

RESEARCH REPORT

Challenges of accessing skills development opportunities for people with Physical Disabilities in South Africa: an HWSETA Reflection

Researcher: Mxolisi Moyake

Supervisor: Siphso Buthelezi

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17 Bradford Road
Bedfordview
Gauteng
South Africa
P.O. Box X15
Gardenview
2047
Tel: +2711 607 6900
Fax: +2711 616 8939

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are that of the Author and not that of the HWSETA.
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ACRONYMS

CRPD	Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability
EEA	Employment Equity Act
FET	Further Education and Training
INDS	Integrated National Disability Strategy
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
NSFAS	National Students Financial Aid Scheme
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
PWD	People with Disabilities
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
UNCRPD	United Nation Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UPIAS	Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas

Executive Summary

People with physical disabilities (PWD) are generally excluded, marginalized and discriminated in all works of life. Even though the government has devised policies to ensure they have equal treatment. They lack access to many areas where they can participate and contribute meaningfully to society. Although policies exist, the question of access to skills development opportunities remains a concern because implementation has not been a success. Central to the study are these two concepts, which are physical disability and access. Accessing skills development opportunities are amongst a number of challenges facing people with physical disabilities. Provided this perceived constrained access, an argument could be made that PWD are at the risk of being affected by unemployment. Disability on its own is an addition to the lack of skills and a negative economic climate. As a result, people with physical disabilities could not fully contribute to the mainstream economy.

The objective of the study was to identify challenges PWD face in accessing skills development opportunities and to reflect on the Health and Welfare SETA's (HWSETA's) interventions. It is critical that the HWSETA, as an organization, reflects on its own programmes. The study was conducted using a mixed method approach, with an application of both qualitative and quantitative tools. Data collection was done through in-depth semi-structured telephonic interviews. It was also imperative to compile semi-structured questionnaires given the number of participants recruited for the study. Data analysis was done through content analysis and statistical presentation of findings.

The study confirms that some PWD do not have equal access to education and employment opportunities as a result of lack of skills. They do not receive the disability-related services that they require; hence they experience exclusion from everyday life activities. The study also points to the gaps and deficiencies in the management of policy concerning physical disability. Amongst the identified deficiencies is the faulty conception, communication, and monitoring of policy for effective implementation.

The study recommends more engagement with educational institutions, corporate world and members of society to ensure that reasonable level of awareness on disability is created. The study proposes various ways through which people with disabilities can be pulled into the

economic mainstream and labour market. These ways include; incentives, upskilling and re-skilling them through learnerships, internships, work integrated learning etc. In addition to advocacy for adding more financial resources, there is a great need for a thorough skills audit for people with disabilities. It should be on the basis of such a study that specific vocational training programmes should be implemented to empower people with disabilities. In this way, their skills will be aligned to the needs of the labour market. Mainly for the HWSETA, there is a need for organizational profiling to trace performance against set targets. Thus, recruitment and training of disabled people must be a priority and integral part of the broader training and development of staff.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study is about challenges facing people with physical disabilities in accessing skills development opportunities. People with physical disabilities are impacted by their experiences as they transition from childhood into adulthood and similarly spill over into the remainder of their adult lives. For many people with physical disabilities, exclusion, isolation, and abuse, as well as lack of educational and economic opportunities are daily experiences. There are disparities in education, employment and relationships are more pronounced in youth with disabilities. Like adults with disabilities, youth with disabilities do not enjoy the same human rights or equal access to goods and services as peers without disabilities. Children with disabilities may lack opportunities to receive an education due to inaccessible school systems, which will, in turn, impact their vocational skills and ability to accumulate capital and social assets as adults (Mitra, Posarac and Vick, 2013).

Lack of access to available skills development opportunities offered by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and other bodies remain a challenge for people with physical disabilities. Given the narrated deficiencies and challenges, there is a need to refocus on the strengthening of expertise (artisanal, professional and technical skills) and organizational performance (Grindle, 1997). Efficiency and effectiveness in the management of sustainable human resources capacity are more crucial in the South African population which is dominated by youth, who lack the essential skills to achieve economic growth. For a long time, the public sector has struggled with the problem of retaining skilled professionals which has to result in and this continues to cripple the human resources capacity (Grindle, 1997). People with physical disabilities are not in equal standing when coming to access the labour market due to lack of skills. The following discussions will offer a narrative around factors influencing the lack of access to skills development opportunities.

Studies published both nationally and internationally ha described the barriers to employing youth with physical disabilities to be in line with their lack of skills. These further include, amongst others;

- A lack of knowledge and awareness of disabilities
- Employer and fellow employee attitudes leading to discrimination

- Organization's physical infrastructure
- The perceived low productivity of people with disabilities, and
- Labour market legislation (ILO, 2007).

Clearly, with the current high level of skills shortages in the country, disability cannot be allowed to continue inhibiting entry into the labour market. As much as comparatively, youth with physical disabilities may be at a disadvantage in an open labour market, skills development opportunities targeting them should be a difference.

At various levels of governance, disability has progressively gained recognition as a development issue (Voluntary Service Overseas, 2006). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), (UN, 2006) clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced. The convention was based on the social model of disability, which focuses upon equal access; social opportunities; health; education; employment; political, economic and social development; and elimination of legal and social barriers (McClain-Nhlapo, 2010). With the implementation of UNCRPD development institutions and professionals have recognized disability as a key issue inevitably linked to poverty, in the recognition of human rights and citizenship (Mohapatra, 2012).

At the country level, South Africa has various legal instruments and policies aimed at addressing issues pertaining to disability, including issues of skills development. For example, in the National Development Plan (2012) provision was made for persons with disabilities to have enhanced access to quality education and employment. This provision forms part the efforts to ensure relevant and accessible skills development programmes for people with disabilities, coupled with prioritizing equal opportunities for their productive and gainful employment. It is important to note that youth with physical disabilities are also capable of contributing in many occupations within the labour market. However, the question will always arise regarding their level of skills given the *status quo* concerning access to skills development interventions.

Being exposed to primary, secondary, tertiary levels of education, then finding work and contributing to the economic and social life in any society is amongst the key values for self-actualization. As such, people living with disabilities are not except, they deserve to fully participate in the labour market. This narrative is however not a reality in some societies and for people with disabilities. This inequality and failure is a reason why this remains an aspiration for many governments (Braten and Svalund, 2015). The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) in its SSP (2016) emphasizes ensuring equal access to skills programmes by all youth irrespective of physical characteristics. Clearly, the challenges facing the youth with disabilities deserve due attention, investigation, and understanding. This is more so especially that out of the many opportunities that exist in the labour market, very few are secure by people living with disabilities.

1.2 The rationale of the study

The skills interventions for youth with disabilities range from internships, learnerships and work integrated learning supported by SETAs and relevant stakeholders in the education sector and the labour market. Despite the commitments from the NSDS 1 and 2 to increase opportunities for training and skills development for persons with disabilities, the country is still far from achieving goals in this regard. Therefore, NSDS 3 (2011-2016) aimed to open up opportunities for skills training for people experiencing barriers to employment caused by various physical and intellectual disabilities (NSDS 3, 2011-2016).

