



University of Cape Town

Faculty of Health Sciences

Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Division of Occupational Therapy

In fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MM005

MSc. Occupational Therapy by dissertation

***Employer's experiences of using the Supported Employment Model
when employing Persons with Disabilities in the Open Labour
Market in South Africa.***

Student Name: Reyna Makan
Student Number: MKNREY001

Research Supervisor: Mr Israfeel Abbas
Research Co-Supervisor: Dr Madri Engelbrecht

Date: 30 June 2023

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Plagiarism Declaration

“This thesis/dissertation has been submitted to the Turnitin module and I confirm that my supervisor has seen my report and any concerns revealed by such have been resolved with my supervisor.”

Name: Reyna Makan

Student number: MKNREY001

Signature:

Word count: 37244 (excluding reference list, table of contents, abstract, figures, tables, and appendices)

Date:30/06/2023

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
ABSTRACT :	7
DEFINITION OF TERMS :	9
ABBREVIATIONS :.....	11
CHAPTER ONE: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF STUDY	12
1.1 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION	12
1.2 RATIONALE:	14
1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM:	14
1.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE:.....	15
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION:	15
1.6 RESEARCH AIM:.....	15
1.7 OBJECTIVES:.....	16
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW :	17
2.1 INTRODUCTION:	17
2.2 SE AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS	17
2.3 CHALLENGES TO SE IMPLEMENTATION: A GLOBAL VS LOCAL PERSPECTIVE.....	19
2.4 DISABILITY LEGISLATION: GLOBAL VS LOCAL FOR SE IMPLEMENTATION	21
2.5 EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVE AND CONTRIBUTION TO SE	22
2.6 FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT	24
2.7 AN OCCUPATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF WORK	25
2.8 SE RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN SA.....	25
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY :	30
3. INTRODUCTION:	30
3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH:	30
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN:.....	30
3.3 RESEARCH METHOD:	31
3.3.2 Participant Selection Criteria.....	32
3.3.3 Recruitment of Research Participants	32
3.3.4 Description of Research Participants.....	33
3.3.5 Data Collection	35
3.3.6 Interview Preparation and Conducting	36
3.3.7 Data Management	37
3.3.8 Data Analysis	37

3.3.9	Trustworthiness	39
3.3.10	Ethical Considerations	40
<u>CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....</u>		<u>44</u>
4.	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	44
4.1	Theme one: Facilitators in using the SE Model:	46
4.2	Theme two: Challenges in using the SE Model:	63
4.3	Theme three: Disability attitudes shaped by SE implementation:	77
4.4	Theme four: Employer support for SE implementation.....	88
<u>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION.....</u>		<u>100</u>
5.	INTRODUCTION	100
5.1	Facilitators experienced by employers when using the SE model in the OLM	100
5.2	Challenges experienced by employers when using the SE Model in the OLM	108
5.3	Employers' attitudes around disability are shaped by SE implementation.	115
5.4	Identified support measures for SE implementation which informs best practice guidelines.....	120
5.5	Conclusion	125
<u>CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>		<u>127</u>
6.1	Conclusion	127
6.2	Recommendations	128
<u>REFERENCES:</u>		<u>130</u>
.....		<u>143</u>
<u>APPENDIX I:.....</u>		<u>143</u>
INFORMATION SHEET		143
.....		<u>147</u>
<u>APPENDIX II:</u>		<u>147</u>
INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....		147

APPENDIX III:148

INTERVIEW GUIDE148

LIST OF FOLLOW-UP GUIDING QUESTIONS.148

.....149

APPENDIX IV149

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER.....149

APPENDIX V151

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 1.....17

Figure 2.....41

LIST OF TABLES:

Table 1.....32

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Almighty for the strength and courage to complete this task.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisors for their invaluable patience, leadership and attention to detail that has been instrumental in achieving my goal. Your guidance during this research journey has supported my growth and development from inception to completion. I am sincerely grateful.

To my family and friends, thank you for all your love and support.

I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues at the OT division at UCT for their support and cheerleading.

To my additional funders, the UCT OT division for the divisional bursary in 2021 and the Ruth Watson OTASA Grant in 2022 thank you for the opportunity to supplement the completion of my degree.

Abstract:

Background: Persons with disabilities (PWD) face barriers to obtaining and maintaining sustainable employment in the open labour market (OLM) in South Africa (SA) and, therefore, are under-represented in the OLM. In SA currently, there are limited services available to assist PWD in acquiring or maintaining employment in the OLM. Supported employment (SE) is a model that aims to promote employment of PWD in the OLM. Research in SA found that employers directly influence the success of employment for PWD in the OLM. Employers are uniquely positioned to create either barriers or opportunities for PWD to become integrated into South African workplaces. Employers in the OLM contribute to this factor of not employing PWD into the OLM due to the feeling of being ill-equipped and lack knowledge about disability employment. The purpose of this research was to inform practice of SE partnerships with employers to increase their capacity to use the SE model in their businesses to contribute towards sustainable employment of PWD in SA. *Design:* A qualitative descriptive design of inquiry was selected to describe South African employers' experiences of using the SE Model when employing PWD in OLM. *Research methods:* six in-depth interviews were conducted. Audio recordings were used and data was transcribed verbatim. The data was analysed through thematic analysis and represented in a report format. *Findings:* Four themes emerged from this research study: Facilitators in using the SE model, Challenges in using SE model, Disability attitudes shaped by the SE implementation, Employer support for SE implementation. *Discussion:* Employers' experiences of using the SE model were discussed in regard to the facilitators and challenges of its implementation. Employers described how the partnerships formed by the stakeholders in the SE intervention, and the role of the job coach were essential in the implementation of SE. Challenges surrounding implementation of SE were the issues around the period of re-integration for employers as well as the lack of knowledge available and inclusion in policy and legislation in SA available to support employers in the OLM on SE implementation. Employers reported an increased awareness about disability and normalised the provision of support in the workplace for employees. Employers' attitudes and understanding of disability and inclusion in the workplace were increased using the SE model. Employers' suggestions regarding needs for future implementation were made to enhance the SE implementation for future employers, such as strengthening

SE partnerships with stakeholders and provision of more education and inclusion of SE in SA Legislation. This aims to inform best practice of SE in SA. The ethical considerations pertaining to this research study include following the guidelines of ethical considerations outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013). This research proposal was granted ethical approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Cape Town. The researcher was able to maintain confidentiality can be described within enhancing practice of SE within occupational therapy (OT), for employers in SA OLM, South African government legislation and policy makers and for future research in OT.

Word count: 503

Key words: Supported employment, open labour market, employment, employers, persons with disabilities qualitative research, South Africa.

Definition of terms:

“Employer” for the purpose of this study, refers to:

a person or organization who have used the Supported Employment Model in employing (provision of paid work to) persons with disabilities.

“Person with a disability” is defined as:

people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in employment (Section 1, Employment Equity Act, 1998).

Also referred to as the employee in this research study.

“Employee” for the purpose of this study, refers to:

any person, other than an independent contractor, who works for another person or for the State and receives, or is entitled to receive, any remuneration (Section 1, Employment Equity Act, 1998).

Also referred to as the persons with disabilities in this research study.

“Disability” refers to:

impairment of bodily function, activity limitations that result in an individual’s inability to do a task and participation restrictions which results in an individual not being able to engage in life situations (World Health Organization, 2001).

“Supported Employment” refers to:

providing integrated jobs in community settings, where persons with disabilities work alongside those without disabilities, and they are provided with individual support to facilitate long-term success (Jenaro et al., 2002) and which aims to integrate persons with disabilities into the open labour market by providing the correct type and intensity of support (Hoekstra et al., 2004).

“Job coach” refers to:

- a) a professional who provides on the job support and advocacy services to the employee and employer to help them achieve independence and ensure sustainable employment within the Supported Employment Model (Hoekstra et al., 2004).
- b) Qualified occupational therapist in the use of supported employment in the open labour market.
- c) “Employment specialist” is used interchangeably with the term job coach.

“Work” refers to:

paid employment at a job or a trade occupation or profession that requires physical or mental effort in terms of a duty, task or undertaking (Summers & Holmes, 2004).

“Reasonable accommodation” refers to:

any action, behaviour or modification to a job, tasks or a working environment that is made in order to eliminate a barrier to employment or increase access, participation or advancement of a person with a disability, or other categorically disadvantaged group (Employment Equity Act, 1998).

“Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment” refers to:

advance economic transformation and enhance the economic participation of black people in the South African economy.

The Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 intends to:

- establish a legislative framework for the promotion of black economic empowerment;
- empower the Minister to issue codes of good practice and to publish transformation charters;
- establish the Black Economic Empowerment Advisory Council; and
- provide for matters connected therewith.

“Stakeholders” for the purpose of this study, refers to:

partners in the Supported Employment intervention; that being the employer, persons/people with disabilities and the job coach.

Abbreviations:

- ADA: Americans with Disability Act
- BASE: British Association of Supported Employment
- BBBEE: Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
- COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease
- EEA: Employment Equity Act
- EUSE: European Union of Supported Employment
- HR: Human Resource
- IPS: Individual Placement and Support
- OLM: Open Labour Market
- OT: Occupational Therapy
- OTs: Occupational Therapists
- PWD: Persons/People with Disabilities (used in both singular and plural format)
- RA: Reasonable Accommodation
- SA: South Africa
- SE: Supported Employment
- UNCRPD: United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- WHO: World Health Organisation

Chapter One: Brief overview of study

1.1 Background and introduction

Persons with disabilities (PWD) are significantly under-represented in the South African open labour market (OLM). In South Africa, 7,5% of people have disabilities and the country's legislative framework highlights the employability of PWD and supports their employment in the OLM (Sing, 2012). There are over 2,8 million PWD in South Africa (SA) (Stats SA, 2014), of which only 1,1% of workers in the labour market are PWD (Stats SA, 2014). At present, the population of SA stands at 60,6 million (Stats SA, 2022). The current unemployment rate in SA is 32.9% (Stats SA, 2023) after the concerning loss of jobs since 2020 when the global Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic broke out. While PWD contend for employment opportunities in a highly competitive market, it was envisioned that by 2010, PWD should comprise 2% of workers in SA (Stats SA, 2014) to achieve greater parity between job seekers with and without disabilities. However, despite the implementation of supporting policy and legislation supporting the employment of PWD in SA, this was not achieved.

In SA, paid work¹ is the most recognised type of work as it aids social inclusion and enables disadvantaged individuals' movement out of poverty (Ross, 2007). PWD usually find themselves in lower paying, low status, and lower skilled jobs (Ross, 2007). This is partly due to the attitudes towards PWD and their capabilities despite SA policy directing employment practices to operate inclusively (Ross, 2007). Disability employment still remains a concept that is misunderstood and PWD are not being afforded sufficient opportunities which further perpetuates the disability-poverty cycle (Graham et al., 2013). PWD face barriers to obtaining and maintaining sustainable employment in the OLM (Sing, 2012). Some barriers include employers having difficulty proving the existence of a disability and PWD not applying for jobs as they are unable to meet the criteria stated in the job descriptions (Sing, 2012). In addition, the lack of disclosure by PWD results in discriminatory attitudes among

¹ **Paid work** may include some form of employment or job, but can extend to those who are self-employed. This type of work takes place under contractual agreement and in return given material reward which is usually financial.

employers (Ebuenyi et al., 2018). Poor accessibility is also a barrier for PWD to accessing employment (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013).

‘Occupation’ refers to the ordinary things that people do every day and the way they expend their time, energy, interests, and skills in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations (Christiansen & Baum, 1997). The relationship between occupation, health and well-being is a focal point in occupational therapy (OT) (Christiansen, 1996; Wilcock, 1998). In OT practice, work is regarded a key occupational performance area and is considered an essential activity performed by humans which provides meaning beyond the individual's life context (Ross, 2007). Work enhances self-esteem, fosters independence, and improves quality of life (Bond et al., 2001). Work engagement enhances PWD’s skills to adapt to a worker role and impacts individuals’ decisions to partake in various forms of work (Abbas & Soeker, 2020). OT’s in the context of SE, have a specific role in the workplace; to assist PWD in seeking employment and advocating for their inclusion in the OLM. They are also pivotal in addressing barriers to participation in work (Abbas & Soeker, 2020). In SA currently, there are limited services available to assist PWD in maintaining or acquiring employment in the OLM (Abbas & Soeker, 2020). There is lack of partnerships within multidisciplinary teams within the health sector, this being a key factor to retaining PWD in employment (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013).

Employers in SA are governed by legislation and policy when supporting PWD in the workplace. The Employment Equity Act (EEA) of 1998 prohibits unfair discrimination against PWD in the workplace on the basis of having a disability, and employers are required to implement affirmative action by removing of barriers and promoting reasonable accommodation (RA) for PWD. Employers are also guided by the Code of Good Practice on the Employment of People with Disabilities (2002) to afford equal opportunities to access work to PWDs, as well as fair treatment in the workplace. Furthermore, SA signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (2006), undertaking to protect the rights of PWD to work equally alongside others (Article 27). Employers are further governed by the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (BBBEE) (2003) to promote transformation and diversity in the workplace. SA employers are provided with incentives through tax benefits when they employ PWD in their companies.

Supported Employment (SE) as an employment strategy developed by Paul Wehman and colleagues at the University of Virginia, United States of America, is a model used to promote employment of PWD in the OLM (Van Niekerk et al., 2011), and is considered the most suitable employment strategy to address barriers faced by PWD in the OLM in Africa (Ebuenyi et al., 2018). The key stakeholders within SE practice are; the employer, the job coach and the employee with a disability (PWD). Currently, there is a lack of integration of SA legislation to include SE, despite international literature showing the effectiveness of SE as a strategy (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). In SA there is no principle of implementing SE as per a government legislation. Local research has found that employer perceptions directly affect the success of long-term employment for PWD (Wiggett-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). The number of employers in SA who utilise SE is not documented and therefore there are no records to refer to.

This study's research focus will be on the SA employer to identify experiences of the use of SE when employing PWD in OLM.

1.2 Rationale:

The practice of SE in SA remains limited despite robust evidence about the positive disability employment outcomes through SE globally (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). Insufficient context-specific research about what may be needed to promote SE as a strategy in disability employment leaves a gap in knowledge about the employer as a role player and partner in SE. This study explored employers' experiences of using SE when employing PWD in OLM to add to the body of knowledge of SE in SA.

1.3 Research Problem:

This research study emerged from the apparent increased unemployment rate in SA, especially pertaining to that of PWD in the OLM. This research is aiming to address the SA employer in order to provide opportunities for PWD to thrive economically. This research will aim to address employers to assist in overcoming the increased unemployment rate of PWD in SA.

Disproportionately high disability unemployment rates prevail in SA despite the existence of effective disability employment strategies such as SE. Perpetual and

long-term unemployment impacts negatively on a person's health and well-being and contributes to increased and persistent poverty of PWD. South African employers are not able to identify that PWD are faced with various challenges to maintain or enter into employment in the OLM in SA. This research will focus on how employers experience SE when employing PWD in the hope to enhance SE practice in SA to increase equitable employment opportunities for this designated group. There is limited research in SE focused on the employers' experiences of the use of the model to inform better practice in this context. There is a gap of knowledge and research available focused on the employers to utilise SE partnerships.

1.4 Research Purpose:

The purpose of this research is to better understand employers experiences and participation in SE in the SA OLM. This will inform OT's how to best support future employer participating in SE and improve work participation of PWDs in the OLM. This will also inform OT practice of SE partnerships with employers to increase their capacity to use the SE model in their businesses to contribute towards sustainable employment of PWD in SA. The researcher intends to use the findings of the data collected to widely promote knowledge of SE to other service providers.

1.5 Research Question:

What are employers' experiences of using the Supported Employment Model when employing Persons with Disabilities in the Open Labour Market in South Africa?

1.6 Research Aim:

To describe South African employers' experiences of using the Supported Employment Model when employing Persons with Disabilities in the Open Labour Market.

1.7 Objectives:

1. To explore and describe the challenges experienced by employers when using the SE model.
 2. To explore and describe what employers have experienced as facilitators in using the SE model.
 3. To explore and describe how the use of the SE model influences employers' understanding and attitude of disability in the workplace.
 4. To identify support measures that may be needed for employers when using the SE model.
-

Chapter Two: Literature Review:

2.1 Introduction:

In this chapter the existing literature about SE and the stakeholders involved in the implementation will be reported on. Furthermore, literature on SE in international and local contexts will be discussed. The review will assist to situate current scholarly discourse about occupation as a central concept in work. The current literature pertaining to research about SE in SA will be discussed to shed light on the need for this current research study.

2.2 SE and key stakeholders

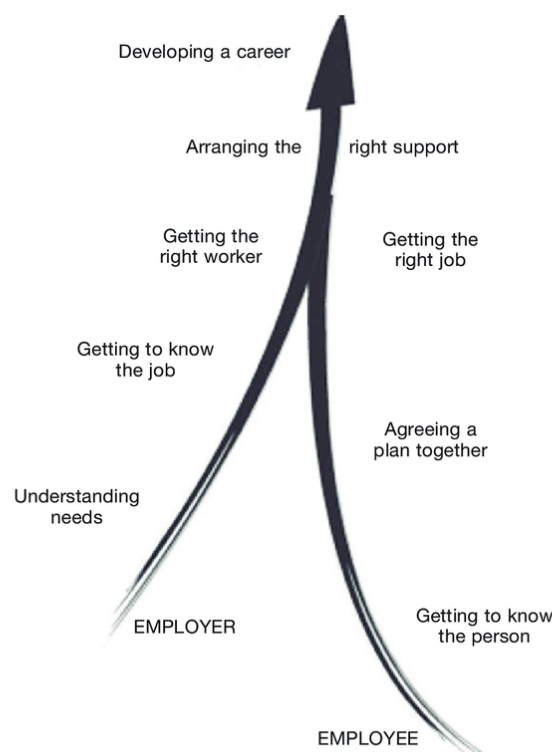
SE is a disability employment strategy used to promote employment and integration of PWD into competitive employment (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Within SE practice, it is proposed that with the correct amount of support, individuals with the most severe disabilities can be integrated into competitive employment (Van Niekerk et al., 2015). SE is founded on the relationship between three key stakeholders: the employer, the employee (PWD) and the job coach or OT (Hajwani, 2008). Research evidence suggests that SE has better employment outcomes for PWD compared to other traditional vocational rehabilitation approaches (Lecomte et al., 2020), such as sheltered workshops, transitional work and pre-vocational training. These traditional strategies place emphasis of the “train and place” method of situating PWD into forms of work (Fioritti et al., 2014). These strategies are implemented by training PWD through functional rehabilitation programs which are conducted outside of the OLM to improve skills (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). This approach did not have much success in aiding sustainable disability employment (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Traditional vocational rehabilitation strategies have a less than a 20% employment rate (Zhang et al., 2017), further highlighting how SE is more successful. These traditional methods are known to take a lot of time and training before one can seek an employment opportunity (Zhang et al., 2017). SE in comparison, is foregrounded on the “place-train-maintain” approach in place of a rehabilitation facility (EUSE, 2010) which means training is done in real life work settings. SE has been identified as a method which achieves a competitive employment rate according to the study conducted by Zhang et al. (2017). Part of the effectiveness of SE is due to the model’s

ability to support not only PWD, but also the employer (EUSE, 2010). Appropriate support assists in overcoming social, political, and economic barriers faced by PWD in obtaining and maintaining employment (Hajwani, 2008).

SE incorporates three basic elements (Jenaro et al., 2002), the first of which is to provide integrated jobs to PWD in community settings. This means that PWD work in workplaces in local communities alongside people without disabilities. Secondly, PWD enjoy equal employee status through acknowledgement of the benefits from working, reasonable wages, social inclusion and acceptance, and implementation of work legislation in formal and informal workplaces. Finally, job coaching support is offered to PWD and employers in recognition of special needs related to disability that can impact the process of obtaining and sustaining long term employment. SE thus recognises that employers require support in integrating PWD into a workplace and in supporting PWD's for sustainable employment in their company (Jenaro et al., 2002).

The British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) states that any person with a disability can be employed, if they want paid employment, provided that sufficient support is given to the person (BASE, 2006). The Association proposed a practice model for SE (Figure 1), depicting a flexible and continuous process.

Figure 1: The SE Model proposed by the BASE



The essential steps in SE intervention are assessment, job finding, job analysis, job matching, job (re)design, introduction into the workplace, training on the job/job coaching, support outside the workplace, job coaching in the workplace, and ongoing support (EUSE, 2010).

SE is founded upon values of advocacy for social inclusion in real workplaces, meaning in competitive employment (EUSE, 2010) and aims to offer support to PWD based on their needs in workplaces, following a client-centred approach to disability employment (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021).

2.3 Challenges to SE implementation: A global vs local perspective

The Individual Placement and Support Model (IPS²) is the preferred evidence-based form of SE internationally (Drake & Bond, 2023). The IPS model is foregrounded on eight principles; focus on the goal of competitive employment, zero exclusion, attention to client preferences, rapid job search, targeted job development, integration of employment services with mental health treatment, personalised benefits counselling and individualised long-term support (Drake & Bond, 2023).

Research conducted in England, focused on implementing SE and identifying methods of sustainability through the use of IPS. IPS is a person-centred approach which assists PWD, in particular people with severe mental illness, to find employment in OLM and provide on-going support. IPS is embedded in government policy to assist in increasing the number of PWD being employed (Hutchinson et al., 2018). In a quantitative study by Hutchinson et al. (2018), the objective was to assist National Health Services to implement IPS services in their local communities using a development project. It was found that an employment specialist assisted with the inclusion of PWD into the workplace and employers identified that support measures implemented in the workplace assisted with the outcomes of employment of PWD. The forming of relationships with the various stakeholders involved in the process (the employer, employment specialist, and PWD) assisted in the credibility of the

² **Individual placement and support (IPS)** is evidence-based supported employment practice, is a core service in community mental health in the United States (Drake & Bond, 2023)

intervention and output of the PWD when working. Employers were more likely to use IPS due to its positive outcomes through support and when there are clear roles for each partner in the process. However, the amount of time it took to implement IPS, funding, and negative attitudes and beliefs of service providers posed challenges to IPS implementation and sustainability (Hutchinson et al., 2018).

Barriers to implementation and continuation of IPS pertaining to funding became an issue for the stakeholders, despite the strategy being incorporated in government policy, funding was not included in this policy (Hutchinson et al., 2018). In England, SE is embedded in government legislation and there are consequences for not abiding by the legislation, which is different from other policy contexts around the world.

A study conducted in America compared the use of IPS and transitional work to get unemployed war veterans diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder back into competitive employment through the use of transitional work as part of a vocational intervention which follows various steps (Davis et al., 2018). IPS was found to be more effective compared to transitional work (ibid.). The study incorporated IPS specialists who had exposure to war veterans prior to implementation of the program and implemented the principles of IPS with the war veterans to assist with placement. The comparison made described IPS to be most effective due to the rapid searching for jobs and the person-centred approach. The transitional work method, in comparison is time-limited, controlled by external brokers and involves minimum wages (Davis et al., 2018). The environment is controlled, which meant not a competitive employment space; meaning the jobs were mostly laundry duties, housekeeping and maintenance work (Davis et al., 2018). When implementing IPS, the worker achieved a “steady worker status”, meaning they earned a higher wage and were in competitive full time jobs (p.138).

A randomised control study conducted in Germany researched the effectiveness of SE through IPS as a result of the high unemployment rates present due to mental illness (Kawohl et al., 2015). The study identified specifically how IPS was implemented to assist unemployed PWD back into work, however there was limited evidence to show whether the jobs were indeed maintained (Kawohl et al., 2015). It appears that IPS works well in assisting with successful reintegration of PWD into the

OLM, however, there is a limitation in terms of the sustainability of the intervention, and therefore maintaining employment.

Research in SA regarding SE has highlighted the importance of forming partnerships with employers in order to implement SE in OLM in SA (Hajwani, 2008). Including the focus on the type of intervention with a specific group of clients; mental health service users and their experiences in the use of the SE model when being employed in the OLM (Abbas & Soeker, 2020). Wiggett-Barnard and Swartz (2012), regard the importance of employer's perceptions of disability as it directly affects the success of long-term employment for PWD. The consideration for designated employers' perceptions which indicate they are unaware of disability within EEA, they could contribute to creating a barrier for PWD to become integrated into South African workplaces. Although the studies above support the need for research to further understand the employer's experiences of employing PWD in OLM with the use of SE, it has not shown how employers can assist in the advance of employment of PWD in SA.

2.4 Disability legislation: Global vs Local for SE implementation

In America employers are bound to employ PWD through the use of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) (1990) if they employ more than 15 employees into their company. The ADA (1990) is foregrounded on the premiss of prevention of discrimination of PWD in employment. This means PWD are protected against discrimination in the recruitment, hiring, promotions, training, pay, social activities and other privileges of employment (ADA,1990). The ADA (1990) is applied in their State and local Government and includes public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation and telecommunications. The ADA (1990) is effectively applied to those in the USA with a disability or those who are in relation to a PWD. The act describes PWD as an individual with either a mental health or physical health impairment which limits the individual to a substantial degree and impacts their daily functioning. The specifics of what kind of disability are not listed in the ADA (1990). The ADA (1990) assists PWD with employment at an equal level to employees without disabilities that including benefits. The ADA (1990) prevents an employer from casting a judgement on the PWD before being employed and there is a requirement for RA to assist the

PWD adjust in the workplace with the consideration of undue hardship. The ADA (1990) also assists in applying RA in structural measures as architectural standards to construction to accommodate for PWD in aiding access and accommodating for sensory impairment. IPS is implemented successfully through the ADA (1990) and is named the preferred method of disability employment in comparison to traditional methods of vocational rehabilitation (Ottomanelli et al., 2020), however, employment of PWD remains low in the USA.

