares for the future aspirations of an employee. Transformational leaders acknowledge the differences in the abilities and needs of their employees and consider meeting these individual needs to be an integral part of the transformation of the workplace.

Companies cannot sustainably achieve their employment equity targets unless they acknowledge the skills and benefits that employing PWD bring to the business. The focus of equity is to support employees in the work environment to meet individual needs. According to Wright, Wehman, McDonough, Thomas, Ochrach, Brooke, Ham, Godwin and Junod (2020), the creation of equity is grounded in acknowledging how differences in social, economic, cultural and historic factors impact the opportunities available to employees. When creating equity, value is placed on the specialized contributions made by employees, irrespective of whether accommodations are needed. RA allows employees to make these contributions to the best of their ability. In a study done by Soeker and Ganie (2019), which dealt with return to work for persons with traumatic brain injuries (TBI), it was found that adaptations to the workplace, both in ergonomic and work routine designs, allowed employees to adapt to the requirements of the workplace. It was deemed essential for employers to understand the capabilities of persons with TBI, in order to assign suitable tasks for sustained employment. Hartnett, Stuart, Thurman, Loy and Carter (2011) affirmed that providing RA fosters a feeling amongst employees that they are valued as individual human beings by their employer. Wright *et al.* (2020) suggest that when people feel respected, liked and accepted at work their performance improves and they are more successful. Fisher (2010) further states that the generation of positive emotions and high self-esteem in the workplace leads to increased motivation, higher levels of creativity and productivity which contributes to the increased success of the company. This SOE embraces the inherent benefits of a diverse workforce and inclusive practices. As such, it markets itself in this way.

One of the key findings spoke to the notion of shifting mind sets. The shift in mind sets of colleagues towards embracing diversity and towards more supportive practices was also facilitated through various workshops, disability sensitization campaigns and through marketing via electronic media. An important factor mentioned by PWD in this study was that of not wanting to be treated differently. HR participants confirmed that they did not single out groups of people but rather ensured that the individual needs of employees were being met equitably. The aim of this approach is to ensure a culture of greater inclusivity by focussing on similarities rather than differences and on abilities rather than disabilities. Bainbridge and Fujimoto (2018) described this as "inherent incorporation". It is where inclusive practices are part of the design of the organisation and removes the need to pay "special" attention to selected groups. As reflected in the findings, the key objective is not to treat PWD "like everyone else", but to rather expand the idea of what people consider to be "normal" and to include a wider range of more inclusive practices in the workplace. It is for this reason that the company recognises that all employees have unique needs, and they are provided with a safe environment to disclose these needs in order for the necessary accommodations to be made accordingly. Therefore, creating an atmosphere that is open to RA is an important enabling factor.

Bainbridge and Fujimoto (2018) found that the introduction and subsequent adaptation to a new working environment is largely influenced by the initial encounter during which PWD evaluate the environment and the attitudes of others towards PWD. These findings highlight that PWD had a positive experience during their initial engagement with the company. They observed the physical adaptations that had been implemented, as well as observed other PWD who were visibly active in the workplace, performing their duties. Initial interactions which PWD had with colleagues and managers portrayed a positive initial impression about the inclusion of disability into this company. This paved the way for a positive engagement about their roles and an enthusiasm to become and remain part of this company.

Many studies have pointed out that a manager's past experience of working with PWD created a greater likelihood of that manager hiring a PWD in the future (Andersson, 2015; Hartnett, 2011; Lindsay *et al.*, 2019). An initial barrier experienced in this company was the unwillingness of operational line managers to employ PWD. An added contributing factor was the lack of knowledge about how different disability types could be

accommodated within the various operational environments (Strindlund, Abrandt-Dahlgren & Stahl, 2019). In this SOE, internal mobilisers for change and networking with DPOs brought about a change in the willingness of line managers to employ PWD. HR practitioners acted as facilitators to point out vacancies and how PWD could be accommodated within those spaces. This process was further facilitated by alliances held with DPOs that continue to provide support to ensure that the work environment is conducive to persons with different types of impairment. The change in willingness of line managers to employ PWD acts as a facilitator and will continue to be a facilitator in the future, because they now have the knowledge, positive attitude and positive experience of employing PWD. According to Padkapyeva *et al.* (2017), effective accommodation can be provided to PWD simply by having a positive attitude and offering emotional support and/or empathy when it is needed. Managers who encourage equal opportunities and fair treatment for all staff, including PWD, facilitate inclusion in the workplace and minimize negative attitudes.

Adapting the physical environment to accommodate PWD is a continuous process. The findings have illustrated that, initially, the minimum building standards for universal design were not adhered to. As a result, various alterations and adaptations have been and continue to be implemented over time to accommodate PWD. These alterations need to be continuously done as improvements and maintenance to the building takes place. Changes also take place as new assistive technologies become available. All these changes are planned and take place in consultation with PWD. This ensures that the actual needs of PWD are considered and ensures practicality in design changes. RA in the form of physical adaptations is budgeted for, but once the expense has been covered, it acts as an investment to the future hiring of candidates with disabilities as well as providing accessibility to customers and stakeholders with disabilities. RA gets provided as is required by an employee and approved by management. All requests cannot always be accommodated immediately and may be constrained by financial budgets and project planning. The important thing is that employees are given a platform to raise concerns within a supportive environment and needs are taken seriously. If not addressed immediately, they get addressed within the foreseeable future.

Various barriers have been overcome through the alliances with specialised recruitment agencies and disabled persons organisations. These alliances ensure that requirements

of the job are suitably matched to a candidate. This company operates in a specialised industry and requires specific skills at various levels of the company. Findings were that PWD did not necessarily apply for these jobs. Specialised recruitment agencies match a candidate with a specific skillset to a specific job or role. In this way, there is no limitation on the level where an individual can find a position for which they are qualified within the company. This arrangement helps the candidate in accessing the job opportunity and application forms as well as preparing for the interview. The company is assisted in making sure that reasonable accommodation is provided at the interview venue, during the interviews and during employment. This continued support is a valuable facilitator to recruit PWD.