1.3 Problem Statement, Aim and Objectives

1.3.1 Problem Statement

It is estimated that there are between 180 and 220 million youths with disabilities worldwide of which nearly 80 percent live in developing countries (UNDESA, 2012). They face a similar range of issues and challenges as all young people, including lack of access to education, employment, healthcare, and social services. However, the literature on employment among youth with disabilities indicates that they are affected in far more complex ways. In the labour markets, youth are often the “last in and the first out,” but for youth with disabilities, even the possibility of being “last in” is often not a reality.

The lack of inclusion in education and skills development initiatives for young people with disabilities renders them vulnerable to a cycle of unemployment. As “the aim of these programmes is to provide learners with workplace experience and in so doing enhancing their employability (HWSETA Project Review, 2017). There is clearly an argument that can be made that with the lack of essential skills and negative economic growth, which elongates the higher rates of unemployment; disabled people are the most affected.

1.3.2 Aim

The aim of the study is to describe, contextualize and understand the challenges that are faced by the youth with physical disabilities in access skills development opportunities in the sector.

1.3.3 Objectives

The objectives of the study are the following:

- To identify challenges relating to access to skills development opportunities for the physically disabled youth,
- To identify the key factors which perpetuate the exclusion of PWD from effectively participating in the HWSETA skills development interventions,
- To identify an innovative approach for the HWSETA’s skills development interventions (unlock blockages) which could enhance access.

1.4 Overview of the study

The study consists of five main sections/chapters. Section 1 introduces the study (introduction and background), the problem, aim and objectives of the study. Section 2 presents a review of the literature, which discusses the global perspectives, concepts and policy context. This section further unpacks the HWSETA reflection on its own contributions. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, sampling method, data collection, and analysis. Section 4 provides the analysis of findings and discussion. Lastly, Section 5 presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the elements of the conceptual framework, which includes the concepts, perspectives and policy orientations on mainstreaming disability. The literature is reviewed on the relationship between disability and poverty as a result of challenges to access skills development opportunities in line with policy context. The report subsequently looks at the literature on the impact of factors on the livelihood regarding opportunities for people with disabilities.

2.2 Perspectives, Concepts and Policies Context

2.2.1 Global Perspectives

Globally, there has been an increasing focus on non-discrimination in the workplace and human rights for disabled people (Halvorsen and Hvinden, 2011). Article 23 in the Universal declaration on human rights states that “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and protection against unemployment” (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). In addition article 27 in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) further states that disabled people have a right to work on equal basis with others, and its main purpose is to ensure individuals with disabilities equal opportunities, to realize their human rights and to reduce obstacles that hinder their livelihood (CRPD, 2008). The assumption is that the above declarations will inspire change and commitment at national levels.

There is another argument that, cultural myths worldwide play a critical role in discriminating people with physical disabilities, particularly the youth. This goes with the perception and view that people with disabilities are the way they are because they are cursed and are often considered a burden (Maja et al., 2011). As a result, many young people with disability consider themselves to be without purpose. South Africa is no exception and due to this has developed some policies concerning fairness and equality of race, gender, and disability to overcome segregation and discrimination. These policies include among others; the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, National Skills Development

Strategy 2015, the Employment Equity Act (EEA) and The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS).

In spite of the emphasis on the human rights-based approach to disability, about 82% of disabled people worldwide lived below the poverty line (Cramm and Finkenflugel, 2008). An estimated 65-80% of 60 million disabled people in rural areas do not have access to basic minimum facilities. “Disability” still remains overwhelmingly marginalized in mainstream developmental research, institutional, policy and programme levels (Grech, 2009). Social and economic discrimination, architectural, transportation, institutional and policy barriers continue to prevent disabled people from accessing any of the opportunities (Rust and Metts, 2007).

2.2.2 Conceptions and Definition of Physical Disability

The definition of disability has been confusing for decades since the era of uprising among people with disabilities (Disability movement in the 70's). Burger and Burger (2010:2) maintain that “the conceptualization of disability dependent on the core assumptions made about the nature of disabilities and the obligations of both individuals and society. These core assumptions can be grouped into two major models; medical and social model”. The following models are discussed to offer clarity for the purpose of study context:

a) Medical Model understanding

In the modern world of technological advancement, the medical/individual model has been introduced and it is linked with the medicalization of disability. This model thus regards disabled people as “having something wrong with them” and that is the source of the problem (Oliver, 2009). The medical model is associated with negative ideas of permanency, dependency, and passivity, and focuses on deficit rather than talent. Furthermore, it ignores basic needs and rights, such as education, employment, housing and participation for people with physical disability (Barron and Amerena, 2007).

The medical model views disability as a feature of the person, directly caused by disease, trauma or other health conditions which require medical care provided in the form of individual treatment by professionals. Disability, in this model, calls for medical or other treatment or

intervention, to 'correct' the problem with the individual (Nottinghamshire, 2015). It is clear that the medical model focuses on the provision of treatment or creating alternatives to begging or hiding away if not dependency. It means that all interventions are based on assessment, diagnosis, and labeling, with separately developed therapy programmes and alternative services. Ordinary needs of the disabled are not taken into account by this model. In essence, the prescription for treatment will serve as a means to address disability (Burger and Burger, 2010).

The medical model emphasizes the following preconceived perceptions:

- The disability must be controlled by medication;
- Impairment is regarded as a personal tragedy needing treatment;
- Disability is caused by disease requiring treatment; and
- People with disabilities must be institutionalized.

Finally, people with disabilities cannot cope without medication to participate in societal activities.

b) Social Model understanding

Disabled people around the world introduced the social model of disability by discarding the medical model. This model defines disability as the restriction of activity resulting from a contemporary social organization where society does not consider people with impairment, restricts their participation and marginalizes them from the mainstream of society (UPIAS, 1976 cited in Barnes and Mercer, 2010). The strength of this model is that it looks beyond impairment and focuses on social, economic, cultural, legal and political dimensions with a rights-based perspective (Turmusani, 2003).

This model considers disabled people's unemployment as the outcome of development where faulty policies exclude them from work. Barron and Amerena, (2007) further add that the model, based on a human rights approach, focuses upon meaningful determinants of social inclusion including access to education, employment and community facilities like transport, housing, and public places (environment and surroundings).

In the social model, disability conceived within the notion that society has established barriers that make the disabled unable to participate on an equal basis with others. Society creates systematic and structural barriers that lead to social exclusion and oppression (Vedeler, 2014).

For instance, it can be such things as unavailable buildings and transport services. The following arguments are pointed by social model:

- In the social model of disability, impairment is not denied but is not thought of as the cause of disabled people's economic and social disadvantage.
- Disability is defined as an outcome of an oppressive relationship between people with impairments and the rest of society, and
- The social model recognizes disability as a socially created problem.