In South Africa, the EEA (1998) was developed to redress employment disadvantages as a result of social inequalities arising from the legacies of Apartheid. This includes legislation that provides for affirmative action directed towards designated groups. EE legislation focuses mainly on the equalisation of opportunities in were that there are heavy costs for the private sector when adhering to EEA and thus ultimately affects compliance by those companies that operate in the private sector. The Department of Labour issued two further documents related to the employment of PWD. The Code of Good Practice (2001) which aims to promote equal opportunities in the workplace through guidelines to ensure that both the employer and employees understand their rights and responsibilities. These legislative frameworks are highlighted to support the implementation of SE in employing PWD into the OLM. These frameworks aim to inform employers and employees about fair opportunities and treatment of PWD in the OLM and to provide a foundation for the development of affirmative action initiatives and for the implementation of reasonable accommodation (Van Niekerk et al., 2011).

2.5 Employers' perspective and contribution to SE

Employers' perspectives are relevant in disability employment as they have the potential to make accommodations and adaptations in order to identify, recruit and retain PWD in workplaces (Chan et al., 2010). A quantitative study conducted in the United States of America investigated perspectives of 138 Human Resource (HR) managers and line managers focusing on PWD as productive and reliable workers; and reported a combination of positive and negative perspectives (ibid.). The managers identified that PWD contribute to their company's diversity plans and that PWD can be productive in the workplace, however disability inclusion was not a priority in the company's diversity agenda. Attitudes of managers were moderately positive

when PWD were viewed as productive workers. This finding was due to the lack of knowledge of disability inclusion, recruiting and accommodation for PWD (Chan et al., 2010). Managers acknowledged that when skilled employment specialists were involved in the hiring and integration of PWD into companies, the outcomes were more successful (Chan et al., 2010).

A study investigating the competencies of SE programs in Canada described the relationships built with the employer and supervisors in the workplace to be the most integral part of implementing SE for PWD (Corbière et al., 2014). The competency of the employment specialist is important to ensure PWD are able to obtain and maintain jobs in the OLM. The role of the employment specialist is diverse and includes working with job seekers to plan the work integration program in keeping with the individual's work interests and preferences and making recommendations to employers and supervisors on economically viable accommodations for PWD's work integration (Corbière et al., 2014).

Recruiting PWD into the OLM is part of diversity plans in Vienna, Austria although, disability fell within the minority of diversity aspects; such as age, gender, sexual orientation and religion (Kocman et al., 2018). Employers stated that there were few PWD applicants, and when PWD were employed, various legal barriers came to light, for example, PWD are protected from being dismissed. This factor further disadvantaged PWD's to be seen as equal employees, as it did not allow the employer to dismiss the employee if they did not meet the demands of the job. Employer's attitudes around the inclusion of PWD in the workplace created barriers when PWD's were segregated in the workplace from others, compared to when PWD's were regarded as equal to others in the workplace (Kocman et al., 2018). The possibilities of hiring PWD's improved when senior management and executives' attitudes are changed with education. Employers were also incentivised by financial benefit in the form of tax relief and wage subsidies when employing persons with disabilities (Kocman et al., 2018).

2.6 Factors affecting employment in the South African context

Ross (2007) defines work as “paid employment at a job or trade, occupation or profession” (Ross, 2007). In SA, the Apartheid regime limited access to work for designated groups of people; black people, PWD and woman (Department of Labour, 1998). It has also affected access to education, healthcare and social services and restricted the rights and opportunities of these groups to be business owners or be promoted in established companies (Bisschoff et al., 2019). Apartheid resulted in inequality and socio-economic injustice and increased the unemployment rate and poverty within these designated groups which make up the majority of the population in SA. Despite two decades of change in policy and government rule, the inequalities in SA have increased (Bisschoff et al., 2019). The recent global pandemic of COVID-19 has placed further strain on the struggling SA economy, which increased the unemployment rate significantly. In June 2021, SA reached its highest unemployment rate since 2008, at 32,2%. The current unemployment rate in 2023 is recorded at 32,9% (Stats Sa, 2023).

This study refers to “work” as paid work. Paid work is defined by the engagement in a job based on a contractual agreement for financial remuneration (Ross, 2007). In SA, paid work is the most recognised type of work as it aids social inclusion and assists disadvantaged individuals out of poverty (Ross, 2007). PWD are members of a designated, previously disadvantaged group, as defined in the EEA of 1998. PWD are usually found in lower paying, low status, and low skilled jobs (Ross, 2007). This is partly due to the attitudes towards PWD and perceived capabilities despite changes in policy in SA, resulting in PWD being excluded from the workforce (Ross, 2007). Other influences such as lack of tolerance and misunderstanding on disability sensitisation results in poor communication and interactions with PWD’s in the workplace (Sing, 2012). This impacts PWD’s negatively and results in a lower socio-economic status (Ross, 2007). Due to the exclusion from society and limited opportunities afforded to PWD in SA, the disability-poverty cycle occurs and continues to affect communities (Graham et al., 2013). In order for SE to be implemented successfully there is a need for skilled job coaches to implement programs with South African employers which can notably take time and high costs to implement, unlike internationally where there is provision of funds to implement SE through legislation.

This is perhaps the reason SE is not commonly implemented and a known form of disability employment in SA.

2.7 An occupational perspective of work

The field of occupational science recognises that humans have the ability to control their individual lives through making occupational choices (Christiansen & Baum, 1997). It is highlighted through an occupational perspective that humans are inherently productive. In OT, work is described as a key occupational performance area and considered an essential activity performed by humans which provides meaning beyond the individual's life context (Ross, 2007). The ability and opportunity to work is important for the health and well-being of individuals (ibid.). Work enhances self-esteem, fosters independence and improves quality of life (Bond et al., 2001). Individuals engage in different forms of work, such as; paid work, unpaid work, hidden work and substitute work. Lack of access, skills and opportunities in various contexts impact individuals' decisions to partake in various forms of work (Bond et al., 2001). Work practice services are termed for the provision of services for occupational health and safety or injury prevention and work rehabilitation services (Deen et al., 2002). It may also include placement and support at work. OT's match job placement demands to workers who has had injuries by being able to recognise the inherent characteristics required to complete the job (Deen et al., 2002). In work practice, a person's right to employment is equally important and demands OTs to consider marginalised or vulnerable groups and communities, including PWD (Bill of Rights, 1996). OT's assist individuals in transitioning to establish a worker role (Ross, 2007).

2.8 SE research conducted in SA

SE research in SA is mostly reported on within the context of mental health. Hajwani (2008) conducted a qualitative study analysing three employers' perspectives of working with PWD when implementing SE. It was described how partnerships between the job coach and employer assisted the employer to understand SE implementation and the effectiveness when the right amount of support is provided to both the employer and PWD employee. This study highlighted how an employer can

impart knowledge to other employers for future implementation of SE in workplaces. Hajwani (2008) also identified the limitation of how the impact of the commitment of employers to the SE implementation in their workplaces and recommended that the OT or Job Coach persevere in the forming of these relationships (Hajwani, 2008).

Abbas and Soeker (2020) investigated how the Model of Occupational Self-Efficacy was used to implement SE with nine clients with schizophrenia to return to work in the OLM. Two key informants, OT's who had experience in the implementation of SE, were used to manage the program. Experiences of the clients' employers from this study showed that when support was not available to the PWD, the success of the SE implementation was reduced. Success of the return-to-work program using SE was higher when employers and co-workers of the employee with a disability were involved and supported the client and the return-to-work process. Employers were also responsible for making RA in the workplace for PWD to aid the success of their work integration, supporting their integral role in the successful implementation of SE. Challenges that were mentioned in this study, were the lack of support from family, friends, employers, and colleagues of PWD during return to work. The researchers recommended that for future practice relationships with employers and support structure are prioritised for PWD and a collaborative approach is taken with various stakeholders to provide a holistic SE service (Abbas & Soeker, 2020).

Van Niekerk et al. (2011) looked recommendations for successful SE implementation in SA. The researchers in this study conducted a focus group interview with eight service providers of SE within the Cape Metropole, to identify barriers and modification for successful SE implementation. The service providers were part of government organisations, non-profit organisations and universities in the Western Cape. The findings of this study foregrounded the core values of SE implementation to be; "competitive employment should always be the ultimate outcomes, client-centred approach should be used and support should be provided to ensure long-term sustainable employment" (Van Niekerk et al., (2011) p. 3). This study further highlighted the fact pertaining to how SA legislation is supporting of disability employment, despite SE not being mentioned explicitly in these. A further suggestion was made for policy development and change to assist in incorporating SE into these government legislated documents for future practice. This study also brought to light

the role of the job coach in the SA context to be situated within the marketing and promotion of SE implementation to employers; this takes place in the form of job searching, assisting with disclosure decisions in the workplace, education of employers and employees in the workplace and assistance in a practical manner with the consideration of financial support. This study also refers to the lack of funding available to support employers in SA OLM to implement SE and suggested partnerships be made with Government and Non-Government originations to secure these funding opportunities (Van Niekerk et al., 2011).

In 2015, Van Niekerk et al. reported on the time utilisation trends of SE for mental health service users in SA. This was the second phase completed from the study reported on in 2011. This study further explored the feasibility of SE as a disability employment strategy in SA. It was found that over a 12-month period, majority of the mental health service users had utilised approximately half of the service offering within the first month of the SE implementation and thereafter tapered off substantially. This finding suggested that SE is feasible when there are sufficient resources been made available to cover the cost of services of SE implementation in consideration of the context in which the SE is implemented in (Van Niekerk et al., 2015).

A cost calculation study conducted by Engelbrecht et al. (2017) reported on a pilot of cost calculation of SE implementation in SA due to SE being acknowledged to be cost effective internationally, with no evidence on a local level. The researchers were able to report on the use of SE services with services users with mental health conditions. The findings were reported after a 12-month period and the cost calculation was based on the government sessional salary rate of employment and medical aid reimbursement rate. The study revealed that the cost to implement SE was less than the provision of funds to PWD through the disability grant and protected workshop subsidies by SA Government (Engelbrecht et al., 2017).

Engelbrecht (2020) conducted research on the inclusion of youth with disabilities into employment in Cape Town, SA through SE implementation programs. This study foregrounded the relationship between work and well-being of PWD and highlighted the need to close the gap in access to opportunities for youth with disabilities who are seeking employment. This was done by discussion on how occupational justice can

be achieved through engaging in work. This study found that when the employed disabled youth as the research participants were afforded the opportunity to work through SE in the OLM, issues around injustices experienced by disabled youth in SA were addressed. This was found as the support offered through the provision of SE was utilised by all stakeholders involved in the implementation effectively. It can be noted that SE assisted this cohort to achieve occupational justice through the engagement of work.

A recent study conducted by Otty (2021), looked at SE implemented within two contexts in SA; in Cape Town and Gauteng. The study aimed to describe PWD's perspectives of SE participation and how it affects their access to work. The findings of this study highlighted the need for internal motivation of PWD prior to accessing employment in order to be successful in employment outcomes. Some barriers identified were related to the workplaces lack of disability awareness and support presence available. The study further highlighted the need for funded SE services within workplaces to assist with effective disability employment in SA, despite barriers still present in the SA OLM. This study was inclusive of all PWD in the first site in Cape Town and the Gauteng site focused on mental health service users.

The above reviewed studies reported limited evidence about the experiences of employers involved with implementing SE during disability employment. Local literature also highlights the limitation to the types of classified disabilities researched. There is limited inclusion of disability through physical impairment, diseases of lifestyle, unemployment or poverty and social circumstance which also result in unemployment of SA citizens. The research recorded focuses on the perspectives of the employee and highlights the need for employer experience in order to enhance the SE service and approach to other employers within SA (Abbas & Soeker, 2020). The research recorded focuses on the perspectives of PWD as the employee and brings to light the gap in research on the employer's experience. The need to conduct this research on the employers experiences will assist in enhancing SE practice in SA and assist in approaching other employers to use SE within SA (Abbas & Soeker, 2020).

Although the studies above support the need for research to further understand the employer's experiences of employing PWD in OLM with the use of SE it has not shown how employers can assist in the advance of employment of PWD in SA. Given the above review, a paucity in research remains about the employer as a stakeholder in the implementation of SE in SA. This results in the lack of understanding of how the employers' role in and contribution to SE in the OLM can be supported, and their experiences thereof can be translated into future practice of SE and promote disability employment in SA.

Chapter Three: Methodology:

3. Introduction:

The methodology used to conduct this study is described in this chapter. First, the research approach and design are described, and then the research method. The sections 3.1 and 3.2 will describe the research approach and design. In 3.3 the research method is discussed including participant selection, recruitment of research participants, data collection, data management, data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and dissemination.

3.1 Research Approach:

The research was conducted using a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research was chosen as it is open-ended, so that participants are able to respond freely, based on personal opinions and experiences (Mazzola et al., 2011). Qualitative research focuses on in-depth understandings of the topic explored and the individuals rich accounts of their experiences (Press, 2015). A qualitative approach was used to explore employers' opinions and personal experiences of the use of the SE model, to generate qualitative data which will contribute to the limited body of knowledge on SE in SA.

3.2 Research Design:

A qualitative descriptive design (Creswell, 2014) was used to structure the methods of investigation in this research. This design allows for the description of experiences and perceptions of participants in an uncomplicated and direct manner, especially in areas where limited research has been conducted on the topic under investigation (Doyle, 2020). Qualitative design assists in recognising the subjective nature of a research problem as well as taking into consideration the research participants' experiences in relation to the research question (Doyle, 2020). The descriptive design provided the means to produce a comprehensive summary of specific events experienced by employers, and relayed by them in layman's terms (Sandelowski, 2000). Knowledge based on a constructivist perspective was developed, where the data collected were used to construct new knowledge to add to the field of SE in

relation to employing PWD into the open labour market in SA. At present in SA, there are not many employers who implement SE, as evidenced by the lack of research in this field of SE focusing on the employers' experiences.

3.3 Research Method:

3.3.1 Participant Selection

3.3.1.1 Purposive Sampling

Convenience sampling as a form of purposive sampling (Press, 2015) was used in the selection of participants for this study. This method of sampling does not include the use of theoretical frameworks, but rather aims to create an emphasis on the generation of specialised knowledge gained from research participants who are available to answer the research question (Press, 2015). The researcher had access to employers who used SE in their companies with the assistance of a job coach to participate in this research study. Open-ended questions were formulated, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the research participants. This method was used to gather data about employers' experiences and opinions to build a logical argument to explain and describe the phenomenon of employing PWD through SE in SA (Todd, Jones, & Lobban, 2012).

Eight employers were approached who had utilised SE through a private SE service provider, however, only six employers showed interest and participated in the study. Participation in the study was voluntary. All participants were members of staff in a management capacity and were directly involved with the implementation of SE at their employing company. The participating employers were all from SA.

There is a limited pool of employers in SA implementing SE in the OLM. This factor was supported by the choice of using qualitative research, as it is conducted to extract meaning rather than to focus on frequency (Press, 2015). As such, the emphasis is not on how many, but rather the meaning being examined. The deliberate choice of participants was done for their specific knowledge and experience in the topic being researched (Press, 2015). The limited choices of employers was directly linked to the

choice of sampling method chosen, being convenience sampling due the fact that the researcher has direct access to participants easily and can be conducted within a small sample size effectively (Richie & Lewis, 2003). It was therefore important to consider diversity in choice of the employer in relation to the type of business and the demographics related to operation as well as having the relevant experience in the field of SE.

3.3.2 Participant Selection Criteria

3.3.2.1 Inclusion Criteria:

Due to the local focus of the research, participants needed to have been employers who were operating their companies in SA. They also needed to have implemented SE as a disability employment strategy in their employing companies with facilitation or involvement of an SE service provider. At least one employer needed to have been a designated employer as defined in the EEA (1998), i.e., employ more than fifty employees. Employers were required to be able to converse in either English or Afrikaans.

3.3.2.2 Exclusion Criteria:

Employers from countries other than SA were excluded from selection to participate in the study, as well as those who utilised strategies other than SE for disability employment. Employers who did not implement SE with the assistance of an SE service provider were also excluded.

3.3.3 Recruitment of Research Participants

Participants were recruited through an SE service provider company where the researcher works on a part-time basis. The service provider is based in Cape Town, SA, and assists employers with employment, development and retention of PWD. The researcher is a consultant OT at the company and has direct access to employers who have implemented the SE model. The SE service provider employs three OT's including the researcher, therefore, the researcher had access to employers who had also worked with the other OTs.

The researcher had an initial meeting with the OTs at the SE service provider to discuss inviting clients for this research study. Clients, in the context of this study, refer to either employees with a disability or companies who are referred to the SE service provider company for SE intervention. The OTs agreed for the use of clients and alerted the researcher that there required to be consent gained from the third-party funder for some SE cases.

The researcher used the SE service provider's database (undisclosed) of employers who had participated in SE programs. The database of employers is kept confidential due to the nature of referral of clients, as external referrers and funders do business with the service providers. Employers who have participated in SE offered by the OTs do not always pay directly for the SE services. Therefore, external funders were also contacted for the release of employer's details to be a part of this research study.

Employers were made aware that their participation in this research study was separate to the SE services rendered and separate to the job coaching role fulfilled by the OTs. Contact was made with employers via telephone call and email correspondence. Employers were given a time frame of two weeks to confirm their consent to participate in the study. Once an employer agreed to participate, all the relevant study information (Appendix I) and consent forms (Appendix II) were sent to them and were either signed in person or electronically.

3.3.4 Description of Research Participants

Six employers participated in this research study. All the employers were of a management level of employment and had either participated in an SE implementation process or were involved in an SE process at the time of the study. A combination of half male and half female employers participated in this study. Table 1 provides a summary of the research participants demographics.

Participant 1 (P1): P1 is a HR manager for a non-profit, independent medical service unit in the Western Cape, SA. The organisation operates in accordance with strict standards as directed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and comply with the

government's National Health Act and is accredited by the South African National Accreditation System. The organisation employs more than 50 employees; however, the organisation was not subject to BBBEE or EEA legislation due to the nature of their work and their non-profit status. P1 was directly involved in reintegrating an employee after the employee acquired a disability. Intervention with the employee involved upskilling and SE. P1 was the direct liaison during the process of SE implementation. An external funder paid for the implementation of SE services.

Participant 2 (P2): P2 is a building manager for a body corporate at an apartment block in Cape Town, Western Cape, SA. P2 reports to higher management regarding his portfolio. The employer does not employ more than 50 employees and is operated like a small business. P2 was directly involved with supervision and support of the SE process with a staff member who had an existing disability. P2 has a disability. The employer funded the implementation of SE services directly.

Participant 3 (P3): P3 is a small business owner from Stellenbosch, Cape Town, with less than 50 employees. P3 is a business consultant who focuses on organisational development and ensuring health for employees. P3 was involved with the employment of a PWD into their small business under the direct supervision of P3. The employer funded the implementation of SE services directly.

Participant 4 (P4): P4 is a Team Leader within a client relations division at a large medical scheme within South Africa. P4 is part of a company which employs more than 50 employees and is a BBBEE Level 1 accredited employer. P4 was directly involved with the reintegration of an existing employee of the company with an acquired disability. An external funder was used for P4 for the implementation of SE services.

Participant 5 (P5): P5 is the General Manager of a company with a focus on employing PWD in the OLM in SA. The company is operational in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. The company is BBBEE accredited with a Level 2 compliance. P5 is directly involved with overseeing employment of PWD and implementation of SE services within their company. He has had many years of using SE in the company. P5 is a direct funder to the job coach for implementation of SE services.

Participant 6 (P6): P6 is a Functional Area Manager for a large power, mining and oil service provider company in Cape Town, SA. The company is BBBEE Level 3 accredited. P6 engaged in an integration program of an employee with a disability who was new to the job market and working environment. This employer had no prior experience of working with PWD, the employer was directly involved with the employee and was responsible to ensure support and RA was adhered to. P6 was directly funded for the implementation of SE services.

Table 1: Summary of research participants				
Employer participant	Job Title	Type of company	Area	Funder
P1	HR Manager	Non-Profit Organisation	Cape Town	Indirect
P2	Building Manager	Body Corporate (<50 EE's)	Cape Town	Direct
P3	Business Consultant	Small Business owner (<50 EE's)	Stellenbosch	Direct
P4	Team Leader	Medical Scheme Level 1 BBBEE	Cape Town	Indirect
P5	General Manager	Large employment solutions company for PWD. Level 2 BBBEE	Cape Town and Johannesburg	Direct
P6	Functional Area Manager	Power, Mining and Oil Company Level 3 BBBEE	Cape Town	Direct

3.3.5 Data Collection

Data was collected through six in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Morris, 2015). Interviews were set up once informed consent was acquired. Two interviews were conducted in person and four were conducted on virtual meeting platforms (MS Teams Version 1.6.00.12966 and Zoom.us Version 5.13.11 (16405)) between December 2022 to March 2023. A total of six interviews were conducted, with saturation of data occurring after the sixth interview. All in-person interviews were conducted in a private office to ensure confidentiality and all online interviews were conducted in a private venue with end-to-end encryption on computers. The researcher took field notes

during the interviews on poignant aspects mentioned during the interview as well as on observations of non-verbal cues. Field notes were a part of the data collection process and all the data being collected via the recordings, in line with UCT's data management policy (University of Cape Town Research Office, 2018).

3.3.6 Interview Preparation and Conducting

Interviewing is done when exploring multiple perspectives to gain detailed information on one particular topic, therefore providing context to data gathered (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Interviews were planned with consideration of ethical principles and interview protocols. The researcher prepared a list of terms related to SE, the research aim and question, and research objectives to prompt employers' thinking. A list of questions was generated and used in the semi-structured interviews (Appendix III) (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Initial questions were asked to introduce the employer to the topic being discussed and further questions were used to elicit information to answer the research question, aims and objectives. Audio recordings were made using multiple devices to ensure the data was accurately captured during interviews and to avoid any errors with technology jeopardising data collection.

Open-ended questions were used to allow for employers to use their own words when answering the questions. The researcher adopted a conversational approach to enable discussion (Creswell, 2003) and exploration of the topic. Follow-up and probing questions were used to explore constructs being discussed by the participants. The researcher ensured that they were being non-directive and remained neutral throughout the interview process. Each interview took 45-60 minutes to complete.

The researcher was able to be neutral by not necessarily responding to the answers given by the employer, but rather used active listening and rephrasing to elicit more about the topic. This was done in order not to pass on an opinion which would alter the employer's responses. Neutrality ensures the researcher is free of bias and is practicing separate from their own perspectives, background, position or conditioning circumstances (Given, 2012). By the researcher being neutral, the data collected is also known to be trustworthy and legitimate.

3.3.7 Data Management

In-person interviews were recorded via audio recording on multiple devices and online interviews were voice and screen recorded on MS Teams or Zoom.us. The recordings were transcribed with the online system of Otter.ai (2016) by the researcher with permission from the participants. Recordings and field notes on interviews were kept secure on an external hard drive to which only the researcher has access. The transcribed data is kept on the researcher's computer which is password protected. The data will be kept for five years after completion of the research and then wiped from devices.

3.3.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was used to capture the unique and individual experiences of the employers who agreed to be interviewed (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This type of analysis involves preparing and organising the data in a meaningful way, carrying out a preliminary read-through of the data and then arranging the data into codes, categories and themes (Creswell, 2007).

Inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to identify themes. Inductive analysis was chosen as it assisted the researcher to identify themes closely related to the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The purpose of thematic analysis is to identify patterns in the data, which assist the researcher to make sense of the data for interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) describe two types of themes, namely semantic and latent. Semantic themes describe what the research participant said, whereas latent themes can be described as delving deeper into the experiences presented and uncovering assumptions and underlying issues which inform the semantic themes. Semantic themes were discovered manually by the researcher as the researcher wanted to bring to light the descriptions of the employers' experiences.

The researcher followed six steps to conclude thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

- *Step 1: become familiar with the data*

The researcher completed step 1 by immersing herself into the transcripts through listening to the audio recording and cross checking the transcriptions of each interview.

- *Step 2: generate initial codes*

The researcher assigned initial codes to words, phrases, sentences, or sections of information from the data that were linked to the research question and the objectives of the research aim. She gained feedback from the research supervisors about the initial codes and the process of step 2, to inform her process of coding and to enable her condensing the codes identified and categorising them.

- *Step 3: search for themes*

The identified codes were grouped into categories. These categories were used to identify similarities amongst the data collected and direct quotations were selected. These categories were grouped to form themes. This process was completed for all six transcripts of raw data.

- *Step 4: review themes*

The researcher then reviewed the initial themes and categories and collapsed some of them and created sub-categories. The researcher collated themes together in separate word documents and used colours to code similarities for ease of reference. Themes, categories and sub-categories were classed and collapsed in accordance to answer the set-out research question and objectives.

- *Step 5: define themes*

The researcher reviewed the selected themes and categories and made references to literature to consider and reference the findings being developed. Flow diagrams were developed to visually represent each theme and their respective categories and sub-categories.

- *Step 6: write up*

The researcher completed step 6 by writing up the findings theme by theme. The researcher took direct quotes from the interviews to represent the findings per categories. One flow diagram was inserted on the collated themes to show the relationship between the themes and categories presented.

3.3.9 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to ensuring authenticity of data found (Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Trustworthiness ensures there is enhanced confidence in the findings being discussed (ibid.). Trustworthiness was ensured by implementing the following strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity.

