

**Understanding the experiences of employees with
disabilities in an open labour market setting**

Madri Engelbrecht

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of a **Masters degree in
Occupational Therapy** in the Division of Occupational Therapy, School of
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health Science, University of
Cape Town

August 2006

Supervisor: Dr. Theresa Lorenzo

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.

Dedication

To Altitude Workforce Solutions – a truly visionary and inspiring company

University of Cape Town

Declaration

I, Madri Engelbrecht, hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based, is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise), and that neither the whole work, nor any part has been, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university.

I empower the University of Cape Town to reproduce for the purpose of research either the whole or any part of the contents in any manner whatsoever.

Signed:

Signed by candidate

Date: 22/08/06

Acknowledgements

To my family: Thank you for giving me the space and ability to do this.

To Theresa Lorenzo: Thank you for being strict and giving me the push that I needed during these last few months.

To Altitude Workforce Solutions: You have helped, assisted and supported me in more ways than you know.

To Zerina Hajwani: Thank you for the much needed reflections and inspirations when I needed them most.

To Amé Engelbrecht: You have given me all of the motivation that I needed to complete this thesis.

University of Cape Town

Contents

Dedication	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	viii
Definition of terms	xi

List of figures

Figure 1.1 Diagrammatic presentation of the traditional relationship between employer and employee	7
Figure 1.2 Diagrammatic presentation of the triangular relationship within the TES industry	7
Figure 2.1 The deprivation trap (Stone, 2001)	13
Figure 2.2 A downward spiral created by the deprivation trap	15
Figure 5.1 A cycle of inferiority associated with disability	80
Figure 5.2 Options presented to PWDs who are eligible for a disability grant	86

List of tables

Table 4.1 Summary of findings presented as themes, categories and subcategories	37
---	----

Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 South African Government efforts	1
1.2 A social security system to counter poverty	3
1.3 Unemployment in South Africa and the Western Cape	4

1.4 Altitude Workforce Solutions (Pty) Ltd	5
1.4.1 The Temporary Employment Service (TES) industry	6
1.5 Problem statement	9
1.6 Purpose of the study	10
1.7 Research question	10
1.8 Aim of the study	10
1.9 Objectives of the study	10
Chapter 2 Literature review	11
2.1 Disability and poverty	11
2.2 Disability and unemployment	13
2.3 Sustainable economic empowerment and PWDs	15
2.4 Situating work within an occupational perspective	17
Chapter 3 Methodology	20
3.1 Research approach	20
3.2 Research design	20
3.3 The researcher	21
3.4 Study population	22
3.5 Sampling	22
3.6 The study participants	23
3.7 Data gathering process	29
3.7.1 In-depth interviewing	30
3.7.2 Reflective journaling	31
3.8 Data analysis	32
3.9 Ensuring research rigour	32

3.9.1 Credibility	33
3.9.2 Transferability	33
3.9.3 Dependability	33
3.9.4 Confirmability	34
3.10 Ethical considerations	34
Chapter 4 Findings	37
4.1 Theme 1 “I can say I got a home, it’s a home to me”	39
4.1.1 Altitude Workforce Solutions as a specialised employer of PWDs	39
4.1.2 Earning money as an enabler in employment	46
4.1.3 Enjoying the social environment	48
4.2 Theme 2 “Why do you come and waste your time here?”	55
4.2.1 Skewed perceptions and negative attitudes	55
4.2.2 Barriers imposed by insufficient infrastructure	59
4.3 Theme 3 “People with disabilities sort of flock together”	62
4.3.1 Separation between PWDs and normal people	63
4.4 Theme 4 Disability in the workplace: a double-edged sword	68
4.4.1 The specialised employer as a restrictor	68
4.4.2 Earning money as a stressor	69
Chapter 5 Discussion of findings	71
5.1 The specialised employer	71
5.1.1 Specialisation and the sensitised employer	72

5.1.2 The counter-effect of specialisation	76
5.1.2.1 A self-fulfilling prophecy of deficiency	79
5.2 Economic empowerment as a desirable outcome of employment	83
5.2.1 Economic empowerment and the disability grant	84
5.2.2 Social security as a means of economic empowerment	85
5.3 Discussion of the methodology	87
Chapter 6 Conclusion and recommendations	89
References	93
Appendices	102
Appendix A Information sheet	102
Inligtingsvorm	104
Appendix B Consent form	106
Toestemmingsvorm	108
Appendix C Interview guiding questions	110
Appendix D My perceptions of persons with disabilities and their employment: personal narrative	111
Appendix E Interview schedule	113
Appendix F Ethical approval letter	114

Abstract

In 1994, the unemployment levels of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) in South Africa appeared on government agendas, when a process was set in motion to redress the inequalities of the apartheid regime. At that stage, and still at present, the vast majority of PWDs in South Africa are unemployed. In the Western Cape Province alone 72,38% of PWDs do not have formal work (Vocational Rehabilitation Task Team, 2004).

This study focused on a small business enterprise in the Western Cape that primarily employs PWDs in the open labour market arena. However, the company has been experiencing annual turnover rates of 26,6% in terms of labour, resulting in a substantial financial loss. The purpose of the study was, therefore, to identify the reasons for this attrition by PWDs, which effectively defeats the objective of the economic empowerment of PWDs that the company has set for itself.

The research aimed to understand those experiences of PWDs that related to their work. The objectives were to explore and describe their reasons for leaving employment. The study also describes the factors that are perceived to enable the company to retain disabled employees.

A qualitative research approach was followed using a collective case study in the research design. This approach enabled the researcher to do in-depth interviews with the participants and to use reflective journaling to generate

rich information about employment experiences from the participants' as well as the researcher's point of view.

Four themes emerged. The first theme centred around factors that participants found to be enabling in the workplace: "*I can say I got a home, it's a home to me*". In the second theme participants described restricting factors: "*Why do you come and waste your time here*". The third theme described their perceptions of the open labour market and themselves within that context and emerged from the data: "*People with disabilities sort of flock together*". The fourth theme reported on dualities that appeared in the participants' experiences: "*Disability in the workplace: a double-edged sword*".

In the discussion, the researcher highlights the concept of a specialised employer, as opposed to an employer who has merely been sensitised about disability and disability issues. Economic empowerment and its role in achieving success in the workplace are discussed, while considering governmental efforts to counter the effects of poverty in South Africa.

Limitations of the study methodology are highlighted in terms of the study population being restricted to one company in South Africa. Another limitation was the exclusion of a co-coder which could have increased the confirmability of the study findings.

The study concludes that the concept of a specialised employer was identified as a desirable conduit to successful employment of PWDs in the

open labour market. Based on this conclusion, the researcher recommends further research of the concept in combination with other existing concepts such as sensitivity, inclusion and integration.

The study concludes that economic empowerment of PWDs is not a natural result of such a person being employed in the open labour market since current government systems are possibly causing a counter-effect to the economic empowerment of PWDs. Thus, the researcher recommended that further and alternative measures be investigated and considered to ensure that government efforts are indeed conducive to the economic empowerment of PWDs who are able to work.

University of Cape Town

Definition of terms

Disability

Disability has been defined as the loss or elimination of opportunities to take part in the life of the community, equitably with others as encountered by persons having physical, sensory, psychological, developmental, learning, neurological or other impairments, which may be permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, thereby causing activity limitations and participation restriction with the mainstream society. These barriers may be due to economic, physical, social, attitudinal and/or cultural factors (Department of Social Development, 2003).

Disability grant

A grant paid out by the state to a person who is 18 years or older and has a disability. The disability must be confirmed by a medical report from a medical officer. The person must be certified incapable of entering the labour market (Department of Social Development, 2005).

Economic empowerment

Empowerment is described as "an acquiring of power" (Neath and Schriener (1998: 219). In the context of PWDs and this study, sustainable economic empowerment would thus provide opportunities to generate money and exercise discretion in spending money on an ongoing basis.

Impairment

"The loss and/or abnormality of mental, emotional, physiological or anatomical structure or function: this term includes all losses or

abnormalities, not just those attributable to the initial pathophysiology, and also includes pain as a limiting experience” (Christiansen and Baum, 1997: 597).

Learnerships

Learnerships refer to new para-professional and vocational education and training programmes, initiated by the South African government. They combine theory and practice and culminate in a qualification that is registered with the National Qualifications Framework (Department of Labour, 2001b).

Persons/people With Disabilities (PWDs)

The terms Persons With Disabilities or People With Disabilities will be used in this report, to refer to people who experience disability in their lives, because of the presence of an impairment.

Persons/people without disabilities

In reference to the above mentioned definition, the researcher will consistently refer to persons without disabilities or people without disabilities as those who do not have an impairment, and therefore do not experience disability.

Reasonable accommodation

A modification or adjustment to a job or work environment that enables a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process, perform essential job functions, and have access to the

same rights and privileges in employment as are available to other employees without disability (Roberts and Zimbrich, 1994).

University of Cape Town

Chapter 1

Introduction

Worldwide, levels of unemployment amongst persons with disabilities (PWDs) became a focus topic in the international arena when the United Nations adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1994). Employment was identified as a target area for equal participation. Governments worldwide were urged to develop laws and regulations related to the employment field that do not discriminate against persons with disabilities and to eliminate obstacles to their employment.

1.1 South African Government efforts

In South Africa, the process of transformation from an apartheid regime into a democratic model of governance started in 1994. The old regime was fraught with the legacy of inequality, which permeated all spheres of society, including the field of work. As a result of transformative efforts over the past ten years, the South African government has passed laws such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998 (Department of Labour, 1998) and developed documents such as the Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace (Department of Labour, 2001a), in an attempt to redress the employment inequalities in South African society. Special attention has been given to PWDs by ensuring the integration of disability issues into policy development. The White Paper on the Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS) (Office of the Deputy President (ODP), 1997) addresses the challenges faced by persons with disabilities (PWDs) within the South African

context. The INDS is both a response to the UN Standard Rules and an attempt to focus governmental efforts on the rectification of inequalities with regards to PWDs in all spheres of life. The INDS states that PWDs are more likely than other people to be poor because of the strong relationship between disability and poverty. It holds that disability *reinforces* and *deepens* poverty (ODP, 1997). It also confirms that PWDs in South Africa are traditionally a disadvantaged group of people who were marginalised and excluded from society.

A further effort to redress inequalities in the labour market was made when the Department of Labour launched a Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment of People with Disabilities in 2003 (Department of Labour, 2003b). This document offers practical advice on how to accommodate PWDs in the workplace and covers all other aspects of employment for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, in 2003 the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act (Office of the Presidency, 2003) was introduced into South African law. The BBBEE Act prescribes how economic empowerment should be established in South Africa for previously disadvantaged groups. PWDs are included in these groups, along with Black people and women. The Act aims to effect an increasing number of PWDs who will manage, own and control enterprises and productive assets, as well as achieve equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels of work.

It is, therefore, clear that the South African government has, in compliance with international trends and United Nations regulation, responded in a pro-

active manner to the situation of PWDs in the country, by addressing their needs at a legislative and policy level. In another effort to address poverty amongst PWDs and introduce economic empowerment into the disability ranks, the Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation implemented a social security system.

1.2 A social security system to counter poverty

The social security system allows for state grants to be paid out to various beneficiaries based on a set of criteria (Department of Social Development, 2004b). The disability grant, awarded to PWDs who are unable to work as a result of their disability, is one of these grants. This grant is acquired through application to the Department of Social Development and based on an assessment done by a medical practitioner.

According to the Social Assistance Act (Department of Social Development, 2004b), a person is only entitled to a disability grant while he or she is unable to work. Should the person's ability or status change, that is he or she enters employment, the person is required to declare this to the Department of Social Development and the grant will be revoked, either in part or completely, depending upon the person's income level. The Department, in 2004, reported on the social and economic impact of the social security system in South Africa and stated that "South Africa's system of social security successfully reduces poverty" (Department of Social Development, 2004a: 4). What they could not deny though, is that social security grants may encourage a household response that impedes job search. Furthermore,

this statement can be seen as contradictory to statistics about unemployment in South Africa as identified by Van Niekerk (2005):

- Unemployment of the adult population rose from 17% to approximately 30% between 1994 and 2001.
- In 2001, South Africa had 4,5 million unemployed, active job seekers, compared to 10,8 million people who worked.
- At that time, an estimated 3,2 million people had given up the attempt to find work, despite the fact that they wanted to work.
- In 2004, 27,9% of South Africans were unemployed.

It is clear, therefore, that unemployment statistics in South Africa are still dire and affect the level to which South Africans can truly rise from poverty. Unemployed PWDs naturally form part of these statistics. For the purposes of this study, employment statistics within the South African context as well as the province in which the study took place, need to be considered.

1.3 Unemployment in South Africa and the Western Cape

According to the Department of Labour, the exact prevalence of disability in South Africa is unknown. They consider an estimated minimum of 10% of the population as reasonable for the purposes of Employment Equity planning (Department of Labour, 2003b). In 2002, South African designated employers (employers with more than 50 employees) reported that a total of 26 539 PWDs were employed nationally. This figure represents only 1% of all employees reported that year (Department of Labour, 2003a). Five years earlier, in 1997, the INDS reported the same statistic, indicating that the unemployment situation for PWDs had not improved (ODP, 1997). In the Western Cape there are reportedly 186 579 PWDs, of whom 18,5% (34 542)

are employed in the open labour market (Vocational Rehabilitation Task Team, 2004). Out of 132 471 PWDs of working age, this renders 72,38% of PWDs who are unemployed in this province with a general unemployment rate of 18,6% out of approximately 1,8 million economically active people (Statistics SA, 2005a).

In response to the INDS, the provincial government of the Western Cape developed the Integrated Provincial Disability Strategy (IPDS) in 2002 (Office of the Premier, 2002) to address the issue of disability in the province. This document forms the basis for co-ordinated approaches within the province towards achieving total equality of opportunities for PWDs. The IPDS identifies economic empowerment of PWDs as a key policy issue in the Western Cape and proposes that protective workshops for PWDs be transformed into viable and sustainable units of economic empowerment.

It could be concluded that provincial government provides the framework for integrating PWDs into the open labour market and that such integration is certainly on the agenda of policy makers. However, when the level and nature of unemployment of PWDs are scrutinised, it is clear that to date efforts have met with limited success in terms of achieving this aim. A company in the Western Cape has responded to the disability legislation and policies by focusing their employment practices on PWDs.

1.4 Altitude Workforce Solutions (Pty) Ltd

Altitude Workforce Solutions (AWS) is compliant with the labour legislation and guidelines as set out by the government. Its mission and vision reflect its

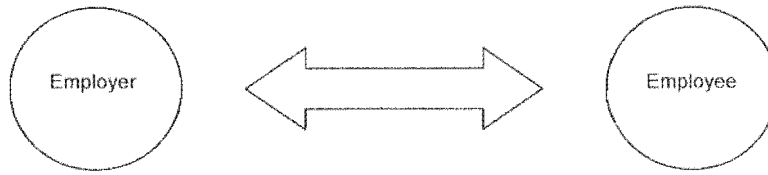
commitment to the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities (AWS, 2004a). This company strives towards enabling PWDs to succeed in the open labour market, while their desired outcome is for their employees to become economically productive and independent.

AWS has been employing PWDs since its inception in 1997. Currently, 69% (435) of persons employed by the company have disabilities (AWS, 2005). They fulfill various job categories, for example, tasks requiring technical or administrative skills, as well as job levels within the company, from managerial to labourers. The company operates within a specific sector of industry in South Africa, namely, the Temporary Employment Service (TES) industry. The TES industry brings its own challenges and dynamics to employment in South Africa. These challenges need to be considered in order to fully comprehend the effects that they may have on the employment of PWDs.