The study recognizes and embraces both models with the view to see how best-supporting infrastructure can respond to both medical and social needs of those living with a disability. This is mainly because access to skills development programmes has everything to do with the total well-being of the youth living with physical disabilities. For example, the social model of disability can be associated with the need for increasing level awareness about disability and their special needs for full social activity.

2.3 Policy Context

2.3.1 The need for Mainstreaming Disability

Access within the context of this study refers to readily available information regarding skills development opportunities for people with physical disabilities. In this instance challenges serving as barriers are to be further identified for redress. Youth with disabilities often face marginalization and severe social, economic, and civic disparities as compared with those without disabilities due to a range of factors from stigma to inaccessible environments. As countries look towards the post-2015 era to ensure poverty reduction and equitable development, it is essential to ensure that all youth have equal opportunities to become productive and contributing members of their society and enjoy all rights and privileges of citizenship, including youth with disabilities (Groce, 2013). It is important to understand the life cycle of disability-based marginalization that impacts persons with disabilities in their youth (Openideo Rex, 2017).

2.3.2 Scope of Provisions

The South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996 states that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it". The South African White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS)

envisioning a society for all...encompassing human diversity and the development of all human potential, encouraging people with disabilities (PWDs) to make contributions through their experiences, capabilities, and talents to both national development. Furthermore, according to the INDS, it is estimated that in South Africa only 30% of the children with disabilities who are at the appropriate school going age, are attending school. These inevitably results in increasing levels of limited skills and illiteracy amongst People with Disabilities (PWD). A lack of skills and qualifications among PWD were frequently identified in the research. Wordsworth's (2015) study again indicated that employers thought that PWD often did not have the experience and skills required for certain jobs.

2.3.3 National Skills Development Strategy III

Building on the policy foundations, “the skills development of persons with disabilities has been an important focus for the HWSETA since its inception in 2001” (HWSETA Project Review, 2017). There is thus a perpetual pursuit of the targets of this responsibility.

The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III was drawn to ensure increased access to training and skills development opportunities. In essence, to achieve the fundamental transformation of inequities linked to class, race, gender, age and disability in South Africa (NSDS III, 2015), further, will also address the challenges of skills shortages and mismatches faced by many organizations in the country and improve productivity in the economy. On 1 April 2011, the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) had to enter a new phase in line with NSDS guidelines. During this new phase, there have to be fundamental changes to the leadership, governance, and strategy of the SETAs to meet the objectives of NSDS III. In this way, SETAs will then improve their functioning and performance by setting up a comprehensive performance monitoring, evaluation and support system for all education, training, and skills development institutions.

Based on this assertion, the real value added by SETAs is their understanding of labour market issues in their respective sectors. SETAs are mandated to ensure that they are backed by employers and workers. They are to be acknowledged as a credible and authoritative voice on skills, create interventions and shape solutions that address skills needs within their sectors. SETAs must become recognized experts about skills demand within their sector. This

discussion will be relevant whereby youth with disabilities will then need to have access firstly to the available information, which will inform them of opportunities for skills development interventions across sectors (NSDS 3, 2011-2016).

2.3.4 Skills development interventions for youth with disabilities

The Baseline Country Report to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) (2013) provided an overview as to what extent affirmative action policies and laws, following ratification of the UNCRPD in 2007, had made an impact on the lives of people with physical disabilities. The Report notes among others:

- In 2011/12, 2481 full-time students were enrolled in what was then known as Further Education and Training (FET) colleges. This dropped to a full-time enrolment of 1805 full-time students in 2012/13;
- Enrolment of students with disabilities at institutions of higher education does not show any significant improvement, from 4 861 (2008) to 4 662 (2009) and 5 027 (2010). Figures for students with disabilities graduating from institutions of higher education show a similar lack of improvement, having dropped from 995 (2008) to 904 (2009) and 801 (2010);
- The inclusion of persons with disabilities in learnerships has been an uneven experience, with each education and training authority applying its support measures, often based on motivation by individual service providers;
- The employment equity target of 2% for persons with disabilities, set by Cabinet for the public sector has not been met to date;
- The National Student Finance Scheme (NSFAS) introduced a bursary scheme to provide financial support for students with disabilities who are academically able but need financial aid, enrolled at public higher education institutions. The bursary currently covers tuition, books, and other study materials and accommodation. However, transport, as well as assistive devices or human support, are still required which were overlooked for cases of people with disabilities.

The above citation depicts minimal absorption of people with disabilities in many available upskilling and academically empowering initiatives.

2.3.5 Barriers to inclusion in working life

Internationally, research on the transition to adult life including work participation has received some attention and is showing this transition to be very difficult, especially for young people with physical disabilities (Vedeler, 2014). This transition is difficult because of individual conditions such as physical, sensory or cognitive limitations. There are obstacles or barriers are discussed as follows:

a) Knowledge of employers and prejudices

According to Burke et al. (2013), in a focus group survey conducted by the 13 employers from various industries were asked what are the most important areas in terms of low employment among people with disabilities were. The most common response was that employer's need more practical information on how to remove own prejudices and concerns about hiring and retaining people with disabilities. In the recent report by Brathen and Svalund (2015) as well as Svalund and Hansen (2013), they both mention four different barriers to the integration of people with disabilities. These are; discrimination barriers, a cost barrier, a productivity barrier, and an information and attitude barrier in many organizations. Vedeler (2009) addresses the fact that processes in the welfare service may be a barrier to getting employment. There is also a notion that their products or services are met with skepticism. They are not trusted fully to deliver products and render services of high quality (Rusnes, 2010).

Even though the young people have sought after qualifications for various jobs they have experienced being placed last and not received any employment. The type of disability does influence your chances of getting into the labour market (Sima et al., 2014) and generally, more severe disabilities have poorer chances of securing employment. The literature collected clearly points to lack of skills or rather failure from the side of organizations to accommodate disabled in terms of upskilling.

b) Challenges to access education for people with disabilities

Education for all youth is critical for realizing their full potential. However, from basic education level children with physical disabilities have a lower probability of entering school, staying and advancing as compared to children without disabilities (World Health Organization and the World Bank, 2011). It is clear that by the time they enter adolescence and become

youth they run a high risk of being illiterate. This challenge will then lead to restricted opportunities for further education, skills development, employment, and income generation (Eide and Loeb, 2006; Singal, Bhatti and Malik, 2011). Some families do not feel that youth with disabilities should receive an education, often believing that young people with disabilities are incapable of learning. In patriarchal conservative societies, young women with disabilities are further disadvantaged as families may be reluctant to allocate resources to them. However, even with supportive and encouraging families, many youths with disabilities still face severe challenges in acquiring an education (Groce, 2004).