Another facilitating factor which was identified by EWD and HRE was the self-efficacy needed for PWD to operate within the work environment. EWD have identified the freedom to confidently express their need for RA, as well as guiding interactions with colleagues in a favourable manner as essential in the workplace. Lyons, Martinez, Ruggs, Hebl, Ryan, O'Brein and Roebuck (2016) have suggested that discussing disability openly within the workplace has greater advantages than just gaining access to RA. It builds more supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors and EWD are also perceived as being more competent and confident. An HR participant highlighted how some EWD struggled with handling themselves during challenging work situations. In these cases, further support was provided from HR to help line managers cope with this. Job coaching was also provided to EWD who needed this support. The company has broadly managed to provide the necessary support, but here one should also look externally at how PWD can be better prepared to enter the work environment. This should be an area of focus for recruitment specialists and rehabilitation practitioners in preparing PWD to enter the workplace (Martins, 2015). A recent study done by Abbas and Soeker (2020), which focused on return to work for individuals with schizophrenia, acknowledged that therapeutic support which equips workers with the skills to face challenges in the workplace confidently enhances self-efficacy in the workplace.

The study by Wiggett-Barnard and Swartz (2012) has acknowledged that unemployment for PWD is greater in countries like South Africa because of less-developed infrastructure and limited access to quality education and training for many PWD- an issue that is also closely linked to the South African apartheid history. In this study, a need for specific skills

required in specialised positions was expressed. This would require adequate training and education for PWD to enter these specialised positions. Educational opportunities therefore need to be available to PWD at a tertiary level. I think that targets can far be exceeded if more PWD with tertiary education and technical skills put themselves forward. Skills development opportunities are available for EWD at this SOE. However, the provision of bursaries or scholarships by the SOE, targeted at young PWD, may increase the number of PWD who study at tertiary institutions, and are then available for employment in these specialised positions. This SOE can accept PWD within a variety of different levels and occupations. PWD would stand a better chance to be employed at this company if they were registered with a specialised recruitment agency and/or involved with a DPO.

A barrier being experienced by EWD, as revealed in this study, is the availability of accessible transport to and from work - an infrastructure that should be available to all PWD in general. Government should make safe, adequate, efficient, and accessible transport a priority. This will not only allow PWD access to medical services, education, and employment but will also improve participation of PWD in the workplace (Lorenzo & Cramm, 2012; Wiggett-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). A possible solution for the transport barrier could be for the SOE to introduce the option of EWD working virtually, where possible. This is currently happening as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and could be considered as a viable option in future.

Another barrier that was encountered was expressed by an EWD who had been issued with an electrical wheelchair from the company but did not have enough finances to ensure adequate maintenance of the wheelchair. He indicated that after taking care of basic needs and looking after his family, no money was left to maintain his wheelchair. He needed to use a manual wheelchair instead. This significantly slowed him down in terms of travelling between various departments and this negatively affects his functioning in the workplace. This brings to light the need for government to offset the extra cost that living with impairment brings to the households of PWD for them to function on an equal basis with others in the workplace (Hanass-Hancock *et al.,* 2017). Additionally, the dispensing of assistive technologies by companies and rehabilitation professionals should be done taking the needs and circumstances of each individual into consideration (Hartley & Wirz, 2002).

Fortunately, this SOE was financially able to make the necessary changes to the building structure to be accessible to PWD. Where companies are financially not able to make these changes, it becomes essential for better monitoring to take place to ensure the erection of universally accessible offices and work environments in private and publicly owned buildings that render services to the public. This could prevent excessive expenditure on these changes at a later stage.

An aspect that was not explored in this study is the intersectionality of where disability interfaces with individual characteristics such as age, gender, race and socio-economic backgrounds of individuals. These are all factors that influence participation of PWD in the workplace (Sevak, Houtenville, Bruckner & O'Neill, 2015). While this study looked at factors that facilitate the recruitment and employment of PWD at an SOE in the Western Cape, one cannot separate the functioning of an individual within the company from the socio-political context within which the company and the individual operates. It is with this in mind that one calls for the same transformational leadership that ensures the implementation of policy into practice that is demonstrated in this company to be practiced at higher levels within government. This will ensure that disability policies are implemented to ensure that PWD are afforded the rights that these policies are designed to uphold (Nxumalo, 2019). This will have a ripple effect and result in better functioning of PWD to enter and sustain employment.

Discussion conclusion

The discussion responded to the research question and study objectives. The main discussion points were around themes that emerged from all data sources as it relates to relevant literature.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study explored and uncovered how this SOE managed to meet employment equity targets for recruiting PWD. The following factors were uncovered:

- Transformational leadership was demonstrated in translating policy into practice. This happened through the company embracing diversity as a strength and acknowledging the benefits that having a diverse workforce brings to the company. Leadership was held accountable for implementing, monitoring, reporting and achieving targets.

- Designing for inclusivity acknowledged the different and individual needs of employees. Support was provided to employees and to company leadership through alliances with DPOs. These alliances assisted in fostering an inclusive environment through the shifting of mind sets about disability (disability awareness and sensitivity programmes) and in the provision of RA to attract and retain PWD as employees.

- While accommodating differences, the focus was placed on strengths rather than weaknesses, and on how individuals function to the best of their ability with the necessary supports in place. This was communicated throughout the company to create awareness and sensitivity towards the process of removing barriers to the optimal functioning of individuals within the workplace.

-Alliances with DPOs and specialised recruitment agencies was crucial.

- Employees are supported to make their own individual needs for RA known by creating a safe space for disclosure of disability.

- The self-efficacy of PWD was an important contributor to the successful functioning of PWD in this SOE.

While this company has many factors which facilitate the ability to reach these targets, one cannot separate the company or PWD from the socio-political context within which it operates. Inclusivity needs to extend much further than the company. Design for inclusion needs to happen not only in the company, but also within communities where barriers to

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participation are removed through the provision of accessible public transport, educational facilities and the design of public and work spaces. Leadership in local and national government structures should be committed to and accountable for the removal of barriers to participation for PWD in society. This, together with the inclusivity offered by companies like this, will allow more PWD to gain the necessary skills needed to enter into competitive work environments.

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to improve recruitment and employment of PWD based on the findings of this study:

1. Department of Transport: Accessibility should be addressed as a priority at government and municipal level. Public transport should be made accessible for PWD. This would facilitate PWD getting to interview venues and places of employment, and to enjoy the general freedoms that having accessible transport affords to everyone else.

2. Department of Public Works: Improved benchmarking is required to ensure the universally accessible design and construction of workplaces. This will prevent excessive expenditure for companies on alterations in future.

3. Department of Education: Adequate tertiary education opportunities should be made available to PWD. This will allow more skilled PWD to enter the job market.