3.3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to placing confidence in the research findings as well as establishing if the findings from the research are plausible and correctly interpreted (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Credibility of data and its presentation were ensured by incorporating direct quotes from the participants in the research report (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Research participants were sent the transcriptions via email due to busy work schedules and limited time available to meet with the researcher again. The participants had the opportunity to go over the transcripts and add additional comments where they felt necessary. This was done to create an opportunity for member-checking and enhancement of the credibility of data. Member checking was conducted to ensure bias was reduced by including the research participant in the checking and confirming of results (Brit, 2016). Peer debriefs were conducted with the supervisors to ensure the researcher was remaining impartial to the findings.

3.3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the thick level of description used to describe data ensuring it takes into consideration the context and research setting of participants so that it can be transferred appropriately (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Transferability of findings were ensured by collecting in-depth, contextual descriptions of data, as well as keeping an audit trail. Findings from this research were not generalizable. The in-depth descriptions of context promoted the transferability of findings to similar contexts. To ensure richness of data, the contexts of each employer were described in sufficient detail. Transferability was also expressed in the rich descriptions of the quotations used in the findings of this study.

3.3.9.3 *Dependability*

Dependability refers to the how stable the findings are over time as well as ensuring the data that is being presented encompasses the research participants evaluation, interpretation and recommendations of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Dependability of the research was promoted through debriefing with the research supervisors about the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and consistency was promoted in this way. Dependability was also achieved through the description of research design and approach. The findings were enhanced by review of the research supervisors who are considered experts in the field. An audit trail was also used.

3.3.9.4 *Confirmability*

Confirmability refers to ensuring the findings of the research can be confirmed by other researchers as well as making sure the interpretation of the findings presented are indeed facts derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Confirmability was ensured through the researcher recording and making notes during all interviews and by creating an audit trail. This allowed for the researcher to refer to the data collected at any point in time to allow for confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Other strategies to ensure confirmability were used via debriefing. Member checking was conducted too, the research participants were sent their transcriptions to verify information and add additional comments to their initial interview. This was done in order to validate the findings.

3.3.10 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the guidelines of ethical considerations outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013). This research study was granted ethical approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Cape Town (308/2022) (Appendix IV). The researcher remained cognisant of her position in this research, and, due to the pool of participants being limited for this research study, the researcher did not encounter any ethical dilemmas or conflicts of interest with regard to the consideration of familiarity to the research participants.

Principles of ethical research were implemented as follows:

3.3.10.1 *Full Disclosure*

The participants were informed that the research will form part of fulfilling a thesis in completion of a master's degree in occupational therapy at the University of Cape Town.

3.3.10.2 *Autonomy*

Free speech during the interviews and freedom of expression were encouraged during the data collection and participants' autonomy was upheld by informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any point in time without any negative consequence to them.

3.3.10.3 *Informed Consent*

Participants were presented with informed consent forms (Appendix II) to sign before participation in the study. Informed consent forms included all relevant information about the study. The researcher ensured that participants comprehended the information provided and that they signed the consent form before participation. All consent forms were signed prior to conducting the interview with the participant.

3.3.10.4 *Beneficence*

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (2008) states that beneficence is concept whereby the researchers act to benefit or promote the good of the participants. This was upheld throughout the duration of the study. The principle of beneficence was upheld by ensuring participants were protected and that no harm came to them during participation in this study. The researcher is a qualified OT and was able to address questions that the participants may have around the research topic. The participants did not benefit directly from participating in the study, but their contribution has assisted in building knowledge related to the research question. This factor of no direct benefit to the employer was discussed prior to consenting to participate in this research study (Appendix II).

3.3.10.5 *Non-Maleficence*

Non-maleficence means to “do no harm” (Health Professions Council of South Africa, 2008). This principle means that the welfare of the research participant is not threatened. This study involved no risk to participants. The researcher’s intention was not to create undue burden for the research participants by choosing to conduct research activities at the most convenient times for each participant and least intrusive, to ensure that their workload and productivity were not affected. Psychosocial support would be provided if necessary as an additional level of support.

3.3.10.6 *Privacy and Confidentiality*

Participants' identities and all personal information were kept confidential. Identifying information such as names of workplaces and contact details were omitted from the research report and non-descript identifiers to participants were used. The researcher described the type of workplace instead of using the name of the workplace. All information related to the study is kept under password protection and all data was backed up on an external hard drive which only the researcher has access to. Adherence to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) (2021) was considered to ensure all personal information pertaining to research participants were omitted.

3.3.10.7 *Justice*

Justice in research ethics pertains to fairness in both receiving the benefits and burdens of participating in research (Cozby, 2012). In this study, the researcher selected appropriate participants based on the inclusion criteria mentioned and ensured that there was no unfair exclusion.

3.3.10.8 *Dissemination*

The information generated will be shared with the University of Cape Town, the research participants and research sites of participants in the OLM. Fellow job coaches can request access to this data for their own practice enhancement.

3.3.10.9 *Limitations to the study*

The researcher had difficulty acquiring employers to participate in this research study due to the limited amount of employers implementing SE in SA OLM. Therefore the sample size of participants was small for this reason.

There were also difficulties in setting up appointments with employers due to their existing commitments. There was a need to adapt to online interviews with the use of video calls to account for not being able to do in person interviews with the employers.

Chapter 4: Findings

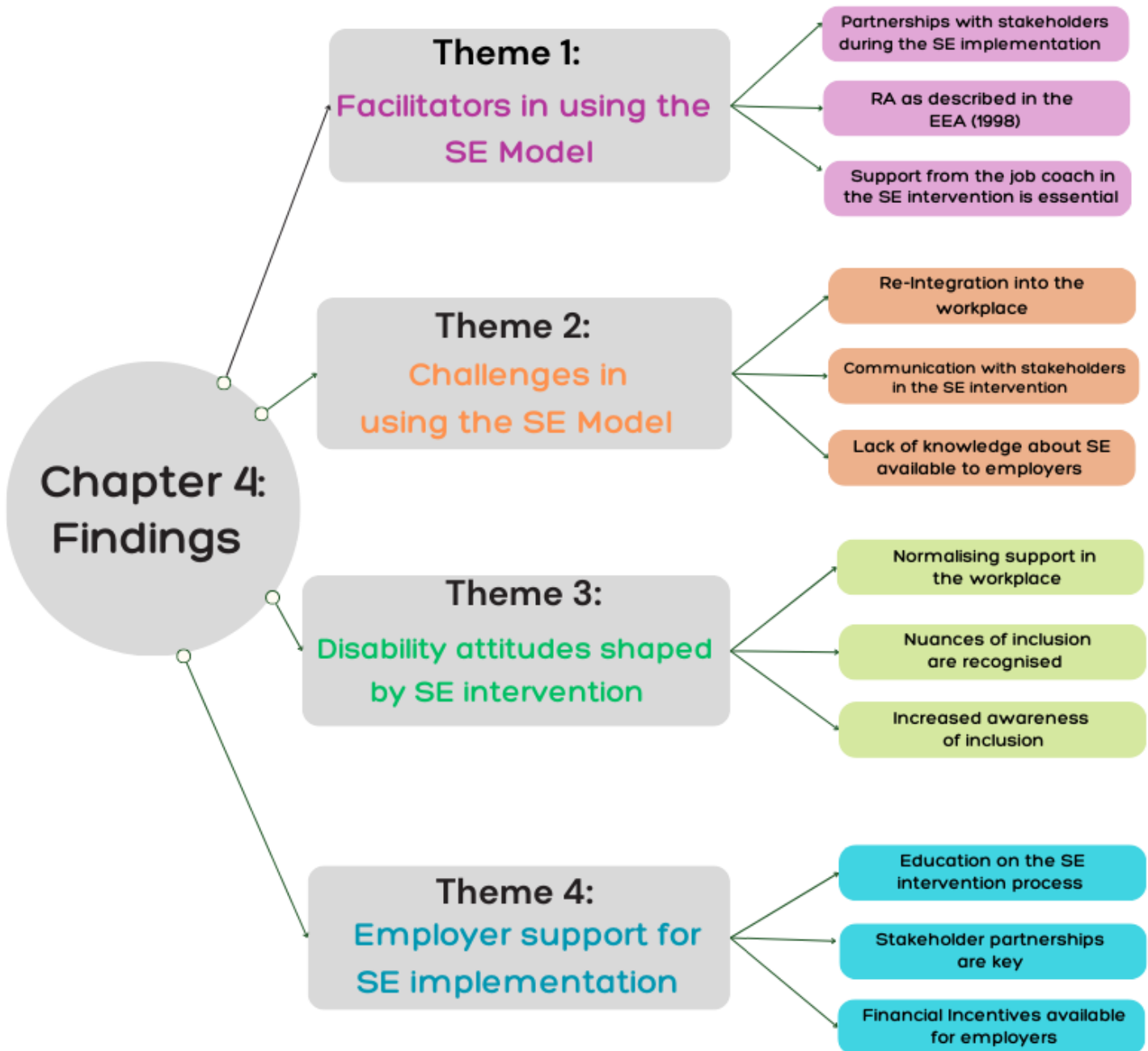
4. Presentation of Findings

The findings of this research study are presented in this chapter. The findings are grouped into themes, categories and sub-categories to describe the experiences of employers who have used the SE model in SA to employ PWD in the OLM. Four main themes were identified through analysis. Themes one and two, respectively, describe, the facilitators and challenges that employers experienced when implementing the SE model. Theme three describes how employers' understanding and attitudes were influenced after using SE in the workplace. Theme four describes the employers' support needs required to implement SE in the OLM for PWD. These themes are related to each other as they describe the various research objectives derived from this study. They describe all angles of how employers experience using SE in their various workplaces and the effects thereof. There is a consideration that these themes will inform best practice guidelines for SE practice for job coaches in the OLM with SA employers.

- **Theme One: Facilitators in using the SE Model**
- **Theme Two: Challenges in using the SE Model**
- **Theme Three: Disability attitudes shaped by SE implementation**
- **Theme Four: Employer support for SE implementation**

The themes and categories are represented in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Summary of Findings



4.1 Theme one: Facilitators in using the SE Model:

Theme one describes the facilitators experienced by employers when using the SE model when employing PWD in the OLM in SA. Employers were able to relay their experiences of the implementation of SE in their own companies and bring to light what worked for them for a successful implementation of the model. Three pertinent sub-categories emerged under this theme, namely: partnerships with stakeholders during SE implementation, RA as described in the EEA (1998), and support from the job coach in the SE intervention is essential.

4.1.1 Partnerships with stakeholders during the SE intervention.

In this category the experiences of employers related to the stakeholder partnerships when implementing SE. Stakeholders were identified as the employer, employee (PWD) and job coach (OT). Participants emphasised the partnerships that were formed in order to implement SE in a successful manner.

Employers in this research study confirmed the centrality of stakeholder partnerships to support the implementation of SE reflected on the aspects surrounding the implementation of SE and addressed the importance of stakeholder partnerships.

In order to strengthen partnerships between stakeholders; transparency, communication and buy-in from stakeholders were required.

4.1.1.1 Transparency among stakeholders

Participants elaborated on stakeholder partnerships by identifying transparency as a helpful tenet for the implementation of SE.

“To be honest, I think it [the implementation of SE] was very transparent. You know, at first, and I didn’t quite know how to approach the situation, it’s probably because [of] my ignorance.” (P6)

The above quote describes how the employer was unaware of how to approach the SE intervention without adequate understanding of the SE model and its

implementation. Employers appreciated transparent plans to be negotiated before commencing the SE intervention to ensure success.

“I'm in no way qualified to make that decision. So, I think, for me, it was very beneficial to have somebody who is professionally qualified and doing these things to be able to say to someone like myself, Oh, this is actually, you know, so that guidance that was provided for me was incredible.” (P1)

Another employer made reference to having gaps in knowledge prior to SE engagement and how the initial contact, with regards to education and setting clear expectations, were essential before starting the SE intervention.

“So, when the job coach met with us in the beginning, she took us through how to, myself, as well as my team that has previously worked with [the employee], took us through how we should be addressing [the employee] or how we shouldn't be addressing her, the types of things we should and shouldn't be asking her. Just and explaining to us the type of stroke she had, what we can expect to see, what we can expect not to see. So that heads up was really really beneficial because I can tell you people were scared, especially her team, they were scared as to what to expect when they do see her and I know of some of my colleagues, some of the other team leaders they were scared to approach her, because they didn't have that the heads up that we got because they didn't know, what can I ask her what can't I ask her, those kinds of things like will she be comfortable? Because we all know she's very private person. So, like, can I ask her how she's been those kinds of things, but the job coach gave me and the team a very nice heads up.” (P4)

P4 described that the need to make decisions was based on the qualification or expertise of the stakeholder based on their set out roles. Guidance to make decisions during SE interventions was something employers relied on. The employers relied heavily on the job coaches to facilitate the process and to provide education regarding SE implementation as described in the quote below:

“The OT for me would play such a critical role in explaining the situation, explaining how to engage, how to understand why things [are] the way there are, without having to understand all the intricacies but more than practical face value of things.” (P6)

Partnerships between the stakeholders were imperative for the SE program to be a success.

“Okay, so I've also had a disabled person working with, with the model. So from a personal point of view, I think, I know that the employment contract would have not been as successful and last as long if it wasn't for the job coach, for a fact. Because there is just too much opportunity for misunderstanding and miscommunication.” (P3)

Employers were able to describe their experiences of working with PWD and how that was guided by the job coach in being able to understand the desired outcomes and how to manage expectations of all the stakeholders involved.

“At the moment, but they do compensate, and they overcompensate for their disability. And I think the employee, the disabled employee needs to be aware that they can't really do this without the job coach, which makes the life a lot easier if they can sort of humble themselves.” (P3)

The quote above highlighted the importance employers placed on role expectations and having a clear understanding about each stakeholder and their engagement in SE. The stakeholder's understanding of their limitations was also something which the participants relied on the job coach for support with.

“ But the principles of its engagement, the principles of constraint needs to be well understood within the team. Otherwise, people will not treat the situation in the right manner resulting in adverse impacts or effects.” (P6)

The above employer articulated the importance of having a clear guide to engagement amongst stakeholders in order to prevent an outcome less favourable to all.

4.1.1.2 *Communication amongst stakeholders*

This sub-category draws attention to communication amongst stakeholders in the implementation of SE. It was found that stakeholder communication in the form of collaboration aided the outcomes of the SE intervention, as expressed by one employer: *“We had collaborated”* (P3). This employer described how the rest of the team took the information provided by the job coach and understood the implications of working with PWD. This information was further understood going forward and what lines of communication needed to be established for this to work well.

“Look, I’m aware that the trial is coming to an end. What does this mean? What is what? What does it look like afterwards? And that’s when we then met with the job coach to ask, okay, what does it look like going forward? And that’s, that’s when other conversations then happen.” (P3)

An emphasis was placed on understanding the different steps of SE and understanding what to do when something was not going according to plan. Each stakeholder having a clear set role gave employers peace of mind when navigating the SE intervention.

“And they look very much, I look operations and sees is the guy wearing his correct PPE and he got these shoes on and is he handling that bottle correctly. Whereas your job coach in the experience and with their know-how, in that way can say, okay the employee is not operating today, why is he not operating today, there has been a death in the family or something like that.” (P4)

P4 further mentioned the reliance on the job coach to communicate with the employer regarding support to the employee with a disability. The above quote described how P4 understood their role in supporting operations of the company in relation to productivity. Whereas the job coach would be able to delve deeper into why the PWD was not being productive and that communication would be beneficial to the employer to understanding the PWD’s needs in the SE intervention.

“Yeah. And at the same time, there is no judgment, from the job coach in that. Because the employer as an able bodied person struggling to support and do the right thing and trying to not, you know, it's like parenting where you want to be fair, you know, this person is struggling, but you don't, you don't want to mollycoddle, you still want to be fair towards the other people, you don't want to look like, you know. So, I think that relationship is critical.” (P3)

The statement above by P3 indicated that the relationships between stakeholders are needed to ensure appropriate support was given to the stakeholders. P3 further notes the need for non-judgement and ensuring fairness in treatment and provision of the correct amount of support to the employee with a disability.

“I tried to be part of a team or as, as opposed to a supervisor, in being workers, they can come to me with any of the problems, I've got an open-door policy as far as it's concerned.” (P2)

P2 described having an open-door policy to ensure all employees in the company felt they could communicate as needed in order to create a supportive working environment.

“I think, my belief is that your occupational therapist, your job coach should be part of that meeting. To give some feedback. So, guys, you sitting in a table as HR officers, operations and GM [general manager] and the MD [managing director] might be in the meeting as well. Are you aware of so and so? So, collaboration is important.” (P5)

P5 brought to light the aspect of inclusion of the job coach into the team meetings in the company to enhance the SE experience and enhance communication during the intervention.

4.1.1.3 Buy-in of all SE stakeholders

This sub-category describes how the research participants call attention to the fact that for SE to work, mutual buy-in is required from all stakeholders. All the participants were able to express the success of SE if there was buy-in from each stakeholder involved. Buy-in refers to the understanding of the SE intervention and having the motivation to be committed to the process regardless of the outcome.

“I think he [PWD] had to be, he had to buy in, in order to properly participate in the process.” (P1)

The above quote implies that the buy-in from PWD was not achieved. This meant that the PWD was not able to effectively situate themselves in the SE intervention in order to achieve the best outcome.

“And I was approached by someone like yourself to say, Listen, can we go down this road, and I was very amenable to it. In my previous life, I worked in the mining industry. And unfortunately, the people were often quite badly injured and might have lost half a limb or a limb. And I was quite used to there not necessarily working with occupational therapy professionals in my space, but they would have seen an occupational therapist, I would get a report and say, you can return to work under these conditions, and I would then find them a place to work.” (P1)

The combination of prior experience of working with PWD and additional information provided by the job coach aided in the employer's willingness to engage in SE. This employer also mentioned that the additional aspect of having a job coach to add a different level of support to employing PWD was beneficial to the company.

“Well, you see, yeah, I came into the program, I got you, I think you guys about 25% of the way into discussing it. So, then I had to kind of catch up that I did. But I think it's not anyone's fault. But I think only like when I started asking questions, and when I look back upon your reports, which hadn't been shared with me, but when they were given to me by my

colleague, and I could then look through it, I could then say, okay, there is actually a bit of science behind this the has been testing, they have an understanding of what could reasonably be expected. I think, then I felt much, much better.” (P1)

With the above statement P1 explains the necessity for all members of the employer team to be involved from the beginning of the SE intervention to promote buy-in to SE. However, once that was caught up, the process was made easier, and the employer was able to recognise that there was evidence to back up the SE intervention which assisted the employer to buy into the process.

4.1.2 RA as described in the EEA (1998)

This category reports how RA, as understood from the definition provided in the EEA (1998) translates in the workplace when integrating PWD with the use of SE. In this study, RA refers to tangible and intangible adaptations made in the workplace to support PWD in their employment. RA was foregrounded by stakeholders in SE partnerships as a facilitator to success of SE.

“Facilitating this process as far as possible... I wanted to make sure that we had done absolutely everything within our power as the employer to try and reintegrate this person to the workplace.” (P1)

The below sub-categories describe how employers utilised RA within the SE intervention.

4.1.2.1 Understanding of disability and disclosure

Employers referred to an understanding of concepts of inclusion as a facilitator in the implementation of SE and as a measure of RA.

“I mean, having said that, I probably would think that it's so critical and crucial to really understand the situation circumstance. And that understanding is to carry through the team, which is probably done by

the education side of things is to enlighten people on where the situation is, and so on.” (P6)

P6 described how important education about SE and disability was and the need to filter it down to all team members in the company was vital in ensuring the SE intervention was a success. The above-mentioned quotation also bring attention to ensuring the process of SE is understood by members who are not directly involved in the intervention. This point lead into the below quote where the employer highlighted the need for desensitisation:

“And I remember saying to the supervisor of the area where the person was going to, you have some very real responsibilities in terms of this in terms of sensitising your staff, to this person coming into your space and why he's there, and what is the expectation, and I think she must have done a good job because none of them came and knocked on my door.” (P1)

Employers who had prior experience with working with PWD were able to understand the need for desensitisation amongst other staff who would be working alongside PWD. The need for desensitisation was a high priority for employers as it also assisted in further understanding the expectations of staff.

Employers relied heavily on the job coach to assist them in terms of deepening their understandings around how disability presents in the workplace and how to distinguish between worker skills and competencies. This point is reflected in the below quotation:

“But also, to have as an employer point of view to have someone that you can say, I don't get why this person is doing this, is this part of the disability? Or is this just poor workmanship you know?” (P3)

The above quote again brings to light the importance of each stakeholder having a clear role and acting in accordance to their qualification and expertise to pass on knowledge. This is further demonstrated by P6 who reflected on being empowered through knowledge of concepts which were not known prior:

“You know, to have that consideration in place and what provisions need to be put in place for people with disabilities. And so, from a professional level, there is processes there's road mapping, there is engagement, there is education, empowerment through exposure is important for me.” (P6)

Employers were reliant on guidance on how to navigate disclosure in the workplace. The SE stakeholders were at times the only individuals who knew the type of diagnosis, and this was required in order to provide information around how to reasonably accommodate PWD in the workplace:

“Absolutely. I mean, disclosure is the need to respect someone's privacy, their views on what they want to share and not share.” (P6)

P6 conveys how the protection of PWD's privacy around their disability was required. There required to be a level of understanding around the disability, however not the specific details thereof. The need for disclosure is so those staff who are working alongside PWD are able to assist when needed and highlight to the employer when there could be a potential problem.

“The job coach so nicely said, you know what, it's just the elephant in the room, tell the individual, you know what, this is quite intimidating for me. And that will break the ice. So, I mean, as much as the job coach was the job coach for the person with a disability, but I found value out of the job coach as well.” (P4)

Employers were also able to address their lack of experience in navigating disability disclosure and this is represented well by P4 above.

“It's really opened my mind to, you know, staff or employees or people who need assistance in various categories of their life or where they are you know. So yeah, it's given me a new look as to how to approach the staff that I'm working with. Because it's all about our employees really.” (P5)

Employers reported that after being educated and emerging themselves into the SE intervention they were able to increase their scope of thinking around support to staff regardless of whether there was a disability or not.

4.1.2.2. *The company's environment*

This sub-category communicates how the existing company environment structurally and culturally play a role in the facilitation of RA in order to make the SE intervention successful. P1 described how their company would go above and beyond to try to accommodate PWD regardless of diagnosis. The existing company culture played an important role here.

“So, whether it was he was in a wheelchair, or on a set of crutches or with a prosthetic limb, we would figure out a way to accommodate them.” (P1)

This point is further reiterated in the quotation below:

“Facilitating this process as far as possible. I wanted to make sure that we had done absolutely everything within our power as the employer to try and reintegrate this person to the workplace.” (P1)

P1 displays their company's willingness to look at RA at all levels and ensure that the SE process was conducted in order to assist PWD to reintegrate into workplace.

“First of all, from when there's issues to people that already have disabilities, to get them support and make sure that we keep them from my retention point of view, but also from an appointment point of view. Let's do it right from the beginning. And yeah, so that's, that's basically the motivation, personally, is from the fact that I know the more diversity in the better.” (P3)

P3 further provided context around accommodating PWD from the point of being able to retain them in the company's employ. This point related to the employer being motivated to employ PWD due to it being the “correct thing” to do and the use of SE

assisted employers to engage in this process. The employer was able to demonstrate the need for diversity in the workplace and how SE assists in achieving this.

Employers conveyed their understanding of how to accommodate PWD in the workplace with the use of SE. They were able to take their existing understanding of how to employ PWD in the workplace and couple that with further knowledge around provision of a job and salary for PWD.

Company environmental culture assisted in the implementation of RA as employers who had existing support measures for members of staff in place, were more receptive to implementing SE into their companies.

“So, if I tell you that people come here, they stay here, we grow old together, we get sick together, we get better together.” (P1)

SE assisted employers to identify their own internal support structures which may not have been utilised prior to the SE intervention.

“But I mean, I think I've really got a great support structure within the business. It's not just left to my own devices, I've always got the support, or I can always leverage off any one of them.” (P4)

P4 described how the internal support structures assisted their SE implementation. This is thereafter linked to the concept of the match between the employer and PWD. The employer is able to cater to the needs of PWD through the provision of support when a good match is established between these two stakeholders

The below quote from P4 described this particular point:

“Well, it was a combination of nominating myself and being nominated. Was I previously worked quite close to the individual, as a colleague, and I felt it was only fitting to be supporting her based on the fact that she previously supported me. And not only that, but the team that I currently lead is the team that she previously led. So, it was just a good fit.” (P4)

The above quotation adds a layer to the description of the provision of RA as the match between employer and PWD may not always be achieved. The other employees then filter down this support from the employer and are able to provide PWD with support in the workplace to assist in the SE intervention being a success.

4.1.2.3 *Legislation and Policy*

This sub-category demonstrates how existing SA government legislation and policy is used by employers to employ PWD and implement SE.

“Yeah, legislation, definitely in the sense that they've got to follow the acts you know and the labour law acts, in terms of the hearings and hearing all sides but the thing is, it's not a lack in this particular case. You don't have to, you don't.” (P3)

Not all employers were able to speak to this particular sub-category due to their limited understanding of the relevant SA legislation and its application thereof. Employers who did however use EEA (1998) and BBBEE (2003) were able to share where this fitted into the implementation of SE in their companies.