Educational establishments are often inaccessible, lack appropriate facilities, and do not provide students with disabilities necessary accommodations or assistive devices. Inclusive and accessible schools are essential conditions to promote social inclusion, acceptance, equality, and opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Sensitization, awareness-raising, and capacity building programmes are important to prepare teachers and school as well as personnel in institutions of higher learning, the lack of which often results in the exclusion of youth with disabilities from certain activities (World Health Organization and the World Bank, 2011). This is even more poignant for students with hidden or invisible disabilities.

2.4 Health and Welfare SETA's reflection

Despite the country's progressive legislation, which has enabled the implementation of policies that support the employment of persons with disabilities as well as post-school strategies, there has been a slow pace of improvement in the employment of persons with disabilities in both the public and private sectors. Persons with disabilities only account for 83 325 or 1.2% of the total number of employees, according to the Commission of Employment Equity (CEE) (DoL, 2016). For example, the sphere ere of local government employs the highest percentage of persons with disabilities at 1.9%, whereas educational institutions employ the least at 0.3%. The target set for employment equity has never been met.

As part of the skills development mission of the HWSETA, it became imperative to create an awareness of disability and how employing persons with a disability could enrich the working environment, their lives and families (HWSETA, n.d.). In 2016 less than 0.5% of the people employed in the sector were living with disabilities. Of the 1025 disabled employees in the

Public Service, 128 (12%) were employed as managers, 149 (15%) as professionals and 126 (12%) as technicians and associate professionals. In private health, 116 (8%) were employed as managers, 338 (22%) as professionals and 377 (35%) as technicians and associate professionals (HWSETA SSP, 2016/17). The HWSETA reference to such stats in the sector which is mandated clearly indicates the role played in ensuring the placement of people with disabilities in various workplaces through skills development initiatives.

In terms of funding to stakeholders for the facilitation of skills development for people with disabilities the following table could draw a clear picture of the mandated:

Figure 2.1: Organisations implementing a project for people with disabilities

Year	Organization	Project title	Duration	Learners	Amount Allocation
2016/17	QuadPara Association of SA	Workplace Experience for persons with disabilities	12 months	12	811 778.40
2016/17	Pathcare	Workplace Experience for persons with disabilities	12 months	5	210 000.00
2016/17	Cape Mental Health	Training for protective workshop employees (These are people who take care of persons with disabilities)	12 months	200	1 135 360.00
2016/17	Pietermaritzburg Mental Health Society	Work Experience Grant for Persons with disabilities	18 months	4	267 120.00
2016/17	University of Cape Town	Higher Certificate in Disability practice	12 months	38	1 490 121.43
2017/18	Pietermaritzburg Mental Health Society	Workplace Experience	18 months	9	201 757.50
2015/16	DEAFSA	Social Auxiliary Learnership for the Deaf learners	24 months	14	1 485 546.25
2017/18	Netcare	Learnership: People with disabilities	12 Months	30	2 400 000
2017/18	University of WC	Post-graduate bursaries for Persons with Disabilities	36 Months	23	1 840 000

The number of learners awarded or placed in skills development interventions is huge even though based on national statistics in line with lack of access to such opportunities, the numbers are a just tip of an iceberg. In order to curb this minimal contribution, it is imperative that Non-Government Organisations (NGO) be fully engaged through workshops and more funding. In

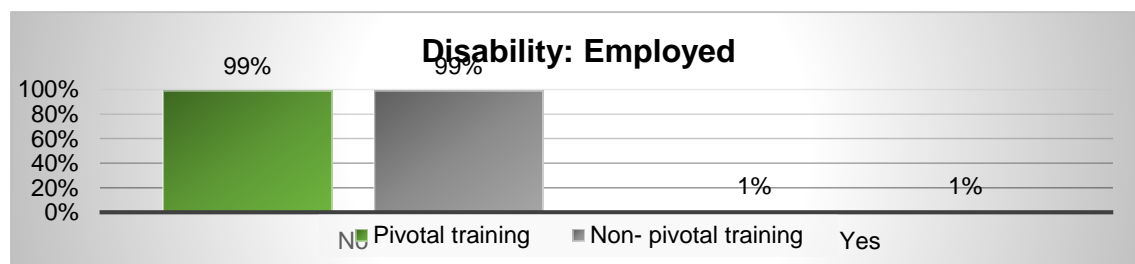
this way their impact you be positive in empowering people with disabilities. It is evident given the statistics that the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are not doing enough, thus, there have to be innovative enablers to help them cement partnerships with NGOs.

Skills development is very important in the country, especially in the Health and Social Development sector because the state of health and skills of the population is essential for economic growth and social welfare. The Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) programmes are qualifications or part qualifications that are registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which often combine theoretical, practical and workplace training. The PIVOTAL programmes, therefore, include internships, work integrated learning, apprenticeships, work experience placements that lead to a trade test or professional designation (candidacy), bridging course/ examinations of qualifications that lead to a designation. The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are obliged to develop PIVOTAL lists as part of their sector skills planning processes. These lists are meant to align training programmes offered in and for the sector to the scarce skills or skills shortages experienced in the sector. Essentially, the PIVOTAL lists are then used to guide funding decisions in the SETA.

a. Employed

As below, almost all who are employed do not have a disability (figure 2.2). More could be done to employ people living with disabilities. However, the challenge would remain the type of skill required for an occupation. When considering the actual count, there are more people living with disabilities in non-PIVOTAL occupations.

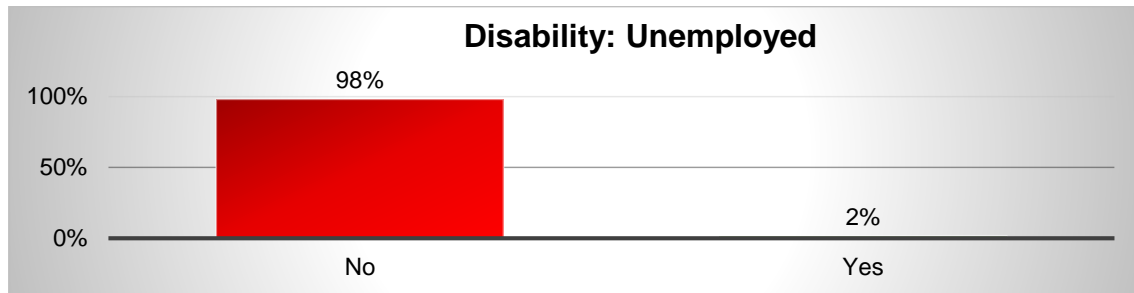
Figure 2.2: Employment of PWDs



This section includes an analysis of only the unemployed. A reminder that all unemployed are learners who are currently undertaking work-based training programmes either in a learnership,

internship or WIL. Furthermore, as this section only refers to unemployed, there will be no analysis for non-PIVOTAL as these occupations have been identified as PIVOTAL. The majority of those unemployed are African (64%), followed by Coloured (17%), White (13%) and Indian (7%). Females were the majority at 73%. Similar to those employed, almost all unemployed were not people living with a disability (figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Unemployment among PWDs



This graph paints a very negative picture, which indicates a huge degree of failure in the facilitation of access to training and employment for people living with disabilities. Most of the unemployed were based in urban areas with 98%, it must be even worse in rural areas.

