

University of Cape Town



School of Organisational Psychology

**Inclusivity and support for employees living with disabilities in the
South African Police Service (SAPS)**

By

Rachel Govender

(GVNRAC001)

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's degree in
Organisational Psychology

September 2019

Supervisor: Chao Mulenga

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Acknowledgements

To Dr Chao Mulenga, for her continued support and supervising of my dissertation from the start.

To the participants from the South African Police Service, for their willingness to openly share their everyday work experiences. Their involvement and passion made this research possible.

To the South African Police Service, Western Cape, for allowing me to conduct the research.

To Marié Henning, for her assistance with regard to the editing and proofreading of my dissertation.

To my family, for their support and prayers during my studies.

Abstract

The problem of inclusivity in the workplace has been globally acknowledged as a challenge for employees living with disabilities. The objective of this study was to explore the experiences of employees living with disabilities in the South African Police Service (SAPS). Globally, there has been a lot of research conducted on diversity in the workplace; however, research on inclusivity is a rather new phenomenon. A theoretical model on inclusion and diversity in work groups is presented as a framework, which offers insight into the experiences that contribute to feelings of inclusion for a diverse workforce. This model identifies potential contextual factors and outcomes of inclusion. This study further defines inclusion and disability and provides literature on the barriers employees living with disabilities encounter once employed, as well as support structures that could enhance inclusivity for these employees. The study used a qualitative, explorative approach. Fifteen employees of the SAPS were selected for participation, based on their disability type as per the research criteria.

A purposive convenient sampling approach was used to identify employees with disabilities, taking into consideration hearing, visual, physical and mobility impairments. Participants varied in age, gender and race and came from stations mostly situated in the southern suburbs of Cape Town, with one participant from George and one participant from Paarl East. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and provide insight into how employees living with disabilities perceive inclusion in the SAPS. A thematic analysis approach was used to identify which negative and positive experiences of inclusion were identified. Irrespective of the provision of disability policies and legislation, which clearly stipulate that no person may be unfairly discriminated against on the grounds of their disability, the findings from this study indicate that employees living with disabilities still experience discriminatory attitudes in the workplace.

While some participants had positive experiences of inclusion, other employees reported negative experiences relating mostly to a lack of management support, non-conducive workplaces, lack of disability awareness, as well as negative attitudes towards disability in the workplace. The results of this study indicate that the general feeling of inclusion in the SAPS is, to a certain degree, fair, and that management and co-worker support, together with reasonable accommodation, played an important role in contributing to making employees living with disabilities feel included.

This study shows that more research is required in terms of disability awareness, and an understanding of the needs of employees living with disabilities in the workplace, to create an enabling environment of growth for employees living with disabilities. It is proposed that this study be used to provide employers and employees with a greater understanding of how to effectively include and retain employees living with disabilities.

Keywords: Inclusion, management support, co-worker support, reasonable accommodation, SAPS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Employees living with disabilities remain under-denoted in the workplace; therefore, it is significantly important to include them in the world of work (Allen & Cohen, 2010). After a person living with disability is hired, he or she will have to work through matters with colleagues, such as dealing with attitudes and perception towards their disabilities (Allen & Cohen, 2010). Inclusive and conversant consideration of disability in the workplace is a rather new phenomenon (Gewurtz & Kirsh, 2009). Work is a critical matter for employees living with disabilities – for the creation of their personal identity, needs fulfilment, finding meaning in their lives, and the provision of opportunities to apply their knowledge and personal talents (Szymanski & Hershenson, 2005). Although general and state policies endorse the inclusion of employees living with disabilities, (Wehman, 2011) stigma and negative attitudes still play an important role. Employees living with disabilities are avoided by colleagues, subjected to exclusion, and are often regarded as being less desirable employees (Colella, De Nisi & Varma, 1998).