1.4.1 The Temporary Employment Service (TES) industry

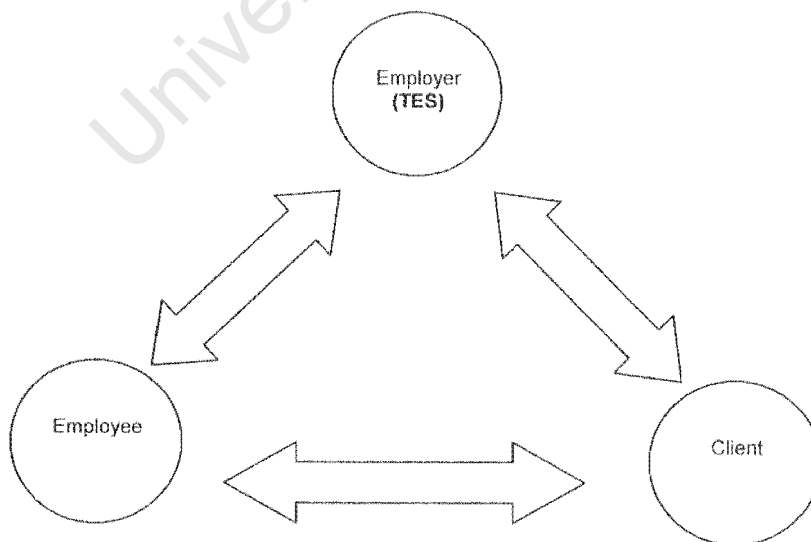
It is important to consider the industry within which the company operates, as it introduces a challenging dynamic into the employer-employee relationship. Traditionally a two-way relationship exists between employer and employee.

Figure 1.1 Diagrammatic presentation of the traditional relationship between employer and employee



However, where an employee functions within the context of a TES, a third party is introduced into this relationship, namely, the client. The Labour Relations Act of 1995 (Office of the President, 1995: 120) defines a TES as “any person who, for reward, procures for or provides to a client other persons who render services to, or perform work for the client; and who are remunerated by the temporary employment service”. The source of remuneration is, therefore, linked to the role of the employer, and consequently influences the relationship and responsibility for management of the employee in a triangular relationship.

Figure 1.2 Diagrammatic presentation of the triangular employment relationship within the TES industry



Globally, the TES industry has been fraught with a diverse range of challenges. Despite these challenges the TES industry has become a powerful role player on the field of employment and economics (Theron, Godfrey, Lewis and Pienaar, 2004). The industry has established itself strongly within the market economies because of the competitive edge that it offers its clients. It is cheaper for companies to outsource their labour requirements to a TES, with the added benefit of statutory labour law requirements being taken over by the TES as well. After 1994 in South Africa, it became even more desirable to outsource labour because of new, stricter labour legislation that was developed by the post-apartheid government. The industry has, therefore, grown with tremendous speed. Between 1983 and 1995, when labour legislation was amended and new legislation adopted to regulate the industry, the number of companies providing TES increased from 15 to 55. Between 1995 and 2002, the number increased again to 121 companies (Theron *et al.*, 2004). This increase took place to the disconcert of government and labour organisations, who believe that the TES and the client are the only parties that benefit from this relationship, while the employee is left open for exploitation. Government and organised labour have indicated that the following factors in the triangular relationship could promote exploitation of the employee:

- Employees of TES are mainly unskilled people with little prospects of development within the context of contract-bound employment.
- It is difficult to organise a segmented labour force so that TES employees represent themselves in terms of employee rights (Theron *et al.*, 2004).

AWS has responded to the above mentioned points in the following manner:

- It has created an entrance to the open labour market for people who have no work experience and subsequently no work history; have not finished school and are therefore unskilled; and have a disability rendering them the least likely candidates to be afforded an opportunity to enter the open labour market (Engelbrecht, 2005).
- It has designed integritous company policies to guarantee developmental processes for employees of the company, despite the challenges of inconsistencies in the industry (AWS, 2005).

It is clear that the company's chosen industry of operation (TES) presents the employer with unique challenges in the world of work to ensure fair labour practices that benefit all three parties in the relationship, as well as unique opportunities in terms of employment for PWDs.

1.5 Problem statement

AWS experiences a high turnover rate in workers (PWDs), estimated at 26,6% of the new recruits annually (Roberts, 2005). This turnover accounts for a total loss of R88 472,20 per annum to the company and clearly affects the company's annual profit. The rapid turnover of employees is, therefore, problematic from a business perspective. From a social perspective, the sustainability of this gainful employment opportunity and economic empowerment of the PWDs becomes questionable. The problem of rapid turnover where PWDs in the open labour market are concerned therefore needed to be investigated within the context of this particular small business.

1.6 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to identify the reasons that PWDs frequently left employment in an open labour market setting, thereby defeating the objective of economic empowerment. The identified information would inform future policy of the company, related to the retention and development of PWDs as employees, but also to reach a broader platform of disability organisations and para-statal in South Africa.

1.7 Research question

What are the experiences of persons with disabilities when they enter employment in the open labour market, while they are working and when they leave employment?

1.8 Aim of the study

The research aimed to understand the experiences of PWDs who enter and exit employment at AWS.

1.9 Objectives of the study

- To explore those factors which cause PWDs to leave or remain in employment in the open labour market.
- To make recommendations concerning the employment of PWDs in the open labour market.

Chapter 1 introduced the background to this research. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature related to understanding the experiences of employees with disabilities in an open labour market setting.

Chapter 2

Literature review

The literature review explores pertinent concepts posed in the research question, aim and objectives. The relationship between disability, poverty and unemployment is reviewed and sustainable economic empowerment presented as a counter to the effects of a cycle that has exacerbated disability, poverty and unemployment of PWDs.

2.1 Disability and poverty

Tiroler (1995) found that poor people are at risk of becoming disabled because they often have insufficient food resources. Lack of food resources exposes poor people to hunger and makes them vulnerable to illness and disease. Their vulnerability increases the risk of infections, while they have less access to treatment because of associated high medical costs and poor accessibility to services. Poor people are more likely to live in unhealthy environments, for example, where sanitation services are less than adequate. They tend to be exposed to danger in the environment for lack of security or are unable to protect themselves. Poor people who become employed are more likely to have low-paid, insecure or dangerous jobs which may generate insufficient income to sustain a household. They expose themselves to a high risk of injury at work. This, in turn, could lead to disability (Tiroler, 1995).

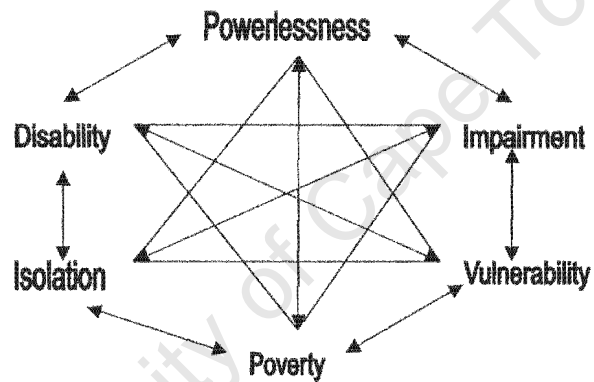
Tiroler's research (1995) also indicates that poor people are more likely to be less educated, less literate and have fewer opportunities to learn about

prevention and treatment, thus rendering them more vulnerable to disability. On the other hand, PWDs are “pushed into poverty” because they are unable or not allowed to contribute towards the generation of income in a household, or they could be over protected (Tiroler, 1995: 4). The opportunities for PWDs to become economically empowered through work are, therefore, restricted in different ways, namely, through ill health and malnutrition or lack of knowledge and capacity to gain access to employment. The findings of Coleridge in 1993 anticipated those of Tiroler (1995), as he found that disability creates and exacerbates poverty by increasing isolation and economic strain (Coleridge, 1993). Consequently, PWDs are amongst the poorest in poor countries.

In a report on disability, poverty and development, the Department for International Development (2000) states that poverty is both a cause and a consequence of disability. The Department describes how the situation of PWDs affects their chances of going to school, working for a living, enjoying family life and participating as equals in social life. In accordance with Tiroler's (1995) and Coleridge's findings (1993), the Department concurs that poor nutrition, dangerous working and living conditions, limited access to vaccination programmes, health and maternity care, poor hygiene, bad sanitation, inadequate information about the causes of impairments, war and conflict, and natural disasters all cause disability. This confirms Tiroler's findings that disability exacerbates poverty by increasing isolation and economic strain. Both studies conclude that PWDs are usually amongst the poorest of the poor and their literacy rates are lower than the rest of the population.

In addition, Stone (2001) concedes that impairments are created and compounded through poverty in terms of restricted access to resources, basic health care, adequate nutrition and appropriate support. She identifies denial of access to education, employment, training and involvement in decision making as ways that PWDs experience impoverishment. She describes a cycle whereby poverty produces impairment in a disabling society that results in further poverty.

Figure 2.1 The deprivation trap (Stone, 2001)



The relationship between poverty and disability is clearly evident: the one condition seems to perpetuate the other. Allowing PWDs to become economically active by entering into employment, could counter the effects of poverty. However, such opportunities are restricted.

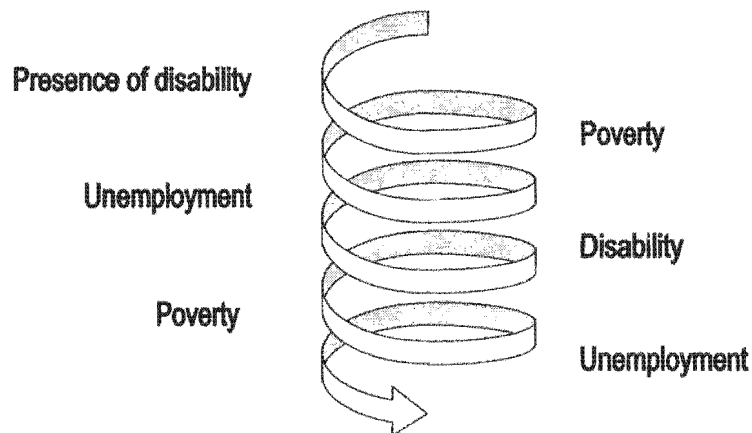
2.2 Disability and unemployment

Oliver (1991) indicated that PWDs fare worse than other people in terms of employment, in that fewer of them are employed, fewer have high earnings, they work more hours to secure the same earnings as non-disabled workers

and slightly fewer have good working conditions. Because of this, PWDs are “trapped in a situation of unemployment, underemployment and poverty” (Oliver 1991: 133). Kitchin, Shirlow and Shuttleworth (1998) agree with Oliver. They identified three main consequences of excluding persons with disabilities from the labour market. Firstly, PWDs are denied the right to work and support themselves. Secondly, extra living costs such as the cost of medication or physical adaptations have either to be met by PWDs themselves or the state. Lastly, social security payments to support PWDs are expensive and in many cases not adequate to maintain the basic, minimum standard of living. Arksey (2003) refers to a report written by the Department for Work and Pensions in the United Kingdom, which indicates that PWDs are seven times more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled persons.

A relationship, therefore, seems to exist between disability, poverty and unemployment, and it is clear how these three states perpetuate one another to form a downward spiral in which PWDs are trapped (see figure 2.2). The need, therefore, arises for a medium to break this cycle that renders PWDs disempowered and poor. The concept of sustainable economic empowerment for PWDs warrants exploration as a possible method to break the vicious cycle.

Figure 2.2 A downward spiral created by the deprivation trap



2.3 Sustainable economic empowerment and PWDs

Neath and Schriener describe the concept of empowerment as “an acquiring of power” (1998: 219). They indicate that employment provides employees with power over others, albeit to different degrees depending on the job. In the context of PWDs, sustainable economic empowerment would thus provide opportunities for them to generate money and exercise discretion in spending money on an ongoing basis. Access to an income would enable PWDs to fulfill their basic needs and access services such as transport, education and health, thus providing a means for them to break the cycle of poverty and disability.

Economical empowerment through work means being able to participate and contribute in the labour market. Oliver (1991) comments on the participation of PWDs and focuses on the demand side of the market rather than making the individual PWD suitable for work. He argues that PWDs should be made more employable by changing the social organisation of work through the removal of architectural barriers, non-discrimination and affirmative action

programs. Oliver (1991) seems to favour the concept of changing the work environment to accommodate a PWD, rather than moulding the PWD to fit into the work environment.

Entering the labour market and becoming economically empowered will inevitably present a PWD with unknown challenges and difficulties, especially when such a person has not worked before. Retaining their status as workers may be one of those challenges and would certainly influence the sustainability of their own economic empowerment. Targett, Wehman, McKinley and Young (2004) conducted case studies with PWDs to examine strategies that can be used to promote job retention for persons with spinal cord injuries. They identified that the promotion of *choice*, as well as *meaningfulness* motivated the participants to remain in their jobs. Providing *support* and enabling the PWD to bridge the gap between the individual's initial job performance and the employer's ultimate expectations, increases job retention, as well as ongoing, long-term support. The latter allows for the identification of potential barriers to employment so as to anticipate training and advocacy needs. Finally, addressing off-the-job support needs and supporting *career growth* for PWDs are essential strategies in enabling them to retain their worker status (Targett *et al.*, 2004). They describe the implementation of these strategies specifically within the context of a supported employment environment. Such an environment is created to assist PWDs to gain and maintain work. It includes the services of a job coach, who uses supported employment as a vocational rehabilitation strategy to reduce unemployment of PWDs.

Dorio (2004) identified key components of a supported employment model in the USA, that will promote success in job placement and job retention, for persons with psychiatric disabilities. She identifies *placement* as a major component, including aspects such as the co-workers placed alongside the PWD, interest, preference and challenge of the placement, stress levels of the job, potential for advancement and the work environment. She found that an *attitude* component affects the person's probability of success in the job, as well as the *level of support* available in terms of the person's family, friends, co-workers and professional support, for example, housing, social services and therapists. Finally, Dorio (2004) lists *skills* as a key component in achieving success. This component includes technical skills to perform the job tasks, interpersonal skills, self-care skills and life management skills.

Tarfett *et al.* (2004) and Dorio (2004) draw attention to the concept of employment for PWDs, and facilitating success in the endeavor of becoming employed, and remaining as such. The importance of work as an occupation, and its influence on the health and well-being of those who engage in it, can be explained by referring to occupational therapy theory.

2.4 Situating work within an occupational perspective

Occupational therapists are concerned with outcomes of health, wellness and independent functioning, as well as a quality of life that gives meaning and purpose to everyday living (OT IV Class of 2000, Watson, Buchanan, Duncan, Flieringa, Galvaan, Lorenzo, Ramugondo and Van Niekerk, 2001). The occupation of work, therefore, is of particular interest to occupational therapists due to its perceived therapeutic value, and subsequent influences

on health and well-being. Yerxa (1998) described work as one of the patterns that occupations are organized into, to “enable us to adapt to environmental demands” (pg. 412). She reported on the latent consequences of employment that are relevant to health, namely, that it imposes a time structure on one's day. Secondly, employment implies regularly shared experiences and contact with persons outside one's immediate family, and links a person to goals and purposes that transcends their own. Employment furthermore defines important aspects of personal status and identity, and lastly, it enforces activity, providing a predictable demand for action. To emphasize her view of work, Yerxa quotes Freud who said in 1930, to “remove employment [is to] remove a person's strongest tie to reality” (Yerxa, 1998: 415). She concludes that occupational engagement (in work), is an essential mediator of healthy adaptation.

Strong (1998) supports Yerxa's view of work and its relationship with the health and well-being of a person. She also places the engagement in meaningful occupation, such as work, in the centre of occupational therapy ideology. In her examination of what makes work meaningful for persons with persistent mental illness, she found that work can be a powerful facilitator of change in a person's self-concept and self-efficacy. Her study participants described how work itself and the process of working appeared to provide the basis for interactions between person, work environment and external environment to effect change. She concludes that her study is an affirmation of beliefs that people need to engage in meaningful occupation, and that their engagement appears to interrupt the cycle of disempowerment and despair.

The occupation of work is evidently important to occupational therapists in their therapeutic engagement with clients. Chapter 3 describes the methodology employed to examine the work experiences of PWDs, as a client group of occupational therapists.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology employed to conduct the research in terms of the approach and design. In the chapter motivation is given for the researcher's preference for each aspect.

3.1 Research approach

The researcher followed a *qualitative research approach* to conduct the study. According to Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999) researchers who follow this approach assume that someone's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously. A further assumption is that the experiences of others can be understood by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us. In support of these assumptions, the researcher chose this approach to understand the causal processes involved in participants leaving employment (Brink, 1991).

3.2 Research design

A study design that allowed the researcher to do an in-depth analysis of cases where participants had entered and left employment, was the *collective case study*. A collective case study is an exploration of a bounded system or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth data collection (Creswell, 1998). It involves multiple sources of information that are rich in context. This design has distinct advantages over other research methodologies when a how or why question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control.