SECTION 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section discusses the methodology used in the study including the rationale for using both qualitative and quantitative research designs (mixed method). It also the methods of data collection and data analysis, as well as the study sampling strategy, are discussed. Furthermore, ethical considerations are also discussed.

3.2 Research Design and Data Collection

The research design for this study was descriptive and exploratory, “representing who, what, when and how that is associated with the target population” (Berndt and Petzer, 2011:343). Descriptive research is social research with the primary aim of describing (rather than explaining) a particular phenomenon (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000:154). Thus, the challenges of youth with a disability was explored and described with regard to inaccessibility to skills development programmes. In essence, this study was conducted through both qualitative and quantitative methods usually referred to as mixed method approach within the pragmatic paradigm. This study derived findings from the data collected using qualitative and quantitative techniques as follows.

3.2.1 Qualitative techniques

a) Document analysis

The study began with a desktop review of, South African and international legislation about youth with disabilities as well as various reports on the status of training, education, skills development and employment in the country. In essence, the study focussed on gathering information on similar previous research carried out both locally and internationally. These secondary sources include academic journals, dissertations, textbooks, academic databases (Science Direct, Emerald, SA e-Publications, EBSCOhost and Google Scholar) and labour market-related reports. HWSETA’s website was also browsed for more reports and articles related to people with disabilities (see <http://www.hwseta.org.za>).

b) In-depth telephonic semi-structured Interviews

Greeff (2002:302) emphasizes “semi-structured interviews are especially suitable when the issue is controversial and personal”. In this study, describing lack of access to skills interventions by youth with disabilities is both controversial and personal. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the form of telephonic interviews due to a number of reasons cited as part of the limitation of the study. Interviews with youth with disabilities were transcribed. All transcriptions were proofread for analysis purposes.

3.2.2 Quantitative techniques

a) Semi-structured questionnaire survey

Questionnaires were utilized in this study. The study relied on open-ended questions. These questionnaires were submitted to a network of organizations working with disabled people.

3.3 Sampling and Data Analysis

In essence, this study on both probability and non-probability sampling methods whereby cost-effectiveness and time-effectiveness were taken into consideration. Thus, the marginalized youth with disabilities with qualifications as identified by NGOs offered rich data per purposive sampling for interview purposes. In reference to quantitative data collection, the study used stratified sampling as a probability sampling technique. The study managed to reach fewer participants whereby only 13 questionnaires were collected. In terms of interviews, only four participants were consulted and agreed to participate. One need to emphasize that these numbers were relied upon based on saturation principle. This implies that responses were always recurring from various people with disabilities points to share the same sentiments.

3.3.1 Data Analysis

a) Qualitative data

Data were analyzed through content analysis technique, and this was being done in line with the steps proposed by Piercy (2014:6) as follows;

- To read the transcripts carefully, making notations in the margins;

- Observations to be developed into preliminary descriptive and interpretive categories based on the evidence presented in the transcripts;
- Basic themes to be determined by examining clusters of comments made by participants and memos made during the interview, and
- To examine themes from all interviews across such responses in order to delineate predominant themes contained in the data.

These predominant themes were managed to serve as answers to the research objectives and form the basis for writing up the data.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Brewerton and Millward (2001) offer certain guidelines on unethical conducts to be considered during the research process, such as; involving people without their consent, coercing people and withholding the true nature of the research. The ethical policy of HWSETA was adhered to throughout data collection so as there would not be a falsification of data during the dissemination (HWSETA Research Strategy, 2016/2017).

3.5 Limitations of the study

This study is dominated by secondary data and this might raise a number of concerns from the readers about empirical data. Questionnaires were well distributed, though only a few respondents returned answered questionnaires. The sensitiveness of the study resulted in insufficient data for analysis in confidence to avoid any negative critique. It is critical that questionnaires must be self-administered to avoid problems in distribution and return. Plans are to take made taking into cognizance the timeous response to a request for interviews.

SECTION 4: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section of the study presents findings from the analysis of data, which was collected during the research process. Furthermore, the findings will be discussed whereby the literature reviewed, questionnaires collected and interviews conducted will be outlined.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.2.1 Identified Policy Gaps and Deficiencies

In many legislations drawn, the reason provided was that they are not intended to discriminate against any individual with respect to race, gender or disability. Legislation and policies play a vital role in overcoming segregation and discrimination of PWD within the workplace. Research conducted in South Africa suggests that the majority of employers have equal opportunities, but only some employers have specific strategies or policies in place for the employment of PWD. A significant barrier to the employment of PWD was that companies do not have internal policies targeted at recruiting or training PWD. The authors' concluded that a lack of internal policy with respect to training of PWD, in organizations may be a contributing factor to the difficulties experienced in meeting its equity targets. It is thus concluded that although policies and guidelines are in place it appears that they are not always implemented effectively (Burger, 2010).

It is clear that legislative and policy design does not always take into account the needs of people with disabilities, or existing policies and standards are not enforced. For example, for inclusive education policies, either provided very little detail of their proposed strategies to include people with disabilities in schools or did not refer to disability or inclusion at all. The common gaps in education policy include a lack of financial and other targeted incentives for people with disabilities to attend school as well as a lack of social protection and support services for children with disabilities and their families. The social integration of persons with disabilities gained prominence as a key issue from both a policy and legislative provision perspective. The NSDS all highlighted that persons with disabilities are too often excluded

from contributing to society and its work. To identify the gaps, it is critical to explore the relevant legislative and human rights environment (Burger, 2010).

4.2.2 Barriers to employment due to a lack of skills

Limited formal or informal employment opportunities, the absence of income and lack of access to finances and safety nets are major challenges for disabled people's livelihoods. The survey statistics suggests that four disabled people are illiterate; the majority have attended primary school but only four completed the twelfth class and one studied up to graduation. None of them have undergone any kind of vocational or skills training. Only two disabled girls revealed doing tailoring work which they had learned from the other family members (ILO, 2007).

It is estimated that in South Africa only 30% of the children with disabilities who are at the appropriate school going age, are attending school. This inevitably results in increasing levels of limited skills and illiteracy amongst people with disabilities (PWD). A lack of skills and qualifications among PWD were identified frequently in the research. It is further indicated that employers thought that PWD frequently did not have the experience and skills required for certain jobs. Further studies found that whilst employers were willing to employ PWD, they failed to do so because applicants with disabilities did not possess an adequate level of qualification commensurate with skills. All of these predicaments are as a result of the following citations (ILO, 2007).

4.2.3 Discrimination and Exclusion

South Africa has been characterized by a great number of discriminatory practices in the past, some of which still persist today. Even though a fair amount of attention has been given to discrimination relating to race, religion, and gender, not much has been accorded to disability discrimination, particularly in the workplace. Inequality, discrimination, and transformation remain the key challenges, which most employees are faced within the South African Labour Market. Key among such challenges has also been the employers' ability to ensure that persons with disabilities access the skills development opportunities. Persons with disabilities have generally had difficulties in exercising their fundamental social, political and economic rights.