4. Educators, rehabilitation and placement professionals: Self-efficacy is an important skill needed as PWD enters the workplace. This will facilitate sustainability of employment and should be addressed to prepare PWD to enter the workplace.

5. This and other employers, the Department of Health, educators, rehabilitation and placement specialists: The cost of maintenance of assistive technologies that allows PWD to participate in the workplace on an equal basis with other employees should not prevent PWD from meeting basic household needs or be unaffordable. The provision of assistive technologies should be affordable to maintain and be appropriate

for each individual case. PWD should be knowledgeable about what rights and benefits they are entitled to and how to access them.

6. Persons with disabilities: Register with specialised recruitment agencies, DPOs and NGOs. This will improve prospects of gaining employment.

7. This SOE: It would be beneficial to continue disability awareness and sensitivity training to accommodate shift workers and new employees. These trainings should encompass all different types of disabilities, even those not currently employed at the SOE, to pave the way for EWD entering employment in the future. Provision of RA should be followed up according to recommendations from EWD based on recent surveys. This will allow the individual needs of employees that are not currently catered for, to be addressed. Preferably, a time-line should be agreed upon. Alternative work arrangements for EWD may include working virtually in cases where this would be appropriate for the type of role assumed.

8. The leadership of this SOE: While minimal employment equity targets are being reached, ample room remains for improvement, which would allow this company to be seen as being progressive in this area. The following recommendations can be made to further improve the recruitment and employment of PWD in this company:

- Investigate additional platforms through which to reach PWD for recruitment purposes.
- Partnering with colleges and tertiary institutions to have access to skilled students with disabilities entering the job market.
- Look at providing transport for candidates with disabilities to and from interview venues.
- Regular maintenance of assistive technology devices could allow EWD to perform their jobs more efficiently.
- Create an understanding that feedback on and/or provision of RA and problem resolution takes place according to a time-frame that is formally agreed upon between EWD and the responsible person.
- Ensure that the person who represents PWD at employment equity meetings has the necessary training, availability of time, commitment

and communication skills to represent this group adequately. In cases where this person is unavailable due to shift work or absenteeism, an alternative representative should be made available.

- EWD should be able to communicate their needs confidently and clearly. Each experience of disability is an individual experience. Urgency of requests for RA should be clearly communicated. In cases where individual needs are not being responded to or met timeously, PWD should have the organisational savvy to know which formal channels to follow. This can possibly form part of the induction process.

9) Health Education: Health professionals such as Occupational Therapists and Social workers should be educated to include skills training which improves self-efficacy, confidence and communication skills for PWD in preparation for entering the workplace. These are also important skills to be taught to young adults with disabilities transitioning from places of studying to the workplace.

6.3 Shortcomings, reflections and recommendations for future research

My study did not address the intersectionality of disability. Many PWD are faced with multiple barriers to entering the job market. Future studies may look at how different intersectionalities which shape the disability experience affect participation in the job market and how this can be practically addressed.

The scope of my study was small, because it was conducted in partial fulfilment of a master's degree, and limited by time, budget and scope. Similar studies, done cross-sectionally, that consider a few SOEs that have reached employment equity targets would reveal common models for best practice.

My study did not address return to work of PWD after injury and disease. Future research may consider how facilitation of the return-to-work process in a company affects the employment of PWD.

It is a consideration that the title of my thesis would draw EWD who had a positive experience of working in the SOE to participate in the study. It may be true that EWD having a negative employment experience would not willingly participate.

As a researcher doing reflection, I was constantly mindful about how much easier it was to probe HRE during interviews. I felt comfortable asking and probing because it was their professional roles. With EWD, however, I felt that I needed to ask follow-up questions in a more sensitive manner because I was very aware that it was their own personal experiences being shared with me.

6.4 Dissemination of results

Findings of this study will be reported on and distributed to all participants who indicated that they wished to receive the report, and to the general manager of this SOE. The study will be published as an article in an accredited and peer-reviewed journal.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Stellenbosch University Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

Approved with Stipulations

New Application

15/04/2020

Project ID: 12924

HREC Reference No: S19/10/233

Project Title: Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity Targets.

Dear Mrs Natasha Maclean

The **New Application** received on 03/02/2020 was reviewed by members of the **Health Research Ethics Committee** via Expedited Review procedures on 07/04/2020 and was approved with stipulations.

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: **15- April-2020 – 14-April-2021**.

The stipulations of your ethics approval are as follows:

1. Submit gatekeeper permission (i.e. SOE) to HREC upon receiving permission letter.
2. Add to ICF:
   - The results from the study will be reported on and shared with the SOE.
   - Anonymity cannot be ensured with such a small study sample.
   - A translator may be provided on request by you as the participant.
3. Submit final interview schedule for HREC review

- Kindly note that although the study has been granted ethics approval, the study may not proceed during the current national lockdown as an embargo has been placed on studies that require interaction with research participants in order to prevent potential harm to participants.
- HREC will publish on the HREC website a date when the said embargo is to be lifted taking into consideration the best interest of participants and national interests around COVID-19.

Please remember to use your project ID 12924 and ethics reference number S19/10/233 on any documents or correspondence with the HREC/UREC concerning your research protocol.

Translation of the consent document(s) to the language(s) applicable to your study participants should now be submitted to the HREC.

Please note that this decision will be ratified at the next HREC full committee meeting. HREC reserves the right to suspend approval and to request changes or clarifications from applicants. The coordinator will notify the applicant (and if applicable, the supervisor) of the changes or suspension within 1 day of receiving the notice of suspension from HREC. HREC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

After Ethical Review:

Please note you can submit your progress report through the online ethics application process, available at: https://apply.ethics.sun.ac.za and the application should be submitted to the Committee before the year has expired. Please see Forms and Instructions on our HREC website for guidance on how to submit a progress report.

The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility, permission must still be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Please consult the Western Cape Government website for access to the online Health Research Approval Process, see: https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/health-research-approval-process. Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant hospital manager. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these health authorities.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

For standard HREC forms and instructions, please visit: Forms and Instructions on our HREC website (www.sun.ac.za/healthresearchethics).

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact the HREC office at 021 938 9677.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Brightness Nxumalo

HREC 2 Coordinator

The Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) complies with the SA National Health Act No. 61 of 2003 as it pertains to health research. The HREC abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the World Medical Association (2013). Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects; the South African Department of Health (2006). Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials with Human Participants in South Africa (2nd edition); as well as the Department of Health (2015). Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (2nd edition).