Furthermore, case studies contribute uniquely to our knowledge of an individual, organisational, social or political phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). It allows investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. Finally, it gives a voice to the powerless and voiceless. In this study, the collective case study design allowed the researcher to investigate a why question, namely: Why do employees with disabilities leave employment after attaining it? It also facilitates an answer for the how question, namely: How can current employees with disabilities be assisted to retain their jobs?

3.3 The researcher

The researcher is a 30 year old, White, Afrikaans-speaking woman without a disability, living in Cape Town. She has a degree in Occupational Therapy and has been practicing as an occupational therapist since 1999, that is, for seven years. She worked primarily in the psychiatric field before focusing on the world of work. At the time of the study, she had been employed by AWS for two years. Her experience in disability and work extends over four years (see Appendix D).

The researcher's role at the company is focused on the management of persons with disabilities in the open labour market setting in which the company operates. In conjunction with her occupational therapy knowledge, she had to learn about and familiarise herself with the relevant labour legislation, industrial relations, small business dynamics and the operations of the industries in which the company is involved. Most of the employees in the company are appointed by the researcher in her role as human resources

manager, after following a process of recruitment and selection. This process combines occupational therapy principles of assessment, human resources management principles and interviewing skills.

The researcher was, therefore, familiar with each of the participants and could use her workplace knowledge in the sampling process to select appropriate candidates for the study. Furthermore, the researcher was intensely aware of each participant's history as an employee of the company, the dynamics introduced by the person's previous or current involvement with the company, as well as with the researcher as an individual. This knowledge has informed the researcher's opinions and interpretations during the research process. Over the four years of exposure to the concepts of disability and work, the researcher has become very familiar with practical elements involved in the dynamics between these two concepts. Her perceptions, informed by this acquired knowledge, therefore, strongly influenced her interpretations of the study findings (see Appendix D).

3.4 Study population

The study population consisted of persons with disabilities who were previously employed by AWS, and those who were employed by the company at the time of the study.

3.5 Sampling

A sample of five people was selected to participate in the study. Three participants were AWS employees at the time, and two were ex-employees

of the company. A method of purposive sampling was followed to ensure that participants met the following criteria:

- They were between the ages of 18 and 60 (representing a working age sample).
- They must have a disability as defined by the company's criteria, that is, the person must have an impairment that influences his or her ability to find employment.
- They must be conversant in English or Afrikaans to ensure good communication with researcher.
- Some participants must have been employed by AWS at the time of the study.
- Participants who were not employed by the company at the time of the study must have worked for the company previously, for at least one week. This duration ensured that the work experience at AWS had been sufficient to provide the employee with information so as to participate in the study. It also represented a realistic duration in terms of PWDs exiting employment as experienced by the company.
- The latter must have worked for the company for not longer than three months prior to the research to ensure that work experiences were fresh in their memory.

3.6 The study participants

After sampling was completed, the following participants were included in the study (nom de plumes are used for the purpose of confidentiality):

Julius

Julius is a 54 year old, Coloured man (according to the previous classification of race in South Africa). He lives in a two-room house in a poor community in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. Julius has cerebral palsy causing spastic diplegia, which affects his legs and subsequently his mobility. He walks without the aid of any assistive devices though.

Julius passed Grade 10 at school and later on acquired a certificate in office administration. He did various jobs, including machine operator, storeman, stock control, clerking and assembling, before signing up for a learnership with AWS. He left these jobs either because the company was being liquidated or because of retrenchment as a result of downsizing processes.

He signed up for a mail handling learnership, whereby he was trained and gained experience in all the aspects of handling mail and related materials. The job required him to be seated at a table in a warehouse with approximately 200 other workers. He worked at AWS for a year and nine months, at which time he decided to resign. During this time Julius never forfeited the disability grant that he receives from the government. He had made a special arrangement between the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA), under whom he was trained, and the Department of Social Services, which allocates the grants. In effect, he was receiving a grant as well as a learnership allowance at the time that he participated in the study.

As an employee Julius was occasionally argumentative, resisting authority and disobedient in terms of following instructions. His work performance in terms of production used to be low to average compared to his co-workers.

At the time of the interview, Julius was unemployed, having completed his last contract with AWS in the open labour market three months previously.

Julius is a middle-aged man who talked freely during the interviews. The first interview was conducted at his house, and the second one at a familiar venue that was accessible to him.

Nazli

Nazli is a 24 year old, Coloured, Muslim woman who lives in a traditionally Coloured area on the outskirts of Cape Town. This area is part of an urban renewal area in the Western Cape, which has led to much community and commercial development taking place over the past ten years.

Nazli has cerebral palsy, causing a left hemiplegia. She subsequently has a mild mobility impairment and movement in her left hand, compared to her right hand, is restricted. Nazli finished Grade 12 at a school for learners with special needs in the Western Cape. She completed a secretarial and administrative learnership with AWS, but had not undergone any further training after school.

Nazli has been known to the company for several years. She started as a trainee office clerk in 2001 where she worked at the head office. She then

became a trainee administrative assistant on one of the satellite sites of the company. She also worked as a telephonist and administrative clerk on other satellite sites. Later in 2002 she was placed outside of the company with a client. At the end of 2002 she was retrenched when her position became redundant. During Nazli's period of employment, she was never in receipt of a disability grant because her disability was of a very mild nature and she did not qualify for a grant.

She signed up with AWS again in 2004 as a temporary administrative assistant, and in 2005 she entered a learnership process to attain a qualification in the secretarial/administrative field. She completed this process during that year, and since then has worked for the company as a relief receptionist for a client.

During her time of employment with the company, issues surrounding her punctuality and work attendance became problematic, and one of the clients where she worked on behalf of AWS, accused her of dishonesty.

At the time of the interview, Nazli had been unemployed for two months. She is friendly and spoke freely during the interviews.

Nico

Nico is a 49 year old, Coloured man, who boards with his sister and her family in a traditionally Coloured area in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. This community is regularly plagued by crime and violence.

Nico has epilepsy. He experiences seizures on an irregular basis (approximately one seizure every four months) and uses medication to control this condition. He describes the seizures as absences, as opposed to tonic-clonic seizures. He visits a hospital on a six monthly basis for routine check-ups.

Nico finished Grade 10 at school and subsequently gained experience in woodwork at a workshop for PWDs. He learned upholstery while doing private jobs for people, and worked as an office assistant for five years. His longest formalised work experience was at an industrial workshop for persons with disabilities (protective environment), where he worked for 26 years. He performed duties as a production assistant, did sorting work and quality control tasks.

Nico signed up for the same learnership as Julius, though they worked at different sites in different areas. At the time of the interview he had been employed in the open labour market for a year and nine months. Since he completed the learnership process, his job function had grown to include both mail handling and machine operating. At the time of the study, Nico was in receipt of part of his disability grant.

Nico is a friendly middle-aged man. During the interviews he was initially shy, especially to communicate while a tape recorder was on. However, he became increasingly talkative as the interviews progressed. He was interviewed at his place of work on both occasions.

Kyle

Kyle is a 44 year old, White man from Cape Town. He lives in a suburb south of Cape Town, traditionally considered to be a middle-income White residential area. He lives in a house together with other PWDs who have a disability similar to his.

Kyle has a diagnosis of schizophrenia. He takes medication to stabilise his condition and visits the doctor on a regular basis for check-ups.

Kyle finished Grade 12 at school and has worked at a storeman before in the open labour market. He has also done casual jobs as a painter and a gardener. For about two years he participated in a transitional employment programme under the guidance of a community club for persons with schizophrenia. Prior to his participation in the programme, he had been hospitalised for extended periods of time because of relapses.

At the time of the interview, Kyle had been employed in the open labour market for two years, after first having signed for a mail handling learnership and later being promoted to a line assistant position. During the initial stages of his employment with the company, there had been an incident of undisciplined behaviour, but at the time of the study, Kyle was a reliable and dedicated participant in the workforce. During his time of employment he forfeited his disability grant because his income increased to more than the amount allowed for a grant receiver.

Grace

Grace is a 30 year old, Black woman from a township to the east of Cape Town. This area is traditionally a poor area where many Black people still live in shacks.

Grace has a severe form of asthma. She uses an asthma pump to control the condition, but she still describes it as causing her prospects of finding work to diminish.

Grace finished Grade 12 at school and subsequently did an intermediate diploma in business management. At her time of employment at AWS, Grace had had no previous jobs and, therefore, no work experience.

She started working at AWS in 2005 and at the time of the interview had been employed in the open labour market for one year. She works as a packer in a small spice factory and performs the same job function for another client of AWS' in the plastics industry. At the time of the study, Grace was still in receipt of a disability grant.

Grace is a dedicated and responsible worker, and will in the near future be attending a Basic First Aid course to be able to act as a representative on site.

3.7 Data gathering process

The researcher gathered data using in-depth interviews with the participants and the reflective journaling process.

3.7.1 In-depth interviewing

In-depth interviewing is a research tool that builds on the conversation skills that humans already have, but differs from ordinary conversation (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). In-depth interviewing can be done between strangers, as well as people who know one another. These interviews are guided by the researcher, who intentionally introduces a limited number of questions and requests the interviewee to explore these questions in depth (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

For the two participants who were unemployed at the time of the study, interview questions focused on the event of leaving employment and the circumstances surrounding this event (see Appendix C). These questions were directed towards developing an understanding of the participants' experiences throughout the employment process, with particular interest in the event of terminating employment.

Questions to the other three participants were focused on the enabling factors that made it possible for them to enter and retain their jobs (see Appendix C). This entailed an exploration of the event of becoming employed, and the day-to-day experience of being employed with the company, and translation of those experiences into enablement of job retention.

The researcher interviewed each participant on two separate occasions, that is, ten interviews in total. The second interview was used to further explore

concepts, ideas and thoughts that were identified during the first interview and to check the accuracy of information already obtained. This interview was naturally lengthier than the first one because it served the purpose of member checking, as well as gathering information not obtained during the first interview. The interview schedule appears in Appendix E.

3.7.2 Reflective journaling

The researcher reflected upon her experiences, feelings and observations prior, during and after the period of data collection. Reflective journaling as a method of data gathering was used as a means of bracketing to develop the rigour of the study (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996). It reflected the research schedule, logistics of the study and logged the methods of the study. The journal allowed the researcher to become aware of biases and preconceived assumptions, which could influence her method of collecting data and her approach to analysis. It, therefore, facilitated the researcher to reflect upon her own characteristics and to examine her processes of data gathering and analysis (Krefting, 1991). Thus, the journals allowed a strategy of reflexivity to strengthen the credibility of the study.

Reflexivity is defined as “the capacity of any system of signification to turn back upon itself, to make itself its own object by referring to itself” (Frank, 1997: 87). The researcher used reflexivity during the process of reflective journaling, to elevate any anxiety, transference, counter-transference, splitting, projection and empathy to a conscious level. She was, therefore, able to clarify her perceptions and understanding of the research data, and to use the clarity as a focus for more intense insight into the data.

3.8 Data analysis

The researcher transcribed all the interviews herself as the first step of analysis. This allowed her to become immersed in the data. After each transcription, or part thereof, the researcher reflected on the content and process of transcribing, as well as at any time that thoughts occurred to her regarding or in relation to the interviews/interview data.

After reading the data a further two or three times, the researcher started identifying codes and categories that emerged from each interview. She highlighted these in different colours and cross-referenced them with similar or related categories in data from other interviews. Substantiating comments or evidence from interviews were noted next to categories to serve as a reference to the particular interview where the category presented, as well as to contextualise the comment. All categories were eventually summarised and grouped together to look for emerging themes.

3.9 Ensuring research rigour

Krefting (1991) stated that the concepts of *reliability* and *validity* as used in a quantitative research context do not fit the details of qualitative research, in terms of establishing rigour. She suggests that a different language be used that includes the terms *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability* and *confirmability*. These four aspects serve as strategies to establish trustworthiness in a qualitative research study. Thus, the researcher established trustworthiness of the study in the following way:

3.9.1 Credibility

To ensure strong credibility, the researcher used member checking when the second interview was conducted with each participant. When participants attended their second interviews, emerging themes and categories from the first interview were verified by means of questions formulated to serve that purpose, and further probing questions to gain clarity on statements made during the first interview. The participant thus had the opportunity to review the researcher's findings and interpretations. Further to member checking, the researcher heeded the principle of reflexivity, as discussed earlier.

3.9.2 Transferability

Krefting (1991) is of the opinion that transferability is more the responsibility of the person wanting to transfer the findings to another situation or population than that of the researcher of the original study. In this study, transferability was established by the researcher by presenting rich, descriptive data regarding the context and circumstances of the study and its participants, thus allowing comparison with other studies. Furthermore, ensuring transferability allows for the study to be repeated in another context or area.

3.9.3 Dependability

The researcher ensured that the methodology of the study was accurately documented with a detailed and clear paper trail of all steps taken. This meticulous process of documentation will effect the dependability of the study to an extent that it can be replicated if needed.

3.9.4 Confirmability

To ensure confirmability of the study results, the researcher documented the procedures for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study. Furthermore, she had two reflective discussions with another researcher who is studying a research question closely related to this study. These discussions gave her an opportunity to confirm ideas, thoughts and emerging categories and themes with someone who had not had extensive exposure to the data, but who shares an interest in the topic and research method.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Research Portfolio and the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee of UCT before the commencement of the study (see Appendix F). The proposal was also submitted to the Managing Director of AWS and permission obtained for access to employees of the company.

During the first interview with each participant, the objective of the study and the role of the participant were explained. Written informed consent was obtained for participation in the study, as well as for the use of an audio tape recorder during the interviews (see Appendices A and B).

Munhall (1988) refers to the concept of *process consent*, which implies that consent needs to be renegotiated as unexpected events or consequences occur during qualitative research. During the research process, the researcher assessed the effects of her involvement in the field and acquired

verbal permissions at every subsequent interaction with participants, after initial written informed consent had been obtained.

It was made clear to participants that they had the right to retract sensitive information at any stage during the study, and that they themselves could withdraw from the study should they not want to continue participating. Furthermore, it was explained that they had the choice to refuse to answer a question should they wish to do so, and that should they choose to withdraw from the research, it would have been of no consequence to them.

The identity of participants was kept confidential by ascribing a nom de plume to each of them. Participants were given the assurance that communication during interviews would not affect their status as employees of the company, or the future prospects of employment through the company.

The researcher is herself an employee of the company in the capacity of human resources manager, and subsequently had access to all employee files. No other parties were involved during the sampling of participants, apart from the researcher. Thus the anonymity of participants was protected.

In adherence to the principle of beneficence, the researcher ensured that participants were not harmed by their participation in the study. This was established by interviewing participants who were employed at the time, at a convenient venue on the premises where they work, during one of their breaks, for example, lunch time, or on one of their days off. Thus,

participation in the study therefore caused them the least possible inconvenience and in no way affected their work or income.

The researcher arranged transport for one of the participants to be brought to the researcher's place of work, since this interview took place on an afternoon when the participant had finished work early.

Participants, who were not employed by the company, were interviewed at a convenient venue or other designated area that they had indicated as being suitable. The researcher reimbursed them for their travel costs to get to the venue and back.