“So, it was one of those EE requirements. So, it's part of the BBBEE requirements to get their scorecard and they have to have a really high scorecard to be able to get work. So even though I've always thought it's a good idea to have diverse workforce, it's hard to sell just the concept of “ oh you've got to employ disabled people” it's much easier to sell it as “this is gonna make you money.” (P3)

Employers were able to reflect on the concept of BBBEE to get money into the company, and how the practice of employing PWD is incentivised by this legislation. This factor of implementing BBBEE also resulted in a more diverse workforce as there was inclusion of PWD. Employers therefore directly benefitted from employing PWD.

“We do have a policy in our company, that when we engage with people with disabilities and how we go about it, and how we should support it, and also job coaches and such.” (P5)

Employers alluded to the fact that they had internal policies which supported the intervention of SE. P5 described how their company had stipulated policies to ensure it included the employment of PWD with the use of the job coach. This then translated to their application of SE interventions.

“But if there's evidence to say, hey, this person, we know this person is depressed, we know this can be a disability []. So nowadays this it's not a policy, but it's a mind frame now, of the leadership. From a policy point of view, it's informed by the law that they have to try to employ disabled people, but people don't do it, because they fear it.” (P3)

P3 was able to draw attention to the fact that policies can be internally made as a result of the type of leadership offered. These policies can be made internally as P5 mentioned their company has existing policies which support the employment of PWD. P3 provides insight on appropriate management of employees if there is disclosure around diagnosis and therefore RA can assist PWD in the workplace.

“Well, within BBBEE, we've got goal sets internally for disabled persons. And that's inherent within the company. So, there's a whole demographic profiling, we look at that all the time, we try and get equal representation, according to demographics. And disabilities is just one of the slices of that picture. So internally, we have an understanding of these kinds of aspects. I would imagine the legislation would provide the framework, which I'm not really involved with all the details, but the frame will be provided for us would latch on to that framework to see whether we supported as best as possible.” (P6)

P6 conveys how there are structures within companies which supported the employment of PWD. This translated into how the goals in the company with regards to implementing BBBEE are monitored and the company ensures the adherence to

the structures put in place. Employment of PWD is part of those goals. P6 also highlighted the need for information to be filtered to all employees in the workplace.

P4 brought a different layer to RA through the use of policy from their group insurance cover which allowed for staff to get assistance if they were unable to work due to disability. P4 was able to describe how SE assisted in broadening their understanding of how an individual with a disability can be protected and supported in the workplace.

“And then the employer, look, the business, I think as a whole. Giving us the opportunity to have such a benefit is I feel it's phenomenal. I've never seen it play out in this way. So, I mean, I think the person that we're currently dealing with at the moment, she's also blown away by the fact that yes, we pay for this benefit every single month, but we never see what it actually does. And now we can actually, I mean, it's unfortunate that she's gone through this, but now we can actually see what we pay for every single month for this for this group benefit.” (P4)

4.1.3 Support from the job coach in the SE intervention is essential.

This category demonstrates the need for the support of the job coach during the SE implementation as essential for its success.

4.1.3.1 On and off-site job coach support

This sub-category describes how employers experienced the support of the job coach in and out of the workplace.

“We were put into contact with a professional and she was very good at sort of walking the servers through the process, and it was engaged with myself and the business partner. And then with the manager, or the supervisor of the area where it was thought that this person could be placed.” (P1)

Employers were able to describe how the job coach was the stakeholder to provide support to the other stakeholders. The support was multifaceted and was provided in accordance with which stakeholder required it and occurred either on or off site as needed.

***“Because they become the person that you can vent towards, whether you’re the employer or the employee, and you can be honest about it.”
(P3)***

P3 describes the nature in which the level of support was given to the employer and PWD. Honesty in communication to the job coach assisted in the implementation of SE successfully as there was transparency amongst stakeholders.

“I think it was very beneficial to have somebody with your skill set in the room to have those conversations.”[.....] “Because I might, unwittingly put something in there, that’s not the so I might look at the person said, that’s not that’s not gonna work. But that’s me,” (P1)

P1 described how the job coach assisted in ensuring PWD were placed in the correct areas in the workplace and provided insights into the rationale of that based on knowledge and experience.

“My role was to, along with the job coach was to provide support for the employee or the person with the disability. It was to create a model in particular was to create guidance from a business perspective, structure from a business perspective. And then the job coach was like, if I, for lack of better words, the middleman in the very beginning, the middleman between myself and the person with the disability.” (P4)

P4 described how the job coach maintained communication and ensured all stakeholders were supported effectively during the SE intervention.

“If the job coach is not there, and that person does not have excellent communication skills, and self-awareness or emotional intelligence, then

the process will fail. I can guarantee you somma net so, it's like a no-brainer.” (P3)

Employers reflected that if the job coach was not providing the support for PWD the SE intervention would not have been successful.

“With the job coach would also give us maybe advice and said, okay, this person is not suitable to work on a forklift or at that position, but we can possibly channel it into another position where he can be successful.” (P5)

P5 described how the role of the job coach translates into the workplace and assists the employer in terms of allocation of PWD to the job role.

“I would say probably combined, I say this because the on the job training is relevant to your specific project or tasks at hand. But in this situation, the circumstances need to be considered. So, there should be some level of input from the OT to, to gain, how to better engage, and to maximize the outputs for that individual.” (P6)

P6 expressed the combination of having the presence of the job coach at the worksite and being available to both the employer and PWD. The role of the job coach assists the employer to support PWD by remaining in their role as the employer.

All the research participants reflected on the fact that knowing PWD had the support of the job coach on, and off site was reassuring for the employers to remain in their stakeholder role.

4.1.3.2 Graded levels of support from the job coach

In this sub-category, the role of the job coach with regards to understanding the various levels of provision of support are presented. Employers relied on the job coach to address issues around productivity and task output during the SE intervention.

“The coach would tell us, okay, you can, you can push it a bit or look, the individual is feeling a bit flustered. So, let’s take a few steps back. So, guiding me as well as guiding the person with the disability as to what our boundaries are, as well as tools we could use to improve.” (P4)

Employers described that the job coach’s availability contributed to the success of SE in a significant way. The job coach was able to grade the level of support provided to both the employer and PWD.

“We had someone like yourself [job coach] that was very involved and very available.” (P1)

Knowing that the job coach was accessible was a positive factor for the employer.

“So, the job coach, for me is someone who's hands on, on the job training, someone who, coaches by asking relevant questions, leading questions to the individual, to allow that person to figure it out themselves to not necessarily dictate what steps need to be taken, but rather allow the individual to figure that out.” (P6)

P6 described how the job coach was able to ensure the most effective level of support in accordance with the needs of PWD and also to allow for more independence in thinking by PWD.

“But the value that I saw in the employees is that they can actually vent [to the job coach] I've been struggling with this person”[.....] “And at the same time, the job coach can then say, Yeah, I can I get why you say it. So, you know, and bring some maturity and insight and wisdom and support. And also, to bring some a different perspective and some objectivity, because I think what happens is, especially with the, you know, the unseen disabilities is the thing that's even more important than your other perspective.” (P3)

The above-mentioned quotation from P3 described how employers were able to understand PWD by utilising the job coach in the provision of a level of support in relation to the deeper understanding of the disability and how that may present in the workplace. This type of support was observed by employers and described to be part of the job coaches support to employers through the SE intervention for the company.

“It’s really opened my mind to, you know, staff or employees or people who need assistance in various categories of their life or where they are, you know. So yeah, it’s given me a new look as to how to approach the staff that I’m working with. Because it’s all about our employees really.”
(P5)

Employers were able to describe the long-term effect of their ability to provide support not only to PWD after engaging in SE and this was affirmed by the job coach and their ability to decipher what level of support was required.

4.2 Theme two: Challenges in using the SE Model:

Theme two describes the challenges employers experienced when using the SE model in their companies. Employers were able to reflect on their experiences of utilising SE when employing PWD in the OLM which proved at times to be challenging. Three pertinent sub-categories emerged under this theme, namely: re-Integration into the workplace, communication with stakeholders in the SE intervention and lack of knowledge of SE available to employers.

4.2.1 Re-integration into the workplace

Employers communicated challenges that they experienced around the re-integration of PWD as part of the process of SE. Re-integration refers to the return to the workplace for the PWD. In this category the following factors were seen to be challenges for employers: cost of services and time taken to implement SE, and application of RA in the work environment. In addition, other factors pertaining to support, namely: availability of the job coach, PWD not utilising the support provided,

PWD understanding job demands, and employers' ability to provide support were also raised as challenges for employers.

4.2.1.1 Cost of SE services and time taken for implementation

This sub-category referred to how employers experienced the SE implementation in relation to how they navigated the cost of services as well as the time taken to implement SE.

“Because you're dealing with other people's money, there is a limit to how long you can carry on offering that support.” (P2)

P2 refers to the difficulty in continuing support as their company was a body corporate where the tenant owners funded the support.

Employers in this study either externally (third party) or directly funded the SE intervention in their companies. The employers who paid directly for services provided were able to reflect on how they were more conscious of how much support to provide. Employers who had third party funding sources were more secure during the process.

“So, there were a couple of challenges, but they slowly, slowly moved out the way, which was great, you know, so the one was what, you know, who's, who would be managing this process from the insurance perspective [third party]? [.....], and we just had to facilitate it.” (P1)

P1 makes reference to when the responsibilities of each member were explicit and the SE intervention was going to be covered by the external funder, that they were more likely to engage in the SE process sooner as they had funding security. P2 described how they were limited in the amount of support they could provide due to budgeting considerations.

Additional to the cost of services, the time taken to conduct the SE intervention was also noted to be a challenge for the employers. Those employers who directly funded

SE noted that the support offering depended on how much the service would cost and, if additional support was required, the support may not always have been provided. This resulted in a longer period taken by employers to buy into the concept of SE, stated by P3:

“The buy-in is a long process.” (P3)

Employers reflected on the fact that when SE was initially proposed to them, the buy-in would not be there and that there would be some resistance to the idea.

“Oh, well, look, there's a ton of resistance. It takes forever, to get people to buy in management to buy into this because they don't want a distraction. It's a grudge purchase.” (P3)

P3 described how the experience of SE initially took time to buy into as it required extra work and it would be done to fill an employment quota within a company. This meant the company would be hiring a set number of PWD due to allocated figures due to their internal or external policies regarding inclusion, instead of looking at the other benefits of the intervention.

Employers reported that it takes effort to participate in the SE intervention separate to their own jobs that need to be completed. This point is reiterated by P2 below:

“There's a limit to how often you can, how many times you can actually do that [offer support]. If you're going to do it every day. Then you know, I have my own job. And everybody has to take their own responsibility.” (P2)

Employers were able to express the time and effort required to engage in SE. P2 described that even when support was provided, at times the behaviour PWD did not change and this was challenging.

“Sometimes, sometimes I’ll become a little bit frustrated because the job coach would say, okay, we need to go back and be patient and do this, do that. And understanding has been difficult to go back and be patient to carry on do the same thing that you’ve been doing for so long, without any results.” (P2)

Employers also reiterated that there was no way of getting around the time required by SE.

“No! You have to got to do the freaken work and dive in and give it a shot. It’s one of those, you have to do it to know it and give it a chance.” (P3)

Employers found the cost of services and time taken to implement SE challenging at times. They described that it takes much initial consideration and once you are committed to the intervention it takes time before results can be seen. At times, results are also not visible. This proved to be challenging to those who are directly funding SE as that can incur the company financially.

The challenge of cost and time taken to implement SE lead into another challenge expressed by employers, namely the implementation of RA in the workplace during the SE intervention.

4.2.1.2 Application of RA in the workplace

RA is implemented during the SE intervention. The RA requirements are suggested by the job coach to both the employer and PWD. Challenges pertaining to the implementation of RA emerged for employers with regard to how the workplace environment and job requirements supported the recommendations.

Employers found it challenging to navigate issues around accessibility due to structural limitations in the workplace.

“Okay, well, there was a problem. But I'm cautiously optimistic that the problem has gone away. Our previous building had serious challenges in terms of being able to access the second floor.” (P1)

P1 reflected on how the physical environmental barriers for PWD was limiting due to the nature of the disability and the structural environment of the workplace. The employer expressed that during the SE intervention it was at times difficult to accommodate the PWD as they did not have an accessible building.

“The challenge is always what is the project about, what is the positions to fulfil or to do that project. Those can be challenging when employing people with disabilities to work [...] in that stations, it always depends on the nature of the project, and the work that the person is going to do.” (P5)

P5 brought to light a different element of RA, namely, the requirement to understand the needs of PWD and their job tasks. The nature of the project required matching PWD and the environment. This point is better understood by P4's description below:

“In the beginning, we had her sitting in a bit of a separate environment where she could focus. But as time went on, when the person allocated to her could no longer be like full time, fully allocated to her, I then moved her down to the rest of the team.” (P4)

P4 alluded to how providing RA was challenging when required to consider all the environmental needs of PWD as well as other employees who were required to assist in this. PWD would also require supervision in the workplace. This factor was not always easy to navigate as the other co-worker has their own responsibilities. The RA need was to be at times away from distractions and high levels of noise, yet still have the support of a co-workers to be of assistance when needed.

“So, there were days where she would come in, and it was quite rowdy, so she would feel quite distracted, and overwhelmed. So, she would have to go sit back upstairs. So, I think she's still she's not coping with, like the noise aspect. When that comes into play for me, is then I would need to then send a resource [co-worker] with her upstairs. Because the reason why I brought her down [...] is to have the availability of the rest of the team to be able to support her if she does require assistance with anything.” (P4)

The above-mentioned quote further portrays the point of RA taking additional employees away from their original work environments to provide support for PWD. Employers were also aware that this factor was a challenge, yet not a long-term occurrence.

This sub-category of understanding challenges within RA are directly related to the support offering from stakeholders in the SE intervention.

4.2.1.3 Support of stakeholders

This sub-category included aspects pertaining to the provision of support to stakeholders; the job coach, the employer, PWD, and third-party funders during the SE intervention. PWD were re-integrated into the workplace with the implementation of RA. Support during the SE intervention initially began with the job coach providing the support to the employer and PWD.

Employers experienced challenges when PWD could not accept the offering of support.

“Look, I think the difficulty that he had was that he did not accept guidance from authority.” (P2)

P2 made reference to authority as being the employer and the job coach. PWD were not receptive to the support provided and this was challenging to the employer.

“They can, but I do think that the employee really has to understand that they that they need to come with their part and they've got to, they've got to try.” (P2)

The above-mentioned quote further relays how the challenge came about when PWD were not willing to utilise the support provided in the workplace.

“The biggest thing that I found challenging was his non-acceptance.” (P2)

Employers faced challenges when PWD did not always understand their disability and when their behaviour in the workplace reflected that. For example, when the job coach provided support to PWD and it was not utilised.

“The thing is, I think disabled people are so used to dealing with their own disabilities and the challenges around it, that they would quickly compensate or they figure it out, or whatever it is.” (P3)

P3 expressed how PWD were able to distinguish how to utilise support and avoid over-compensating in the workplace. The employer reported to have some difficulties navigating this aspect.

“I think there was perhaps a challenge. I think he thought, “oh, this is quite an easy job. I just I've got to make the phone call”. It's a bit more than that. So, I think that was definitely one of the challenges.” (P1)

The abovementioned quotation refers to P1 experiencing PWD to not take on the support given and did not place priority on the SE intervention. PWD in this context were not able to understand the demands of the job which were provided to them by the stakeholders in the SE intervention. These demands pertained to the job tasks of being effective in communication and professionalism beyond being able to answer or make a phone call and the inherent qualities relating to physical requirements of the job.

The employer (P1) was able to further explore the concept of the challenge experienced. They were able to reflect that this challenge was something that could be overcome and used as a potential steppingstone for PWD for future opportunities.

“Do I think it's a permanent problem? No, I don't think so. I think he just did that. It just needs to be. I think, he's, hopefully he's learned something.” (P1)

Employers were able to express when they felt they could not provide support during the SE intervention. They faced challenges in having to perform their own work tasks and being able to provide support to PWD.

“And I would love to have given a lot more of my time to support this individual. But that is why I then took one of my strongest staff, to allocate to her to be there as like an all-time support. But I would have loved to be a lot more involved and a lot more present. But time management was splitting myself amongst the other 15 (co-workers) and her was, was a bit tough yes.” (P4)

Employers' experiences of not always being able to provide support for PWD resulted in employers being more reliant on the job coaches to provide support to PWD.

The availability of the job coach was a challenge for P5. The employer alluded to the fact that the job coach was not always available to provide insight on the needs of PWD in the workplace and that proved challenging for this employer.

“What I have experienced is that when I get feedback from the operations that somebody has had difficulty in, for example, their house burned down, or they've lost all the goods, or they might get them to have a drug habit or something like that, to engage them with the occupational therapist to intervene. In those circumstances, I find that I don't always get the feedback.” (P5)

The employer refers to not having the job coaches' feedback to relate to their operational requirements challenging. This filtered down to the employer being aware that PWD were seen by the job coach, however they were not provided with the information around it. The employer was able to reflect that this factor could also be linked to ethical reasons, which pertain to confidentiality of support provided from the job coach to PWD.

“That's a personal thing. It's confidential, but that I can get the feedback of like person where the occupational therapist or the job coach has intervened, and they've done their investigation or analysis or assistance, whatever they've done. I didn't get that feedback. So that's challenging for me sometimes.” (P5)

This employer felt that they would have preferred a tailored version of the feedback to still protect the privacy of PWD, however be made of aspects which pertain to company's levels of productivity or reasoning as to why someone is not performing.

“I'm well aware of the confidentiality. So does sometimes there's some red tape take and I can't go past that sometimes. It proves to be a challenge.” (P5)

The point of confidentiality was also seen to be a challenge for P5 as this limited their insight as to what was indeed happening with PWD and how they could assist.

P5 was able to suggest that to overcome this challenge of not having enough feedback to provide support to PWD, that the job coach be present in the meeting with the relevant other members of management in the company and provide an appropriate employer version of the type of support that was provided.

“I do believe that our job coaches or occupational therapist should, although it's quite a tricky one, because some of its confidential and confidentiality of the nature of the employee with the company or with the GM I feel like the occupational therapist or job coach should give us more feedback on just in general, you know.” (P5)

Not all employers experienced this challenge in their companies. This point was directly as a result of the job coach not understanding the needs of the employer effectively.

Challenges in re-integration during an SE intervention were discussed in the above category. Issues pertaining to communication when implementing an SE intervention will be described next.

4.2.2 Communication between stakeholders in the SE intervention

Employers were able to express their challenges with regards to communication amongst the stakeholders. The sub-categories below describe how issues pertaining to the understanding of a new disability and managing expectations of stakeholders were challenging at times for employers.

4.2.2.1 Understanding and adjusting to a disability in the workplace

Employers found it difficult to understand characteristics of disabilities. This can be seen from the direct quote from P6:

“Um, some of the challenges would, is probably getting to grips with the aspects of the disability.” (P6)

Employers who have had prior experience of working with PWD, were able to reflect on the concept of having to adapt to a new disability, whereas PWD who were born with disabilities were better adapted to their disability and the nature of their accommodations compared to those who acquired a disability later in life.

“But yeah, you know, and this is what I think happens, I think if you have a disability, you know how to navigate the world, if you grew up with it, that was never an issue.” (P3)

Employers who did not have prior experience with working with PWD in the OLM, had challenges adapting to new disabilities as they did not understand methods of how to address the concept of disability.

“We do find that when we have persons with disabilities, working with your mainstream staff, if I can call it that, that sometimes that is a challenge because the persons with disabilities, perhaps sometimes you work a bit slower, they don't grasp the task, but they working with, I don't want to call it normal, but with employees that have target stuck to them, and they need to make the targets.” (P5)

P5 described how they faced challenges integrating the PWD amongst other members of staff who did not have a disability. The reasoning for this was due to wanting to avoid setting a precedence in the workplace for all employees. The precedent they wanted to avoid was related to employees thinking the PWD were perhaps getting special treatment over the other staff.

4.2.2.2 Managing expectations of stakeholders

Employers experienced challenges in navigating issues around precedence in the workplace. PWD who were integrated into the workplace were working alongside other members of staff without disabilities. The employers at times needed to rely on the job coach to assist them where they could be at risk of setting expectations in the workplace which they could not fulfil for all staff.

P1 describe this point in the direct quotation below:

“But where there were challenges that I could not get involved in because it would muddy the waters in terms of other staff. That's when I retracted and would say to you [the job coach], that this needs to get sorted out. You know, and I think, for me, that was fine.” (P1)

Employers found it challenging to navigate issues in the workplace which only pertained to PWD. The job coach was able to assist the employer to navigate this

challenge. The employer was very wary of setting precedences for the future which they could not always provide for all employees within the company.

“I need to manage him so as to not create expectations or a precedent elsewhere that I don’t really want to have to deal with.” (P1)

Employers experienced challenges in communication when the job coach was not always available.

“I want to get more interaction with the job coach if I can call it like that. Everybody’s busy, I understand that, but there should be more engagement.” (P5)

P5 was the only employer to express this challenge of lack of availability of the job coach. This was a challenge for the employer as they had an expectation of the job coach which was not fulfilled.

Employers brought to light the need for communication between the stakeholders in the SE intervention. This was an expectation which was set up in the beginning of the SE intervention.

“The challenge was actually for me, not for the person to understand. And then obviously, with that in mind, it comes with certain constraints in this case would be communication and engagement, active engagement with staff. And that, in turn, comes with further engagement with the team to understand that and to know how to engage. And so those are challenges that are overcome through education, again, to empowering those that don’t understand it, so they can better engage it as well.” (P6)

P6 puts into words collaboration between stakeholders being challenging due to many contributions of each stakeholder needing to be considered while embarking in the SE intervention. This included considering how other staff members requirements were included to ensure the SE intervention would be able to be implemented.

4.2.3 Lack of knowledge about SE available to employers

This category reports on how a lack of knowledge and information in the public domain about SE contributed to challenges in the implementation of the model by employers.

4.2.3.1 SE is not included in SA Government legislation

Employers had difficulty initially understanding SE and relayed that the concept is not included in any SA Government legislation or policy explicitly. In SA legislation there is the inclusion of rights and actions towards PWD regarding their access, entry and treatment in employment. Employers in this research study were not always guided by these when deciding to employ PWD.

Researcher: “Has any of that been supported by any type of policy or legislation?”

Participant 2: “No, not that I know of.”

P2 relays that SE is not featured in a SA’s Government legislation or policy. All research participants were able to corroborate this fact.

“So, in terms of legislation, I think you’re at the service, we pride ourselves on complying and doing what is best practice. I don’t have a policy per se on supported employment. But through people, the management of people and their medical issues, we certainly look towards that.” (P1)

P1 conveyed that the non-inclusion of SE in legislation was challenging as it did not fit into best practice guidelines of the industry where the employer operates. This fact resulted in employers having challenges when required to employ PWD due to lack of knowledge present around the implementation of SE.

“So, it's far more difficult to employ a disabled person to them, than to employ an abled body person.” (P3)

Employers were able to allude to the lack of information currently about SE is challenging when considering employment of PWD in the OML.

Employers in management positions were also able to describe how their lack of knowledge on HR processes within the company, including the employment of PWD, was a result of information not being shared by HR practitioners in.

“I get guided basically by my HR manager, they are the specialists.” (P5)

4.2.3.2 *Early intervention of SE is not prioritised*

Employers were able to state the challenge surrounding the timing of SE implementation.

“I think the intervention came too late.” (P2)

P2 communicated the SE intervention was not implemented soon enough to effect change in their workplace. This resulted in the SE job coaching not always being effective due to learnt behaviours of PWD in the workplace.

“So, he wasn't partial to be giving him any instructions or coaching him from because he'd been doing it for 20 years.” (P2)

P2 further re-iterated that the inclusion of SE for these PWD came at a stage where coaching was ineffective.

“I think, had I been involved from the get-go, Yeah, you probably would have be asked that question straight up, is, but I think because I came in after the fact [information which was needed] and then sort of, the case became mine, you know, and it was like, okay, yeah, catch this.” (P1)

Employers were also able to comment on how their involvement was required to start at the beginning of the SE intervention. This was a challenge for P1, this factor links back to how the lack of knowledge available to employers on SE intervention proves to be challenging for its implementation.

Employers in this research study were able to effectively describe their challenges experiences when implementing SE, they were also able to make suitable suggestions for future practice in order to avoid it for the future.

4.3 Theme three: Disability attitudes shaped by SE implementation:

Theme three describes how employers' experiences of using the SE model shaped their attitudes and understanding of disability. Employers were able to reflect on how they view disability in the workplace after engaging with a SE implementation. Three pertinent sub-categories emerged under this theme, namely: normalising of support in the workplace, nuances of inclusion are recognised and increased awareness of inclusion.

4.3.1 Normalising support in the workplace

Employers described their attitudes around the aspects of support, and how these were altered after exposure to SE. They further describe how their experience of SE was translated into the workplace. Employers emphasised the aspect of normalising support and encouraging on-going support in the workplace. They also reflected on how their work cultures around inclusion were influenced after engaging in SE.

4.3.1.1 Encouraging on-going support in the workplace

Employers highlighted that having been exposed to the implementation of SE, their attitudes around provision of support shifted. They described how their ability to provide support for employees was enhanced by their experience in using SE.

“Ever since I started, it's really opened my mind to, you know, staff or employees or people who need assistance in various categories of their life or where they are, you know. So yeah, it's given me a new look as to how to approach the staff that I'm working with. Because it's all about our employees really.” (P5)

P5's statement highlights how the experience of supporting PWD in the workplace influenced their ability to accommodate all staff in the workplace.