The Health Research Ethics Committee reviews research involving human subjects conducted or supported by the Department of Health and Human Services, or other federal departments or agencies that apply the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects to such research (United States Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46); and/or clinical investigations regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Department of Health and Human Services.

UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY
Approval Letter
Amendment

13/08/2020

Project ID: 12924

Ethics Reference No: S19/10/233

Project Title: Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity Targets.

Dear Mrs Natasha Maclean

Your amendment request dated 05/08/2020 17:29 refers.

The Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) reviewed and approved the amended documentation through an expedited review process.

The following amendment was reviewed and approved:

Change from face-to-face interviews to telephonic interviews with minor amendment in the following documents:

1. Participant Invitation Letter: Employees with Disabilities
2. Participant Invitation Letter: Human Resources (HR) Employees
3. Participant Information Leaflet and Consent Form: Employees with Disabilities
4. Participant Information Leaflet and Consent Form: HR Employees

Where to submit any documentation

Kindly note that the HREC uses an electronic ethics review management system, *Infonetica*, to manage ethics applications and ethics review process. To submit any documentation to HREC, please click on the following link: https://applyethics.sun.ac.za.

Please remember to use your project ID 12924 and ethics reference number S19/10/233 on any documents or correspondence with the HREC concerning your research protocol.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Brightness Nxumalo
Coordinator: Health Research Ethics Committee 2

National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) Registration Number:

REC-130408-012 (HREC1)•REC-230208-010 (HREC2)

Federal Wide Assurance Number: 00001372
Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Number:
IRB0005240 (HREC1)•IRB0005239 (HREC2)

Appendix B - Letter for SOE Permission

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

APPLICATION LETTER FOR INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION

_____

_____

INSTITUTION NAME & ADDRESS:

INSTITUTION CONTACT PERSON:

INSTITUTION CONTACT NUMBER:

INSTITUTION EMAIL ADDRESS:

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: "**Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity targets.**"

ETHICS APPLICATION REFERENCE NUMBER: S19/10/233

RESEARCHER: Natasha Maclean

DEPT NAME & ADDRESS: University of Stellenbosch Centre for Human Rehabilitation Studies, Education Building, 4th Floor Francie van Zijl Drive, Tygerberg, 7505, Cape Town, South Africa

CONTACT NUMBER: 079 534 8873

EMAIL ADDRESS: natsmaclean@telkomsa.net

_____

_____

Dear Mr…………,

Kindly note that I am a M. Human Rehabilitation Studies student at the Department of Human Rehabilitation Studies at Stellenbosch University, and I would appreciate your assistance with one facet of my research project.

Please take some time to read the information presented in the following four points, which will explain the purpose of this letter as well as the purpose of my research project, and then feel free to contact me if you require any additional information. This research study has been approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at Stellenbosch University and will be conducted according to accepted and applicable national and international ethical guidelines and principles.

1. A short introduction to the project:

Companies are struggling to meet Employment Equity (EE) targets for the recruitment of Persons with Disabilities. This happens despite numerous International and National policies and guidelines being available. Reaching EE targets is an indicator for success in recruiting persons with disabilities for employment. ……… is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) that that has been progressive and have managed to successfully reach employment equity targets for the recruitment of persons with disabilities. A study which explores the reasons for tangible successes in a company that has met EE targets, can provide meaningful information, ideas and guidelines for other organisations to learn from. It is hoped that this knowledge will contribute towards a growing body of knowledge which can improve employment prospects for persons with disabilities. Very few studies using this approach have been done, especially in a South African context. My research aims to gain knowledge about the factors and practices that have been practically implemented to facilitate the recruitment of persons with disabilities in a SOE. I have identified ……… as a suitable organisation within which to conduct my research.

2. The purpose of the project:

The aim of my research project is to obtain knowledge about the factors within a company that has facilitated the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Another aim of this study would be to gain an understanding of how barriers to recruitment and employment of persons with disabilities have been overcome in the company. Conducting this study will generate knowledge that can be useful to other employers, who hopefully will be able to

use this knowledge in order to inform the challenges that they are experiencing. The ultimate purpose of the study is to contribute to knowledge that can assist persons with disabilities to obtain meaningful employment.

3. **<u>Your assistance would be appreciated in the following regard:</u>**
   <u>Formal permission will be needed for me to: -</u>

- Obtain general information about who I can contact in the Human Resources department to link me to possible study participants.

- Obtain information about company practices regarding employment and recruitment of persons with disabilities from these participants through conducting interviews.

- Access internal recruitment policies of ……. for the recruitment of persons with disabilities - if permissible.

- Access the Employment Equity plans of ……. if permissible.

4. **<u>Confidentiality:</u>**

I will personally collect all information. Only essential personal information will be requested from participants. All information collected in interviews and through documents will be treated as confidential and protected. The identity of participants and that of your company will remain anonymous. Participants will be assigned pseudonyms, which will be used instead of their names on all documents and audio recordings. All data will be handled confidentially, and only the researcher and supervisors will have access to this data. Information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations will always ensure anonymity of …… as well as participants. Institutional information will remain confidential, and only information relevant to my research topic will be reported on in a way that maintains confidentiality and in a positive manner.

If you have any further questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me via email natsmaclean@telkomsa.net or telephonically 079 534 8873. Alternatively, feel free to contact my supervisors, Dr. Martha Geiger, via email mgeiger@sun.ac.za or telephonically 0824408713 OR Dr. Lieketseng Ned, via email lieketseng@sun.ac.za or telephonically 0825451370.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this regard.

Kind regards,

Natasha Maclean

Principal Investigator

Appendix C – Institutional Permission

From: ███████████████████████████
Sent: Saturday, 06 June 2020 15:54
To: natsmaclean@telkomsa.net
Cc: ███████████████████████████
███████████████████████████████████

Subject: Fwd:

Hi Natasha,

Thank you for your email, what a great research project and topic, certainly we will be keen to be part of this, this serves as confirmation and approval.

Let's connect sometime next week so that I can understand how best we support you in this research project.

Regards,

███████████████

Begin forwarded message:

From: Natasha Maclean <natsmaclean@telkomsa.net>
Date: 04 June 2020 at 10:44:39 SAST
To: ███████████████████████████

Good Morning ███████

I hope that you are well. I have attached a letter introducing a research project as part of my M. Degree in Human Rehabilitation-Disability Studies.