Chapter 3 described the research methodology employed for this study. In chapter 4 the themes that emerged as findings will be described.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter reports on the themes and categories that emerged from the participants' interviews. Themes will be expanded by drawing on data presented in the form of direct quotes. The English translation of Afrikaans quotes is given in bold. Four themes were identified:

Theme 1 *"I can say I got a home, it's a home to me"*

Theme 2 *"Why do you come and waste your time here?"*

Theme 3 *"People with disabilities sort of flock together"*

Theme 4 *Disability in the workplace: a double-edged sword*

Table 4.1 Summary of findings presented as themes, categories and subcategories

THEME	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY
<i>"I can say I got a home, it's a home to me"</i>	Altitude Workforce Solutions as a specialised employer of PWDs	AWS agent for entry into open labour market AWS agent for PWDs to retain employment Sense of belonging and self-worth Positive effects on health and wellness AWS: sensitivity, knowledge and awareness of disabilities

THEME	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY
	Earning money as an enabler in employment	Income makes PWDs independent, self-sufficient and contributive to society Earning an income motivates PWDs to work hard
	Enjoying the social environment	Positive and constructive communication with employer Assistance from co-workers Teamwork Shared understanding and experience of impairment with other PWDs Acceptance Friendships Encouragement Sense of accomplishment
<i>"Why do you come and waste your time here?"</i>	Skewed perceptions and negative attitudes	Abilities judged on basis of presence of impairment The debilitating power of pity Ignorance
	Barriers imposed by insufficient infrastructure	Transport and hours of work Communication barriers Absence of specialised safety measures Competing with normal people

THEME	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY
<i>"People with disabilities sort of flock together"</i>	Separation between PWDs and normal people	Acceptance of a level of inferiority Being labeled as a PWD Being a burden to co-workers
<i>Disability in the workplace: a double-edged sword</i>	The specialised employer as a restrictor	AWS dependent on good will of others to find opportunities for employees
	Earning money as a stressor	Pressure of earning a salary Financial insecurity when losing disability grant Need for permanency and job security

4.1 Theme 1 *"I can say I got a home, it's a home to me"*

This theme reports on the participants' experiences of factors in the workplace that enabled them to successfully enter into and perform in the open labour market, while working for Altitude Workforce Solutions. They identified aspects of the company itself and its operations, which contributed to their success.

4.1.1 Altitude Workforce Solutions as a specialised employer of PWDs

Participants experienced the company's field of specialisation as an agent to entry into employment and their ability to retain employment.

When I started at Altitude I was treated as one of the workers, I was treated as one of the employees, basically because Altitude was a recruitment agency at the time who helped disability people only. And I quite enjoyed my

experiences with Altitude as I was feeling as one of the workers. (Nazli, 31 March 2006)

Ma ek sal sê dat juffrou, as ek nie vir juffrou-hulle ge-ontmoet het nie, da sal ek dit nie reggekry het nie, ek moet eintlik bly wees vir juffrou-hulle lat ek die dinge ge-ontmoet het¹.

But I would say, miss, if I didn't meet you [the people of Altitude] I wouldn't have succeeded, I must actually be happy that I've met you and all these things. (Nico, 19 April 2006)

You see the thing is, basically just that I, that I got a job. And that's important ..., because, you know, I know where I'd be without a job, and I've been there before and I don't wanna go back there. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Kyle continues to talk about the facilitating nature of the company and refers to the way in which he was allowed to perform his tasks without interference from the company. He thanks the company for the opportunity to enter the open labour market that afforded him the chance to prove himself in this arena. Grace confirms Kyle's statements and briefly compares this company with other companies in saying that others are less amenable to employ PWDs.

The participants talked about the company's field of specialisation as a conduit to allow them entrance into the open labour market, which had been

¹ Afrikaans quotes are in the form of a local dialect, as used by the participant.

denied to them by other companies. In their experience the company's business model enabled them, some of whom had no previous work experience, or exposure to work, to enter the open labour market.

Some of us haven't been working before and this is rather an advantage for those that haven't been working before, to see whether they could cope being out in a labour market. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

[Altitude] can find you a job first of all, because ... it was very difficult for me to get a job, because some companies don't want to take you if you are disabled ..., because you have to go to hospital, you have to go to use medication. So [with] Altitude you can get [that] all that time, you have your time. (Grace, 5 April 2006)

This gateway that was created by the company, reportedly served to motivate and encourage the participants to work and perform, and as such had a positive influence on their retention of a worker status.

It gave me a sense of security, you know, it made me feel good ... (Kyle, 13 March 2006)

This sense of belonging, strengthened the participants' self-worth. Nico ascribes a great deal of honour to the aspect of working for an employer. He does not perceive his previous places of work with such regard, because they were protected environments. Having achieved success in entering the

open labour market, he is now filled with a sense of accomplishment, which positively influences his self-worth and ability to retain a job.

Mevrou, om eerlik met mevrou te wees, dit gaan eintlik oor 'n baas. Dis [oor] die eienaar van 'n plek, mevrou, ek het nog nooit by 'n eienaar gewerk, by 'n fabriek of enige ander werksplek of iets van die aard nie, en nou kry ek die geleentheid in my lewe om nog vir 'n baas te werk ... Almal die plekke wat ek gewerk het is ma plekke waar gestremde [mense werk], juffrou.

Miss, to be honest with you, it's actually about a boss. It's about the owner of a place, miss, I've never worked for an owner before, at a factory or any other workplace or something of that nature, and now I got the opportunity in my lifetime to work for a boss ... All these places where I've worked, they are places where people with disabilities [work], miss. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

Participants described factors that, as a result of the company's field of specialisation, further influenced their successes directly or indirectly. They commented on how their employment status had **positive effects on their health and wellness**. These positive effects could be seen as a motivator to remain employed, and so added to the enabling effect that the company has had on their engagement in the open labour market.

... ek voel nogal so, juffrou, want ek dink dit is 'n gedeelte, juffrou, van my liggaam, juffrou, van die siekte wat ek het, juffrou. Ek wetie of dit die werk is wat dit weerhou nie, juffrou, of die op en af se loper, juffrou. [Dis waarvoor] ek druk, juffrou, nou daarvoor is ek so bly, juffrou. Vir die werk wat die siekte

so wegdruk in my, juffrou, dit is wat dit ... beveg, juffrou. Oor niks ander nie, niks, behalwe die siekte wat ek het, juffrou. Ek is gesond ... En ek was nog nooit so gesond nie, juffrou.

I kind of feel that way, miss, because I think that it is a part, miss, of my body, miss, this illness that I have, miss, I don't know if it is the job that keeps it away, miss, or the walking up and down, miss. [That is] what I'm pushing, miss, now that is what I'm happy for, miss. For the job that pushes the illness away inside of me, miss, that is what ... wards it off, miss. For no other reason, none, except the illness that I have, miss. I am healthy ... and I've never been this healthy, miss. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

For me, it has taken me away from a life on the streets..., and...how can I say as a psychiatric patient it's ... it keeps me stable ... and I come to work, to be able to carry on with life. Altitude has given me a chance where I've ... I know I've come up from where I was ... It helps me psychiatrically, it helps my psychiatric condition. It keeps me stable psychiatrically ... gives me [something] to do ... like, keeps me going. (Kyle, 13 March 2006)

Participants reported that the company's ability to demonstrate **sensitivity, knowledge and awareness of disabilities**, allowed AWS to build an effective and realistic base of experience about the employment of PWDs.

[Altitude is] a company that probably have got a back-up should the person not be happy where he or she is, then [they] obviously look out for something better ... They would either then give you the opportunity of getting a job near

to where you are staying, or where it would be easily for you to get to the job and back ... Their assistance was of such once you phoned them with a problem they usually come assess the problem and deal with it properly.
(Julius, 10 April 2006)

If you've got an appointment at hospital, Altitude can allow you to go there ...if you go to disability grant, Altitude can allow you to go there ... If you feel like you are not well at work, you can talk to your supervisor ... [who will] send you home and relax ... (Grace, 5 April 2006)

The employer's sensitivity, knowledge and awareness of disability have allowed it to develop sophisticated systems, which in turn enabled it to effectively accommodate PWDs in the workplace. The participants commented on these systems of reasonable accommodation as a further factor that contributed to their success in the workplace.

I can't work one day [and then] four days off a week, or things like that. And then I was offered a learnership and I took it. I mean, there they accommodated me very well, and I appreciate that fact ... [And] they do help me if they see me behind. Because here, it's a teamwork effort. You know, and teamwork goes a long way. They've accommodated me. (Kyle, 13 March 2006)

It was very hard for me to work there, because I've got a back problem, so I worked there for one day, so I was very happy to go there to [a different workplace] ... [The company] can say no, Grace, you can't work here [at this

specific site] ... because you've got that problem ... At Altitude they can put it [the communication] in a smart way: you can't work here, we can put you here ... (Grace, 5 April 2006)

Grace was referring to a transfer that took place between two work sites, when tasks at the first site impacted negatively on her back. After she communicated this difficulty to her supervisor she was transferred to another site with different expectations in the work environment. She expressed her appreciation for the way that the company communicated with her in this instance.

Nico also made mention of this form of reasonable accommodation, where he was moved from one site to another that was closer to home, thus impacting positively on his traveling arrangements.

Participants commented positively on how the company's approach of matching jobs and people assisted them in becoming employed and remaining employed.

Altitude Workforce Solutions cater for these things [different abilities] and say "This is what people can do, this is their type of disability, would you please help where you can," and this is what happened at the last place where we worked together. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

Julius further commented on the company's screening processes that allowed them to make optimal job matches, basing the match on the applicant's ability and the requirements of the job.

Nazli reported on similar experiences where she was moved into different job positions based on her developing abilities. She commented on how the positive experience of being offered different opportunities in the workplace and in doing so, allowed her to explore her talents.

The above mentioned comments by participants described how the employer's field of specialisation had enabled them to enter into and retain employment. Another aspect that participants experienced as an enabler of employment was earning money.

4.1.2 Earning money as an enabler in employment

The participants described their positive experiences in relation to receiving an income. One participant mentioned repeatedly how his income enabled him to become independent, self-sufficient and contributive to society, at the level of his own household. It is clear that earning a salary has changed his life for the better, and that the remuneration received for his work has motivated him to be productive in the open labour market.

It's as good as making you independent financially as well as you can live without a state grant. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

En hier kan ek sien, juffrou, ek verdien my salaris, juffrou, met my werk wat ek doen, juffrou, ek word betaal ... Ja, juffrou hier kan ek dam vir my klere koop, juffrou, ek kan dam vir my sorg, juffrou. Ek het dit nog nooit gedoen [nie], juffrou, ma ek kan dam, hoe sê hulle, die board betaal, juffrou, ek kan vir my losseer geld betaal ... nou dit is vir my die mooiste, juffrou, om by die huis iets te kan gee, juffrou ... wat 'n mooi iets het juffrou-hulle aan my gedoen om my salaris te verhoog

And here I can see, miss, that I earn my salary, miss, with the job that I do, miss, I'm getting paid ... Yes, miss, here I can at least buy myself clothes, miss, I can at least look after myself, miss. I've never done this before, miss, but I can at least, how do they say, pay the board, miss ...now that is nice for me, miss, to be able to give something at home, miss ... What a nice thing you have done to me to increase my salary.

(Nico, 19 April 2006)

Another participant comments on the positive impact of the salary on her motivation, by referring to another characteristic of the company's processes: that of payment based on production. She thereby demonstrated her understanding of the parallels between her level of productivity and her income.

I feel good because as you work hard, you gonna earn more ... (Grace, 5 April 2006)

Kyle also commented on how earning an income has motivated him to try even harder, especially at a time when his disability grant was revoked based

on his salary. Participants commented on the positive effect that good communication practices had on their experiences in employment.

4.1.3 Enjoying the social environment

Participants highlighted aspects of the social environment at work, that made it easier and enjoyable for them to work at AWS. **Positive and constructive communication** between the employer and themselves was explained in the interviews.

The personal experience regarding myself is (that) there was good communication with the company and management, as well as the workers that were employed at that stage. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

And even our managers, supervisors, everything, you can share your views with them ... Like I know that if I've got a problem I can talk to Madri [human resources manager], or I can talk to Tracey [human resources administrator]... (Grace, 3 May 2006)

A further category, namely, **enjoying the social environment**, describes factors in the employment environment that enhanced the working experience of the participants, and as such enabled them to remain employed with the company.

Participants referred to **assistance** that was offered to them by co-workers without impairments or disabilities, as well as assistance from their co-

workers with disabilities. As a result, the concept of **teamwork** emerges from this category.

[En as mens] saam met die nie-gestremde mense is, juffrou, hulle sal 'n mens help, juffrou. Hulle is nogal verstaanbaar, juffrou, dat ons nogal gestremde mense is hier by [die kliënt], juffrou, wat by [die kliënt] werk, juffrou ... Nou, ek het meer vertrou op hom, juffrou. Want hy's ene wat saam met my geloop het, juffrou en so iets van die aard, hy't my altyd besigtig hy kyk my.

[And when you are] together with the non-disabled people, miss, they will help a person, miss. They are quite understanding, miss, that we are disabled here at [the client], miss, who works for [the client], miss ... they are understanding people ... Now, I trusted him more, miss. Because [he] used to walk with me, miss, and something of that nature, he always kept an eye on me, he watched me. (Nico, 19 April 2006)

This experience of how a fellow worker with a disability was able to assist him because of his insight and understanding of PWD, is echoed by another participant:

Like we work as a team first of all, you can't work alone. You work [with] someone [who's had a] heart attack, you work [with] someone [who's] maybe using a stick, you work [with] different disabilities ... so you share. Maybe someone [was in a] car accident, so you share that ... maybe someone tells you ... "That day was so terrible to me", so you share that moment and you share your views with other people. (Grace, 5 April 2006)

These participants felt that they benefited from working with other PWDs, because of the shared understanding and experience of impairment and/or disability. Another participant identifies the benefit of working together with persons who do not have impairments or disabilities.

I'm always being helped, by other people, especially [the client's] people. They do help me 'cause they know I'm slow, but they do come and assist me when they see it's getting late. So, there is teamwork, which I appreciate. If it wasn't for teamwork I'd still be packing yesterday's work today ... You know, and teamwork goes a long way. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Participants described **acceptance** by their co-workers without disabilities, as a positive contributor to their success in the workplace.

The people have accepted me, they haven't like, put me aside. They haven't, like I mean they haven't told me I'm mad or they haven't made fun of me or that, you know ... It's made [it] easier for me. They don't even discuss my problems. They treat me like a normal human being. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Though the acceptance by persons without disabilities is stressed, Grace refers to a camaraderie that existed between herself and her co-workers with disabilities, because they all share the experience of disability.

You feel free to talk to [about] everything that you have ... I experience a lot to work with people with disabilities, because I feel free to work with them ...
(Grace, 3 May 2006)

Participants have described acceptance as an enabler in the workplace, as experienced from two sources: their co-workers with disabilities, and their co-workers without disabilities. The two enablers identified so far, namely, assistance and acceptance, seemed to contribute to the development of **friendships**, which was perceived as another enabler to the participants.

... of die vriend kan miskien in jou insien dan sê sy vir jou "Nico, jy moetie daai werk so doen nie, jy moet dit so doen", dan sal jy dit weer doen. As jy net so doen soos hy vir jou gesê het, mevrou, dan sal jy nogal meerder doen. Dit hang dieselfde van jou af ook, mevrou. As jy so graag iets [wil] doen, om net meer te kan behaal soos die next persoon, mevrou, dan kan jy probeer elke dag om vir hom te sit en dophou wat hy doen.

... or the friend can see it in you then he tells you "Nico, you musn't do that job like that, you must do it like this", and then you will do it again. If you do it like he tells you to, miss, then you will be able to do even more. It depends on you as well, miss. If you want to do something to achieve as much as the next person, miss, then you can try to watch him everyday how he does things. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

This quote demonstrates how Nico was able to learn from his friends in the work environment. They taught him how to do the job, he learned through

observation and eventually was able to perform the job ascribed to him with great efficiency.

Because there was friendship, there was friends, there was joking there was laughing. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Participants explained how the dynamics created by these friendships contributed to further positive experiences in the workplace. They describe the enjoyment that they got out of this environment, as well as the enjoyment of their actual job tasks.

... [want] ek weet ek gaan die dag geniet, juffrou ... net [die mense] wat mooi is met my, juffrou, wat glimlag met my, wat mooi groet met my, wat mooi gesels met my, of so, juffrou.

... [because] I know I'm going to enjoy the day, miss ... [The people] that are nice to me, miss, that smile at me, that greet me friendly, that chat to me in a nice way, or something like that, miss. (Nico, 19 April 2006)

You know, I actually have quite a lot of fun here. A lot of laughter, a lot of jokes, a lot of smiles ... It's the same thing at [the client's], I mean, it's not just work. It's work, but there's time for a joke, there's time for a laugh, a bit of play, you know. And that's what makes me go ahead, 'cause all these fun and jokes, you know, it was, the atmosphere, the people. (Kyle, 13 March 2006)

Grace refers to the element of enjoyment in terms of the job itself. She mentions teamwork but motivates that her co-workers in combination with her love of the tasks that she is responsible for, make it enjoyable for her.