“Yeah, and almost creating a sense of community, of like you know...like we have with the woman movement, where you have allies and all these people who are trying to help women in the workplace. In the same way you know, there has got to be like champions that has brilliant experiences and say “no man, give it a chance, don't be such a wuss.” (P3)

Employers' experiences of using SE shifted their level of understanding around creating an inclusive work culture. P3 described how employers normalised the fact that PWD were entering the workplace, influencing the employer's ability to provide support for PWD in the workplace in the future.

Employers were able to further reflect on how their ability to support PWD was strengthened, and they were able to manage the degree of support provided.

“Don't be scared to push the individual as hard, if not harder than able bodied person, because they are so freaken resilient.” (P3)

The above-mentioned quote reflects how the employer was able to action normalising the abilities of PWD in the workplace to ensure that they were treated equally to the other employees. This employer in particular was able to resonate that PWD come with resilience which they bring into the workplace.

SE assisted employers to work alongside employees with newly acquired disabilities. This further challenged the employer to normalise the method of on-going support in the workplace, despite at times feeling uncomfortable.

“She used to be the senior in our space, I used to go to her for advice and now the roles are reversed. She's been out of the space for like two years. And now she needs to come to me for advice and support. So the relationship, it was very humbling, to me, as well as to her. It was quite intimidating for me at first.” (P4)

P6 described the influence of SE on their operations for future support for employees. Employers could incorporate an on-going review system of employee goals and this should be done with all employees as a form of support.

“Continuing engagements, asking medium to long term goal objectives, and then seeing how do we support that. And then doing that continually throughout the time and so that plan can be changed, the plan actually does change. Because you do achieve them that must be achievable goals. Once you achieve them, then well done, then we move to the next set of goals and so on.” (P6)

Having engaged in SE in the workplace, employers were able to recognise that support would be translated into the work environment for future. This aspect further invested the employer into the company.

4.3.1.2 Corporate culture influenced by support

Having described how ongoing support is encouraged in the workplace, employers were able to convey how their attitudes around inclusion affected their corporate culture, as expressed by P4 in the following quote:

“The support and just the benefit of the job coach, not only for that individual, but for the leader as well. I mean, I think I would, I would like to have a job coach myself.” (P4)

This employer reports an experience of enhanced corporate culture after support was provided to PWD, and expressed a realisation that all employees could perhaps benefit from a form of support through coaching.

“So, it opens up the conversation to development. It's a healthier, more humane outlook [], because it was a new disability. So, I think it brings a huge sense of fairness, open mindedness and it creates...especially if the organization has a culture of development, and care and we look after our people and they have that story it's awesome. Because they become the part of the story, the cultural story.” (P4)

P4's quote relayed how their company's corporate culture was enhanced by engaging in SE and how their ability to provide support would go beyond SE intervention in the workplace.

4.3.2 Nuances of inclusion are recognised

Employers referred to their understanding of nuances of inclusion in the workplace after SE implementation. This category describes how employers were able to recognise the nuances pertaining to including PWD into the workplace which were elicited by their experience in using the SE model within the workplace.

“I think, a shift in perspective. And in terms of how I would position work, or how I would give feedback. Yeah, I think it then nuances, a lot of it is about the nuances.” (P3)

4.3.2.1 Ability to accept what is unknown

SE empowered employers to be able to recognise what they did not know. Employers described their lack of knowledge around concepts pertaining to the understanding of inclusion in the workplace after the SE intervention.

“I think other employers need to accept what they don't know. And then it's better to perhaps lean on the people that do know, and use their expertise to help you as the employer to make a decision. I think employers think that he's all wise, all knowing but we're not all wise and all knowing I think it's important to understand who does know, go ask that person the questions.” (P1)

Employers highlighted that being able to lean on the expert in the field of inclusion, being the job coach, assisted them to further understand disability in the workplace.

“Look, the thing is, obviously, each disability is different. So, I wouldn't do this without a job coach. Definitely not. Because I am not specialist. I don't have a freaken clue. I can try and imagine I can, and also the disabled person also doesn't know what I know or not. You know, so that unknown gap needs to be filled.” (P3)

The recognition of what is unknown to employers further strengthened the relationship with the job coach as they provided knowledge and therefore the level of understanding amongst employers was enhanced around inclusion in the workplace.

4.3.2.2 Modified levels of thinking were achieved

Employers' experiences of using SE resulted in depth of understanding about disability and inclusion in the workplace.

“I think that everything that you're exposed to is going to change your level of thinking, okay and so yes, I must say that it is definitely going to modify my thinking.” (P2)

P2 reflected on how being exposed to SE assisted in modifying their levels of thinking beyond the workplace. P3 reiterated this reflection as follows:

“I think I'm just a more open minded about that. And I think more accepting, and also its something of equality, it's true equality when you actually can see the person for the person and not the person with the disability.” (P3)

Employers' understanding of disability expanded beyond disability to include an understanding of the employee as a human being, despite the presence of diagnosis.

“Um just, I think, a shift in perspective. And in terms of how I would position work, or how I would give feedback.” (P6)

There was a sense of confidence which was fostered amongst employers after implementing SE which assisted them in broadening their ability to accommodate for the needs in the workplace effectively and being more inclusive to all employees.

“But so, I think the mindset is there, definitely. But I think, you know, they didn't know that 15% of our population has got disabilities. And I think, you know, we've got to become more aware, and it's going to become more normalized.” (P3)

The shifts in thinking allowed employers to further consider PWD for employment as a business practice and be more considerate of disability needs in the workplace. Employers were also able to convey that exposure to SE implementation assisted them to be more open-minded for the future and be more considerate to various aspects which may influence a person's ability.

4.3.3 Increased awareness of inclusion

There was consensus amongst the participants that their knowledge of disability improved after being exposed to SE. Another aspect pertaining to awareness, is that most employers were able to express their future consideration of SE in their companies as well as assisting in spreading awareness beyond their own companies to other employers.

4.3.3.1 *Increased knowledge on disability*

The SE exposure for employers resulted in deeper understanding of and increased knowledge about disability.

“You need to be solutions-driven, but at the same time, holistic and to consider others.” (P6)

Employers were able to reflect on their increased levels of consideration for PWD in the workplace.

Researcher: “What would make the program easier, is that the main factor that would kind of flag to you?”

Participant 6: “Yes it would, with other elements, such as the understanding of the constraints, whatever that might be and everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, whether you're disabled or not, it's my job to, to leverage off the strengths.”

Employers who had prior experiences of working with PWD were able to express how SE assisted in deepening their understanding and in the provision of better support methods for PWD in the workplace. Employers were therefore comfortable with providing support for PWD as that was something they did prior.

“Yeah, not just as I said, coming from mining [industry] where we would hurt people [and acquire disabilities], it's the nature of the beast, I'm quite used to.” (P1)

P2 described their unique experience from the perspective of an individual with a disability. They reflected that their own impairment influenced how they treated all employees in the workplace, including PWD. The engagement in SE further enhanced this employer's ability to accommodate for PWD in the workplace as they could use their own experiences as an employer with a disability to understand other PWD in the workplace.

“You see, I have a hearing problem, I have got hearing aids. So fortunately, I got hearing aids, would I be able to do my job, in a few years? Probably not. In fact, I even sometimes with different people I battle to speak to them on the phone. Because they don’t come across clear for me. With you I am doing lip reading as well at the same time. As you know, that becomes part of the larger the process of finding how to look after your hearing properly. But yes, I probably wouldn’t be able to do the job. So the level of disability is has to be in line with “can they still do the job?”.” (P2)

Employers’ deepened understanding of disability was also translated to other employees and enabled them to look beyond disability in the workplace.

“I think it has given me quite a new look on persons with disabilities and people.” (P6)

Employers were able to express a sense of personal growth in their outlook on disability in the workplace and to reflect on their experiences after exposure to SE.

“It was an eye opener to see that there all of a sudden, your five soft disabilities; speech impaired, hearing impaired, that there was, physically, mentally exposed to that. And I thought, wow, you know, there’s quite a market. People, I think these speak on a correction, 5 million people with disabilities in South Africa. And that all opened up a whole new approach to employees and reaching out for people with disabilities. So that has affected my identity as such.” (P5)

4.3.3.2 Re-implementation and retention of PWD

Once employers had improved knowledge on disability and understood how this translated into the workplace after the implementation of SE, they were more likely to implement SE again and retain PWD in the workplace.

“I think for me, I'm very interested in this. And it's something that I wish to pursue, because I would like to look for a best practice in terms of attracting the skills of disabled people. Because I think there's a real value added, and I think this is a good space to do it. I think this is a very good space to do.” (P1)

P1 brought to light future SE implementation as a priority to aid best practice in the workplace.

“Well, it's something I've actually I'm gonna have to do quite a bit of work on this next year. Because, and I don't want to do it, just because of the legislative requirements, I don't want to do it because the labour inspector says that 2% of our workforce needs to come from a disabled population, I want to do it because I feel it's fundamentally the right thing to do. I think there are a lot of people in this world, that are able to work, but they just don't know how to get there to do that. So I think, for me, I want to have a look at what our brand is, as an employer, I want to have a look at what do our recruitment strategies look like?” (P1)

SE assisted employers to identify the need for future employment and retention of PWD through this strategy. Employers were able to identify how SE impacted on fostering a better holistic understanding of employees in the workplace and enhanced their ability to see beyond diagnoses. This, too, affected their considerations for recruitment and policy procedures in the company.

“Yeah, that's employing people for the future. As I stated, that depends on your client, and their operation.” (P5)

P5 expressed their increased ability to accommodate for their business clients' needs through the use of SE and provision of employment for PWD.

“You know, my goal is to create a safe place so that everyone can have a voice and not feel afraid to voice whatever they're feeling. Someone who's disabled, the challenge would be is to realise that and it comes in time,

***doesn't happen quickly. And so, your hopefully, progress will continue.”
(P6)***

Similarly, P6 described how their increased awareness led to the company being able to accommodate all employee needs during recruitment.

“But I mean, ultimately, I'm far more open to the possibilities. And I seem to now have more empathy to people with disabilities, so that openness and empathy, so I really put myself in their shoes. In other words, to see well, what would I like for me if I was in that person's shoes, and then it blows me away to see what they've achieved. It's just Incredible. And that's what I've personally taken away terms of me. Especially changed me for the better, I suppose.” (P6)

Employers were more likely to retain PWD after SE implementation as they had an increased awareness of what inclusion entailed in the workplace.

“First of all, from when there's issues to people that already have disabilities, to get them support and make sure that we keep them from my retention point of view, but also from an appointment point of view. Let's do it right from the beginning.” (P3)

Employers were able to shift their thinking to want to re-integrate and retain PWD in their worker roles after SE implementation.

“There is, of course, the financial side of things, there's tax benefits that they can tap into, should they employ people with disabilities that will assist them. That's just on the financial side, there's more about creating job opportunity for a person with a disability.” (P5)

With the increased awareness provided with the use of SE, employers were able to tap into the financial benefits of employing PWD, promoting employment of PWD to be mutually beneficial to the company and PWD.

4.3.3.3 *Becoming SE brand ambassadors*

Employers' increased awareness of inclusion and the employment of PWD led to them wanting to encourage more companies in SA to implement SE, as expressed by P3 in the following quote:

“You know it is interesting, because I've employed [a] disabled person, an because I've encouraged it. And I think on the one hand, you become sort of a go-to person if there's a need. So, I think that's cool. And like, you become sort of a brand ambassador in some way. And people ask about it.” (P3)

P4 further reflected that after they had experienced the implementation of SE, they felt it necessary to share information with other employers for future SE practice and implementation.

“If we were going to have like a case study as to how this individual has progressed, what the individual has been through and where they are now. And that it is possible that someone can come from having such a traumatic disability, and that they're able to work. I mean, it's not at the full capacity, but they're able to perform at least 70% of what I don't think it's 70%, but it's 50% of the required outcome.” (P4)

Some employers emphasised the importance of formally documenting the successes of PWD' ability to work alongside other employees in the workplace as something that should be distributed to other employers. A deeper understanding around RA was achieved for P4 which brings to light that awareness has been enhanced successfully for this employer.

“What happens is people start talking about it in their organization without you having to push it. And then they ask you, how did you find her, what happened, etc. And then that opened up a door.” (P3)

Employers described the benefits experienced in their company after SE implementation. They reflected that with spreading the positive outcomes to other employers would allow for more employers to use SE.

“But if we can just get them to stop to realize that this is worth the journey, through education, and through realization that there is a good return on investment. It’s worth it. I think that’s a trick and how to engage the industry I suppose.” (P6)

P3 described how through implementing and talking about SE to other employers created awareness on how to implement SE and the effectiveness of it. This point was further reiterated by the quotation below:

“Yeah, it’s just in terms of the change management around engagement and giving them insight into my experience I think once there’s a story where its worked, people will buy into it. So, definitely just the legacy.” (P3)

Employers described the implementation of SE to be positive and to have various impacts on them professionally and personally. Employing PWD through the use of SE was understood by employers to be more than an added extra to a company’s compliance in order to achieve a diverse workforce.

4.4 Theme four: Employer support for SE implementation.

Theme four describes how employers who utilised SE in the workplace to support PWD suggest methods of support for future employers to implement SE. This theme highlights the support needs for employers to successfully implement SE in the workplace. Three applicable categories emerged under this theme, namely: education on the SE intervention process, stakeholder partnerships are key and financial incentives available for employers.

4.4.1 Education on the SE intervention process

Employers were able to describe their needs in relation to being educated on the implementation of SE. This included transparency on the roles and expectations of the SE stakeholders, education around disability, making early intervention a priority as well as the provision of evidence of successful SE implementation.

4.4.1.1 Understanding SE and Disability

Employers expressed the need for a depth of understanding about the SE intervention and how to address disability in the workplace as a support measure to implement SE.

“But through the empowerment process which the job coach exposed me and the team, that was overcome, so I find it hard to find any areas for improvements. [], maybe one improvement suggestion would be is to come up with a roadmap, [] a framework of plan or steps of understanding for that individual [PWD] in the process of understanding the situation circumstance [reintegration], and that that framework or plan can be used going forward in engagement in the workplace.” (P6)

P6 was able to resonate that, after being educated on SE and the outcomes thereof, their engagement with SE was enhanced for future implementation.

“So, I think quite a lot of time went into explaining to him [the employee] what the process was and how the process would work and what the potential outcomes of the process were.” (P1)

P1 described how an emphasis was placed on understanding SE and the roles of each stakeholder before being able to engage successfully in the implementation.

“Yes, I think for us, it was the guidance in terms of you know, what could realistically be expected. And what were the very specific outcomes.” (P1)

Employers were able to highlight the aspect of further understanding disability and how this translates into the workplace.

“It will help if you have quite an intense session upfront on what is the disability, and what are we dealing with here and is really a good fit for our environmental, our work environments.” (P6)

P6's statement above highlights the benefit to SE implementation if the employer had sufficient knowledge regarding the disability and the needs associated with the disability.

“I've gone on a journey of learning more about those aspects as well. So, I'm gonna highly recommend educating other organizations about this, making them more aware of, of this aspect, and just how much benefit you can get from it, provided it's managed correctly, upfront, and approached correctly.” (P6)

Being well-versed in the implementation of SE assisted employers to share knowledge with other employers in the OLM in order to increase SE implementation.

“That there is an opportunity for people with disabilities to work in the open labour market. And there is certain restrictions, when people with disabilities would come on to the project work there. So that's very much engaging with your client and the company, on people with disabilities.” (P5)

It was found that once employers understood the concept of disability and relevant factors in the workplace, they felt comfortable to incorporate PWD with the use of RA in the workplace, as P5 made reference to their consideration before employing PWD.

Employers relied on the role of the job coach as an SE stakeholder to guide the process of employing or re-integrating PWD.

“Okay, so I've also had a disabled person working with the model. So, from a personal point of view, I think, I know that the employment contract would have not been as successful and last as long if it wasn't for the job coach, for a fact.” (P3)

Employers are able to understand the requirements of the SE intervention with the support of the job coach in order to have a successful implementation. This further reinforces the need for clear roles and expectations for stakeholders before engaging in the SE intervention.

This sub-category reflected that effective education on SE and disability will allow for employers to understand their role of supporting PWD in the OLM, and therefore encourage early intervention.

4.4.1.2 Early intervention is prioritised

Employers were able to convey the need for SE to occur to support the integration of PWD. This factor was recognised in order to avoid long term negative effects in the workplace. The participants proposed that when employers are equipped with knowledge around SE, they would be able to identify the needs for future implementation and seek out intervention at an early stage.

“So, I needed to rely on the job coach to inform me to, to put me in the right frame of mind. And, yeah, that's a critical step for these kinds of initiatives. Otherwise, if we don't engage upfront, in the correct manner, [SE implementation process] we could potentially result in a lot of unnecessary complications or struggles later on.” (P6)

Employers highlighted the need for the job coach to assist in directing them and to allow for early action to ensure the appropriate process of implementation is followed.

“Definitely the support from the job coach, the heads up in the very beginning.” (P4)

P4 further reiterated the need for the job coach in this assistance for provision of education to allow for future early SE intervention in the workplace.

“Look, it was a difficult process. I don’t think anything could have made it easier, apart from maybe that had it been done 20 years earlier, and they [management] might possibly be a bit firmer.” (P2)

P2 brought to light that the employer struggled to provide support for PWD when the intervention was brought in at a later stage in their employment. Employers were more likely to have success in the SE intervention if they addressed concerns earlier and allowed for support in the workplace.

4.4.1.3 Employers required previous evidence of successful intervention

Employers were able to address the concept of evidence as something that was more likely to get them involved in SE. They reflected on the fact that they, and other employers, would show more interest in the implementation of SE if they had access to evidence of employers’ success in using the SE intervention in their companies.

“So, this, selling it into the business takes long, first of all, and secondly, there's a massive sense of resistance. So, the change management around in the organization has got to be really good. So that's why I believe it's got to come from someone that's got a lot of seniority not just in rank, but in influence. That will drive the culture. So, it's not easy. It's brilliant, but it's not easy.” (P3)

Having a company culture that supports inclusion in the workplace assisted employers with SE implementation. Employers acknowledged the time taken is needed to work beyond resistance to reap the benefits of the future implementation.

“So that, and this is the thing, right, is that if, if employers knew that it would be, it would be fantastic, because they will then understand that

the value add and the culture that it creates, and the performance, encouragement of peers and things like that.” (P6)

By highlighting the outcomes which impact on an employer’s company positively, employers who have experience in using SE will assist in more employers in SA being open to SE implementation. Employers rely on evidence-based practice from their own industry to assist in making this decision.

Employers are more likely to buy into the concept of SE if they are provided with information directly from other employers’ experiences and the effects on a company. This highlights the need for employers to share their experience widely to increase awareness of SE in the SA OLM.

“I think that its important if you have a reference [employer with experience in SE], so if you are going to sell it into an organisation it would be cool if another business owner or employer from another company to share the experience because it’s only that sort of marketing, through and then you’ve got it because the thing is if an OT comes to sell it to me, it’s not as valuable I think, or as believable or as relatable as another employer.” (P3)

Employers reflected that the provision of education on SE through the lens of other employers in the OLM assisted in creating awareness for future SE implementation.

4.4.2 Stakeholder partnerships are key

Employers with experience in using the SE model in the OLM were able to demonstrate the necessity for partnerships between the stakeholders involved in SE. This is a key support measure for future implementation of SE. The assistance from the job coach was mentioned as an essential support to employers for successful intervention. This factor also depended on the buy-in from employers and employees with a disability on the implementation.

4.4.2.1 Assistance of the job coach

The experiences of employers using SE in their companies were able to express the essential need for the job coach during this implementation.

“But I think that engagement with OT, is absolutely critical. You don't get that understanding upfront, it can backfire on us a lot. That's something I don't want to see happen.” (P6)

Employers disclosed that the job coach has a unique ability to support both the employer and PWD in the implementation of SE. This was noted by employers to be a necessity. They further noted that the unique expertise of the job coach assisted in the success of the SE implementation for both the employer and PWD.

“Because they, they become the person that you can vent towards, whether you're the employer or the employee, and you can be honest about it.” (P3)

The job coach assisted in building partnerships between stakeholders in order to allow for the intervention to unfold smoothly.

“Ultimately, the challenge will be unique to the circumstance. And, and if you don't understand it, then you're, you're like dead [in the] water.” (P6)

Employers relied on the job coaches to provide assistance regarding the nature of the intervention and supported employers to better understand the needs for SE implementation.

“Oh, absolutely. I intend to carry on with this relationship [with the SE service provider company] for quite a while, as I say to you, I personally have gotten an interest in this. And yeah, I'm very keen to make use of someone's expertise to help. You know, I mean, as I said, I'm not the expert. I can facilitate it. You know, I can see the benefit of it. But yeah, I'm definitely not the expert.” (P1)

Employers recognised that, for future SE implementation, despite having the knowledge on SE, the job coach is required to continue to manage the intervention. Employers highlight the need for clear roles of each stakeholder to play an important part of the intervention; hence the need for strong partnerships between stakeholders.

“Lots of encouragement and lots and lots of feedback, especially if they are from a younger generation. Lots and lots of feedback. This was good, you can do better here, I appreciate you there. I think the encouragement is critical, because I think a lot of disabled people when they start working, they are very insecure and so the boost of confidence is critical and helping them understand what being induced and all of these things. But push them as hard if not harder than able bodied individuals.” (P3)

The job coach assisted PWD to adjust to the workplace with their individual skill set. Employers were also able to recognise that job coaches are health professionals, and therefore hold confidentiality for each stakeholder to ensure transparency in a tailored manner.

“I am sure that they are guided by the law in terms of what they can and can’t divulge, but I just feel that once a week, I should be let know what they have done” (P5)

Employers further highlighted the need for the job coach's presence in the workplace prior to and during the SE intervention as that it assisted them in understanding the complexities of the job and the environment.

“I know the job coach started with like the day that the individuals came to the office, that day the individual started, but I think and she took down the jobs basic specifications, but maybe, just an additional step, maybe before the individual starts, if the job coach could come in like a day or two, just to buddy or shadow, another, just to see what will be expected of the individual? Because it's very different on paper, as in the practical experience.” (P4)

Regular feedback to the employers regarding the progress of PWD were highlighted as a need by the employers.

“I would probably make a suggestion that the OT can, every six months or so, come do maybe an assessment of that person to see where they are in that space. And then have feedback to the organization to say, to keep people within organization who's responsible for that individual, gets constructive feedback. Well, [] should we change something should we do something differently. And I would say that OT engagements are recommended every six months or something like that. And then feedback to the organization would just help. Because we're not OTs, we're not, we don't have that professional inclination, are we chasing down all sorts of other technical issues. So that would probably help.”
(P6)

A further support suggestion by employers was to have ongoing support to aid the SE implementation and ensure all aspects are continuously assessed in order to keep accommodating for the needs of the intervention for long-term usage. The initiation of the intervention is led by the job coach, this essentially cannot be done if there is not buy-in from both the employer and PWD.

4.4.2.2 Buy-in from employers and PWD

Ensuring success in the SE intervention required all stakeholders' buy-in to the implementation of SE. The job coach provided the education regarding the implementation and for it to be a success, there required to be motivation and interest from the employer and PWD to effectively engage in the SE intervention.

“Once I get buy-in from them and they're very accommodating, to then guide, discuss with the people in the actual department and say, right, this is what's coming your way. This is what's expected of you this is what's not to expected of you.” (P1)

Employers described the need for buy-in based on the education and evidence provided. Once they bought into the concept they were motivated to engage effectively. Having buy-in is an essential step to implementing SE effectively.

Employers demonstrated the need for a workplace culture to support diversity.

“Diversity is key. So, I’m a big fan of diversity because, your solutions are far more holistic to the client. So, everyone has a different view, a different perspective, which we need to embrace. And we do that here. And the more diversity you have, the better the solution is.” (P6)

Taking into consideration the needs of all stakeholders during the SE intervention would support future implementation through advocating for diversity in the workplace.

“Yes, there has got to be buy in from the employee.” (P2)

Other than having the job coach and the employer's buy-in to SE implementation, an additional factor is to ensure that PWD involved had the motivation to work again.

“So, I think quite a lot of time went into explaining to him what the process was and how the process would work and what the potential outcomes of the process were. So, I think there was a lot of coaching in terms of that, and I think he had to buy in, in order to properly participate in the process.” (P1)

The aspect of buy-in from PWD is required to ensure the SE intervention is effective.

“It’s a process and it’s a long process. For you [job coach], for the employer. It’s a very frustrating process. And you have to be patient. But I do think that the employee really has to understand that they need to come with their part and they’ve got to, they’ve got to try.” (P2)

Employers also understand that with support and assistance during the SE intervention, PWD are able to build their motivation into staying in the workplace and committed to the SE intervention.

4.4.3 Financial incentives for employers

Apart from employers being able to understand the SE needs for implementation, employers suggested there was also the limited factor considered for SE implementation through legislation.

“So, it's part of the BBBEE requirements to get their scorecard and they have to have a really high scorecard to be able to get work. So even though I've always thought it's a good idea to have diverse workforce, it's hard to sell just the concept of “ oh you've got to employ disabled people” it's much easier to sell it as “this is gonna make you money”.” (P3)

Despite limited evidence available in SA regarding SE being a well-matched strategy to meet the needs of employers to employ PWD, employers highlighted how the employment of PWD could fit into companies.

“Well, within BBBEE, we've got goal sets internally for disabled persons. And that's inherent within the company. So, there's a whole demographic profiling, we look at that all the time, we try and get equal representation, according to demographics. And disabilities is just one of the slices of that picture. So internally, we have we have an understanding of, of these kinds of aspects. I would imagine the legislation would provide the framework, which I'm not really involved with all the details, but the frame will be provided for us would latch on to that framework to see whether we supported as best as possible.” (P6)

BBBEE is one portion of legislation where employers gain incentives to employ PWD. SE is seen as a strategy which can assist employers to do this.