I am hoping to get approval from you to do the study at ███████ I am quite mindful that this is a very busy time for you.

I am happy to call you to answer any questions. Please indicate a time that would be convenient to do so.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Maclean

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.
For more information please visit http://www.symanteccloud.com

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General Manager

Direct:

Cell: ,

E-Mail:

Appendix D - Participant Invitation Letter for Human Resources Employees

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:	
Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet employment equity targets.	
DETAILS OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):	
Title, first name, surname: Ms. Natasha Maclean	**Ethics reference number: S/19/10/233**
Full postal address: 34 Skaamrosie Street, Protea Valley, 7530, Cape Town, South Africa	**PI Contact number: 079 534 8873** **E-mail:** **natsmaclean@telkomsa.net**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that is being conducted as part of a master's degree in Human Rehabilitation Studies. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is important that you are completely satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. In other words, you may choose to take part, or you may choose not to take part. Your decision will not negatively impact on you or your work in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University.** The study will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines

and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice (2006), the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research Department of Health Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Studies (2015). I have also obtained formal permission and support from your company to perform this research.

1. What is this research study all about?

The aim of this research project is to identify and explore the factors that makes it easier for your company to recruit persons with disabilities to achieve employment equity targets. Many companies and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) are unable to meet employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities. This happens despite International and National policies and guidelines being available. Through conducting this study, I wish to explore how your company has practically been able to recruit and employ Persons with Disabilities. The aim is to learn about factors within your company that has facilitated the recruitment process.

The study will be conducted at the business where you are employed. This will be the only site used in the study. The total number of participants will be approximately 9. 3 participants will be HR employees and 5-6 participants will be employees with disabilities.

I am available to answer any questions that you have regarding the research.You do not need to let anyone, including the person who informed you, know that you are participating in this study. I will schedule a date and time during which we can meet telephonically. During this meeting, I will be asking you a few questions, related to your experience of the research topic. This will be done in English, but you can let me know if you prefer being interviewed in a different language. A translator can be provided if this is the case. I will make an audio recording of our conversation, to keep an accurate and practical record of our conversation which I can refer to at a later stage. I may be taking some extra notes during the interview as well. These notes and audio recording that will be transcribed and stored in a secure place, will be accessible only to me. You will be asked to sign an informed consent form and I will complete a demographic sheet that will allow me to identify you in an anonymous way.

2. Why do we invite you to participate?

I have invited you to participate in this study because of your knowledge and experience of recruiting and employing persons with disabilities into your company. I feel that you will have the knowledge to be able to identify and describe the factors within your company that facilitates the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

3. What will your responsibilities be?

You will be asked to share experiences of recruiting and employing persons with disabilities into your company. You will be asked to describe factors that in your experience have facilitated the recruitment of persons with disabilities into your company. You will also be asked about barriers to the recruitment and employment of persons with disabilities that you may have encountered, and how these have been addressed and overcome. You are requested to please answer questions clearly, honestly and to your best knowledge. Please offer as much detail as possible. You are however not compelled to answer any question which makes you feel uncomfortable.

Try your best to ensure that you are not interrupted during the hour set aside for the interview.

4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this research will re-enforce the continued recruitment of persons with disabilities into the company to continue meeting and surpassing employment equity targets. It is also hoped that this research will contribute towards the understanding of other businesses and SOEs on how to practically improve the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Hopefully, this can also assist them in achieving and surpassing employment equity targets. It is hoped that this research will contribute knowledge which improves the employment prospects for persons with disabilities. These research findings will be shared with you and the company. I hope that you will find your contribution to be a satisfying and rewarding experience for you.

5. Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research?

There will be no risks to participation in this study.

6. If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

Choosing not to take part in this study will have no negative consequence for you.

7. Who will have access to your information?

I will personally collect all information. Only essential personal information will be requested from you. All information collected (audio and written) will be treated as confidential and protected. Your identity and that of the SOE will remain anonymous. You will be assigned a pseudonym which will be used instead of your name on all documents and recordings. A master list will be kept, together with audio recordings and transcriptions and locked away. Only I will have access to this information and data may be shared with my supervisor. Information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations will always ensure anonymity. Please note that with a small group of study participants, anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed, but I will do my best to protect your identity in the way that I have described.

8. Even though it is unlikely, what will happen if you get injured somehow because you took part in this research study?

Injury or distress through participation in this study is unlikely because it involves no intervention and is positive in nature.

9. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid for participating in the study. You will have no expenses if you take part in this study.

10. Is there anything else that you should know or do?

➢ You can phone Natasha Maclean, Researcher, at 079 534 8873, or e-mail me at
natsmaclean@telkomsa.net if you have any questions or queries that you would
like me to answer.

➢ You can phone the Health Research Ethics Committee at 021 938 9677/9819 if
there still is something that your researcher has not explained to you, or if you
have a complaint.

Appendix E - Participant Invitation Letter- Employees with Disabilities

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:	
Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet employment equity targets.	
DETAILS OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):	
Title, first name, surname: Ms. Natasha Maclean	**Ethics reference number: S/19/10/233**
Full postal address: 34 Skaamrosie Street, Protea Valley, 7530, Cape Town, South Africa	**PI Contact number: 079 534 8873** **E-mail:** **natsmaclean@telkomsa.net**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that is being conducted as part of a master's degree in Human Rehabilitation Studies. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is important that you are completely satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. In other words, you may choose to take part, or you may choose not to take part. Your decision will not negatively impact on you or your work in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University.** The study will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Guidelines

for Good Clinical Practice (2006), the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research (2002), and the Department of Health Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Studies (2015). I have also obtained formal permission and support from your company to perform this research.

1. What is this research study all about?

The aim of this research project is to identify and explore the factors that make it easier for your company to recruit persons with disabilities to achieve employment equity targets. Many companies and SOEs are unable to meet employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities. This happens despite International and National policies and guidelines being available. Through conducting this study, I wish to explore how your company has practically been able to recruit and employ Persons with Disabilities. The aim is to learn about factors within your company that has facilitated the recruitment process.

The study will be conducted at the business where you are employed. This will be the only site used in the study. The total number of participants will be approximately 9. 3 participants will be HR employees and 5-6 participants will be employees with disabilities.