I can say they love doing their job, I can say that ... As we work as a team, and we are working on our target, we have to do that target, work to work hard, first of all, and I think that if you want to reach the target you can first love your job ... It's all about focus, you can focus on the job. (Grace, 5 April 2006)

Participants also commented on the aspect of **encouragement** in the workplace. Nazli particularly refers to the encouraging power of other people in the work environment. She emphasised the importance of being able to explore her abilities and making an active contribution in the workplace. These allowances had an obvious positive influence on her experiences.

When I came there I was treated like I was put on a pedestal, you know. People praised me ... They didn't limit me to that, they let me see where my talents lie in working in the office ... And I [could] actually be a contribution towards employers ... Everywhere I've worked I've always formed a bond with an employee or with the employer, and I've always had encouragement and support. She [my supervisor] gave me a lot of support and she understood. (Nazli, 31 March 2006)

Kyle described a sense of accomplishment when succeeding in a normal working environment. This positive emotion encouraged and motivated him

to aspire to open labour market norms, demonstrating the **motivating effect of competition on productivity**.

When I started working, I felt kind of proud of myself that, "Here I am", I'm in [this] so-called normal world, doing a work everybody else is doing. You know it made me feel good. (Kyle, 13 March 2006)

Nazli also described a feeling of determination to prove herself worthy of being in the open labour market. She experienced a strong sense of competition with co-workers who do not have disabilities, which influenced her opinion of what is needed for a PWD to succeed in the open labour market. Her determination acted as a motivator to perform and out-perform her co-workers, strengthening the likelihood of job retention for her.

The first theme could be summarised as a report on the participants' experiences of enablers in the workplace. They identified, explained and described which factors enabled them to enter the open labour market, as well as retain their worker status, within the context of Altitude Workforce Solutions. To further enhance the researcher's understanding of their experiences in the open labour market, the next theme will report on perceived barriers to entry and job retention.

4.2 Theme 2 “Why do you come and waste your time here?”

This theme describes aspects of employment in the open labour market that were experienced by participants as restrictive in terms of their entrance into work, their work performance and their ability to successfully remain in the open labour market.

4.2.1 Skewed perceptions and negative attitudes

Participants repeatedly commented on perceptions and attitudes of people without disabilities, who worked alongside them in the open labour market. These perceptions and attitudes were generally towards impairment, disability and persons with disabilities. Participants also reported on perceptions and attitudes held by their co-workers *with* disabilities. They reported on their experiences of their **abilities being judged based on the presence of an impairment.**

... and say, “Oh you can’t do this, or you can’t do that”. But they haven’t given us any opportunity ... So, as I’ve told you before, being disabled, people look at you, “Oh, you are physically impaired, go sit at home, why do you come and waste your time here”. They are not saying that but their attitude shows that [on] a daily basis. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

I was treated differently in a bad manner, basically because I was a person with a disability, and I’m “not capable of doing this” and I’m “not capable of doing that” ... She was very surprised and shocked because I was a person with a disability and she never thought that I was capable of doing that ... They think that they’re [PWDs] not capable of doing a certain criteria and

then they only stick you to that limit, when you know yourself and you know that you can be more and do more. (Nazli, 31 March 2006)

Nazli repeatedly commented on these perceptions of her co-workers without disabilities. It seemed to have had a profound impact on her work experience in the open labour market, to the extent that she later mentions how this has dissuaded her from applying for other jobs because of the fear of being rejected in this way.

Well, when I was not included I had my self-esteem in my work affected and it affected my work progress and it affected how I was going to other places, going for interviews and going for job applications, because I think that once people don't include you or encourage you it just lowers your self-esteem in other prospects to come ... (Nazli, 25 April 2006)

Nico referred to a perception that may exist or come into existence about him and his disability. He feared that his co-workers' perception of him as a *person* would become negative should they ever see how his disability (epilepsy) affected him.

Hier wat ek die werk kry, juffrou, het ek eenkeer siek gekry, juffrou. En dit was vir my baie gevaarlik om te dink wat gaat die mense sê, juffrou ... Maar almal het vir my gesê ek raak bedwelmd, ek trek amper soos 'n persoon wat dronk is of so iets van die aard. Toe voel ek so bly lat hulle vir my so sê, dat hulle nie kan sien in watter toestand ek is nie, juffrou.

After I got this job, miss, there was once that I became ill, miss. And it was very dangerous for me to think what the people would think, miss ... But everyone told me that I appeared drugged, almost like a person who is drunk or something like that. Then I felt so relieved that they said that, that they [couldn't] see what condition I was in, miss. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

Nico indicated that it was more acceptable to him that his co-workers thought that he was drunk at the time when he experienced a seizure, than for them to know the nature of his disability. He also commented on a great sense of fear and apprehension when he first entered the open labour market setting. He described these feelings within the context of not knowing his own abilities while entering an unknown arena for the first time, with a pronounced disadvantage to the normal² workers.

Participants commented on **the debilitating power of pity** based on how the perceptions of their co-workers without disabilities influenced their own performance as workers. Julius refers to the perceptions held about his disability (physical impairment affecting his mobility), causing his co-workers to offer him assistance out of pity, and in effect took tasks away from him. He explained how this influenced his level of production, since he was unable to achieve his daily production targets.

² The term 'normal' was used by study participants to refer to persons without disabilities.

*Die persoon gaan vir jou jammer kry, en dan gaan hy jou produksie probeer beïnvloed. **The person is going to feel sorry for you, and then he is going to influence your production.** In other words, what I'm trying to say is the moment the person is helping you, your potential doesn't come forward. (Julius, 10 March 2006)*

Nazli experienced frustrations because people's perception of her abilities caused them to limit her in the workplace. They restricted her to certain tasks that they thought she was capable of doing, but prevented her from exploring other tasks which she thought she was capable of doing.

Then they only stick you to that limit, when you know yourself and you know that you can be more and do more. (Nazli, 31 March 2006)

Participants offered some explanations for the fact that people's perceptions in their work environment are shaped because of their **ignorance**, which creates a barrier. A constant factor was their co-workers' limited awareness, knowledge and understanding of disability or impairment.

Ja, well, I'm not trying to degrade the company that assisted us, but as it is to comply with people, normal and physically impaired, it's two different ways of handling and I'm of the opinion that they didn't know how to handle physically impaired people ... They don't seem to understand the conditions that we have to challenge everyday, being disabled. There is a difference from a normal person. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

But it obviously made me feel that people were ignorant about disability or they just chose to ignore the fact. (Nazli, 25 April 2006)

As a consequence of the ignorance of persons without disabilities, their limiting attitudes and their expressions of pity, participants experienced their confidence and self-esteem being influenced negatively. This created an obstacle for them in terms of succeeding and/or re-entering the open labour market once they had left it.

Because a person can only take so much. I can't stand disappointment and rejection. And if people will look down at me I feel bad about myself and it lowers my self-esteem. It just gave me a bad impression of what people thought of me and I didn't quite enjoy that, and there were a lot of barriers but the most hurt was probably the remarks that I got. (Nazli, 31 March 2006)

4.2.2 Barriers imposed by insufficient infrastructure

In contrast to positive experiences of reasonable accommodation by the company that emerged from the first theme, forces both inside and outside of the company sometimes rendered accommodative efforts ineffective or imposed logistical obstacles upon the participants. These forces influenced their work experiences negatively.

The presence of physical impairments reportedly impacted on **transport** and **hours of work**.

For argument sake, if a [normal] person jumps into a bus or runs for a taxi, he or she can get faster from one point to the other. A person with a disability usually walks slower, because of his conditions, and finds it difficult to perhaps get into a bus or train. (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Julius commented on a physical barrier that is familiar to persons with physical disabilities, namely, accessibility of public modes of transport. He later also comments on working hours that sometimes fall outside of the normal hours, for example, when employees are required to work late or over weekends. In such cases regular public transport facilities are not available or timetables are very restricted, and utilising normal modes of transport becomes an even bigger challenge for PWDs.

Brief mention was made of **communication barriers** imposed by the participants' places of work. Julius described how the presence of three parties in the employment relationship sometimes complicated this function.

To contact Altitude direct would give us a straight forward communication cord, but as it is, this is [the client's] premises and Altitude has got limited entrance access of coming there at certain times, because of, "You are here with us so you gotta do as we want you to do". (Julius, 10 March 2006)

The **absence of specialised safety measures** in the workplace, that are specifically geared to accommodate PWDs, was raised by Julius.

It's because the factories in the areas were not adequately equipped to accommodate physically impaired people. That could become a hurdle, as they only provide for the normal circumstances. (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Participants experienced frustrations with having to **compete with normal people** for work. Julius describes his frustrations in terms of access to work tasks. He makes it clear that his decision not to remain in employment was strongly influenced by this frustration.

Now, you might ask me but why didn't I carry on with the contract, because basically there is various internal problems, not with Altitude, but with [the client]. In the end being disabled people usually leave us with the so-called crumbs to perform. And then looking at your production sheet at the end of the day you find "Yoo!" ... but if you look at the production sheet of a normal [person], then you'll find 30% or 60% higher level of production ... I mentioned it earlier, once the targets have been set, you gotta have sufficient work to meet the target, but if the job is being taken away from you, how can you make a target? (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Participants identified further aspects of comparison between themselves and their co-workers, which, in their experience, placed them at a distinct disadvantage.

Point number one, people with disabilities are always lacking of two things, [namely] experience and speed. (Julius, 10 April 2006)

As 'n persoon miskien [net] met sy een hand werk, juffrou dan kan hy mos nou nie heeldag werk nie ...

If a person works with just his one hand, miss, then he can't work for the whole day, miss ... (Nico, 19 April 2006)

In the beginning it was very tough, because I'm still slow at it [the packing], I'm not as fast as the others. Where they are fast they can take time off. Now, I can't take time off, I gotta work. And I try to keep my tables, like, clear.
(Kyle, 13 March 2006)

Nico and Kyle, unlike Julius, are still in the employ of the company and have not alluded in any way that they want to resign because of the competition factor.

This theme emerged from data that described participants' experiences in terms of barriers in the workplace. They shared information regarding obstacles that they perceived as restrictive to entry into the open labour market, and those that pose challenges in the workplace in terms of retaining their worker status. A further theme that emerged regarding the experiences of participants as they related to themselves as a group within the workplace.

4.3 Theme 3: "People with disabilities sort of flock together"

This theme reports on perceptions formed by the participants of themselves in the workplace. They position themselves against their co-workers without disabilities, and in effect, create certain roles for themselves, which influence

their entry into the open labour market, and consequently their ability to retain their worker status.

4.3.1 Separation between PWDs and normal people

Julius referred to the reactions of PWDs to the open labour market that serve to protect them against the perceptions and attitudes mentioned in the second theme. He stated that PWDs tend to separate themselves from the normal people by not interacting with them or not sharing information about their disabilities.

Some of us don't talk easy about ourselves and about our disability ... Therefore, some of us do close down and ... very slowly talk about disability ... People with disability sort of flock together. They keep them one side. I don't know whether that is because of feeling ashamed for themselves, or they are scared to fall ... to get onto the boundary of the normal person, that I can't say. (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Participants subsequently reported an **acceptance of a level of inferiority** to their co-workers without disabilities, and in addition to this, a lack of pro-activity and agency on their part.

... who would want to work for R20 a day, nobody, but if you're production limits you to do it, you've gotta accept it ... (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Kyle referred to a specific situation that he encountered when his salary was incorrect on more than one occasion. He felt angry about the situation but did

not take any overt action to resolve it. When he was asked about this lack of pro-activity, he responded that he “got over it”. This response could be indicative of a feeling of poor agency, and a reaction to situations in the open labour market which participants perceived as beyond their control.

‘Cause I know each and every company, wherever you go, there’s gonna be problems. And I mean you can’t tell the boss, “You’re wrong”, ‘cause the boss is always right. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Nico confirms a similar outlook from his experience:

[Ander mense] het baie gefoeter [wanneer] hulle pay, of so iets van die aard. Ek doen niks nie, juffrou, ek is tevrede met als wat ek kry, juffrou.

[Other people] complained about their pay, or something of that nature, but I don’t do anything, miss, I’m satisfied with everything that I get, miss. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

Nazli explained how, in her experience, she gets **labeled as a PWD**, and this imposes a feeling of discomfort upon her co-workers without disabilities. She further relates these experiences to a decrease in self-worth, affecting future prospects of work.

Even if you have got the qualifications and even though you got interviewed, they would always think twice of they’d rather employ the normal person without the disability than you, because you’re disabled. I think it’s because the employer wouldn’t feel comfortable working with a disabled person, and it

would influence the work in a negative way. Your colleagues would see you as differently because you've got this disability and they would think that you're not capable of doing that specific task ... They have no idea what effect it has on the disabled person, because you're being labeled not only there, but you're going to feel labeled in another job if you may apply for one. So you're always gonna have that stuck with you for the rest of your life. (Nazli, 25 April 2006)

Julius voices perceptions of PWDs in the workplace who are not just labeled, but also see themselves as a burden upon their co-workers without disabilities.

And then at the end he [the PWD] becomes sort of the drag stone, being disabled to that normal person, again, like I said earlier on, because of productivity ... (Julius, 10 April 2006)

Nico describes a tendency that he experienced in a protected work environment, whereby PWDs do not respond effectively to the demands of the workplace.

Ek sal sê omdat ons gestremde persone is daarso [werkswinkel vir gestremdes], juffrou. Kyk, somtyds juffrou, as ekkie wil werkie, juffrou, dan sit ek heeldag daar, juffrou, en as ek nou weer smaak om te werk, dan werk ek, juffrou.

I would say [it's] because we are disabled people there [workshop for disabled], miss. Look, sometimes, miss, if I don't want to work, miss,

then I will sit there all day, miss, and then when I feel like working again, then I work, miss. (Nico, 19 April 2006)

He then continued and made a generalised statement about PWDs.

Nou soos 'n gestremde persoon ook, juffrou, hy kan iets doen, juffrou, maar dan's hy lui om dit te doen, juffrou, ... want as jy agteruit gaan in die lewe en jy hou vir jou nou maar gestremd, juffrou, jy is nou maar so, en so 'n tipe mens, juffrou, dan sal jy nooit kan iets kom in die lewe nie, juffrou.

Now like a disabled person too, miss, he can do something, miss, but then he's lazy to do it, miss ... Because if you go backwards in life and you keep yourself disabled, miss, accepting that this is all that you are, miss, then you will never get anywhere in life, miss. (Nico, 19 April 2006)

Nico described the above mentioned dynamic that he experienced in a protected work environment, and that, according to him, influences PWDs' perceptions of themselves in the open labour market. The researcher's reflections during the data collection period also referred to this dynamic. During the interviews with Julius, her feelings of frustration were evident.

I know him as a stubborn, slightly ill-informed person who's fallen into the disabled person's trap of stigmatising themselves – doing to themselves what they supposedly hate about non-disabled society, meaning that he detracts from his own ability, the abilities of other PWDs ... Furthermore, he makes me angry because he's strengthening the stigma around PWDs more than

anything else, while HE's thinking he's doing a great service to the disability community. (Reflective journal, 27 March 2006)

During interviews with Nazli, the same frustration surfaced and the researcher reflected more on symbols in society and communities that represent PWDs and their disabilities.

Two of my participants have somehow suggested that the disabled community disable themselves. They are not just disabled by the non-disabled community. Yes, there are many undeniable barriers in life for someone with a disability, but isn't one of those barriers posting someone in a wheelchair outside a shopping mall to beg for money, appealing to people's sense of guilt and shame and pity while in fact the person in the wheelchair is saying this is who I am, this is what I do. Look at me, look at my dog – this is how I fulfill myself – I am being self-actualised in this way, which means, yes, I'm nothing more? (Reflective journal, 26 April 2006)

This theme reported on the perceptions which the participants formed of themselves within the open labour market setting where they were active. Their perceptions were informed by their own reactions to a competitive labour market, but also the reactions of co-workers who worked alongside them and who did not have disabilities.

The next theme that emerges, reports on the dualities involved in becoming employed as a PWD in an open labour market setting.