Despite the increased sensitivity of this subject in this country, applicants for work and employees generally find themselves to be the victims of employment discrimination due to their disability. In essence, this points directly to a lack of skills, which is due to accessing skills development interventions (ILO, 2007).

There is an argument that could be made in that the discrimination against PWD is as a result of negative attitudes and lack of knowledge and awareness. When one has a prejudicial attitude, discrimination is likely to occur and this will be happening at times without the awareness of the person who applies it. Insufficient information, rather than prejudice itself, has been found to be a significant obstacle in eliminating discrimination in the employment of PWD. People without disabilities usually have negative impressions about people with disabilities, viewing them as inferior. These impressions can foster discrimination within the workplace and contribute to unemployment and poor working conditions. It is clear that access to available skills intervention and opportunities will not be diverted to PWD as they are forever regarded as not worthy of upskilling (ILO, 2007).

4.2.4 Physical environmental factors

The physical environment, such as infrastructure, equipment, and machinery has been found to be significant barriers to preventing access to skills development for PWD. The inability of PWD to have access due to inadequate parking facilities and inaccessible public transport were factors cited in many studies internationally.

South African studies have also supported this finding in so many levels. In South Africa, participant employers indicated that inaccessible facilities and public transport prevented them from hiring PWD, the truth centered on lack of skills.

A person's environment has a huge impact on the experience and extent of disability. Inaccessible environments create disability by creating barriers to participation and inclusion in societal activities. Environmental factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives. Environmental factors can be classified as either barriers or facilitators and either way, affect disabled people's participation in the community. In general, these factors are divided into the following categories:

- *Products and technology*

Products and technology can either be natural or human-made products or systems of products, equipment and technology in an individual's immediate environment that are gathered, created, produced or manufactured. For instance, the usage of wheelchairs whereby a type of wheelchair is not designed for an environment meant for the user *vice versa*. Do products produced improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities?

- *The natural environment and human-made changes*

Accessibility is a prerequisite for inclusion. It has to be stated that comprehensive accessibility would ensure that buildings, products, services, and information were designed in such a way as to be accessible, usable, understandable and comfortable for all people including people with disabilities, without discrimination. For instance, difficulties created for people with disabilities by hilly terrain, lack of ramps and narrow roads, as well as by inappropriate assistive devices such as calipers and wheelchairs on steep slopes or crutches in narrow lanes which create obstacles for people with disabilities trying to access areas of self-employment education and a number of community centers.

- *Support and relationships*

This focuses on the amount of physical and emotional support from family, neighbors, and community in general. Families frequently lack faith in disabled family members' abilities in the workplace, thus undermining their confidence and even at times preventing them from exploring livelihood opportunities or participating in uplifting their lives.

- *Attitudes, services, systems, and policies*

In this regard, there are observable consequences of customs, practices, ideologies, values, norms, factual and religious beliefs. It is stated that these attitudes influence individual behavior and social life at all levels, from interpersonal relationships and community associations to political, economic and legal structures. Thus, for instance, in a comparison of disabled and non-disabled access to livelihood assets, it is found that taxi drivers' and fellow passengers' attitudes were significant barriers to accessible public transport for people with disability. Lack of access to transport seems to impact negatively on disabled livelihood in acquiring opportunities. In final instances, unemployment and underemployment of people

with disabilities in South Africa could be broadly attributed to issues of stigma and discrimination.

It is clear that environmental factors are common to all people, whether they are disabled or not. The difference is that the factors interact with individual health conditions, thereby resulting in different disability situations. It could be deduced that the experiences of impairment should not be a barrier to participation if the environmental factor has been addressed. This participation would be achieved when the physical environment is accessible, social attitudes and norms are positive, and policies and services are inclusive in their approach.

4.2.5 Non-disclosure of Disabilities by Employees

There is a notion that PWD in South Africa usually does not disclose their disability voluntarily. Non-disclosure was identified in many studies as one of the barriers cited. The perceived contributing factors were highlighted as possibly being linked to skilled positions, they do not disclose their disabilities or that they do not actively apply for jobs. This could be attributed to a lack of self-confidence or capability to ‘compete’ with able-bodied persons for a job. The type of disability and the nature of the business may also be a barrier, preventing the employment of PWD (ILO, 2007).

Disability is part of the human condition, almost everyone will be temporarily or permanently impaired at some point in life, and those who survive to old age will experience increasing difficulties in functioning. Most extended families have a disabled member, and many non-disabled people take responsibility for supporting and caring for their relatives and friends with disabilities. On the other hand, disability is complex, dynamic, multidimensional, and contested. The transition from an individual, medical perspective to a structural, social perspective has been described as the shift from a “medical model” to a “social model” in which people are viewed as being disabled by society rather than by their bodies. The medical model and the social model are often presented as dichotomous, but disability should be viewed neither as purely medical nor as purely social: persons with disabilities can often experience problems arising from their health condition.

4.3 DISCUSSION

Precise semi-structured questionnaires were distributed whereby it focussed on identifying challenges by posing questions related to experiences and perceptions. In this regard, the questionnaire survey was dominated by open-ended questions. In this part of the report, the findings are also in line with telephonic interviews conducted.

a) Disability affecting livelihood: Environmental factors revisited

The majority of participants seem to share the sentiment that disability in itself is uncomfortable. However, access to transport, buildings and assistive devices makes lives of persons with disabilities more difficult. As one of the participants pointed as follows:

“For instance, if I want to study in a certain institution but there is no suitable accommodation available or reliable transport to get into the institution from my comfortable accommodation. Also, because most buildings are not 100% accessible, a person with a disability is forced to rely on others for assistance and the unwanted company which might also come at a cost” (interview 1).

Furthermore, participants also shared the point that it becomes cumbersome for them to be afforded skills as this normally becomes a problem:

“In terms of education, it is clear that disabled persons lack equal opportunities to attain education then when one jump to upskilling it’s a joke to people with disability. This is due to discriminatory practices that have always ignored the disabled. The able-bodied children are given first priority to attain education. For the disabled even if there are opportunities to attend school most schools may not be accessible or far away. The majority of the disabled persons also require special schools who are very few and cannot accommodate even those disabled who can afford due to geographical challenges” (interview 2).