Please contact me, using my contact details provided to answer any questions that you have regarding the research. You do not need to let anyone, including the person who has informed you, know that you are participating in this study. I will schedule a date and time during which we can have a telephonic meeting. During this meeting, I will be asking you a few questions, related to your experience of the research topic. This will be done in English, but you can let me know if you prefer being interviewed in a different language. A translator can be provided if this is the case. I will make an audio recording of our conversation, to keep an accurate and practical record of our conversation which I can refer to at a later stage. I may be taking some extra notes during the interview as well. These notes and audio recording that will be transcribed and stored in a secure place, will be accessible only to me. I will arrange to meet you at a convenient time and place of your choice. You will be asked to sign an informed consent form and to complete a demographic sheet that will allow me to identify you in an anonymous way.

2. Why do we invite you to participate?

I have invited you to participate in this study because I would like to gather your experiences of being recruited and employed within your company. I feel that you will have gathered, through experience, the knowledge to be able to identify and describe the factors within your company that facilitates the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

3. What will your responsibilities be?

In a telephone interview at a time of your choice, you will be asked to share experiences of being recruited and employed at your company. You will be asked about factors that you feel has facilitated your recruitment into the company. You will also be asked about barriers to employment that you may have encountered, and how these have been addressed and overcome. You are requested to please answer questions clearly, honestly and to your best knowledge. Please offer as much detail as possible. You are however not compelled to answer any question which makes you feel uncomfortable.

Try your best to ensure that you are not interrupted during the hour set aside for the interview.

4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this research will re-enforce the continued recruitment of persons with disabilities into the company to continue meeting and surpassing employment equity targets. It is also hoped that this research will contribute towards the understanding of other businesses and SOEs on how to practically improve the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Hopefully, this can also assist them in achieving and surpassing employment equity targets. It is hoped that this research will contribute knowledge which improves the employment prospects for persons with disabilities. These research findings will be shared with you and the company. I hope that you will find your contribution to be a satisfying and rewarding experience for you.

5. Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research?

There will be no risks to participation in this study.

6. If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

Choosing not to take part in this study will have no negative consequence for you.

7. Who will have access to your information?

I will personally collect all information. Only essential personal information will be requested from you. All information collected (audio and written) will be treated as confidential and protected. Your identity and that of the SOE will remain anonymous. You will be assigned a pseudonym which will be used instead of your name on all documents and recordings. A master list will be kept, together with audio recordings and transcriptions and locked away. Only I will have access to this information and data may be shared with my supervisor. Information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations will always ensure anonymity. Please note that with a small group of study participants, anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed, but I will do my best to protect your identity in the way that I have described.

8. Even though it is unlikely, what will happen if you get injured somehow because you took part in this research study?

Injury or distress through participation in this study is unlikely because it involves no intervention and is positive in nature.

9. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid for participating in the study. You will have no expenses if you take part in this study.

10. Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- ➢ You can phone Natasha Maclean, Researcher, at 079 534 8873, or e-mail me at natsmaclean@telkomsa.net if you have any questions or queries that you would like me to answer.

- ➢ You can phone the Health Research Ethics Committee at 021 938 9677/9819 if there still is something that your researcher has not explained to you, or if you have a complaint.

Appendix F - Interview Guide for Human Resources Employees

- Short background of interviewee.

- Factors that enable the recruitment of PWD.

- Obstacles that have been identified and overcome-what changes were implemented to allow this to happen.

- Current barriers being experienced and proposed solutions to these to further facilitate the recruitment of PWD.

<u>Introduction</u>

my background
introduce project
purpose of interview
the need for recording devices
sign consent forms

1) **What is your job title?**
   - Can you briefly tell me more about what your main duties are?
   - How long have you been in this position?

2) **Can you tell me about which practices in the company facilitates the recruitment of PWD?**
   - Tell me more about the process followed to recruit PWD………
   - How did you experience this process?
   - What was your experience of………….?
   - What do you think about…………………?
   - How have you modified (this practice) to facilitate recruitment of PWD?
   - What do you think about the role that…………...plays?
   - Can you describe the how……………………...?

- How many PWD have been recruited now, and what do you think helped to get to this number?

3) **Can you describe how (the SOE) has overcome barriers encountered in the past to improve the recruitment of PWD?**
   - What effect do you think this had?
   - What were your impressions on……………..?
   - How did this happen?
   - How did you plan for…………?

4) **Can you describe any challenges still being experienced in (the SOE) for recruiting PWD?**
   - What do you think is the cause of this?
   - How do you think…………… can be addressed?
   - Can you explain a little more about…………….?
   - What do you think would be the solution for………?
   - Help me to understand………………………?

5) **Can you think of anything else that you would like to add, or do you have any questions from your side?**

   Conclude the session:

   # thanks for participation
   # keep open possibility for follow up communication via telephone, e-mail, or session
   # offer to share outcome report with participant

Appendix G - Interview Guide for Employees with Disabilities

- Short background of interviewee.

- Factors that enable the recruitment of PWD.

- Obstacles that have been identified and overcome-what changes were implemented to allow this to happen.

- Current barriers being experienced and proposed solutions to these to further facilitate the recruitment of PWD.

<u>Introduction</u>

my background
introduce project
purpose of interview
the need for recording devices
sign consent forms

1) **What is your job function?**
   - Can you briefly tell me more about what your main duties are?
   - How long have you been employed at the company?

2) **How do you experience working for this company?**
   - Please tell me more about this…………………………………………………………………
   - If I understand correctly…………………………………………………………………………

3) **Can you describe your experience of recruitment?**
   - What initially attracted you to the company?
   - How did you find out about the vacancy?
   - Can you tell me more about how you experienced the recruitment process?

4) What factors do you think facilitates the recruitment of PWD into this company?

- Tell me more about………
- What was your experience of………….?
- What do you think about…………………?
- What do you think about the role that…………plays?
- Can you describe the how……………………...?

5) What changes have you noticed that has made it easier for PWD to be recruited in the time that you have been employed?

- What effect do you think this had?
- How did this happen?
- How was this planned?

6) Can you describe any factors that can still be improved on to further facilitate the recruitment of PWD?

- Why do you think so?
- How do you think…………… can be addressed?
- Can you explain a little more about……………?
- What do you think would be the solution for………?
- Help me to understand………………………?

7) Can you think of anything else that you would like to add, or do you have any questions from your side?