4.4 Theme 4 Disability in the workplace: a double-edged sword

A further theme emerged from the data after participants had considered the factors identified in the other themes, namely, those factors that enabled them to enter into and retain employment, those factors that hindered them from entering into and retaining employment, as well as their reactions and perceptions in response to enablers and hindrances. This theme considered dualities in some of the aspects that participants have already identified as either positive or negative influences in their work experiences.

4.4.1 The specialised employer as a restrictor

One of the participants suggested that Altitude Workforce Solutions, as the employing company, becomes restricted in the same way as its employees, that is, the PWDs. He implied that the company could have offered more opportunities to its employees had it not chosen to become specialised in the employment of PWDs. He felt that the company was somehow dependent on the goodwill of others for opportunities for their employees.

Altitude does what they could have done to their utmost best. As Altitude is, [they're] putting us on various points, but they can only do as much as and as good as they can. If there [are] no opportunities out there, it's very tough to put people with disability in the open labour market. (Julius, 10 March 2006)

These statements reflect powerful perceptions held by this participant about the place of PWDs and those associated with PWDs in the open labour market.

4.4.2 Earning money as a stressor

Previously, participants reported on the positive effects that earning a salary had on their financial independence. One participant commented on the pressures that earning a salary, and the subsequent loss of his disability grant, brings into his life.

Well, you see now that I've lost my disability it's an important role [that money plays], because I've got to work, and I don't get a disability to help me pay my way anymore, I gotta pay my own way. I've got to work for my living. Like in everything that I want, if I want something I've gotta work for it. So it does play an important role, as far as my life is concerned. You know I'm not relying on the government anymore, I rely on myself. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

Linked to the anxieties brought by earning an income and losing a grant, is the strong need for permanency and security in a job. Participants expressed this need against the backdrop of the company's business model, which only offers contract-based work.

The only thing I worry about is like, there's no benefits ... And the fact of a permanent job, like I mean, now that I don't get a disability [grant], having a permanent job is important to me, you know. (Kyle, 8 May 2006)

First of all in my view, if you can put us in a permanent job. (Grace, 3 May 2006)

My mikpunt, juffrou, is om net diepere in te kom, permanent hier te werk, juffrou. Dit is eintlik my begeerte wat ek het, enigste begeerte, juffrou.

My aim, miss, is to get in deeper, to work here permanently, miss. That is what I would like, my only desire, miss. (Nico, 10 March 2006)

This theme reported on aspects that also emerged in previous themes, namely the concept of a specialised employer (Theme 1), and the contribution that money makes to a positive experience in the open labour market (Theme 1). Under the current theme though, participants offered evidence of contrary views to those expressed in the first theme, when they acknowledged the fact that specialisation and an active income can hamper their experience of employment in the open labour market.

Chapter 5 explores the interaction between the four themes in more detail, by expanding on a number of focal points that were identified by the participants as being important.

Chapter 5

Discussion of findings

This chapter offers interpretations and arguments related to the themes that emerged from the findings, triangulated with current and relevant literature. The discussions address dynamics introduced into the South African employment arena by PWDs, as identified by the participants of this study: firstly, the dynamic related to being a specialised employer; and secondly, the dynamic of economic empowerment as a desirable outcome of employment.

5.1 The specialised employer

The concept of specialised employer emerged from the research data, as the participants identified and described their experiences with AWS. Certain characteristics were attributed to the company, including the fact that they specifically target PWDs for employees; that they hold extensive knowledge and experience in disability employment and disability issues; and that AWS as a company has been sensitised to effectively accommodate PWDs in the workplace.

In contrast with these positive comments, the issue of the company's specialisation as a possible restrictor to itself, and consequently, to its employees, was broached. Participants expressed this perception in Theme 4 when they felt that their opportunities in the workplace were restricted and that the company itself had limited power in terms of the promotion of their employees.

The question, therefore, arises of whether it is indeed the specialised character of the company that enables it to successfully employ PWDs, and furthermore, to what extent this specialisation may be disabling the company in achieving its goal of empowering PWDs.

5.1.1 Specialisation and the sensitised employer

In the participants' descriptions of what they considered a specialised employer to be, they referred to the fact that AWS employs only and specifically PWDs. Therefore, they place an emphasis on the exclusivity associated with the specialised employer, in terms of the people employed by such an employer, that is, the PWDs. The concepts of an employer being sensitive towards the needs of PWDs and having an awareness of disability and disability related issues, also surface in the study findings. For the purpose of this study a specialised employer can, therefore, be defined as an employer that employs PWDs exclusively and that has specialist knowledge of disability and disability issues. Borne out of the participants' experiences, the question arises of whether only specialised employers can successfully employ PWDs, that is, afford entry into the open labour market and promote or enhance job retention for PWDs.

Wehman (2003) argues that PWDs can be successfully employed in a non-sheltered setting, that is, open labour market, if the following factors related to integration in the workplace are considered: company, worksite, worker and benefit factors. *Company factors* are important determinants of integration, in terms of the employing company's inclination to create such

opportunities. *Worksite factors*, for example, the proximity of PWDs to persons without disabilities, influence integration. The interaction of workers with one another, including PWDs, is an example of how *worker factors* influence integration, as well as *benefit factors* like the handling of wages and benefits in relation to PWDs and persons without disabilities. The findings from this study reflect the above mentioned factors, as participants commented on their experiences of working alongside persons without disabilities, aspects of communication with AWS as well the issue of money as it is presented in the work environment. A correlation is therefore indicated between Wehman's findings and the study participants' experiences of integration in the workplace.

Wehman (2003) concludes that in order to achieve maximum integration and success in the workplace for PWDs, open labour market settings must be assessed systematically and on an ongoing basis, in terms of these factors. In his view, therefore, a company that employs PWDs does not have to be specialised as such, but a frequent review of the above mentioned factors should sufficiently ensure the success of their employees with disabilities. His conclusion is therefore in contrast to the participants' view of how the specialisation of AWS in the employment of PWDs, was a crucial factor for their successful entry to and their remaining in the open labour market.

Silver and Koopman (2000) also explored the successful employment of PWDs. They talked to potential employers and gave them practical guidelines on how to ensure success in this regard. They substantiated their guidelines with case studies of employers who had in the past employed (and

therefore integrated) PWDs with success into their existing company environments. It is clear that Silver and Koopman do not advocate for employers to become specialists in disability before employing PWDs, but that they can do it with success if their general knowledge of disability and related legislation improves. Again, as in the case with Wehman's (2003) findings, Silver and Koopman's literary opinion, therefore, finds itself in contrast to that of the study participants' experience. The study findings report on a combination or dynamism between specialist and sensitised practices by the employer (Theme 1), to ensure success in the workplace for PWDs. Silver and Koopman do not consider specialisation in their writings, and conclude that sensitised practices will suffice to ensure successful employment of PWDs.

South African employment legislation and the guidelines generated from these laws, propagate a similar notion to what Wehman (2003) and Silver and Koopman (2000) do. The Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace (Department of Labour, 2001a) and The Technical Assistance Guidelines on the Employment of People with Disabilities (Department of Labour, 2003b) aim to guide employers and employees in the promotion of equal opportunities for PWDs in the workplace. The two policies suggest practical ways of ensuring the application of non-discrimination and affirmative action measures. The audience of these documents is employers in general, suggesting that previous knowledge and exposure to disability in the workplace are not prerequisites for the implementation of the guidelines.

Considering all the above mentioned evidence, it seems that a case can be made for employers to heed certain factors in their companies and pay closer attention to disability issues. According to the above mentioned sources, such methods and sensitisation would adequately unlock opportunities for PWDs in the open labour market. Two views are therefore expressed, namely, the participants' who believe that the specialisation of AWS plays an integral part in their ability to enter the labour market and retain their jobs, and the literature that describes a sensitivity and an awareness of disability as sufficient to ensure success in this regard. Further literature on companies in South Africa that have become specialised in the same way as AWS, was not available at the time of the study. It is possible, though, to draw some conclusions from national employment statistics in the country, in terms of PWDs successfully entering into and remaining in employment in the open labour market.

The current situation in South African with regards to employment of PWDs proves that despite literary opinion and regulation by the government, PWDs are not being employed in the open labour market. The 2001 Census of South Africa indicated that there were just over 2,2 million persons with disabilities in the country, constituting 5% of the total population enumerated in the recent census (Statistics South Africa, 2005a). In 2003, the Department of Labour published employment figures of persons with disabilities at only 1% of the disabled population (Department of Labour, 2003a), indicating that this figure had remained unchanged from 1997 (Office of the Deputy President, 1997). National disability employment figures are clearly not reflective of any progression in the open labour market arena as

far as employment of PWDs are concerned, despite available resources to assist with the implementation of guidelines and legislation. Yet, AWS employs 435 PWDs (69% of their workforce) (AWS, 2005) and the study participants regard their specialised focus on disability as fundamental to their own success in the workplace. It would seem that available literature contradicts the findings of the study where specialisation of the employer is concerned, as the concept is not heeded or acknowledged in any way. The statistics that are mentioned serve as evidence though, that the methods proposed by Wehman (2003) and Silver and Koopman (2000), are insufficient to ensure successful entry of PWDs into the workplace and to secure their positions in employment.

These findings raise the question of whether can be said that an employer indeed needs to become specialised in order to allow PWDs entry into employment, and to ensure sustainability of their worker status. If this is the case, it is also necessary to consider the participants' experiences in terms of AWS becoming restricted and, in a sense, disempowered by its chosen field of specialisation. Should such a counter-effect be proven to exist because AWS is specialised, it may suggest that the participants' perception of factors that ensure success in the workplace, simultaneously pose a threat to their true empowerment in the open labour market.

5.1.2 The counter-effect of specialisation

In the findings of this study, participants alluded to the fact that the AWS may be unable to offer PWDs equal opportunities in the open labour market after all (Theme 4). The participants seemed to perceive the company as being

disabled in the same way as themselves, because of the labels that they carry. They projected feelings of inferiority and a sense of lack of agency onto the company, when they considered the *acceptance* of discriminatory practices as the only solution, both for themselves and for the company. The participants consistently reported on feelings that affirm this notion of disempowerment, such as isolation, inferiority, lack of agency and low self-worth. Thus one can ask: If PWDs hold these beliefs and perceptions of themselves, and collectively project them onto the employer, could it be that the employing company finds itself disempowered and helpless?

Literature regarding the employer's experiences of PWDs, and how their presence and self-perceptions influence businesses and companies as a whole, seem to be restricted to those employers who accommodate small numbers of PWDs, sometimes even just one or two PWDs (Graffam, Shinkfield, Smith and Polzin, 2002; Wehman, Revell and Brooke, 2003). A correlation between them and a company like AWS where the majority of employees have disabilities, is therefore difficult to draw. However, the literature does elaborate on the tendency described above, where PWDs doubt their own abilities and regard themselves as lesser than others, in this case, their fellow workers without disabilities. Such perceptions, held collectively by the total workforce, may indeed render AWS less able to create opportunities for employment with industry clients, as this would affect the work performance of each employee.

Hanson-Mayer (1984) speaks of the disability syndrome, as identified in PWDs, that discourages and prevents injured workers from returning to

employment. He described the syndrome from the perspective of persons who have an acquired impairment, and who have left employment as a result of this acquisition. He states that people who have led disability-oriented lifestyles for extended periods of time, find it difficult to readjust to a work-oriented lifestyle. People presenting with this syndrome, have, according to Hanson-Mayer, lost touch with their strengths as workers. The discouraging effect of this syndrome seemed to present itself in statements made by the study participants, relating to their sense of inferiority, agency and self-worth. Their transition from their disability-oriented lifestyles, associated with unemployment or employment in a protective environment, is hampered by these self-perceptions, and manifests itself in projections onto the employment agent, in this case AWS, and onto fellow employees without disabilities. Such comments by participants also seem to contradict literature referred to earlier, which described work as a powerful facilitator of change in a person's self-concept and self-efficacy (Strong, 1998). It would seem that the changes that Strong referred to were not effected in the study participants at the time.

Lynch and Thomas (1994) wrote about the concept of victim, as regularly associated with PWDs. They refer to emotionally-laden campaigns directed towards receiving donations for disability groups, as being instrumental in promoting the victim concept. They drew attention to the interrelatedness of the concept of victim and environment-person interaction, which implies helplessness, fate and being at the mercy of the environment. As a remedy to eliminate the concept of victim, they propose empowerment, which they describe as a process of giving power or authority to individuals, in this case,

PWDs. Although their writings and comments focus on the person without the disability as the perpetrator, who imposes and projects these concepts onto PWDs, from the study data it is clear that these projections also radiate from the PWDs themselves.

AWS has indicated that it suffers a substantial loss of profit due to staff turnover, though it did not perceive itself as disabled, whether financially or otherwise. The overall influence of such perceptions and subsequent attitudes from employees can certainly have a detrimental effect on the Company's goals for empowerment and general achievement. These ideas of the participants about their worth and abilities, warrant further discussion in the context of this study, as its influence on the participants' successes and failures are explored.

5.1.2.1 A self-fulfilling prophecy of deficiency

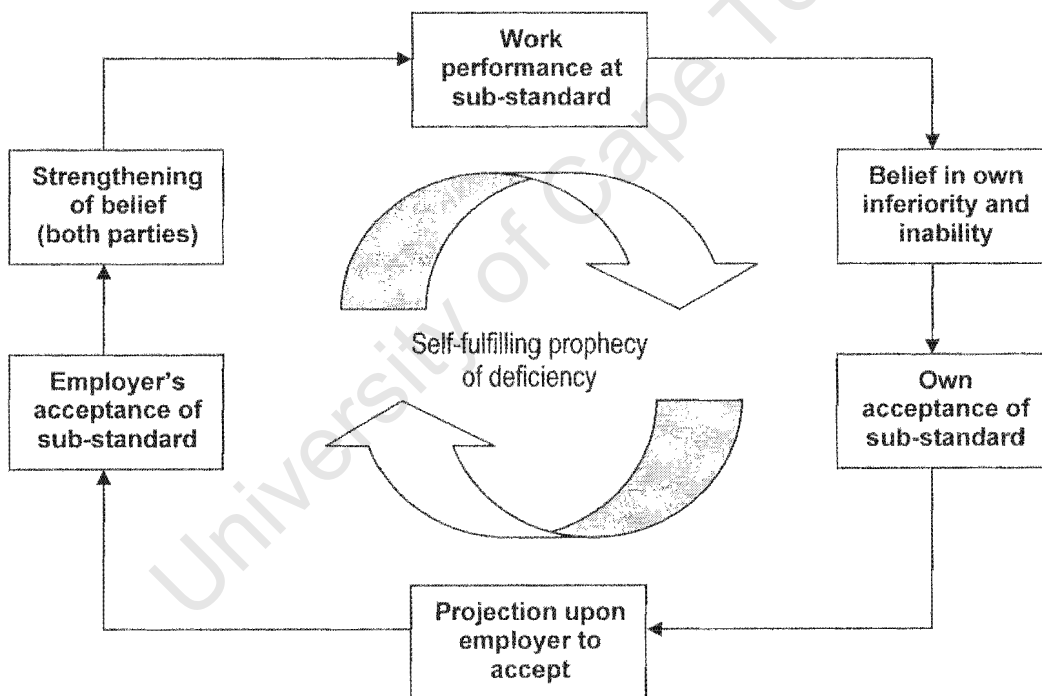
The way that participants' work performance and beliefs about themselves influenced one another was demonstrated in their reports on the element of competition as they experienced it in the workplace. Their failure to effectively compete with persons without disabilities could be the result of discriminatory practices in the workplace, but it could also be indicative of their acceptance of their own inferiority to co-workers and lack of pro-activity to change the situation.

A trend comes to the fore where the participants' work performance seems to be influenced by their belief of sub-standard work. Their unwillingness to take responsibility for both the belief and their lack of pro-activity to change the

situation, translates into a projection onto the employer of having to accept this sub-standard work, and points back at the presence of an impairment.

It could, therefore, be said that PWDs find themselves trapped within a cycle of inferiority, where PWDs believe that they can only deliver sub-standard work, and that the employer should and would accept such a standard of work, because of the presence of an impairment. Figure 5.1 shows how such a cycle could be presented.

Figure 5.1 A cycle of inferiority associated with disability



It appears that in this cycle, there are two sources of projection of negative beliefs that can counter production by PWD, namely, the PWD as well as persons without disabilities (represented by the employer, but including co-

workers). These two sources both have a significant influence on the level of disablement that the participants experienced in the workplace.