“It’s not just a scorecard, that it’s personal journey, and if you embrace it, you embrace diversity at the same time, there’s real benefit, there’s real leverage, the return of investment that you get from staff, we sell ours, we sell time we sell ideas.” (P6)

The law identified by a few employers was not a well explored topic by employers due to the lack of information regarding the match between SE and SA legislation.

Employers were able to identify how SE could potentially be included in SA legislation. They were able to recognise that employing PWD could assist employers’ ability to be diverse as well as gaining financial incentives through the implementation of hiring PWD through BBBEE.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5. Introduction

In this chapter the facilitators and challenges experienced by employers when using the SE model to employ PWD in the OLM in SA will be discussed. Additionally, how employers' attitudes around disability and inclusion in the workplace were enhanced after the implementation of SE as well as their highlighted support needs for future SE implementation will be discussed.

This chapter will aim to highlight the best practice guidelines for SE implementation for OLM employers in SA.

5.1 Facilitators experienced by employers when using the SE model in the OLM

SE as an employment strategy for PWD has been shown to facilitate the inclusion of this marginalised group in OLM employment (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). SE has been highlighted for its well-defined method and achieving positive employment outcomes for PWD compared to other vocational models (Practice & Bond, 2003). Employers in this current study participated in the implementation of SE in the SA OLM and were able to recognise aspects which made the SE intervention more favourable for them to engage in. Theme one brought to light the facilitators identified by employers when engaging in SE, related to stakeholder partnerships, RA and support from the job coach.

5.1.1 *Partnerships amongst stakeholders enhance SE implementation*

Employers have been found to be the gatekeepers of assisting PWD with opportunities for employment; they are therefore emphasised as a key partner in the SE intervention as well as a client of the job coach (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). The job coach has a unique skill set to build partnerships with stakeholders in SE (Lectome, 2020). Stakeholders in the SE intervention will be discussed here as the employer, PWD, and the job coach. It was highlighted by Hajwani (2008) that the job coach is able to understand the needs of employers as well as providing them with relevant information around SE to enhance their ability to engage in the partnership. Employers lack adequate knowledge on SE and the requirements thereof (Gustafsson et al., 2013).

The job coach is required to fill the gap and provide adequate knowledge on SE and the intervention process. Employers in this study reported the same, since they were able to identify the job coach as the stakeholder responsible to form partnerships between stakeholders in SE, as they approached the employers to assist PWD in their reintegration to the workplace. The job coach forms these partnerships through a person-centred service and have the ability to form constructive partnerships (Hutchinson et al., 2018). This was helpful to employers in this current study, as most employers did not have any prior experience with SE and were not aware of how to navigate the intervention in their workplaces. This partnership furthermore assisted the employer to make effective decisions in the workplace. The transparency in the process of the SE intervention for employers was a facilitator in their participation in SE.

Communication amongst stakeholders was identified in this current study by employers as imperative in order to have a successful SE intervention. Employers appreciated open lines of communication as they relied heavily on the job coach for guidance during the SE intervention. Communication was effective when strong partnerships were established with the stakeholders involved. This factor assisted the job coach to manage the lines of accountability (Hutchinson et al., 2018). Employers in this study were more responsive to implementing SE when the expectations were made explicit. This meant having clear roles amongst stakeholders in the SE intervention. The job coach is able to maintain partnerships between stakeholders and therefore assists in the success to the SE intervention (Gustafsson et al, 2013).

Employers appreciated a collaborative approach between stakeholders in order to aid the success of the SE intervention. In a study conducted in Iceland, looking at the effectiveness of work inclusion in SE, it was made apparent that having roles of each stakeholder were beneficial and this lead to the respect of expectations during the implementation (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). In this study too, collaboration amongst stakeholders was noted as a significant principle in facilitating SE. Employers relied on the clear lines of communication between stakeholders to understand the implications of working with PWD in the OLM as this was something new to some of them.

Employers relied on the job coach to guide them in terms of what is appropriate and inappropriate to say to PWD in the workplace (Kocman et al., 2018). They were also conscious about ensuring the appropriate use of language to be translated throughout the workplace in order to avoid any miscommunication. Employers identified the need for feedback between the job coach and the PWD as imperative to ensure adequate support to the PWD. The employer also required additional information which was separate to what PWD would share with them in order to foster a deeper understanding regarding the appropriate provision of support from the job coach. This was possible as job coaches tailor individual plans to support PWD in their work-related needs (Kawohl et al., 2015). The job coach was able to extract deeper understandings of how PWD experienced their entry into work as well as during the intervention. PWD were more likely to open up to the job coach compared to the employer. Therefore, the employers relied on the input of the job coach to assist them. The input is referred to as workplace support conducted by the job coach, which can be identified as the job coach working in collaboration with employers to adjust work tasks and assist in any difficulties which may unfold during the SE intervention (Corbière et al., 2014).

Stakeholder buy-in as a facilitator of success in SE intervention was directly linked to the outcome of the intervention. Employers were more likely to buy into SE when there was adequate knowledge and education provided about SE and its implementation with PWD (Kocman et al., 2018). It was found that employers who had prior exposure and experience to working with PWD, were more likely to buy into SE. Wigget-Barnard and Swartz's (2012) research described how the willingness of employers improved when they had prior experience of working with PWD. Employers in this study further described when PWD were not adequately motivated about the process of SE or did not understand the expectations effectively, the intervention did not go according to plan. Hajwani (2008) highlighted that PWD's own understanding of the SE intervention should be sufficient to effectively sustain a job. It was found in this study that, when PWD were not fully committed to the process, they failed to complete the SE intervention. Therefore, it is recommended to have equivalent buy-in from stakeholders in order to have an effective SE intervention.

5.1.2 RA in the workplace assisted employers to engage in SE

Employers in this study found the assistance of RA to be facilitatory when implementing SE in the workplace. RA as cited in the EEA (1998) assisted employers to accommodate PWD in the workplace. RA was provided in the form of tangible and intangible methods to assist PWD to be involved in the SE intervention. Employers in SA who employ 50 or more employees are referred to as “designated employers” (EEA, 1998). Half of the employers who participated in this study were designated employers as defined in the EEA of 1998 and were therefore required by law to implement RA measures for PWD in their workplaces. The other half of the employers in this study implemented RA voluntarily with the guidance of the job coach.

Employers in this study found that, having adequate knowledge and understanding of disability and disclosure, was facilitatory to the successful SE implementation. Employers were then able to effectively integrate PWD into the workplace alongside other employees who did not have a disability. This further translates to affording PWD with the same opportunities and equal access to resources as other employees without have disabilities. Inclusion in the workplace is supported by the UNCRPD (2006). South Africa is a signatory to the UNCRPD which commits the country's laws and policies to promoting equal rights and participation in all spheres of life to PWD (UN, 2006). Employers were reliant on information about disability and disclosure from the job coach to make informed decisions in the workplace. Nota et al. (2014) explored employers' attitudes around inclusion in the workplace of PWD and, similarly, found that the employer was more likely to engage in employing PWD when they had knowledge on disability and the type of disability.

Disclosure refers to verbal communication of information about oneself (Brohan et al., 2012). In this study, disclosure also pertains to information about disability status. For employers in this study, it was important that PWD's disclosed their disability status to the job coach who could then filter down that information as necessary. Disclosure in the workplace was found to assist employers to deepen their understanding of disability and its presentation in the workplace in this current study. A recommendation made by Wiggett-Barnard (2013) was to encourage a higher level of disability disclosure to assist in accommodating PWD in the workplace. It was furthermore

reiterated that disclosure assisted employers to better accommodate the needs of PWD's in the workplace (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013). Employers in this study discussed how they were aware of the privacy aspect around disclosure and understanding of an individual's disability, and this aspect was respected by employers. The employers were privy to sufficient information in order to pass on to other employees who worked alongside PWD. This was done in order to avoid other employees identifying the RA as preferential treatment in the workplace as well as allowing co-workers to effectively support PWD in the workplace. It was found by Lengnick-Hall et al. (2008) that co-workers without disability would react negatively to PWD in the workplace as well as the concept of disability may alienate other employees in the workplace which would perpetuate into decreasing the production of the company. This again highlights the need for a disability policy in the workplace as a policy will assist in the increasing employment experiences of PWD (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013). Workplace policies would assist SA employers to be guided clearly when employing PWD in the OLM and assist in effective employment of PWD. This factor will aim to promote inclusion in the workplace as well as foster a sense of diversity.

Employers in this study were able to reflect on the terminology used to describe the provision of RA in the workplace. Hajwani (2008) found that language-use was adapted by employers after having knowledge on disability through disclosure. Employers were required to be weary of choice of words in order to avoid the creation of negative stereotypes which could be triggering to PWD in the workplace (Hajwani, 2008). It was found in this research that employers' ability to address PWD was enhanced with the support of the job coach and knowledge on disability through disclosure, therefore aiding inclusion in the workplace. Information was required to filter down to other employees in order to effectively support PWD in the workplace to ensure positive engagement alongside other employees. A systematic review conducted on factors which affect disclosure in the workplace, specifically linking to mental health, identified varied levels of disclosure that can be agreed to in the workplace (Brohan et al., 2012). The reviewers suggested that partial disclosure was the preferred method for PWD, due to it protecting the privacy of the intricacies of the diagnosis (Brohan et al., 2012). Partial disclosure is described as PWD only sharing the most important information about their diagnosis without alluding to much detail on their condition (Brohan et al., 2012). In this current study, employers were able to

discuss how they had adequate information to filter down to other employees in order for there to be effective disclosure and understanding of disability in the workplace, to provide sufficient support to PWD. It was noted by Wiggett-Barnard and Swartz (2012) that disclosure from PWD is necessary in order for RA to be provided in the workplace, which is done in the form of a declaration to their employers.

The environment in which RA was implemented was found to be influential in how SE was implemented in this study. The existing company environment of tangible and intangible structures played a role in how SE was implemented. Employers were open to considering various methods to support PWD in the workplace. Hajwani (2008) found that employers were willing to provide RA during the SE intervention when the recommendations were reasonable in nature and would have sufficient time to implement them, in other words having adequate preparation to integrate PWD. Employers placed emphasis on how PWD were experiencing their reintegration into the workplace and the provision of support and accommodations (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). This aspect was focused on in order to enhance PWD working experience whether it be through making physical or environmental adaptations (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Employers in this current study similarly understood that environmental adaptations were necessary to adequately support PWD in the workplace.

Local labour legislation supported the inclusion of PWD in the workplace and employers in this study were able to identify how SE could fit into that. Labour law in SA was highlighted by employers as guiding their actions for disability integration in the workplace, however it was not something all employers admitted to implementing or having prior knowledge of. Three employers were subject to BBBEE (2003) legislation in their companies. BBBEE is implemented in companies to promote transformation and representation of minority groups in the workplace and this is measured with a scorecard (Wiggett-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). A scorecard indicates diversity in the workplace and whether disability was included in that amongst other aspects like social and economic company concepts (Wiggett-Barnard & Swartz, 2012). Employers in the current study were able to relay how SE was used to influence their BBBEE level and aided their BBBEE rating for future. They further mentioned the financial incentives for employers who employ PWD as they would receive a tax

rebate. In Europe, employers are legislated to employ PWD, specifically through SE (Nota et al., 2014). Tax benefits in the United States of America encourage employers to be more receptive to hiring PWD with the necessary steps to do so, despite disability employment not being a well-known concept (Brockner et al., 2006).

Despite SE not being included in SA legislation and policy, some employers in this study had internal policies to support disability employment which therefore assisted them to utilise SE. Maja et al. (2011) described how the presence of legislation and policy was integral in controlling segregation and discrimination in the workplace. Employers who had existing internal policies present in their companies to employ PWD were willing to do so through SE. However, in this study, only one employer had provision for SE in their internal company policy. Internal policies, procedures and actions in which a company actions is done to assist in improving job satisfaction and commitment to work of all employees (Wilson et al., 2004). Additional to the provision of RA in the workplace, some employers were also guided by group insurance policies which assisted individuals working in the company to be protected in the instance that they should be unwell or acquire a disability. This is referred to as disability management in the most recent study completed by Howell et al. (2023), whereby the aspect of early intervention and prevention in SA disability claims in private insurers were explored. Disability management refers to “a workplace prevention and remediation strategy designed to encourage the retention of persons with ill health, injury and acquired disability in employment using a coordinated approach with careful consideration of employment needs, organisational requirements and legal responsibilities” (Howell et al., 2023, p. 577). Employers in this study reflected that the provision of disability policy and being able to see the execution of support in action via the insurer and provision of SE intervention was comforting to them as it gave them a sense of job security. In this instance, SE is not inserted into this disability policy.

5.1.3 Support from the job coach

Within the SE intervention, there is the commitment to on-going support, whether it be in or out of the workplace to ensure that PWD can maintain their employment over time (Wehman et al., 1997). Employers in this study agreed unanimously that the

support offered from the job coach during the SE intervention was essential in the implementation of SE. They all reported that the SE intervention would not be possible without the assistance of the job coach. The job coach takes on the intermediary role between the employer and PWD (Engelbrecht, 2020). This too was found in this current study as employers discussed how they and PWD were provided with support.

The provision of support was graded to the needs of the employer and PWD and support was offered in various ways to each stakeholder. The job coaching strategy which the OT as the job coach applied during the SE intervention is cultivated from the expert knowledge and skills as a health professional as well as experience in SE (Van Niekerk et al., 2015). Employers in this research appreciated the fact that job coaches had the qualifications to provide support to assist them in placement and allocation of work tasks in the workplace. Job coaches were found to assist in the placement through engagement and assessment of PWD' needs and matching them to a job as well as providing support which assisted PWD to be in the OLM (Rössler et al., 2020).

The job coach was able to take the burden off employers who did not have experience in supporting PWD in the workplace (Hutchinson et al., 2018). Employers required clear lines of communication during the SE intervention which were honest and assisted the employer to make practical accommodations in the workplace. Employers furthermore expressed how the presence of the job coach in the workplace was facilitatory to the success in the SE intervention. On-site presence of the job coach was achieved through work site visit (Van Niekerk et al., 2015), during this time the job coach was able to observe PWD in the workplace performing their respective job tasks and provide advice regarding their performance to strengthen RA. This was not performed all the time, but rather on a needs basis. Job coaches were able to grade the level of support provided to employers, and employers were able to comment on both on and off-site support. They were able to access the job coach through various methods such as; email, telephone call and in-person throughout the SE intervention and that was a facilitator identified by the employers linked to the success of SE. Job coaches referred to in this research study were able to make use of current methods of communication which matched the preference of the employer. Employers were able to reflect that they knew the job coach was available even when they were not

physically present. The support via tele-health was mentioned to be a successful method of communication (Christensen et al., 2015). The flexibility in the ability to provide support for both employers and PWD were found to be beneficial and assisted in the provision of long-term support. Employers in this study were able to share how the implementation of SE assisted them to provide support for all their employees. It was highlighted that the support provided to employers was key to achieving inclusion in the workplace (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021).

5.2 Challenges experienced by employers when using the SE Model in the OLM

Employers in this study shared their experiences about RA in a facilitatory and challenging way. Wiggitt-Barnard and Swartz (2012) identified cost of services to accommodate PWD as something which would dissuade employers in SA. The aspect of accessibility and accommodations in the workplace can be identified as both barriers and facilitators in assisting PWD to enter the OLM. Despite SE being the preferred method in some countries to re-integrate PWD into the OLM, it is not included in SA Legislation.

Theme two will be discussed below, describing the challenges employers experienced in this study with regard to re-integration, communication issues and lack of knowledge available to employers about SE.

5.2.1 Re-Integration into the workplace

In this study, integration or re-integration refers to returning to or entering into the workplace with a disability. Employers suggested that integration of PWD is usually more favourable after having adequate knowledge on disability and accommodations required (Wiggitt-Barnard, 2013). Some employers in this study had difficulties with managing cost for services offered by the job coach during implementation of SE. With half of the employers in this study, SE services externally funded by third parties namely; insurance companies which supplemented the cost of services for SE implementation, whereas the other half of the employers directly funded the SE intervention. The latter employers were more conscious of costs associated with SE and that resulted in a reduction of the provision of support due to limited funds

available to cover the cost. A cost calculation study of SE service utilisation in SA noted that the cost of the SE service influenced the access to sources of funding (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). In Iceland, European Union countries, United States of America and United Kingdom; SE is legislated and therefore federal sources of funding can be accessed by employers. In SA, there is provision for funding for traditional vocational rehabilitation programs more aimed at the hospital and protective employment sector (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). There was further mention by Engelbrecht (2020), that SA legislation and policy has the potential to support the application of inclusion of PWD into the OLM, therefore applying SE. Employers in this study reflected that they were required to monitor how much support was provided to PWD due to having to consider the cost of services. This was seen as disadvantageous as the principle of on-going support in SE was not always viable. Hoffmann et al. (2014) stated that support should be “time-unlimited” as well as also recognising that SE was more cost efficient compared to other vocational rehabilitation programs (Hoffmann et al., 2014).

Secondary to cost of services was the time taken to implement SE. Employers in this study noted that the cost of service was influenced by the amount of support required to implement SE into their companies. Employers who were indirectly funded by the third-party funder were able to reflect on their experience of not having to take on that responsibility and felt more secure in the process. Group Risk insurance is provided to employees in a company as a form of employee benefits and are provided to employees in the hopes to decrease risk of short and long-term disability (Howell et al., 2023). This benefit can be provided to employees in a company in the form of a lump sum pay-out or ongoing income protection. This resonated with employers who were indirectly funding the process as it highlighted how SE intervention forms part of a disability claim intervention which provided resources for employees in the workplace.

Employers reflected that their ability to buy in to a potentially lengthy process of SE took time as they were resisting to engage due to additional time and effort required. Additionally, the consideration for the aspect of filling an employment quota through hiring PWD into their companies was a factor which required time. Van Niekerk et al. (2015) found that the implementation of SE service elements took more time in the

first four months of implementation and tapered down when PWD and the employer were settled into the SE intervention. Even though support was tapered after the initial phase of implementation, there was still a need for on-going support. During these initial phases the job coach was available in various ways to the employer and PWD. Employers in this study resonated that indeed it is challenging to take extensive time investment to implement SE, however there is a need for provision of employment for PWD in SA's OLM and therefore employers are required to do the work to achieve that. It is therefore noted that commitment is required from employers in order to implement SE successfully. Chan et al. (2010) described when employers were committed to the employment of PWD, they had more successful outcomes and were able to overcome perceived barriers. Employers in Hoffmann et al. (2014) study described the costs associated with SE implementation as a "social return on investment" (p.1188) which is aimed at improving PWD's ability to be integrated back into society through work.

Time taken to implement SE also challenged employers in maintaining their own roles and responsibilities in this current study. Employers were able to discuss issues around navigating their ability to provide support to PWD in the workplace, and how this was, at times, not possible due to their own work demands. This aspect can be recognised and shown how the job coach can provide assistance for employers in this regard to ensure that they can provide support as well as maintain their own jobs. A key factor highlighted in SE is time-unlimited support services and it is known to continue indefinitely (Practice & Bond, 2003). Employers were able to recognise this key point, however there were still challenges to meet this requirement. Hajwani (2008) further confirmed this point through her description of employers' lack of availability to provide this form of support in the workplace as a result of their own work demands, and highlighted that this support to PWD was to be absorbed by the job coach.

5.2.2 Factors pertaining to environment

RA, as described by employers, takes on many variations within the workplace. Employers described how they were interested in the implementation of SE, however they had to overcome structural physical environmental barriers which hindered their

ability to appropriately accommodate for PWD who had physical impairments in the workplace. Despite this factor of the requirement of environmental structural accommodations for PWD in the workplace, this further assisted employers to have more insight on their existing structures and how to better equip themselves for an inclusive work environment. The UCRPD (2006) described that PWD have the right to work equally with other employees in their choice of employment in the OLM as well as having a work environment that is inclusive and accessible to all. This point resonated with employers in this study.

The importance of having job tasks that match PWD in the workplace needs to be considered in order to have a successful integration. Barriers to inclusion through employment of PWD in the workplace are recognised globally (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Employers are therefore encouraged to have measures in place to provide RA for PWD, so that they are able to reintegrate PWD into the workplace (Bond, 1998). SE approaches workplace integration with a “place and train” model where PWD rapidly enter work and are trained and supported while performing real jobs (Bond, 1998). The environment is directly linked to how the PWD also experiences disability in the workplace (Ebrahim, 2022). Ebrahim (2022) further sheds light on the finding that SA employment environments are not suitable for PWD with physical impairments which require aspects of the built environment to be accessible. This point is important to note as it can further contribute to the exclusion of PWD in the workplace which perpetuates disability unemployment in SA. Employers in this current study were able to recognise how SE assisted them to identify barriers in the environment and how to create a more inclusive space in which to further implement SE.

5.2.3 Expert advice from the job coach

Support from the job coach was highlighted in this current study to be a part of the RA that employers provided PWD within the workplace when reintegrating. The job coach assisted the employer with environmental recommendations regarding PWD reintegrating into the workplace. This was further explored by Hajwani (2008) whereby the research participants highlighted the need of the job coach to identify the work

capacity of PWD before the reintegration phase. The participants further delved into how their understanding of disability assisted them to make adaptations in the workplace to suit PWD more effectively (Hajwani, 2008). Employers in this current study recognised that they found the provision of environmental support whereby they needed to shift employees and PWD around in the workplace to provide the appropriate level of RA to be challenging. They were also able to recognise that it would not be a long-term need to make so many accommodations in the workplace, as once the PWD was successfully integrated, they would be able to work with less hands-on support or restructuring.

A contrasting aspect arose with employers in this study, as they were faced with PWD who did not accept support from the employer or the job coach in order to participate in the SE intervention and work effectively alongside other employees in the workplace. Employers found this challenging as they could not successfully integrate the PWD into the workplace. The employer and the job coach were found to be figures of authority in this study from whom the PWD took directive. Job coaches are also noted to take on an employer-like role within the SE intervention (Gustafsson et al., 2013). PWD are required to have the motivation to participate in the SE intervention as per the principles of IPS, suggesting that individuals who want to work will not be excluded from the process (IPS grow, 2023). Employers are required to take note of this point and seek guidance going forward regarding the buy-in of PWD with future SE interventions. PWD have the right to choose their own path of employment and disclose their impairment in the workplace as they feel fit (Ebrahim, 2022). Engelbrecht (2020) brought to light the need of employers in the OLM to be open to receiving education and support regarding the method of provision of support from the job coach as well as the provision of ongoing support for PWD in the workplace order to assist in having the SE intervention be successful. It is also to be noted that the job coach picks up the responsibility of the employers level of support in the workplace, when an employer is too busy or unable to provide support to the PWD pertaining to the work needs (Gustafsson et al., 2013).

Employers recognise that they are not well equipped to make accommodations in the workplace regarding treatment and understanding of how disability plays out in the workplace. Employers were found to rely on the job coach for recommendations of

the workplace needs which were feasible and economic to support reintegration of PWD (Corbière et al., 2014). It is foregrounded that the need of employer education and desensitisation in the workplace is essential in order to implement SE appropriately. This further resulted in the need for the job coach to be available to the employer and PWD as needed. When the job coach was not available, this was challenging to employers. Employers required to be provided with expert information pertaining disability-related issues, as well as for the job coach to be contactable immediately should issues arise in the workplace (Gustafsson et al., 2013).

Employers in this study had difficulty adapting to PWD with newly acquired disabilities and had seen the differences in where PWD were born with a disability. Employers are also known to have limited perceptions of how disability presents and have limited expectations of job placement and therefore required assistance to adjust to this factor and adapt the environment to suit PWD (Maja et al., 2011). It was an asset to have the expert advice coming from the job coach as employers were wary of setting precedence within the workplace which they could not provide to all employees. Therefore having clear roles and expectations amongst stakeholders was imperative to ensure that there was fair treatment and management of PWD in and amongst other employees. Principles of SE in SA are rooted in values of “equality, fairness, respect, and integration” (Van Niekerk et al., 2011 p.87). SE further aims to mitigate the effects of stereotyping in the workplace and rather improve inclusion through integrating PWD into the OLM (Hajwani, 2008). SE is implemented as through IPS internationally and locally with the principle of zero-exclusion. This is understood to again highlight the point of PWD who want to work will be able to with the correct amount of support (Drake et al., 2019). This decision is made with the assistance of an expert job coach who is able to use patient-centred care as well as their knowledge on disability rights (Drake et al., 2019). There was an evident need from employers in this current study pertaining to communication amongst stakeholders to be more frequent and in more detail. Some employers felt they did not have enough access to the job coach and this was due to limited availability of the job coach. Collaboration and communication was found to be essential in avoiding misunderstandings in the work place. The EUSE (2010) further reiterated that there needs to be a fostering of healthy working partnerships and good communication amongst stakeholders as well as PWD having the access to the job coach when they need to.