Conclude the session:

thanks for participation

keep open possibility for follow up communication via telephone, e-mail, or session

offer to share outcome report with the participant.

Appendix H - Participant Information Leaflet and Consent Form-Human Resources Employees

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:	
Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet employment equity targets.	
DETAILS OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):	
Title, First Name, Surname: Ms. Natasha Maclean	**Ethics reference number: S/19/10/233**
Full postal address: 34 Skaamrosie Street, Protea Valley, 7530, Cape Town, South Africa	**Contact number: 079 534 887** **E-mail: natsmaclean@telkomsa.net**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that is being conducted as part of a master's degree in Human Rehabilitation Studies. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is important that you are completely satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. In other words, you may choose to take part, or you may choose not to take part. Your decision will not negatively impact on you or your work in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University.** The study will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice (2006), the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research (2002), and the Department of Health Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Studies (2015).

1.   What is this research study all about?

The aim of this research project is to identify and explore the factors that make it easier for your company to recruit persons with disabilities to achieve employment equity targets. Many companies and SOEs are unable to meet employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities. This happens despite International and National policies and guidelines being available. Through conducting this study, I wish to explore how your company has practically been able to recruit and employ Persons with Disabilities (PWD). The aim is to learn about factors within your company that has facilitated the recruitment process. It is expected that this information can guide other SOEs and businesses to reach and surpass employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities.

The study will be conducted at the business premises where you are employed. This will be the only site used in the study. The total number of participants will be approximately 9. 3 participants will be HR employees and 5-6 participants will be employees with disabilities.

I am available to answer any questions that you have regarding the research. You do not need to let anyone, including the person who told you about the study, that you are participating in this study. I will schedule a date and time, convenient to you during which we can meet telephonically. During this meeting, I will be asking you a few questions related to your experience of the research topic. This will be done in English, but you can let me know if you prefer being interviewed in a different language. A translator can be provided if this is the case.   I will make an audio recording of our conversation, to keep an accurate and practical record of our conversation which I can refer to at a later stage. I may be taking some extra notes during the interview as well. These notes and audio recording that will be transcribed and stored in a secure place, will be accessible only to

me. You will be asked to sign this informed consent form and I will complete a demographic sheet that will allow me to identify you in an anonymous way. This means that I will use your background information to link you to the data in an anonymous way. This just helps with confidentiality. The information sheet and consent form will be forwarded to you on e-mail or Whatsapp and you can return the signed consent form to me at natsmaclean@telkomsa.net. Should you not be able to sign electronically, you have the option to consent in writing to me by e-mail or Whatsapp. Alternatively, you can give verbal informed consent at the beginning of the recorded interview.

2. Why do we invite you to participate?

I have invited you to participate in this study because of your knowledge and experience of recruiting and employing persons with disabilities into your company. I feel that you will have the knowledge to be able to identify and describe the factors within your company that facilitates the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

3. What will your responsibilities be?

You will be asked to share experiences of recruiting and employing persons with disabilities into your company. You will be asked to describe factors that in your experience have facilitated the recruitment of persons with disabilities into your company. You will also be asked about barriers to the recruitment and employment of persons with disabilities that you may have encountered, and how these have been addressed and overcome. You are requested to please answer questions clearly, honestly and to your best knowledge. Please offer as much detail as possible. You are however not compelled to answer any question which makes you feel uncomfortable.

Try your best to ensure that you are not interrupted during the hour set aside for the interview.

4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this research will re-enforce the continued recruitment of persons with disabilities into the company to continue meeting and surpassing employment equity targets. It is also hoped that this research will contribute towards the understanding of other businesses and SOEs on how to practically improve

the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Hopefully, this can also assist them in achieving and surpassing employment equity targets. It is hoped that this research will contribute knowledge which improves the employment prospects for persons with disabilities. These research findings will be shared with you and the company. I hope that you will find your contribution to be a satisfying and rewarding experience for you.

5. Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research?

There will be no risks to participation in this study.

6. If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

Choosing not to take part in this study will have no negative consequence for you.

7. Who will have access to your information?

I will personally collect all information. Only essential personal information will be requested from you. All information collected (audio and written) will be treated as confidential and protected. Your identity and that of the SOE will remain anonymous. You will be assigned a pseudonym which will be used instead of your name on all documents and recordings. A master list will be kept, together with audio recordings and transcriptions and locked away. Only I will have access to this information and data may be shared with my supervisor. Information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations will always ensure anonymity. Please note that with a small group of study participants, anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed, but I will do my best to protect your identity in the way that I have described.

8. Even though it is unlikely, what will happen if you get injured somehow because you took part in this research study?

Injury or distress through participation in this study is unlikely because it involves no intervention and is positive in nature.

9. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid for participating in the study. You will have no expenses if you take part in this study.

10. Is there anything else that you should know or do?

➢ You can phone Natasha Maclean, Researcher, at 079 534 8873, or e-mail me at natsmaclean@telkomsa.net if you have any questions or queries that you would like me to answer.

➢ You can phone the Health Research Ethics Committee at 021 938 9677/9819 if there still is something that your researcher has not explained to you, or if you have a complaint.

11. Declaration by participant

By signing below, I ……………………………….………… agree to take part in a research study entitled "Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity targets."

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form, or it was read to me, and it is written in a language in which I am fluent and with which I am comfortable.

- I have had a chance to ask questions and I am satisfied that all my questions have been answered.

- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary,** and I have not been pressurised to take part.

- I may choose to leave the study at any time and nothing bad will come of it – I will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.

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- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan that we have agreed on.

Signed at (*place*) ....…......…………… on (*date*) …………...………. 2020.

....

Signature of participant   **Signature of witness**

12. Declaration by investigator

I *(name)* ……………………………………….……… declare that:

- I explained the information in this document in a simple and clear manner to

- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took enough time to answer them.

- I am satisfied that he/she completely understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.

- I did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) ....…......…………… on (*date*) …………...………. 2020.

....

Signature of investigator   **Signature of witness**

Appendix I - Participant Information Leaflet and Consent Form – Employees with Disabilities

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:	
Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape, to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet employment equity targets.	
DETAILS OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):	
Title, First Name, Surname: Ms. Natasha Maclean	Ethics reference number: S/19/10/233
Full postal address: 34 Skaamrosie Street, Protea Valley, 7530, Cape Town, South Africa	Contact number: 079 534 887 E-mail: natsmaclean@telkomsa.net

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that is being conducted as part of a master's degree in Human Rehabilitation Studies. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is important that you are completely satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. In other words, you may choose to take part, or you may choose not to take part. Your decision will not negatively impact on you or your work in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University.** The study will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice (2006), the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research (2002), and the Department of Health Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Studies (2015).