Susman (1994) proposed a reason for such negative beliefs being held by persons without disabilities, namely stigmatisation. She described stigma as “any persistent trait of an individual or group which evokes negative or punitive responses” (1994: 16). In her comprehensive critique of literature on stigmatisation in relation to disability, she attempted to understand the reasons for its existence, and how it presents itself within the disabled versus the non-disabled world. In doing so, she saw a relationship between stigmatisation and definitions of disability that are steeped within the medical model. This model views a person’s body as a machine, with disease, illness and disability representing malfunctions of the body (Gilfoyle, 1984). As a result, PWDs are seen as abnormal, less than perfect beings because of the presence of an impairment. The impairment evokes negative and punitive responses from persons without disabilities and, according to the findings of this study, from PWDs themselves. Susman quotes other authors who assert that persons without disabilities react towards PWDs in this way, because encounters with the latter “violate their belief in a just world” (1994: 19). The extremity of these responses can be explained by the perception that an impairment represents something which a person without a disability dreads or fears for themselves.

Watermeyer (2006) concurs with this statement by quoting arguments that images of disability have become painful and unwelcome reminders of the “frailty, vulnerability, mortality and arbitrariness of human experience” (2006:

34). Consequently, PWDs are isolated as “different” and “other” because of fear and denial in persons without disabilities. PWDs are socialised much in the same way as persons without disabilities, and therefore share the same perceptions of disability stereotypes and associated stigmas.

Susman (1994) draws attention to the responses of PWDs, when becoming stigmatised. She states that they are often unable to successfully challenge stigmas, in part because they accept the premises and values that underlie their discredited social identities. When they do challenge stigmatisation, Susman (1994) is uncertain as to the degree of their success in doing so. She asserts that such efforts regularly demonstrate a willingness to organise activities around their acquired disabled identities, in support of a minority group perspective on disability. Therefore one could ask: If PWDs have accepted a disabled identity, imposed by a non-disabled world and strengthened by their disbelief of their own worth and ability, then to what extent are they indeed equipped for the challenge of stigmatisation, and changing the course of disability employment in the open labour market arena?

This challenge has been taken on by Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), who saw major growth between 1965 and 1970 (Peat, 1997). DPOs mean to represent the needs of PWDs and objectify the improved status of PWDs, providing a democratic structure through which they can voice concerns and opinions and monitor public policy and legislation. Consumer groups related to these organisations are to affect attitudes towards disability, amongst other goals. In South Africa, the infrastructure of these groups and

organisations, along with progressive disability legislation have set the tone for the change needed in perceptions of disability and PWDs. Still, statistics as referred to earlier in this report, do not reflect these changes in attitude, and neither do the experiences and self-perceptions of participants in this study.

It would seem fair to deduct, that the general perceptions of the participants of this study about their abilities, may collectively influence their competitiveness in the open labour market, and as a result, also that of the company that employs them. However, no evidence has been submitted that reflects the company's record of competing within its industry. In search of the truth about what enables a PWD to enter the open labour market, and subsequently, to retain that position, the meaning and purpose of earning money as described and highlighted by the study participants, warrants some exploration.

5.2 Economic empowerment as a desirable outcome of employment

Economic empowerment was defined earlier as the generation of money and the exercise of discretion in spending that money. Participants of this study described the receipt of money for work, that is, a salary, as a liberating event, affording them independence, a feeling of self-sufficiency and enabling them to contribute towards the household as an active member. These participants have, therefore, clearly been economically empowered by their entry into the labour market. Considering that both the employing company (AWS, 2005) and the South African government (Employment Equity Act of 1998; ODP, 1997) objectify economic empowerment for PWDs as a desirable

outcome of employment, both have achieved this objective as far as these individuals are concerned. However, participants described another effect of earning an income and the dynamics that this introduced into their lives. They referred in particular to the disability grant as part of the social security system in South Africa.

5.2.1 Economic empowerment and the disability grant

A participant explained how his grant was revoked when he started earning a salary. It is clear from his comments that this event changed his outlook on his job, in that job security and permanency became much more important to him. He also commented on how he experienced anxiety on a monthly basis because the security that the grant provided was removed, and how hard he had to work to ensure a sufficient income for the month. This participant had experienced the empowering effect of earning an income, but also the weight of its responsibility.

It is illegal for a PWD to receive a grant from the state while earning an income (Department of Social Development, 2004). Howard (2003), writing from an American perspective, shows the complexities that PWDs face because of this legality: in order to obtain a disability grant, the PWD has to prove his or her inability to work. Should the person be able to work, but cannot find employment, the presence of an impairment entitles him or her to the grant. The reason for this contradiction in terms is the fact that disability grants in South Africa are allocated on the basis of a medical practitioner's report (Department of Social Development, 2004) and are steeped within a medical model approach to disability. Four of the five participants were,

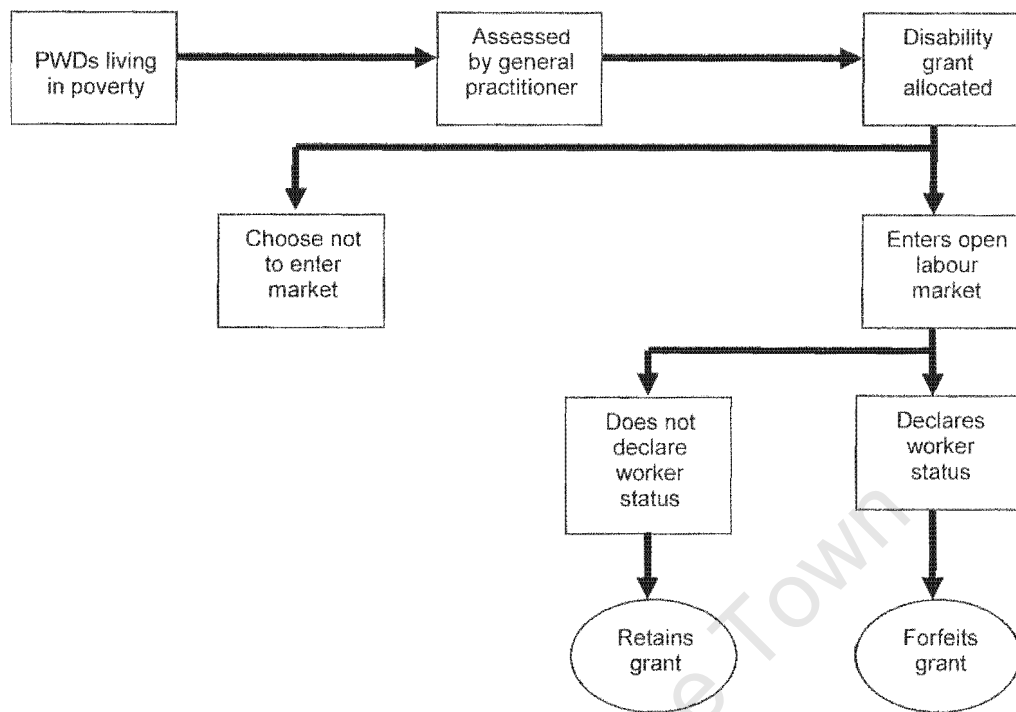
therefore, legally entitled to, and in receipt of, a grant at the time when they entered into employment with AWS. At the time of the study though, three participants were *still* receiving disability grants, despite earning a monthly income. This means that they had not declared their change in status (from unemployed to employed) to the Department of Social Development. They had, at that stage, been employed for extended periods of time.

The report by the Department of Social Development (2004) conceded that social security grants may encourage household responses that impede job searching efforts. Howard (2003) agrees with this in saying that the "rules and structure of incapacity benefits can create a disincentive to work, stemming largely from the need to maintain 'incapacity' as the basis for entitlement, generating considerable fear of losing [the] benefit" (2003: 15). The participants of this study sought employment despite receiving a grant from the state, meaning that they were not dissuaded to do so by the restrictions of the law. Their reluctance to waive their entitlement to a disability grant, caused them to inadvertently become defrauders of the social security system. Their economic empowerment, as it is understood within the context of this study, was therefore incomplete. Thus, a question arises about the impact of the social security system on the actual economic empowerment of PWDs.

5.2.2 Social security as a means of economic empowerment

It would seem that a number of options exist for PWDs when an opportunity to enter employment presents itself. Figure 5.2 shows these options.

Figure 5.2 Options presented to PWDs who are eligible for a disability grant



Firstly, a PWD who is able to work may choose not to enter into employment because of the risk of losing his or her disability grant. As a consequence, this person, who is able to generate an income, remains economically unproductive because of the legalities and constraints of the social security system. A second scenario sees the PWD who is the recipient of a disability grant entering into employment but not declaring his or her change of status to the relevant parties, for fear of forfeiting the grant. This person, therefore, continues to receive a grant, as well as a monthly salary, and in so doing, defeats the purpose of the grant, namely, to provide a source of income for people who cannot work. In a third case, the PWD forfeits the disability grant as he or she enters into employment and becomes wholly dependent upon a monthly salary. As mentioned before, one out of five participants in this study took this option, while the majority opted for the second scenario.

Turton (2001) examined the financial implications for people with mental health problems as they moved from welfare to work. Considering the UK welfare benefit system, which proves to be more elaborate and extensive than its South African counterpart, Turton found that there are still few circumstances that make a move into paid work financially viable. He highlights financial disincentives, income insecurity and restrictive rules as common problems associated with the welfare system. In conclusion, he states that the disincentive effects created by the welfare benefits system, traps PWDs in unemployment and poverty. Roessler (2002) supports this in his review of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of the USA. He found that the primary concern for many social security recipients is the perceived cost of going to work. He sums up their fears as “go to work and lose your cheque” (2002: 11).

It would seem that the interplay between economic empowerment and social security systems is less than optimal, so that the former is not perceived as a guaranteed outcome of the latter. It could be argued that the social security system, in the form of the disability grant, provides a foundation for PWDs to seek work, as it provides security and a base on which to build an income.

5.3 Discussion of the methodology

In order to understand the findings of this study within a comprehensive context, it is necessary to consider possible limitations of the chosen methodology.

The study population included only PWDs who have had a history with AWS, and current employees of the company, at the time of the study. Therefore, the data gathered did not take into account the experiences of PWDs from a broader spectrum of employment, for example, other companies that employ PWDs, government institutions or the protective workshop arena.

The researcher originally planned to include a sixth, unemployed participant in the study, to ensure an even distribution between employed and unemployed participants. Because it was difficult to locate the sixth participant who was also purposively selected, and also because of time constraints, he was eventually excluded.

The selection criteria required the study participants to be fluent English or Afrikaans speakers. Thus, participants who would have required interpreters, for example, Xhosa-speaking or sign language interpreters were excluded from the study. Consequently, the possibility exists that potentially information rich candidates were excluded from the study, as well as specific disability types, such as hearing impaired people.

Finally, the researcher made use of reflective discussions to increase the confirmability of the findings, while a co-coder was not used in the research process. The exclusion of a co-coder could have influenced the focus of categories and themes that emerged from the data, or caused the researcher to overlook or neglect the emergence of other categories and themes.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and recommendations

This collective case study aimed to create an understanding of the experiences of PWDs entering into employment, while they are employed and at the time when they exit employment. The purpose was to identify the reasons for disabled people leaving employment and in doing so, failing to achieve economic empowerment.

During their considerations of factors enabling them (the participants) to enter into employment and retain their worker status at a company like AWS, the concept of the company as a specialised employer emerged. The participants positioned this concept opposite that of an employer being sensitive towards disability issues. It was found that in the opinion of the participants, specialisation proved to be more desirable than mere sensitivity and awareness. Though specialisation will open doors to PWDs in the open labour market, the current cycle of inferiority within which they seem to find themselves, may project negatively upon the employing company. This aspect needs to be examined further as a matter of urgency. In the approach to counter the ill effects of stigmatisation and self-stigmatisation, the role of DPOs must be considered in earnest.

Evidence from the findings of this study, as well as supporting literature, showed that the level of economic empowerment facilitated by entry into employment, is questionable. The positive effects of finding employment as a PWD in the open labour market, is constrained by the dependence upon a

social security grant that was cultivated over extended periods of time. The relationship between the South African social security system and economic empowerment for PWDs needs to be revised, if the latter is to be achieved through the implementation of the relevant legislative regulations and guidelines.

The study has five identified recommendations that would merit further research in response to the urgency to improve the employment of PWDs.

Firstly, the concepts of specialisation and sensitisation were posited as two options or alternatives that could enhance the successful employment of PWDs in the open labour market. Further research must be done to establish the different levels of success that can be achieved if the one is implemented rather than the other, or if the concepts are combined as a strategy to effect successful employment of PWDs. In such a study, a wider study population should be included, and similarly, a broader range of disabilities. Furthermore, based on the evidence from this study, it is recommended that the company itself, namely, AWS, could investigate the possibility of creating specialised units of PWDs (workers) within other companies, with a long-term aim of gradual integration into the non-disabled workforce. This concept will have to be researched and developed to answer both the needs of the current company, that is, to expand and promote PWDs as a viable labour source, and that of target companies in the open labour market, that is, compliance with disability legislation.

Secondly, much has been written about the desirability of the *inclusion* and *integration* of PWDs in programmes that aim to achieve the successful employment of PWDs in the open labour market (Wehman, 2003; Kitchin, Shirlow and Shuttleworth, 1998; Riches and Green, 2003; Wistow and Schneider, 2003). A follow-up study could establish clarity on whether inclusion and integration of PWDs in the workplace, are in fact desirable and effective in achieving success in the open labour market, from the perspective of a PWD, and from the perspective of a person without a disability.

Thirdly, of interest to the business world, would be a study to compare the effects on financial turnover and profits of companies who employ PWDs and those who do not. Different levels and categories of occupations would have to be considered, as well as the number of PWDs employed.

Fourthly, in the discussion part of the report, a cycle of inferiority associated with disability was described. Further research regarding this cycle is recommended to establish a better understanding of the dynamics within it. Concepts of self-stigmatisation should be explored, as well as the motivators and predispositions for this act. Included in such a study should be the role of DPOs thus far and in the future, in countering the effects of stigmatisation in relation to PWDs. Even more importantly, the role of DPOs in affecting realistic social change with regards to the acceptance and integration of disability groups into society and the real effects upon the individual with a disability need to be investigated. From an occupational perspective, it would be of interest to occupational therapists to further investigate the potential

impact of an occupation-based approach to effect change in the above mentioned concepts. Within the context of the cycle of inferiority, these effects should be scrutinised at a population level and applied specifically within the context of the employment arena.

Fifthly, as it was clear from the findings and literary evidence that true economic empowerment of PWDs is not being enhanced by the South African social security system, it is recommended that further measures be investigated in relation to PWDs. In the USA, an initiative called Ticket to Work was implemented to reduce the cost for PWDs to return to work (Roessler, 2002). The ticket affords PWDs access to an approved network of service providers, including vocational rehabilitation agencies, career centres, public or private schools and employers. A study done in the UK recommended allowing PWDs to retain their benefits whilst in work, but paying 50% tax on their earnings. This recommendation was made against the backdrop of benefits that go beyond a monetary grant, for example, housing benefits (Turton, 2001). In South Africa, it would be worthwhile for different government departments (housing, education, transport) to collaborate on the non-monetary benefits for PWDs, with the explicit objective of facilitating them into open labour market employment.

References

Adams, F. (2005). *Exploring factors that inhibit the Outlook Parent Support Group from achieving their stated goals*. Unpublished master's thesis, Division of Occupational Therapy, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.

Altitude Workforce Solutions (2004a). *The Business Plan*. Total Quality Management File. Cape Town: The Management Team.

Altitude Workforce Solutions (2004b). *Employment Equity Report*. Employment Equity File. Cape Town: Human Resources Department.

Altitude Workforce Solutions (2005). *Training and Development Policy*. Company Policy and Procedure File. Cape Town: Human Resources Department.

Arksey, L. (2003). People into employment: supporting people with disabilities and carers into work. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 11(3), 283–292.

Brink, H. (1991). Quantitative vs Qualitative Research. *Nursing RSA Verpleging*, 6(1), 14–18.