5.2.4 Lack of SE knowledge available to employers in SA

SE is not a well-established or researched employment strategy in SA. There is therefore limited SE resources available to SA employers in the public domain. SE is not explicit in SA legislation or policy but it has been highlighted where the model can be situated into the existing structures due to inclusive laws pertaining to PWD. According to Dube (2005), SA has a number of legislative frameworks and policies which promote and protect the rights of PWD as well as the inclusion of PWD in all levels of government. It was noted in this study that employers in SA are not effectively implementing these legislation frameworks and policies due to lack of government fiscal resources pertaining to hiring PWD (Dube, 2005). In SA, research on SE describes that legislation promotes the inclusion of PWD into the OLM, however there is a requirement for specific details to be included around SE (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). Literature further states that an important stakeholder to be involved in the SE implementation is SA government organisations who are able to implement policy and secure funding to assist in a wider range of SE services (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). The aspect around access to resources can be mitigated with the improved awareness amongst employers and, more specifically, to HR representatives in the company. It was highlighted that employing PWD is seen as “good practice” for employers and that there should be focused attention on creating increased disability awareness and sensitisation targeted at senior management and HR levels (Sing, 2012). Employers in this study referred to HR practitioners as holding knowledge regarding employment quotas and guidelines around implementing EEA (1998) and BBBEE (2005) in the workplace. Wiggett-Barnard (2013) described finding that employers at management level should be educated on disability and what PWD’s can offer to the company before they decide to recruit PWD. The further suggestion of holding workshops on disability and RA in the workplace can assist in raising awareness (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013). In European Union countries, the employers are au fait with implementing SE in their workplaces, despite still having challenges, however employers are seen to be more receptive to the implementation of SE due to it being legislated and funded (Rössler et al., 2020).

Due to an absence of SE as an employment strategy in SA legislation, employers are not able to identify the need for SE at the earlier stages of when intervention could

assist. When SE intervention was introduced at a later stage, employers were not able to achieve optimal results due to “learnt” work habits of PWD. PWD were therefore not receptive to support given and RA measures in the workplace were not effective in effecting change for PWD in order for them to successfully use SE in the workplace. Howell et al. (2023), described early intervention as the support, accommodation and treatment provided to an employee who has signs of ill-health and reduced productivity post screening and assessment in order to prevent a long-term disability. This point supports how early intervention in the form of support can assist employees to maintain and sustain employment in the OLM. Van Niekerk et al. (2011) further addresses the issue of how SE is not included in SA legislation and therefore there is no existing forum to regulate the implementation of SE in SA. Their study further investigated how SE would assist both employers and PWD if SE services were regulated and funded (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). The lack of exposure to SE is further reiterated by Abbas and Soeker (2020) that in SA there is a lack of interventions like SE as well as environments which support such interventions.

5.3 Employers’ attitudes around disability are shaped by SE implementation.

Employers in this study were able to reflect on how their perceptions of disability and inclusion in the workplace were altered after they engaged with SE. Theme three explored various dimensions of the deepening of understanding pertaining to disability an inclusion by employers. They were able to address how support was normalised after being exposed to SE and that there were nuances pertaining to inclusion which are required to be understood in the workplace. A pertinent finding with employers in this study was their increased awareness about inclusion in the workplace beyond the concept of disability. In SA, employers hold power to integrate PWD into the OLM, there is existing positive attitudes pertaining to employment of PWD in the OLM, however, this is not practiced enough in order hire PWD in their companies (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013).

5.3.1 Support in the workplace is normalised

Employers in this study found that SE assisted them to implement on-going support in the workplace as their attitudes around disability were altered. SE is noted to be unique

compared to other traditional return-to-work strategies, like vocational rehabilitation who foster the “train-place” approach (Hoffmann et al., 2014). Chan et al. (2010) highlights that employers’ attitudes around disability are contributing factors to how PWD are employed. Employers are required to have adequate knowledge in order to influence their attitudes pertaining to hiring or retaining PWD in the workplace (Chan et al., 2010). In this study it was found that employers were provided with adequate knowledge on inclusion and support in the workplace and that assisted them to translate this for future provision of support for all employees, including PWD.

The employers in this study noted how exposure to the process of SE and supporting PWD in the workplace broadened their thinking of how to be more inclusive to all employees in the workplace. Inclusion refers to provision of meaningful participation which assists in fostering recognition, involvement, belonging and good relationships with others (Hall & Kramer, 2009). Employers were able to see the benefit of having an environment which accommodated all employees. The concept of creating a diverse and inclusive workplace was intended by employers (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). This concept, however, was interpreted differently by each employer based on their company’s infrastructure. The inclusion of PWD into the workplace assisted employers to think more diversely (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Employers resonated that SE assisted them to shift their thinking and be more open-minded to expanding their work culture to be more inclusive. In order to create an inclusive work environment, it was found that in order to create an atmosphere of inclusivity, collaboration was required with the employer and agencies who support PWD (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013). The WHO (2011) suggested that employers should provide an environment that aids PWD in the workplace and enhance awareness and understanding. Another facilitatory factor identified by employers as an asset to SE implementation was the match between PWD and their manager. It was found by Hutchinson et al (2018) that having supportive managers assisted the job coach to translate support for PWD in the workplace, as this meant the job coach was able to have information from both sides. The support from job coaching was also noted to be part of RA (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Employers in this study understood the need for strengthening their existing internal structures of support which may not have been utilised before they were exposed to SE. Employers found PWD to be resilient in the workplace. This was further understood due to PWD working alongside other

employees and where treatment offered was equal. Ebrahim (2022) described the resilience of PWD to attain opportunities are rooted in their own motivation and belief in themselves. This aspect of motivation is deeply rooted in the SE implementation process. PWD are noted to be more committed to their jobs compared to other employees without a disability (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). This too was found in this study by employers.

5.3.2 On-going support is encouraged in the workplace

Employers in this study were able to incorporate on-going support as normal practice in their workplaces despite at times being difficult for them to sustain. SE assisted employers to make use of support in their companies for the future and linked this aspect to their internal review structures of employees. The aspect of support was normalised and was suggested to aim at assisting all employees to meet their targeted goals for the future in their employment. This was a concept raised by an employer in this study, that building on the existing model of support could assist in effectively performing employee performance reviews and assist in monitoring staff goals and progress in the workplace. SE assists in fostering an understanding around PWD strengths and weaknesses (Jagannathan et al., 2020). This factor increased the ability for employers to put measures in place for future evaluation of productivity and job placement.

SE is unique from other vocational rehabilitation strategies as it highlights the aspect of time-unlimited support, and this means support will continue indefinitely (Bond, 2004). The provision of time-unlimited support was not always possible due to various constraints in the SA context which prevented that support, however, employers were able to address how their corporate culture was influenced after SE implementation. Employers' attitudes around inclusion were enhanced and they suggested the concept of having all employees receive some form coaching through support. Workplace culture is understood to be concepts surrounding integration, social support, interaction and participation in the workplace (Ellenkamp et al., 2016). The incorporation of PWD contributed in a positive way to the workplace as PWD were dedicated to their work (Ellenkamp et al., 2016). It was further highlighted that the

exposure to SE assisted employers with increasing awareness within communities addressing stigma as well as support in the workplace to further assist job coaches (Hutchinson et al., 2018).

5.3.3 Nuances of inclusion are understood in the workplace

Nuances of inclusion were described by employers in this study to be recognised after being exposed to SE. Employers recognised that initially they were not able to identify aspects pertaining to inclusion on this level before implementing SE. The EUSE (2010) further reiterates the need for employers to have an increased awareness of the laws pertaining to the employment of PWD as well as the laws on anti-discrimination in countries. The fact of relying on the support of the job coach to assist in providing knowledge to the employer on these various aspects shone through in this study. Employers recommended that, for the SE intervention to work, they need to recognise what they do not know and seek guidance to fill such gaps in their knowledge. Van Niekerk et al. (2011) brought to the fore the need for education on disability awareness and incorporate the rights of PWD when implementing SE. It was highlighted in this study that employers should recognise what they do not know and rely on the expert to assist them with guidance and knowledge (ie. the job coach).

Employers' experiences of using SE resulted in modified levels of thinking which reached beyond the workplace. Employers expressed how they became more open-minded and willing to look further than a diagnosis. It was found that employers attitudes and perceived stigma are noted to be potential barriers for employing PWD (Ebuenyi et al., 2018). Such barriers can be overcome when implementing SE and the relevant support and knowledge are provided. This would further aim to assist employers to look beyond a person's disability and try to incorporate more aspects of the person which are individualised and assist in the employment of PWD. After having implemented SE successfully, employers were able to reflect on their deepened understanding of disability and how that translated in the workplace. Employers reported that they were more considerate of PWD in the workplace, and that could translate this sensitivity in future practice. A further enhancement of employing PWD through SE was the prior exposure of working with PWD in the workplace. Employers

who had prior experience were able to describe how SE enhanced their ability to support PWD in the workplace as this was a known practice to them. Motivation to hire PWD was found to be more favourable to employers who had employed PWD before (Brohan et al., 2012). They were also noted to have less doubts regarding the employment process of PWD as this was not unknown to them. One employer in this study reflected on their own personal experience of having a disability and how that influenced their ability to implement SE in an effective manner as they understood on a personal level what the support needs are for PWD in the workplace. Hajwani (2008) found that employers were able to use a combination of both own personal experiences and company values to employ PWD.

5.3.4 Re-implementation is likely after initial implementation

Employers in this study were able to describe how, after successfully engaging in an SE intervention, they were more likely to re-implement it and retain PWD in the workplace. It was recommended that the retention of PWD into employment should be part of diversity plans of a company (Chan et al., 2010). This would further assist in employers creating an environment which would be able to accommodate for all employees needs in the workplace and create sustainable employment for PWD. Sustainable employment refers to the conditions of working which are favourable to elicit valuable contributions in the workplace in keeping with individuals' health and well-being (Poutanen et al., 2022). For sustainable employment there should be a match between the employees' productivity and their health as there is consideration that PWD as employees have different work capacities and expectations (Poutanen et al., 2022). This further led to highlighting the fact that SA has provision for employment of PWD within legislation. Employers who implement EEA and BBBEE were able to tap into the financial benefits of employing PWD, for example, in the form of tax benefits. Employers who are part of the European Union and United States of America are provided with incentive for hiring PWD and given penalties when they do not comply (Van Niekerk et al., 2011). This could be a mandatory practice if legislation in SA supported SE as noted in these countries. Currently in SA, there is the provision of financial incentives to train and employ PWD through the use of unsustainable methods which do not consider long-term effects on PWD for successful employment

(Ebrahim, 2022). Legislated incentives would assist employers to buy into disability employment, however there is an evident need for a sustainable method of employment which will aim to provide employment for PWD. SE is known to do this.

An off shoot described by employers in this study was the aspect around becoming a brand ambassador of SE to other employers. Employers felt strongly about spreading awareness around the implementation of SE to other employers in SA. Hajwani (2008) also found that employers who engaged in SE successfully wanted other employers to know about SE and its affordances. Employers hold the capacity to employ PWD and be the agents of SE to other employers in the OLM in SA (Hajwani, 2008). Employers in this study recognised that there was a need to document their successes in order to spread awareness amongst other employers more effectively. This would aim to add to the lacking body of knowledge for employers in SA about SE. This point resonated as it was found that employers are more likely to take the directive from another employer compared to a job coach, who is a health professional. A key factor addressed is the distribution of data on implementation and the outcomes thereof (Drake et al., 2019). SE is an evidence-based practice (Bond, 2004). SE can be implemented in various ways through collaboration with the various stakeholders as SE implementation is actioned-based on the core values which guide the implementation to success (Corbière et al., 2014). Implementation can therefore be translated in different contexts. It has been found that it is best to match the SE strategy to the local context in which it will be practiced in (Luciano et al., 2014).

5.4 Identified support measures for SE implementation which informs best practice guidelines

Employers drew together their experiences to guide future implementation of SE in the SA OLM. This part of the discussion aims to foreground what employers found to be essential when implementing SE in the SA, therefore informing best practice in the context of SA. In theme four employers highlighted essential support measures were identified to ensure that SE is implemented successfully. These support measures can be described under the need for education around SE and the intervention process, partnerships with stakeholders are key to the success of the intervention and bring to the fore the financial incentives available to employers when hiring PWD. SE remains

under-developed in SA, hence the need to increase the access and knowledge to this service offering and ensure best practice (Van Niekerk et al., 2015).

5.4.1 Education on the SE intervention process

Employers found that being provided with the necessary education on the SE intervention beneficial in order to match their needs. It is noted that SE assists in employing PWD successfully, yet there are still issues pertaining the sustainability of employment since being employed does not always mean that there is inclusion in the workplace (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). Therefore, focusing on understanding SE and its role in providing an inclusive workplace should be prioritised (Hardonk & Halldórsdóttir, 2021). The OT as the job coach is able to impart knowledge to employers as they hold the skill set to assist in return to work after injury or illness (Coakley & Bryze, 2018). Job coaches have skills, experience and knowledge to share with employers regarding effective support for PWD (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Employers in this study described how it was imperative to have a deeper understanding of SE and how to manage disability in the workplace. Employers noted that they would be able to implement SE in the future if they have adequate knowledge and understanding of disability as well as a thorough understanding of the outcomes of SE. SE is known to contribute to a combination of vocational and work-related outcomes (Drake et al., 1998). These outcomes pertain to PWD in which they are afforded competitive employment as well as being able to experience the benefits of working on a personal level. It is useful for the employer to understand these outcomes, so they are able to implement SE in the future as well as pass on to other employers for implementation.

Having clear roles and expectations in the SE intervention process was essential to employers in this study. The job coach is key in identifying these roles and setting clear expectations for the stakeholders in the SE intervention process (Corbière et al., 2014). Employers in this study emphasised the need for the job coach to guide them regarding the implementation of RA and facilitating the re-integration process of PWD. The job coach is able to assist employers with decision-making in the workplace in order to accommodate PWD as well as seen to be a key factor in PWD being able to

maintain their job through support provided (Ellenkamp et al., 2016). It is advised by the EUSE (2010) that there should be an agreement amongst stakeholders when engaging in SE in order to set clear expectations for each stakeholder and ensure that roles are clear to action during the intervention. This was reiterated in this study.

With education and deepened understanding of the SE intervention process, employers would be able to identify the need for early intervention in order to prevent long-term effects in the workplace. Employers are required to address issues in the workplace pertaining to decline in productivity and signs of ill-health as described in Howell et al.'s (2023) study. This factor too could be useful in this study with regard to implementing SE at an early stage. The job coach again is central in this aspect in ensuring the employer is aware of how to action this. The job coach is essential in the provision of on-going long-term support and follow up in the workplace with employers.

Employers in this study further highlighted the need for evidence on successes in SE implementation in SA when employing PWD. They noted the fact that if they knew other employers were having successful experiences of SE, it made them more interested to become involved. In SA, there is a limited pool of employers who implement SE as highlighted by Van Niekerk et al. (2015). Employers in Hajwani's (2008) study made it explicit that they would disseminate their experiences of implementing SE once they had undergone it themselves and thereafter could they introduce the concept to other employers confidently.

Workplace culture was identified by employers in this study as an important factor to assist in the implementation of SE. Employers found that when they had an existing corporate culture of being open to change to allow for inclusion, implementing SE was easier. Employers were also able to describe that time is required to work past the resistance the job coach may be faced with when initially approaching an employer. Employers found it useful having time to consolidate the knowledge provided and make their own decisions based on how SE can be implemented in their own workplaces. Employers were able to describe the beneficial outcomes of SE implementation and how the need to share the information from the employer's perspective would assist in future implementation for other employers in the SA OLM. Wiggitt-Barnard (2013) described how when the corporate culture of employers is

resistant it will deter employment of PWD. It was also recognised that employers could shift their focus to how PWD are able to contribute to the workplace and aid in equal treatment of all employees. It is noted that employers corporate cultures are ignorant towards disability (Wiggett-Barnard, 2013). This statement foregrounds the need for dissemination of awareness of the employers' perspectives of the outcomes of SE and allow for the job coach to assist in that. It has been found that the employers perspectives have the power to close the gap between supply and demand (Gustafsson et al., 2013). This too can be implemented in the SA OLM.

5.4.2 Stakeholder partnerships are key to successful SE implementation

In this study it was found that employers highlighted partnerships amongst stakeholders involved in the SE implementation. As described in the study conducted by Corbière et al. (2014), job coaches follow the steps of SE rooted in IPS to facilitate the SE implementation in the company, including the provision of support to both the employer and the PWD respectively. This was done in this study too.

The job coach is uniquely positioned to be able to understand the needs of all stakeholders in order to assist in attaining success in the SE intervention process. Englebrecht (2020) further foregrounds the controller role of the job coach in a hands-on manner to achieve successful implementation of SE. It is also noted that the role of each stakeholder in the SE intervention will remain the same in the execution for future based on these strong partnerships built in the implementation of SE (Engelbrecht, 2020). Employers in this study also recognised this pertinent factor for future implementation.

The job coaches referred to in this study had the theoretical knowledge and practical skill set due to being health professionals to prepare PWD to enter the OLM. Employers found that the job coach played an important role in assisting PWD to adjust to the environment of the workplace. This level of support for PWD was identified as “in” and “out” of the workplace to assist PWD to settle into the environment and role of an employee in the workplace. Job coaches are known to perform work-site visits, this is where the job coach could provide the employer with practical

guidance on RA and other support needs of PWD (Van Niekerk et al., 2015). It was important for employers in this study to have the job coach be present on site prior to and during the SE implementation. The EUSE (2010) reiterated that the work-site visit is more than a casual visit at the workplace, this visit encompasses “instrumental, informative, emotional and feedback support” (p.36). Employers in this study relied on the job coach to perform this role and be available to them.

Regular feedback from the job coach was found to be beneficial to employers in this study as it assisted the employer to support PWD in the workplace. The feedback provided was done in order to foster a more beneficial experience for PWD in the workplace. The EUSE (2010) documented the need for regular feedback amongst all stakeholders involved in SE implementation as a measure to mediate situations and to manage any difficulties which may arise in a short space of time. The value of having regular feedback assists the employer to monitor the performance of PWD in the workplace, as well as assisting PWD to monitor their own performance and progress (Christensen et al., 2015). This regular form of on-going support is known to meet the individual needs of PWD and employers (Van Niekerk et al., 2015). On-going support is also done in order to maintain and assist with integration in the workplace (Van Niekerk et al., 2015). The employers in this study understood that on-going support aided in sustaining SE and ensure that the intervention is continuously being evaluated to accommodate for the needs of PWD in the workplace.

SE intervention would be unsuccessful without adequate buy-in from the employer and PWD. The job coach is seen as an essential stakeholder to the SE implementation, guiding the other stakeholders during successful implementation. Employers from this study confirmed that the SE intervention would not work if there is not equal stakeholder buy-in. It was understood by Ebrahim (2022) that PWD had improved levels of motivation when they were engaged in opportunities, like employment. This can be further described as how PWD require the internal motivation to participate in opportunities afforded to them (Ebrahim, 2022). This can be noted from this study as when PWD do not have the internal motivation to participate, SE will be unsuccessful. Similarly, the employer’s motivation and vested interest in the process was foregrounded in their provision of education and evidence of SE. The job coach assisted with the provision of knowledge through education on

SE in order to mitigate the risk factors for the employer to agree to engaging in the concept of SE (Hajwani, 2008). It was further noted that employers' receptiveness will build after engaging more frequently in SE and having the support of the job coach (Hajwani, 2008).

5.4.3 Employers are able to reap financial benefits when implementing SE through legislation.

Employers in this study were able to note that SE assisted them to implement or strengthen their diversity plans. It can be noted that in SA there are only few employers who implement SE and a limited body of research pertaining to its effectiveness in the SA context. SA legislation affords PWD fair opportunities to work in the OLM. SE is not documented in the EEA and BBBEE explicitly. Employers in this study are currently referring to the EEA and BBBEE in employment of PWD and receive the financial benefits. Those who have implemented SE are able to note the gap in legislation, and recommend SE be brought into laws to assist in employing PWD effectively into the workplace. This factor would further assist employers to reap the financial benefits provided by the SA government when employing PWD under these various criteria. It was noted by Engelbrecht et al. (2017) that SA employers are provided with tools to make an investment in SE through either “social investment funds, skills development funding, tax rebates for facilitating learnerships for PWD” (p.15). This study further reiterated the need for guidance and support in this. Employers in this study foreground the gap in existing legislation to insert SE into and assist in making it a well-known and well applied model of employing PWD.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the facilitators and challenges experienced by SA employers in the OLM when using SE to employ PWD. Employers highlighted that; partnerships with stakeholders, RA and support from the job coach during the SE implementation to be a facilitatory in a successful SE intervention. In contrast to the facilitators, employers found the re-integration to the workplace, communication with stakeholders and lack of available knowledge on SE to be challenging during the SE implementation. Furthermore, the researcher uncovered how the employers' attitudes

around disability and inclusion were enhanced after employers were exposed to SE and the benefits thereof. It was foregrounded in this study that employers were willing to disseminate their understanding and knowledge of SE to other employers in the OLM. The researcher was able to combine the findings of this study and present the support measures identified by employers to assist in creating a best practice guideline for employers in SA to implement SE for the future.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes on this research study and describes recommendations based on the experiences of employers who have used SE when employing PWD in the OLM in SA.

6.1 Conclusion

This research study explored and described employers' experiences of using the SE model when employing PWD in the OLM in SA. Facilitators described by employers were the forming of partnerships with stakeholders during the SE implementation, implementing RA as directed in the EEA (1998), and job coach support as an essential element in SE. Contrary to these, employers described re-integration of PWD into the workplace as challenging, as well as communication amongst stakeholders in the SE intervention, and the lack of knowledge available to employers in SA about SE.

Employers' attitudes around disability and inclusion were shaped by the use of SE in their workplaces. These were described in the form of normalising support in the workplace for all employees, recognising nuances related to inclusion in the workplace, as well as an enhanced awareness around workplace inclusion with the use of the SE model.

Lastly, employers in this study were able to identify support needs to improve SE implementation for future. The support needs were identified as having adequate education around the SE intervention process, having strong partnerships with stakeholders, and highlighting the not well-known concept of gaining financial incentives when employing PWD in the OLM through SE. The identified support needs assist in shaping future best-practice guidelines for future employers and job coaches to implement SE more effectively.

This study overall presents an overview of employers' experiences of using SE in their workplaces and how they found the implementation to be both challenging and beneficial. Employers in this study were positively influenced by the use of the SE model to continue to use the model in future. The constant essential need highlighted

for employers was for the job coach to drive the process of implementing SE to ensure the success. It can be highlighted that with more exposure to the SE model, employers in SA will be more receptive to employing PWD in the OLM. This will aim to aid in the provision of opportunities for PWD to enter the SA OLM. This study further contributes to the body of knowledge of SE in SA and confirms SE to be an evidence-based strategy which is effective in employing PWD in the OLM.

6.2 Recommendations

Recommendations for this study can be described within enhancing practice of SE within occupational therapy, for employers in SA OLM, South African government legislation and policy makers and for future research in occupational therapy.

6.2.1 Occupational therapy practice:

- OTs are encouraged to seek training in being a job coach in the field of SE to enhance future practice.
- OTs are encouraged to collaborate and implement SE to assist PWD enter the workplace effectively.
- OTs are encouraged to increase the awareness of the benefits of SE in OLM.

6.2.2 Employers:

- Employers in SA are encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise of using SE effectively in their workplaces.
- Employers in SA are encouraged to use SE more in their workplaces.
- Employers in SA are encouraged to insert SE in their internal policies and use the financial incentives provided by the SA government.
- Employers in SA are encouraged to work closely with job coaches/OTs to enhance SE in workplaces.

6.2.3 SA government legislation and policy

- Evidence from this study shows the need for SE to be included in SA government legislation and policy as there is existing provision for inclusion of PWD in the provision of equal opportunities and the right to work.
- SE should be a funded strategy provided to employers through legislation to assist in employing PWD in SA effectively.

- Legislation and policy in SA should encourage SE to be the preferred method of employing PWD for OLM work.

6.2.4 Future research:

- Future research should be aimed at job coaches' experiences of using SE with employers in SA.
- The suggested support measures identified in this study should be piloted and explored with other employers in SA and the results should be analysed.
- Enhancements on best-practice to suit the SA context should be continuously assessed to keep job coaches and employers informed on effective methods in SA to implement SE.
- Employees experiences explored on how employers have reasonable accommodated them due to a disability or other impairment.
- Improvement of research which is evidence-based through either randomised control trials or systematic reviews in SA.