1. What is this research study all about?

The aim of this research project is to identify and explore the factors that make it easier for your company to recruit persons with disabilities to achieve employment equity targets. Many companies and SOEs are unable to meet employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities. This happens despite International and National policies and guidelines being available. Through conducting this study, I wish to explore how your company has practically been able to recruit and employ Persons with Disabilities (PWD). The aim is to learn about factors within your company that has facilitated the recruitment process. It is expected that this information can guide other SOEs and businesses to reach and surpass employment equity targets for recruiting persons with disabilities.

The study will be conducted at the business premises where you are employed. This will be the only site used in the study. The total number of participants will be approximately 9. 3 participants will be HR employees and 5-6 participants will be employees with disabilities.

I am available to answer any questions that you have regarding the research. You do not need to let anyone, including the person who told you about the study, that you are participating in this study. I will schedule a date and time, convenient to you during which we can meet telephonically. During this meeting, I will be asking you a few questions related to your experience of the research topic. This will be done in English, but you can let me know if you prefer being interviewed in a different language. A translator can be provided if this is the case. I will make an audio recording of our conversation, to keep an accurate and practical record of our conversation which I can refer to at a later stage. I may be taking some extra notes during the interview as well. These notes and audio

recording that will be transcribed and stored in a secure place, will be accessible only to me. You will be asked to sign this informed consent form and I will complete a demographic sheet that will allow me to identify you in an anonymous way. This means that I will use your background information to link you to the data in an anonymous way. This just helps with confidentiality. The information sheet and consent form will be forwarded to you on e-mail or WhatsApp and you can return the signed consent form to me at natsmaclean@telkomsa.net. Should you not be able to sign electronically, you have the option to consent in writing to me by e-mail or Whatsapp. Alternatively, you can give verbal informed consent at the beginning of the recorded interview.

2. Why do we invite you to participate?

I have invited you to participate in this study because I would like to gather your experiences of being recruited and employed within your company. I feel that you will have gathered, through experience, the knowledge to be able to identify and describe the factors within your company that facilitates the recruitment of persons with disabilities.

3. What will your responsibilities be?

You will be asked to share experiences of being recruited and employed at your company. You will be asked about factors that you feel has facilitated your recruitment into the company. You will also be asked about barriers to employment that you may have encountered, and how these have been addressed and overcome. You are requested to please answer questions clearly, honestly and to your best knowledge. Please offer as much detail as possible. You are however not compelled to answer any question which makes you feel uncomfortable. Try your best to ensure that you are not interrupted during the hour set aside for the interview.

4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

You will not be benefiting directly from taking part in this study. It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this research will benefit other PWD to obtain employment. It is also hoped that this research will contribute towards the understanding of other businesses and SOEs on how to practically improve the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Hopefully, this can assist them in achieving employment equity targets.

These research findings will be shared with you and the company. I hope that you will find your contribution to be a satisfying and rewarding experience for you.

5. **Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research?**

There will be no risks to participation in this study.

If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

Choosing not to take part in this study will have no negative consequence for you.

6. **Who will have access to your information?**

I will personally collect all information. Only essential personal information will be requested from you. All information collected (audio and written) will be treated as confidential and protected. Your identity and that of the SOE will remain anonymous. You will be assigned a pseudonym, which will be used instead of your name on all documents and recordings. A master list will be kept, together with audio recordings and transcriptions and locked away in the filing cabinet at a physiotherapy practice. This information will be available only to myself but may be shared with my supervisor. Information included in any research report or thesis document used in publications or in oral presentations will always ensure anonymity. Please note that with a small group of study participants, anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed, but I will do my best to protect your identity in the way that I have described.

7. Even though it is unlikely, what will happen if you get injured somehow because you took part in this research study?

Injury or distress through participation in this study is unlikely because it involves no intervention and is positive in nature.

8. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid for participating in the study. You will have no expenses if you take part in this study.

9. Is there anything else that you should know or do?

➤ You can phone Natasha Maclean, Researcher, at 079 534 8873, if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.

➤ You can phone the Health Research Ethics Committee at 021 938 9677/9819 if there still is something that your researcher has not explained to you, or if you have a complaint.

➤ You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for you to keep safe.

10. Declaration by participant

By signing below, I ………………………………….…………. agree to take part in a research study entitled "Factors which facilitate a State-Owned Enterprise in the Western Cape to recruit Persons with Disabilities to meet Employment Equity targets."

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form, or it was read to me, and it is written in a language in which I am fluent and with which I am comfortable.

- I have had a chance to ask questions and I am satisfied that all my questions have been answered.

- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary,** and I have not been pressurised to take part.

- I may choose to leave the study at any time and nothing bad will come of it – I will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.

- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan that we have agreed on.

Signed at (*place*) ....……………. on (*date*) ……………..………. 2020.

....
Signature of participant   **Signature of witness**

11. Declaration by investigator

I *(name)* ……………………………………….……… declare that:

- I explained the information in this document in a simple and clear manner to

- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took enough time to answer them.

- I am satisfied that he/she completely understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.

- I did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) ....……………. on (*date*) ……………..………. 2020.

....
Signature of investigator   **Signature of witness**

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Appendix J Data analysis strategy

Step 1
- Immersion with data.
- Personal and manual transcription of voice recordings.
- Orthographic transcription giving verbatim account of verbal communication.
- Reading data repeatedly and actively to search for meanings and patterns in data.

Step 2
- Generation of initial codes.
- Identification of the most basic elements contained in raw data and coding of the data accordingly.
- Elements or segments were assessed in a meaningful way to answer the research question.
- Colour coding used.

Step 3
- Search for themes.
- Consideration of how different codes combine to form overarching themes.

Step 4
- Reviewing themes.
- Gaining an understanding about the different themes and how they fit together to make sense of the case.

Step 5
- Defining and naming themes. Review themes to understand how themes link together and overlap with each other to make sense and tell a story. Identification of sub-themes to provide structure to large and complex themes and to establish a hierarchy within data.

Step 6
- Producing a report that presents the story that the data tells within and across themes as it relates to the research objectives.