Apart from the challenge related to this study, the respondents felt it is necessary to also indicate that the disabled have little access to reproductive education and general health information. They usually lack family planning knowledge and access. As a result, they have many children compounding their financial challenges to look after the children. Access to health care facilities is also a challenge. Some clinics are far away and some are not affordable. The HIV and AIDS scourge has adversely affected the disabled as they have been excluded in special education on the disease as far as prevention, management, and treatment. There is no readily available material in braille for the blind. Some disabled are physically and sexually

abused. By the time the abuse is discovered it will be too late to get proper and correct treatment. On top of what is referred this utterance could draw a clear picture:

“Adding to this challenges is cultural/traditional myth whereby practices and beliefs have also played a big role in making the life of us as disabled a nightmare. Despite being shunned the disabled may be killed at infant level as they are regarded as a bad omen. Partners who bear disabled children have separated or divorced because of such births. Either the husband divorce the wife or the woman abandons home leaving the child with the father. Then when you refer to skills development for us as disabled it’s just a tip of an iceberg” (interview 3).

b) Community support and accessibility

The reference to community support boils down to a manner in which members of the public accept and give support to disabled. However, caution must be taken not to regard disabled as reliant on anyone, even though one of the participants reiterated that:

“...challenges are usually realized at destinations that are not accessible. Also, at home, since the original home was not designed for a person with a disability, I will need assistance getting to some parts of the home on a daily basis. People with disabilities need understanding, patience from family and society at large. People should be considerate regarding parking spaces, using public bathrooms meant for people with disabilities amongst others. Society should be encouraged to ask if people with disabilities need help and what help instead of general assumptions made that dehumanize people with disabilities at most times” (interview 3).

The above utterance depicts to the fact that skills development interventions will not be accessed if certain issues affecting disabled people are not addressed. In essence, the support system must be on point in terms of the needs of people with disabilities.

c) Perceptions of PWD regarding the education system

It is very sad and demoralizing that people with disabilities are excluded from normal education and have to be placed in special schools. However, these special schools are not enough to accommodate all those who need to enroll. As it was echoed that:

“Usually, people with disabilities will be assessed or at times placed on a waiting list as opposed to what happens in normal schools during enrolment. Also, because of the fact that these special schools are in remote locations and put a strain on parents as they have to travel long distances to take their kids to schools. Education should be inclusive and strive to accommodate as many disabilities as it possibly could so that children with disabilities may not be isolated” (interview 4).

It could further be deduced that beliefs and prejudices constitute barriers to education, employment, healthcare, and social participation. In essence, upskilling of people with disabilities will not be realized as long as these other factors are not addressed. For example:

“The attitudes of teachers’ right from basic education level, school administrators, fellow school children, and even family members affect the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. One could then imagine in furthering studies where will people with disability be accommodated. Furthermore, misconceptions by employers that people with disabilities are less productive than their non-disabled counterparts, and ignorance about available adjustments to work arrangements limits employment opportunities. At the end of the day lack of skills will always pop-up as a convenient excuse” (Interview 4).

It was also confirmed that the stigma frequently attached to disability whereby it is popularly believed that disabled people were cursed:

“I...had even this stigma because when I grew up...the place was, you know, the place has some superstitions. Some beliefs are that if somebody is disabled maybe they are cursed, something like that” (Interview 3).

The above discussion shows that skills development opportunities cannot be accessed. The challenges are there structurally to exclude people with disabilities in one way or the other.

d) Accessibility challenges

From the literature to the interviews, there is a consensus that the following are the major challenges facing PWD:

- Access to transport,
- Access to buildings since most have stairs,
- Access to suitable accommodation,
- Provision of reasonable accommodation in general and understanding of disability-related challenges by supervisors and managers.

It will be imperative to realize that when upskilling initiatives are made the above facts become a thorny issue for people with disabilities. Often one finds that they are overlooked as this will be influenced by the presumption that people with disabilities are not meant to contribute to the economy.

e) Employment, self-employment or skills development interventions

It would make sense to have opportunities earmarked and customized for people with disabilities. Also, competing with able-bodied people can at times frustrate people with disabilities, more so if they are not given support during application, enrolment, and transportation during interviews, and assistance with accommodation and/or transport when they are appointed. People with disabilities need to be assisted to access funding and entrepreneurial support until they have productive companies. We need to remember that people with disabilities were previously disadvantaged by their disabilities to participate in the mainstream economy. As (interview 4) emphasize that:

“Disabled persons face economic deprivation. Due to their disability status, they cannot compete equally with able-bodied persons in the income-generating activities. The majority of these were not even afforded equal opportunities to pursue education. The society has looked down on the disabled, thereby they are absent in the formal employment sector. For those who fortunate enough to acquire some education they usually do not advance in higher positions due to discrimination against the disabled”.

Based on the above engagement with people with disabilities the findings reflected that employers still lack adequate knowledge, awareness and an understanding of disability that contributes to the ineffective integration of PWD within the workforce. Additionally, findings illustrated that whilst South African legislation is compelling businesses to meet equity targets, they have difficulty in meeting these targets due to their inability of accessing qualified and skilled PWD. The type of disability and the nature of the work are additional factors that restrict PWD from integration within specific sectors in the open labour market. Non-disclosure of disability was found to play a role, due to the uncertainty of the consequences of disclosure. This history of discrimination has additionally had an impact on the stereotyping of PWD by able-bodied individuals i.e. stigmatization from other staff. Physical barriers also remain a major hindrance to the employment of PWD.

Despite these many barriers, the organizations reported advantages for employing PWD. PWD was said to have a positive attitude and were easily trainable in addition to having higher productivity levels. Businesses scored equity points and were more competitive as well as opportunities to work and learn from PWD were created. Finally, it was reassuring to note that these organizations were working towards the social model of disability, by removing barriers through reasonable accommodation and education programmes, which positively impact PWD

future opportunities for integration. As indicated in this study, there is evidence albeit limited that suggests that organizations are indeed willing and actively attempting to reduce the barriers associated with the employment of PWD.

Generally, resources allocated to implementing policies and plans are often inadequate, hence there is always a need to improve the budget allocations. The lack of effective financing is a major obstacle to sustainable services across all income settings. For example, in high-income countries, between 20% and 40% of people with disabilities generally do not have their needs met for assistance with everyday activities. In many low-income and middle-income countries, governments cannot provide adequate services and commercial service providers are unavailable or not affordable for most households. Thus, in this regard, it becomes a concern as to the access to skills development opportunities.

The narrative above points to a perpetual challenge of lack of access to education and employment by people with disabilities. This in many ways renders them victims of inequality and poverty.

SECTION 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the challenges facing people with disabilities in accessing skills development interventions. The discussion underpins the HWSETA's reflection in terms of its extended contribution in ensuring equal access to its skills development initiatives for people with disabilities. Thus, a conclusion is drawn and recommendations offered for areas warranting improvement or redress, which could lead to transformation for people with disabilities.

5.2 SUMMARY

Amongst the key arguments of the study, is the realization and need for PWD to work and contribute in the economy, where they will earn a living, enjoy social well-being and realize their professional career ambitions. Regardless of the identified challenges affecting PWD, there are real opportunities to use skills development programmes to help them participate in economic activities. In instances bursaries are offered, they covered mainly tuition, books, and other study materials and accommodation. This is was not adequate for disabled students in that they need specialized support services, such as transport, as well as assistive devices.