References:

- Abbas, I., & Soeker, M. S. (2020). The experiences of individuals with schizophrenia using the Model of Occupational Self-Efficacy in enhancing work skills and returning to work in the open labour market in Western Cape, South Africa. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 50(3), 22–29. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2310-3833/2020/vol50no3a3>
- Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-336, 104 Stat. 328 (1990).
- Bisschoff, M., Koen, V., & Ryke, E. H. (2019). Strategies for work–family balance in a South African context. *Community, Work and Family*, 22(3), 319–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2018.1473337>
- Bond, G. R., Drake, R., Mueser, K., & Becker, D. (1997). An update on supported employment for people with severe mental illness. *Psychiatric Services (Washington, D.C.)*, 48(3), 335–346. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.48.3.335>
- Bond, G. R. (1998). Principles of the Individual Placement and Support model: Empirical support. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 22(1), 11–23.
- Bond, G. R., Resnick, S. G., Drake, R. E., Xie, H., McHugo, G. J., & Bebout, R. R. (2001). Does competitive employment improve nonvocational outcomes for people with severe mental illness? *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 69(3), 489–501. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.69.3.489>
- Bond, Kim, H. W., Meyer, P. S., Gibson, P. J., Tunis, S., Evans, J. D., Lysaker, P., McCoy, M. L., Dincin, J., & Xie, H. (2004). Response to Vocational Rehabilitation During Treatment With First- or Second-Generation Antipsychotics. *Psychiatric Services (Washington, D.C.)*, 55(1), 59–66. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.55.1.59>

- Drake, R. E., Becker, D. R., & Bond, G. R. (2019). Introducing Individual Placement and Support (IPS) supported employment in Japan. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 73(2), 47–49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.12792>
- Drake, R. E., & Bond, G. R. (2023). Individual placement and support: History, current status, and future directions. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences Reports*, 2(3), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pcn5.122>
- Boyce, C., & Neale, P. (2006). Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input. *Pathfinder International*, 2(May), 1–16. Pathfinder International Tool Series, Monitoring and Evaluation-2. http://www.pathfind.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf?docID=6301
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- British Association for Supported Employment (BASE), 2006. retrieved from: <https://www.base-uk.org/home>.
- Brohan, E., Henderson, C., Wheat, K., Malcolm, E., Clement, S., Barley, E. A., Slade, M., & Thornicroft, G. (2012). Systematic review of beliefs, behaviours and influencing factors associated with disclosure of a mental health problem in the workplace. *BMC Psychiatry*, 12(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-12-11>
- Brockner, J., Flynn, F. J., Dolan, R. J., Ostfield, A., Pace, D., & Ziskin, I. V. (2006). Commentary on “radical HRM innovation and competitive advantage: The Moneyball story.” *Human Resource Management*, 45(1), 127–145. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm>
- Chan, F., Strauser, D., Maher, P., Lee, E. J., Jones, R., & Johnson, E. T. (2010). Demand-side factors related to employment of people with disabilities: A survey

of employers in the midwest region of the United States. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 20(4), 412–419. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-010-9252-6>

Christiansen, Clark, F., Kielhofner, G., & Rogers, J. (1995). Position paper: occupation. American Occupational Therapy Association. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 49(10), 1015–1018. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.49.10.1015>

Christiansen, C.H., Baum, C.M. 1997 Understanding Occupation. Definitions and Concepts. In: *Occupational Therapy: Enabling Function and Well-being*. C.H. Christiansen & C.M. Baum, Eds. Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated.

Christensen, T. N., Nielsen, I. G., Stenager, E., Morthorst, B. R., Lindschou, J., Nordentoft, M., & Epløv, L. F. (2015). Individual Placement and Support supplemented with cognitive remediation and work-related social skills training in Denmark: Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial. *Trials*, 16(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-015-0792-0>

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Chapter 2 Bill of Rights, (1996).

Coakley, K., & Bryze, K. (2018). The Distinct Value of Occupational Therapy in Supported Employment of Adults with Intellectual Disabilities. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 6(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1424>

Corbière, M., Brouwers, E. P. M., Lanctôt, N., & van Weeghel, J. (2014). Employment specialist competencies for supported employment programs. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 24(3), 484–497. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-013-9482-5>

Cozby, P. C., & Bates, S. C. (2012). *Methods in behavioral research*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). California: Thousand Oaks Sage Publications.

- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among the five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crowther, R., Marshall, M., Bond, G. R., & Huxley, P. (2001). Vocational rehabilitation for people with severe mental illness. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD003080>
- Curtin, M. and Fossey, E. (2007), Appraising the trustworthiness of qualitative studies: Guidelines for occupational therapists. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 54(2), 88–94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1630.2007.00661.x>
- Davis, L. L., Kyriakides, T. C., Suris, A. M., Ottomanelli, L. A., Mueller, L., Parker, P. E., Resnick, S. G., Toscano, R., Scrymgeour, A. A., & Drake, R. E. (2018). Effect of evidence-based supported employment vs transitional work on achieving steady work among veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 75(4), 316–324. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2017.4472>
- Deen, M., Gibson, L., & Strong, J. (2002). A survey of occupational therapy in Australian work practice. *Work*, 19(3), 219–230.
- Department of Labour. (2001). *Codes of Good Practice*. Retrieved from: <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/legislation/codes-of-good-ractise/employment-equity/code-of-good-practice-on-disability-in-the-workplace>
- Department of Labour. (1998). Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998, Retrieved from: <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/downloads/legislation/acts/employment-equity/Act%20-%20Employment%20Equity.pdf>

- Doyle, McCabe, C., Keogh, B., Brady, A., & McCann, M. (2020). An overview of the qualitative descriptive design within nursing research. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 25(5), 443–455. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987119880234>
- Drake, R. E., Fox, T. S., Leather, P. K., Becker, D. R., Musumeci, J. S., Ingram, W. F., & McHugo, G. J. (1998). Regional variation in competitive employment for persons with severe mental illness. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 25(5), 493–504. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022337231689>
- Drake, Becker, D. R., & Bond, G. R. (2019). Introducing Individual Placement and Support (IPS) supported employment in Japan. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 73(2), 47–49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.12792>.
- Dube, A. K. (2005). The role and effectiveness of disability legislation in South Africa. *Samaita Consultancy and Programme Design, March*, 1–89. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08c5ce5274a27b2001155/PolicyProject_legislation_sa.pdf
- Ebrahim, A. (2022). *Traversing Disability in South Africa: Considering Social Capital in Disability Inclusive Employment Practices*. University of Cape Town, Faculty of Health Sciences, in completion of Post-Doctoral Study 2022.
- Ebuenyi, I. D., Syurina, E. V., Bunders, J. F. G., & Regeer, B. J. (2018). Barriers to and facilitators of employment for people with psychiatric disabilities in Africa: a scoping review. *Global Health Action*, 11(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2018.1463658>
- Ellenkamp, J. J. H., Brouwers, E. P. M., Embregts, P. J. C. M., Joosen, M. C. W., & van Weeghel, J. (2016). Work Environment-Related Factors in Obtaining and Maintaining Work in a Competitive Employment Setting for Employees with Intellectual Disabilities: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 26(1), 56–69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-015-9586-1>
- Engelbrecht, M., van Niekerk, L., Coetzee, Z., & Hajwani, Z. (2017). Supported Employment for people with mental disabilities in South Africa: cost calculation

of service utilisation. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 47(2), 10–16. <https://doi.org/10.17159/231-3833/1017/v47n2a3>

Engelbrecht, M. H. (2020). *Occupational Justice through Paid Work: A Qualitative Study of Work Transition Programmes for Youth with Disabilities*. University of Stellenbosch, Faculty of Health Sciences, in completion of Post-Doctoral Study March 2020.

EUSE. (2010). European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit 2. Retrieved from: <https://www.euse.org> › EUSE-Toolkit-2010

Fioritti, A., D'Alema, M., Barone, R., & Bruschetta, S. (2014). Social enterprises, vocational rehabilitation, supported employment: Working on work in Italy. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 202(6), 498–500. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NMD.0000000000000150>

Given, L. (2008). The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909>

Given, L. (2012). The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods. *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909>

Graham, L., Moodley, J., & Selipsky, L. (2013). The disability-poverty nexus and the case for a capabilities approach: evidence from Johannesburg, South Africa. *Disability and Society*, 28(3), 324–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.710011>

Gustafsson, J., Peralta, J. P., & Danermark, B. (2013). The employer's perspective on Supported employment for people with disabilities: Successful approaches of Supported employment organizations. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 38(2), 99–111. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-130624>

Hajwani, Z. (2008). *Creating Supported Employment Partnerships for people with Psychiatric Disabilities*. University of Cape Town, Division of Occupational Therapy in completion of a Masters Study.

Hall, & Kramer, J. (2009). Social Capital Through Workplace Connections: Opportunities for Workers With Intellectual Disabilities. *Journal of Social Work in Disability & Rehabilitation*, 8(3-4), 146–170.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15367100903200452>

Hardonk, S., & Halldórsdóttir, S. (2021). Work inclusion through supported employment? Perspectives of job counsellors in Iceland. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 23(1), 39–49. <https://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.767>

Health professions council of South Africa, (2008) Guidelines for good practice in the healthcare professions. Retrieved from:
http://www.hpcsa.co.za/downloads/conduct_ethics/rules/generic_ethical_rules/booklet_1_guidelines_good_prac.pdf

Hoekstra, E. J., Sanders, K., Van den Heuvel, W. J. A., Post, D., Groothoff, J.W. (2004). Supported Employment in the Netherlands for people with an intellectual disability, a psychiatric disability and a chronic disease. A comprehensive study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 21(1), 93–48.

Howell, K.-L., Naidoo, D., & Govender, P. (2023). Prevention and early intervention in South African disability claims management: The private insurer perspective. *Work*, 75(2023), 577–590. <https://doi.org/10.3233/wor-211384>

Hutchinson, J., Gilbert, D., Papworth, R., & Boardman, J. (2018). Implementing supported employment. Lessons from the making IPS Work Project. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(7), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15071545>

IPS Grow, *What is IPS? IPS is based on 8 evidence based principles* (2023). Retrieved from: <https://ipsgrow.org.uk/about/what-is-ips/8-principles-of-ips>.

- Jagannathan, A., Harish, N., Venkatalakshmi, C., Kumar, C. N., Thirthalli, J., Kumar, D., Chaturvedi, S. (2020). Supported employment programme for persons with severe mental disorders in India: A feasibility study. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 66(6), 607–613.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764020918278>
- Jenaro, C., Mank, D., Bottomley, J., Doose, S., & Tuckerman, P. (2002). Employment in the international context: An analysis of processes and outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 17(1), 5–21.
- Kawohl, W., Moock, J., Heuchert, S., & Rössler, W. (2015). Job Maintenance by Supported Employment: An Overview of the “ Supported Employment Plus” trial. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 3(May), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2015.00140>
- Kocman, A., Fischer, L., & Weber, G. (2018). The Employers’ perspective on barriers and facilitators to employment of people with intellectual disability: A differential mixed-method approach. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 31(1), 120–131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12375>
- Kulkarni, & Lengnick-Hall, M. L. (2014). Obstacles to Success in the Workplace for People With Disabilities: A Review and Research Agenda. *Human Resource Development Review*, 13(2), 158–180.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484313485229>
- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 120–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092>
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim international journal of nursing research*, 16(4), 255–256.
- Lecomte, T., Corbière, M., Giguère, C.-E., Titone, D., & Lysaker, P. (2020). Group cognitive behaviour therapy for supported employment – Results of a

randomized controlled cohort trial. *Schizophrenia Research*, 215(2020), 126–133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.schres.2019.10.063>

Lengnick-Hall, Gaunt, P. M., & Kulkarni, M. (2008). Overlooked and underutilized: People with disabilities are an untapped human resource. *Human Resource Management*, 47(2), 255–273. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20211>

Lincoln, Y. S., Guba, E. G., & Pilotta, J. J. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry: Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985, 416 pp., \$25.00 (Cloth). *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 9(4), 438–439.
[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(85\)90062-8](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(85)90062-8)

Luciano, A., Bond, G. R., Drake, R. E., & Becker, D. R. (2014). Is high fidelity to supported employment equally attainable in small and large communities? *Community Mental Health Journal*, 50(1), 46–50.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-013-9687-2>

Maja, P. a, Mann, W. M., Sing, D., Steyn, a J., & Naidoo, P. (2011). Employing people with disabilities in South Africa. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 41(1), 24–32.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rzh&AN=104665973&lang=fr&site=ehost-live>

Mazzola, Schonfeld, I. S., & Spector, P. E. (2011). What qualitative research has taught us about occupational stress. *Stress and Health*, 27(2), 93–110.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1386>

Morris. (2015). A Practical Introduction to In-Depth Interviewing. In *A Practical Introduction to In-Depth Interviewing*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473921344>

Nota, L., Santilli, S., Ginevra, M. C., & Soresi, S. (2014). Employer Attitudes Towards the Work Inclusion of People With Disability. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 27(6), 511–520. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12081>

- Otty, M. E. (2021). *People with disabilities' perspectives on how participation in a supported employment programme facilitates access to work*. Retrieved from: <https://etd.uwc.ac.za/xmlui/handle/11394/8974>
- Ottomanelli, L., Goetz, L. L., O'Neill, J., Lauer, E., & Dyson-Hudson, T. (2020). 30 Years After the Americans with Disabilities Act: Perspectives on Employment for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury. *Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Clinics of North America*, 31(3), 499–513. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmr.2020.04.007>
- Protection of Personal Information Act. (2021). POPI Act (No 4 of 2013) Retrieved from: <https://popia.co.za/>
- Poutanen, J., Joensuu, M., Unkila, K., & Juvonen-Posti, P. (2022). Sustainable employability in Supported Employment and IPS interventions in the context of the characteristics of work and perspectives of the employers: a scoping review protocol. *BMJ Open*, 12(6), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-058413>
- Practice, E., & Bond, G. R. (2003). *SE evidences-based practice Bond 2004*. 27, 345–359. <https://doi.org/10.2975/27.2004.345.359>
- Press, O. U. (2015). Methodological Frameworks and Sampling in Qualitative Research. *Oxford University Press Sample Chapter*, 3–26.
- Republic of South Africa. (1998). Employment Equity Act No 55, 1998, 400. Government Gazette 1–54. <http://doi.org/www.acts.gov.za>
- Ritchie, & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers* (1-397).
- Ross, J. (2007). Occupational Therapy and Vocational Rehabilitation. *John Wiley & Sons, Ltd*.
- Rössler, W., Kawohl, W., Nordt, C., Haker, H., Rüschi, N., & Hengartner, M. P. (2020). “Placement budgets” for supported employment: Impact on

employment rates in a multicentre randomised controlled trial. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 216(6), 308–313. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2019.154>

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Focus on research methods: Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing and Health*, 23(4), 334–340. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240x\(200008\)23:4<334::aid-nur9>3.0.co;2-g](https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240x(200008)23:4<334::aid-nur9>3.0.co;2-g)

Sing, D. A. (2012). Promoting the Employability and Employment of People with Disabilities in the South African Public Service. *Public Personnel Management*, 41(1), 161–171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009102601204100109>

South African Department of Labour. (2002). Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects on the Employment of People with Disabilities. Retrieved from: <http://www.labour.gov.za/legislation/codes-of-goodpractise/employment-equity/code-of-good-practice-on-disability-in-the-workplace>.

South African Department of Trade and Industry. (n. d.). Why B-BBEE? Retrieved from: <http://bee.thedti.gov.za/27.htm>

Statistics South Africa. (2014). Census 2011: Profile of persons with disabilities in South Africa. Pretoria Government Publishers.

Statistics South Africa. (2022). Census 2022: Birth and Death. South African Government, : Pretoria.

Statistics South Africa. (2023) Census 2022: Economic Growth. South African Government, : Pretoria.

Statistics South Africa. (2023) Quarterly Labour Force Survey; Quarter (QLFS) Q1: (2023) South African Government, : Pretoria.

Summers, E., & Holmes, A. (2004). *Collins dictionary and thesaurus*. Glasgow, Great Britian: Harper Collins Publishers.

Todd, N. A., Jones, S. H., & Lobban, F. A. (2013). What Do Service Users with Bipolar

Disorder Want from a Web-Based Self-Management Intervention? A Qualitative Focus Group Study. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 20(6), 531–543. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cpp.1804>

United Nations (2006). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

Retrieved from:<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

Van Niekerk, L., Coetzee, Z., Engelbrecht, M., Hajwani, Z., Landman, S., Motimele, M., & Terreblanche, S. (2011). Supported employment: Recommendations for successful implementation in South Africa. *Supported Employment: Recommendations for Successful Implementation in South Africa*, 41(3), 85–90.

Van Niekerk, Coetzee, Z., Engelbrecht, M., Hajwani, Z., & Terreblanche, S. (2015). Time utilisation trends of supported employment services by persons with mental disability in South Africa. *Work (Reading, Mass.)*, 52(4), 825–833. <https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-152149>

Wehman, P. (2012). Supported Employment: What is it? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 37(3), 139–142. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-2012-0607>

Wiggett-Barnard, C., & Swartz, L. (2012). What facilitates the entry of persons with disabilities into South African companies? *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 34(12), 1016-1023. doi:10.3109/09638288.2011.631679

Wiggett-Barnard, C. (2013). *Disability employment attitudes and practices in South African companies: A survey and case studies*. March, 279. Retrieved from: <https://scholar.sun.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/0741bfec-2dcd-4402-9bcb-aaae93bd34dc/content>

Wilcock, A. A., van der Arend, H., Darling, K., Scholz, J., Sidall, R., Snigg, C., & Stephens, J. (1998). An Exploratory Study of People's Perceptions and Experiences of Wellbeing. *The British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 61(2), 75–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030802269806100206>

- Wilson, M. G., DeJoy, D. M., Vandenberg, R. J., Richardson, H. A., & McGrath, A. L. (2004). Work characteristics and employee health and well-being: Test of a model of healthy work organization. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 565–588. <https://doi.org/10.1348/0963179042596522>
- World Health Organization. (2001). *International classification of functioning, disability and health: ICF*. World Health Organization
- World Medical Association. (2013). *Declaration of Helsinki- Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects*. [online] Available from World Medical Association: <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/> [accessed: 26/05/2023]
- Zhang, G. F., Tsui, C. M., Lu, A. J. B., Yu, L. B., Tsang, H. W. H., & Li, D. (2017). Integrated supported employment for people with schizophrenia in mainland China: A randomized controlled Trial. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 71(6), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2017.024802>



Divisions of Communication Sciences & Disorders • Disability Studies • Nursing & Midwifery • Occupational Therapy • Physiotherapy

F45 Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital
Observatory, Cape Town, South Africa, 7925
Telephone: +27 (0) 21 406 6401
Website: www.dhrs.uct.ac.za

Appendix I: Information sheet

INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

This is a research project conducted by a masters Occupational Therapy student for degree purposes.

Who is the researcher:

The researcher is a 29-year-old occupational therapist who practices supported employment in South Africa. She has been a practicing occupational therapist since 2015. She has been working in the field of work intervention since 2016, working with various types of disabilities with a strong focus on return to work. She has been using supported employment in her practice since 2017. She currently does part-time lecturing for the University of Cape Town in the cluster of work practice and works as a consultant occupational therapist for a Supported Employment service provider company as a job coach.

Why have you been asked to take part?

You have been asked to participate in this research because you as an employer fit the selection criteria of this research study, owing to the fact that you have had experience in working with persons with disabilities in your company when using the Supported Employment Model.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study is to describe employer's experiences of using the Supported Employment Model when employing or retaining persons with disabilities in their companies. The study will identify how the Supported Employment Model is used by employers in the open labour market to ensure success in their capacity to sustainably contribute towards employment of persons with disabilities.

What will your participation in the research study include?

The study will involve one 90-minutes in-depth interview either done in person or virtually and one fact and results checking after the data has been analysed to ensure the data was correctly depicted as per the research participant. Your participation in this research study is separate to the current service rendered if you are currently undergoing an Supported Employment program with a Job Coach from the selected Supported Employment Service provider company.

Why is this study important or necessary?

To gain insight to the experiences of employers who have used Supported Employment when employing persons with disabilities in the open labour market. This aims to further develop current research in Supported Employment and assist in creating awareness for other business owners to use Supported Employment to employ persons with disabilities.

What will the research process involve?

If you decide to be a part of our research study:

- You will have a short initial telephone call to explain the study and the process.
- A 90-minute individual interview will be held with the researcher either online or face to face.
- The interview will be either audio-recorded or screen recorded for transcription purposes.
- The interview will be scheduled at a time and venue most suitable for the research participant. This will be done in a private workplace or office space to ensure confidentiality is upheld whether the interview is conducted online or in person.
- After a few months the researchers will make another appointment with you to share the findings of the research and gain your opinions on the findings. This should take approximately 30-minutes to one hour.
- Lastly, the results will be compiled in a report to share the findings of the research study with others.

Will your participation in the research study be kept confidential?

Yes, your name and that of your company will be omitted, however the content of the interview will be transcribed by the researcher and thereafter analysed within the context of the research project. Thus, only the researcher will know your identity. When the audio recordings or screen recordings are transcribed, all identifying features of your company will be removed. The audio recordings or screen recordings will be kept in a safe place, only the researcher and research supervisor will have access to them. All the information will be kept on the researcher's laptop in an encrypted folder, under password protection.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be compiled in a thesis report and used in the completion of the researchers Masters in OT by dissertation degree. They will be seen by a research supervisor, a second marker and the external examiner. The thesis may be read by future students in the occupational therapy course at The University of Cape Town or for other research purposes in other faculties or institutions. The study may also be published in a research journal.

What are the benefits of taking part in the research study?

The researcher intends to share the results of the study with participants which will further assist employers to better their understanding of supported employment practice among other employers. The research also will assist employers in South Africa in refining Supported Employment practice in South Africa. The research participant will not be reimbursed for their participation in this study as there are no costs added to participate.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

The researchers do not envisage any negative consequences for your participation. However, it is possible that sharing your experiences and opinions about the topic specific to your company may be at times uncomfortable.

Are there any risks in taking part in the research study?

One risk is that you may feel uncomfortable about sharing your experiences with the researcher. You are not obligated to share what you do not feel comfortable sharing

as there are no right or wrong answers. The researcher values your participation and confidentiality in a private and individual setting.

What if I decide not to take part in the research study?

Taking part in this research study is done so on a voluntary basis. You can choose not to take part in the research study. If you do agree to take part but choose to withdraw you may do so without any consequences. Refusing to take part or withdrawing from the study after sharing your company's opinions will not influence current or future employment with the company.

How will the research findings become available to me after the research study is completed?

The findings of this study will be presented to you in the form of a summary pamphlet and will assist you in deepening your understanding of other employers' experiences of using supported employment when employing persons with disabilities.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions, you can ask the researcher or research supervisors now or contact them at a later stage:

Ms Reyna Makan	mknrey001@myuct.ac.za	082 418 4754
Mr Iesrafeel Abbas	iesrafeel.abbas@uct.ac.za	079 994 7738
Dr Madri Engelbrecht	madri@altitudegroup.co.za	083 504 4571

Human Research Ethics Committee may be contacted should the participant have any further questions regarding the research study.

HS Human Research Ethics Admin Office:	Tel: 021 406 6338 or 021 406 6492
--	-----------------------------------

Post Graduate Masters Occupational Therapy student, 2022, School of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Cape Town.

If you agree to take part in the study, please sign the consent form within one- two weeks of receiving this information.



Divisions of Communication Sciences & Disorders • Disability Studies • Nursing & Midwifery • Occupational Therapy • Physiotherapy

F45 Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital
Observatory, Cape Town, South Africa, 7925
Telephone: +27 (0) 21 406 6401
Website: www.dhrs.uct.ac.za

Appendix II:

Informed consent form

The researcher invites you to participate in this research study. Should you agree to the terms of the information sheet please sign the below consent form.

Consent Form

I.....agree to participate in the research study.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

Agree	Disagree
--------------	-----------------

I agree to be audio or screen recorded. The recordings will be kept confidential for a period of 5 years in accordance with the POPIA.

Signed.....

Date.....

Research Participant



Appendix III:

Interview guide

"Tell me about your experience of using SE in your business to employ persons with disabilities..."

List of follow-up guiding questions.

1. When did you begin with SE and what made you consider your involvement in the use of the model?
2. How did each stakeholder play their role and what role did the job coach play in the implementation of SE? Can you describe the relationships formed?
3. How has SE influenced you and your business as a business owner/ HR Rep/ senior staff member and has this been supported by policy or legislation supported the implementation of SE?
4. What are some positive experiences of using SE?
5. What are some negative experiences of using SE?
6. How has your experiences of SE changed over time and what is the impact of having PWD employed/ SE implemented for PWD in your company?
7. What would you like other employers to know when using SE?
8. What would you change about SE and its implementation?



Appendix IV

Ethics Approval Letter



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Faculty of Health Sciences
Human Research Ethics Committee



Room 45 E-52-E-Floor- Old Main Building
Groote Schuur Hospital
Observatory 7925
Telephone [021] 406 6492
Email: hrec-submissions@uct.ac.za
Website: www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms

05 August 2022

HREC REF: 308/2022

Mr I Abbas

Division of Occupational Therapy
F-Floor, OMB
Email: iesrafeel.abbas@uct.ac.za
Student: Reyna.makan@uct.ac.za

Dear Mr Abbas

PROJECT TITLE : EMPLOYER'S EXPERIENCES OF USING THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODEL WHEN EMPLOYING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE OPEN LABOUR MARKET IN SOUTH AFRICA- (MASTERS CANDIDATE-MISS REYNA MAKAN)

Thank you for your response letter, addressing the issues raised by the Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

It is a pleasure to inform you that the HREC has **formally approved** the above-mentioned study, subject to the remaining issue is 12.3(bullet 3 in the HREC letter) which is not address. I have attached an example of how it was to be addressed (added in red).

Approval is granted for one year until the 30 August 2023.

Please submit a progress form, using the standardised Annual Report Form if the study continues beyond the approval period. Please submit a Standard Closure form if the study is completed within the approval period.

(Forms can be found on our website: www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms)

Please quote the HREC REF 308/2022 in all your correspondence.

Please note that the ongoing ethical conduct of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

Please note that for all studies approved by the HREC, the principal investigator **must** obtain appropriate institutional approval, where necessary, before the research may occur.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR M BLOCKMAN
CHAIRPERSON, FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Federal Wide Assurance Number: FWA00001637. Institutional Review Board (IRB) number: IRB00001938 NHREC-registration number: REC-210208-007

This serves to confirm that the University of Cape Town Human Research Ethics Committee complies to the Ethics Standards for Clinical Research with a new drug in patients, based on the Medical Research Council (MRC-SA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA-USA), International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use: Good Clinical Practice (ICH GCP), South African Good Clinical Practice Guidelines (DoH 2020), based on the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry Guidelines (ABPI), and Declaration of Helsinki (2013) guidelines. The Human Research Ethics Committee granting this approval is in compliance with the ICH Harmonised Tripartite Guidelines E6: Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice (CPMP/ICH/135/95) and FDA Code Federal Regulation Part 50, 56 and 312.

HREC.REF308.2022

Appendix V