Brown, P. and Scase, R. (Eds.) (1991). *Poor work: Disadvantage and the division of labour*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Christiansen, C. and Baum, C. (1997). *Occupational Therapy: Enabling function and well-being*. Second edition. New Jersey: SLACK.

Coleridge, P. (1993). *Disability, Liberation, and Development*. Oxford: Oxfam Publishing.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Department for International Development (2000). *Disability, poverty and development*. UK: Department of International Development.

Department of Labour (1998). *Employment Equity Act*. Available online: <http://www.info.gov.za/acts/1998/a55-98.pdf> [Accessed 17 March 2005].

Department of Labour (2001a). *Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of Disability in the Workplace*. Cape Town: Government Publishers.

Department of Labour (2001b). *The National Skills Development Strategy*. Pretoria: Government Publishers.

Department of Labour (2003a). *Commission for Employment Equity. Annual Report*. Pretoria: Government Publishers.

Department of Labour (2003b). *Technical Assistance Guidelines on the Employment of People with Disabilities*. Pretoria: Government Publishers.

Department of Social Development (2003). *Policy on disability. Second draft*. Cape Town: Government Publishers.

Department of Social Development (2004a). *The Social and Economic Impact of South Africa's Social Security System*. Cape Town: Economic Policy Research Institute.

Department of Social Development (2004b). The Social Assistance Act. *Government Gazette*, 10 June 2004. Cape Town.

Department of Social Development (2005). Regulations in terms of the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004. *Government Gazette*, 22 February 2005. Cape Town.

Dorio, J. (2004). Tying it all together – the PASS to success: a comprehensive look at promoting job retention for workers with psychiatric disabilities in a supported employment program. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 28(1), 32–39.

DPSA (2001). *Pocket Guide on Disability Equity*. Cape Town: DPSA Parliamentary Office.

Engelbrecht, M.H. (2005). Facilitating economic empowerment. Presentation to BSc. OT IV students, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Frank, G. (1997). Is there life after categories? Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Occupational Therapy Journal of Research*, 17(3), 84–98.

Gilfoyle, E.M. (1984). Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lectureship, 1984: Transformation of a profession. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 38(9), September 1984, 575-584.

Graffam, J., Shinkfield, A., Smith, K. and Polzin, U. (2002). Factors that influence employer decisions in hiring and retaining an employee with a disability. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 17, 175–181.

Hanson-Mayer, T.P. (1984). The worker's disability syndrome. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, July/August/September, 50–54.

Holloway, I. and Wheeler, S. (1996). *Focus Groups in Qualitative Research for Nurses*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.

Howard, M. (2003). *An 'interactionist' perspective on barriers and bridges to work for disabled people*. Available online: <http://www.ssab.gov/DisabilityForum/MarilynHowardPaper.pdf> [Accessed 14 June 2006].

Kitchin, R., Shirlow, P., Shuttleworth, I. (1998). On the margins: disabled people's experience of employment in Donegal, West Ireland [1]. *Disability & Society*, 13(5), 785–806.

Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in Qualitative Research: The Assessment of Trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45(3), 214–221.

Lynch, R.T. and Thomas, K.R. (1994). People with disabilities as victims: changing an ill-advised paradigm. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, January/February/March, 8–11.

Meyer, A. (1977). The Philosophy of Occupation Therapy. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 31(10), 639–642.

Moglowsky, N. and Rumrill P.D.J. (1996). Schizophrenia: strategies for rehabilitation professionals. *Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment and Rehabilitation*, (7), 21–28.

Munhall, P. (1988). Ethical considerations in qualitative research. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 19(2), 150–162.

Neath, J. and Schriener, K. (1998). Power to people with disabilities: empowerment issues in employment programming. *Disability and Society*, 13(2), 217–228.

Office of the Premier (2002). *Integrated Provincial Disability Strategy*. Cape Town: Government Publishers.

Office of the Deputy President (1997). *The White Paper on the Integrated National Disability Strategy*. Cape Town: Government Publishers.

Office of the Presidency (2000). *The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act*. Available online:
<http://www.info.gov.za.acts/2000/a4-00.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2006].

Office of the President (1995). *Labour Relations Act*. (Government Publication No. 1877). Cape Town: Government Publications.

Office of the President (2003). Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act. *Government Gazette*, 9 January 2004. Pretoria: Government Publishers.

Oliver, M. (1991). Disability and participation in the labour market. In Brown, P. and Scase, R. (Eds.), *Poor work: Disadvantage and the division of labour*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

OT IV Class of 2000, Watson, R.M., Buchanan, H., Duncan, M., Flieringa, H., Galvaan, R., Lorenzo, T., Ramugondo, E. and Van Niekerk, L. (2001). Commentary: What is occupation, how should OT be understood and what are the OT values at UCT? *The South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, (31), pg 2.

Peat, M. (1997). *Community Based Rehabilitation*. London: W.B. Saunders Company Ltd.

Priestley, M. (Ed.) (2001). *Disability and the Life Course: Global Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Riches, V.C. and Green, V.A. (2003). Social integration in the workplace for people with disabilities: an Australian perspective. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, (19), 127–142.

Roberts, A. (2005). Personal communication. Altitude Workforce Solutions. Cape Town.

Roberts, G. and Zimbrich, K. (1994). Putting job accommodation to work. *Work*, (4), 35-45.

Roessler, R.T. (2002). TWWIA Initiatives and Work Incentives: Return-to-work Implications. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, (68)3, 11–15.

Rogan, P., Banks, B. and Herbein, M.H. (2003). Supported employment and workplace supports: A qualitative study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 19, 5–18.

Rubin, J. and Rubin, S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. London: SAGE Publications.

Silver, R. and Koopman, B. (2000). *Successfully employing people with disabilities*. Cape Town: Business for Good.

Statistics South Africa (2005a). *Census 2001: Prevalence of Disability in South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Publishers.

Statistics South Africa (2005b). *Labour Force Survey March 2005*. Available online: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/keyindicators/lfs.asp> [Accessed 23 July 2005].

Stone, E. (2001). A complicated struggle: disability, survival and social change in the majority world. In Priestley, M. (Ed.) *Disability and the Life Course: Global Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

Strong, S. (1998). Meaningful work in supportive environments: experiences with the recovery process. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, (52), 31-38.

Susman, J. (1994). Disability, Stigma and Deviance, *Social Science Medicine*, (38), 15–22.

Targett, P.S., Wehman, P.H., McKinley, W.O. and Young, C.L. (2004). Successful work supports for persons with SCI: Focus on job retention, *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, (21), 19–26.

Terre Blanche, M. and Kelly, K. (1999). Interpretive methods. In Terre Blanche, M. and Kelly, K. (Eds.) *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press (Pty) Ltd.

Theron, J., Godfrey, S., Lewis, P. and Pienaar, M. (2004). *Labour broking and temporary employment services: A report on trends and policy implications of the rise in triangular employment arrangements*. Unpublished report. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Thorne, S. (2000). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, (3), 68–70.

Tiroler, G. (1995). Learning about the links. *CBR News*, 21, (99), 4-5.

Turton, N. (2001). Welfare benefits and work disincentives. *Journal of Mental Health*, (10)3, 285–300.

United Nations (1994). *The Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. Available online: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/dissre00.htm> [Accessed 16 April 2005].

Van Niekerk, L. (2005). *The influences that impact on the work-lives of people with psychiatric disability: an interpretive biography*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Division of Occupational Therapy, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.

Vocational Rehabilitation Task Team (2004). *Proposal for an Inter-sectoral Partnership in Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the Western Cape*. Unpublished Discussion Document. Cape Town: The Work Assessment Group.

Watermeyer, B. (2006). Disability and psychoanalysis. In Watermeyer, B., Swartz, L., Lorenzo, T., Schneider, M. and Priestley, M. (Eds.) *Disability and Social Change*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Watermeyer, B., Swartz, L., Lorenzo, T., Schneider, M. and Priestley, M. (Eds.) (2001). *Disability and Social Change*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Wehman, P. (2003). Workplace inclusion: Persons with disabilities and coworkers working together. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, (18), 131–141.

Wehman, P., Revell, W.G. and Brooke, V. (2003). Competitive Employment: has it become the “First Choice” yet? *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, (14), 163–173.

Wilcock, A. (1998). *An occupational perspective on health*, Thorofare: SLACK Inc.

Wistow, R. and Schneider, J. (2003). Users' views on supported employment and social inclusion: a qualitative study of 30 people in work. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, (31) 166–174.

Yerxa, E.J. (1998). Health and the human spirit for occupation. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, (52), 412-418.

University of Cape Town

Appendices

Appendix A

Information sheet

This research study will help us to understand the factors associated with the employment and employment history of persons with disabilities in the open labour market. To participate in this study you have to do two interviews, where the researcher will meet with you at your house or somewhere that suits you, and ask you some questions about your work. This information will help us to assist PWDs in the workplace to keep their jobs, and thereby affect their economic empowerment.

Your name and personal information will be kept confidential and if you decide later to withdraw from the study, you may do so without any negative consequences to you. What you say during the interviews will also be kept confidential and the company, Altitude, will not know who said what during the study.

The interviews will be done over two months and if you agree to participate in the study, the researcher will be contacting you to set up the first meeting in November.

You are welcome to ask further questions after you have read this, or at any stage during the study, if there is anything that you do not understand.

Should you want to contact me (the researcher) at any stage during the study, you may do so at telephone number 021-761 5321. You may also contact the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Cape Town about this study should you have further questions at telephone number 021-406 6492.

If you agree to participate in this study, please fill out and sign the attached form.

Madri Engelbrecht

Division of Occupational Therapy

School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

University of Cape Town

Tel. no.: 021-406 6492

University of Cape Town

Inligtingsvorm

Die navorsingstudie sal ons in staat stel om beter te verstaan watter faktore beïnvloed die werkservaring en werksgeskiedenis van persone met gestremdhede. Hierdie inligting behoort ons te help om PMG te help om hulle werk te behou, en so hulle ekonomiese bemagtiging te verbeter.

Om deel te neem aan die studie moet u twee onderhoude doen met die navorser. Die navorser sal u ontmoet by u huis of êrens anders wat gepas is, en dan vrae aan u stel omtrent die aktiwiteit van werk.

U naam en persoonlike inligting sal konfidensiëel hanteer word en as u op enige stadium gedurende die studie besluit om te onttrek, kan u dit doen sonder om bekommerd te wees oor enige nagevolge. Alitude sal ook nie weet wie het wat gesê as hulle na die resultate van die studie kyk nie.

Onderhoude sal plaasvind oor die volgende twee maande (Augustus–September 2005) en as u sou instem om deel te neem, sal ek die eerste onderhoud met u reël in Augustus.

U is welkom om vrae aan my te stel as daar enigiets is waarvan u onseker is. My kontakbesonderhede is as volg: 021-761 5321. U kan ook die Navorsings Etiek Komitee by die Universiteit van Kaapstad kontak in verband met die studie by 021-406 6492.

Indien u instem om deel te neem aan die studie, vul asseblief die meegaande vorm in.

Madri Engelbrecht

Afdeling Arbeidsterapie

Skool vir Gesondheids- en Rehabilitasiewetenskappe

Universiteit van Kaapstad

Tel. no.: 021-406 6492

University of Cape Town

Appendix B

Consent form

Division of Occupational Therapy

School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Faculty of Health Sciences

University of Cape Town

Understanding the experiences of employees with disabilities in an open labour market setting.

Informed Consent Form

I, _____ hereby agree to participate in this research study of my own free will. I am aware that all information that I share will be kept confidential, because my name will not be mentioned in the transcriptions, analysis or publication of the study.

I have been informed about the research process and I understand what will be expected of me. I am aware that interviews will be recorded by audio-tape and then transcribed.

I understand that I do not have to take part in the study and that I may withdraw from the study at any time with no consequence to myself.

Consent confirmed by:

Participant

Signature

Consent acknowledged by:

Madri Engelbrecht

Researcher

Signature

Date

University of Cape Town

Toestemmingsvorm

Afdeling Arbeidsterapie

Skool vir Gesondheids- en Rehabilitasiewetenskappe

Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe

Universiteit Kaapstad

**'n Studie om die ervarings van persone met gestremdhede te
ondersoek, binne die konteks van die ope arbeidsmark.**

Toestemmingsbrief

Ek, _____ stem hiermee
in om deel te neem aan die navorsingstudie uit vrye wil. Ek verstaan dat
enige inligting wat ek aan die navorsers weergee, vertroulik hanteer sal word
deurdat my naam nie bekend gemaak sal word op enige stadium gedurende
die studie nie.

Ek is ingelig oor die navorsingsproses en verstaan wat van my verwag sal
word. Ek verstaan ook dat die onderhoude opgeneem sal word en dan
oorgeskryf sal word.

Ek verstaan dat ek nie aan die studie hoef deel te neem nie, en ter enige tyd
kan onttrek sonder dat my onttrekking enige gevolge vir my sal inhou.

Toestemming van:

Deelnemer

Handtekening

Toestemming aanvaar deur

Madri Engelbrecht

Navorser

Handtekening

Datum

University of Cape Town

Appendix C

Interview guiding questions

Main questions

- Tell me about your experience of working for Altitude Workforce Solutions.
- What happened at the time when you stopped working for Altitude?

Probing questions

- Details around start of employment
- Details of the job
- Difficulties in performing the job
- Reasons for leaving

University of Cape Town

Appendix D

My perceptions of persons with disabilities and their employment:

personal narrative

I have been involved with persons with disabilities (PWDs) and employment for four years now – first, only dealing with psychiatric disability and more recently, the full range of disabilities. My perception of employment of PWDs within the context of an open labour market (OLM) as well as a protected or sheltered environment, is that it is a very complicated thing. So complicated that the regular Joe Soap chooses to avoid the topic all together. Joe Soap being the man on the street, in my opinion, has also become the one on whom the onus has fallen, to create employment and subsequently to employ all previously disadvantaged persons as defined by South African law, without government departments setting the tone or the example in this regard.

What *has* happened is that South African government departments have done some planning on paper, in the form of guidelines and projections in terms of who they should employ and by when, but it is the non-governmental organisations, including the private sector, that have ended up with the buck and without the resources to implement it (resources including knowledge). For that reason, it is understandable that the topic and action of employing PWDs are kept quiet and remain a passive intention in the minds and businesses of South African people.

That being the first barrier to PWD in terms of entering employment (the fact that South Africans and the labour market are unprepared and ignorant) it is not necessarily the most disarming reason for PWDs being unemployed. In my opinion, even where PWDs are invited into the labour market, a guarantee of success in terms of being able to retain a job, as well as experiencing growth and promotion within that job, is extremely limited and I again ascribe that to lack of information about disability, lack of knowledge and insight into the needs of a PWD within a working environment, and maybe at the bottom of it all, an unwillingness to learn, to put yourself out to whatever degree.

I believe that there are many reasons why PWD enter employment but do not necessarily remain employed for their whole working lives, resulting in inconsequential and unsatisfactory work histories, and I'm hoping that this study will help me to better understand those reasons, as unpacked and explained by PWD themselves. But I also believe that a lack of effort from persons without disabilities are at the base of it, and maybe the study results will enable me to qualify that resistance in order to direct future approaches towards the non-disabled world.

Appendix E

Interview schedule

Participant	Interview 1	Interview 2
A	10/03/2006	10/04/2006
B	10/03/2006	19/04/2006
C	13/03/2006	08/05/2006
D	31/03/2006	25/04/2006
E	05/04/2006	03/05/2006

University of Cape Town

Appendix F

Ethical approval letter

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Health Sciences Faculty
Research Ethics Committee
Room E53-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building
Observatory 7925
Telephone [021] 406 6338 • Facsimile [021] 406 6411
e-mail: pe@w.uct.ac.za

30 November 2005

REC REF: 287/2005

Mrs M Engelbrecht
P O Box 2300
Denniesig
7601

Dear Mrs Engelbrecht

PROJECT TITLE: UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES AS THEY ENTER, RETAIN OR EXIT EMPLOYMENT IN AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET SETTING

Thank you for submitting your study to the Research Ethics Committee for review.

It is a pleasure to inform you that the Ethics Committee has **formally approved** the above-mentioned study on the 17 November 2005.

Your comments to the queries raised are noted with thanks.

Please quote the REC. REF in all your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR T. ZABOW
CHAIRPERSON, HSF HUMAN ETHICS