Despite efforts to promote increased employment, people with disabilities are considerably underrepresented in the workplace. This points directly to the lack of skills as a result of challenges they faced in terms of access to skills development opportunities. SETAs are mandated to offer redress through a number of opportunities. However, many people with disabilities are still sidelined due to a number of factors discussed in this report. The research relied heavily on the experiences of learners with disabilities, to articulate how experiences are impacted by the model design as well as societal factors. What is revealed is a social and political context whereby the artifacts of the past amalgamate with present actions of redress, which impact strategies to better prepare learners with disabilities to integrate into the formal economy.

There is sufficient evidence that disability and poverty are closely linked. In the South African context, this has become more evident as unemployment remains high among people with physical disabilities. The lack of livelihoods in this can be viewed from the social model perspectives that unemployment of disabled people is associated with education, transport, environment, access, and culture. The livelihoods of disabled people seem to be seriously affected due to limited infrastructure and facilities, lack of access to resources and the negative attitudes of stakeholders and family members. However, disabled people argue that an increase in their income can change the attitude of family and community. They suggested that provisions for skills training and treatment, credit, raw materials and marketing of the product and availability of work can improve their livelihoods status. This should be supported through awareness generation and collaboration with stakeholders to recognize disability from a human rights perspective and include disabled people in the existing poverty alleviation and social security programmes.

People have different ways of looking at the world. We are each born into a specific set of social identities, and these social identities seem to predispose all of us to unequal roles in the dynamic social system. In terms of disability, referring to people with impairments as disabled in lay terms signals that they belong to a group of people who are defined by their 'abnormal' bodily or intellectual 'deficit' or 'incapacity' to engage in 'normal' activities. Therefore, they do not belong as others do in society. The study points to a number of factors causing this, but the question remains, what is belonging? Identities are the stories we tell ourselves and others about ourselves. It is our striving for authenticity – becoming who we “really” are. As a marginalized group, perhaps more than any other, people with physical disabilities have been categorized by medicine and a social system that perpetuates their separation from the rest of society.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The post-school system is understood as comprising all education and training provision for those who have completed school, those who did not complete their schooling, and those who never attended school. Amongst PWD, there are those who were unfortunate to have never been exposed to schooling or any form of training. It is a fair and just argument to make that for PWD skills development programmes to succeed, there is a need for a reactivation of

effective incentive systems, restructuring work relationships, improving recruitment approaches, upgrading physical resources and introducing better management practices (Grindle, 1997).

It may be unfair to arrive at a conclusion that people with disabilities, including to accessing skills development programmes, have not articulated the policy orientations to address the difficulties face. The legal and policy provisions have established adequate structures to address the total welfare and development of PWD. What maybe be a current deficiency in the governance system is sustained and effective policy communication and interpretation. It is upon themselves also as beneficiaries to reach out and fully utilize these opportunities.

Comparatively, it is important for the public sector to note the contribution of the private sector. “Disability awareness is important to Netcare, not only in terms of the patients we care for but also from a staff perspective. As an organization, we are moving towards a diverse and inclusive workforce that embraces and includes people with disabilities” (Sanjay Khoosal, Netcare, 2017, in the HWSETA Project Review, 2017).

Amongst the private sector stakeholders, some such as Netcare are making impressive progress. “Up until 2009, 111 people with disabilities were employed by the Netcare Group. Having identified this as an important area of inclusive growth for the organization, this prompted us to analyze the barriers to the employment for people with disabilities in South Africa. One of the outcomes of this process resulted in the launch of the Netcare Sinako Project in 2012 to assist unemployed young South Africans with disabilities to enter the mainstream economy. The project offers structured internships and learnerships in a number of fields to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to develop the technical skills to afford them real opportunities in the workplace” (HWSETA Project Review, 2017).

The success of the HWSETA is depended on progressive intentional collaboration with all its stakeholders, especially those in the public sector. As the DOH and DSD (national, provincial and district) are biggest employers; hence change must start with them. Through organizational profiling, they must demonstrate how they are mainstreaming PWD.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, what the study revealed is that there are adequate legal/policy tools and institutional mechanisms designed to positively affect the mainstreaming of programmes for PWD. However, very little has been achieved even by the governmental actors such as DSD and DOH, while they have a primary responsibility to address the welfare of all, especially people with disabilities.

5.4.1 Sustain effective Partnerships

It is even more important now for the HWSETA to embark on aggressive partnerships that are aimed at empowering PWD. Some private actors are already making a huge difference in empowering PWD. The Pathcare Group is amongst those that are achieving good results. “Over 96% of Pathcare’s candidates have been persons from previously disadvantaged backgrounds hailing from the six provinces where the organizations have operations” (HWSETA Project Review, 2017). These students are recruited largely in response to adverts and are integrated into various sectors within Pathcare such as Data Capturing, Desk Top Publishing, Systems and Suppliers, HR, Quality Assurance and IT. One of the 2016/17 applicants, Kylin Julies, expressed an interest in the Laboratory Assistant programme and has not only excelled in the classroom but has done exceptionally well in the workplace. She will be writing her HPCSA Board Exams in April 2018, and thereafter will be registered with the HPCSA as a qualified Laboratory Assistant (HWSETA Project Review, 2017).

5.4.2 Skills Audit of People with Disabilities

Various organizations, including provincial departments, have used the excuse that they are not finding qualified PWD to fill vacancies targeting them. One essential information about PWD is still missing. Understanding the availability, abundance, and shortage (lack) skills amongst PWD is essential to tailor effective programs. In such a competitive labour market, a skills audit will help both the government and PWD in understanding their realities especially in terms of opportunities to change their comparative advantages and taking informed decisions.

5.4.3 Strengthen NGOs for Skills Development

Civil society has for the longest time demonstrated their willingness to partner with government in creating awareness, security human rights for PWD, advocating for their

inclusion in the mainstream economic activities. With their understanding of the community social development issues and contexts, they are best placed to positively impact in the capacitation of PWD.

5.4.4 Reskilling for Integration and Inclusion

There is a need to engage all workplaces to help them embrace reskilling of PWD to ensure that they are well equipped to contribute to the economy. This will need very practical strategies and action towards ensuring sustainable means to accommodate PWD, including identification of appropriate occupations for people with disabilities.

5.4.5 Organizational Profiling for Performance Monitoring

The country has made progress in embracing international and continental principles regarding caring and empowering PWD. To help self-organizational reflection and reactivation of efforts, conducting a thorough organizational employment equity profiling, they must demonstrate how they are mainstreaming PWD.

Lastly, the study triggered a few questions, which need further investigation, for effective design and implementation of skills interventions.

- How best can civil society (NGO) be fully engaged and empowered to enhance skills development;
- How the WSP submission can be used to ensure that more and more PWD are benefiting from the PIVOTAL skills training within organizations; *what kind of incentive system can be designed to encourage employers to fully commit to recruiting more PWD,*
- How can the HWSETA intervene in the TVET space to fast-track mainstreaming of PWD,
- How poverty is affecting People with Disability: *what kind of income generating interventions can be implemented.*

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