Persons with disabilities include those who have a perceived and/or actual physical, psychosocial, intellectual, neurological and/or sensory impairment which, as a result of various attitudinal, communication, physical or information barriers, are hindered from participating fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with others (Department of Social Development, 2015, p 11). Therefore, employees living with disabilities also encounter many obstacles in carrying out work-related activities (Bruyere & James, 1997; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (EEA) prohibits any form of harassment, such as teasing, ridiculing or offensive remarks against employees living with disabilities. However, while legislative structures appear progressive and comprehensive, employees living with disabilities are still sometimes subjected to exclusion, hence perpetuating the notion that they are incapable.

Workplaces are becoming more and more concerned with how to manage employees living with disabilities, which is not only based on legal directives but also on the feasible value of managing diversity in the workplace (Shur, Colella & Adya, 2016). Employers and managers are looking for ways to tap into a frequently disregarded population that are able to deliver valuable human resources in a period of increasing globalisation and competitive demands (Shur et al., 2016).

Attitudinal barriers among employers, managers and co-workers often hinder promotion, training opportunities and job performance of employees living with disabilities, which in turn affects turnover intention, and the commitment and satisfaction of employees living with disabilities (Shur et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important that companies develop policies and practices that recognise and break down barriers to the inclusion of employees living with disabilities (Bruyere, 2000; National Council on Disability, 2007; World Health Organisation, 2011). People living with disabilities may be hindered from thriving in the workplace, but with reasonable accommodation, accessibility and disability awareness, employees living with disabilities can feel more included if managers and co-workers would learn to look past their disabilities and display inclusive behaviour (Allen & Cohen, 2010).

Inclusion has an impact on improving the quality of integration and co-participation of employees living with disabilities in the workplace (Farrell, 2000; Vislie, 2003). Even so, current definitions of organisational inclusion lean towards adopting a work perception (Fujimoto, Rentschler, Le, Edwards & Hartel, 2014). Novak, Feyes and Christensen (2011, p. 212) define inclusion as the acceptance, encouragement, and participation of individuals with disabilities in the workplace, which will enable them to form relationships, enjoy full access to and have regular contact with individuals without disabilities. It is important to understand the factors that enhance inclusion of employees living with disabilities because, according to Lengnick-Hall (2007), these people are one of the largest marginal groups and any person can become a member at any given time. Research on disability has mainly focused on factors relating to the prospects of employment and the attributes of people living with disabilities that enable them to gain and maintain employment (Barlow, Wright & Cullen, 2002; Lengnick-Hall, Gaunt & Kulkarni, 2008; Louvet, 2007; Stone & Colella, 1996). The inclusion of employees living with disabilities has not been an exact focus of research (Colella, 1994; Colella & Varma, 2001).

Employees living with disabilities may find it difficult to assimilate into the workplace because of the differences between groups, which result in exclusionary behaviours (Riordian, Schaffer & Stewart, 2005; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). This dissertation focusses on employees living with disabilities who are currently employed. In particular it explores the experiences of people with disabilities with regard to inclusion in the workplace. Exploring their experiences that enhance inclusion for employees living with disabilities, could contribute to the evolving yet limited

research about inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace (Colella, 1994; Colella & Varma, 2001).

With regard to the inclusion of employees living with disabilities, sociology scholars have removed the emphasis from a “special needs approach” through social welfare programmes and employment services toward a “supportive environmental approach” that reassures full participation for employees living with disabilities in everyday activities (Hammel et al., 2008). However, little existing research takes a complete social and environmental approach to the inclusion of employees living with disabilities (Fujimoto et al., 2014). Studies of work and disability-related issues have seldom given discourse to the social and environmental needs of employees living with disabilities (Barnes & Mercer, 2005). To contribute to the limited research in this area, this study addresses the issue by exploring experiences and perceptions of inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS.

2. Problem statement

Employees living with disabilities were selected as the target group for inclusion in this study, as they are among the individuals who experience exclusion and underemployment in the workplace (WHO, 2005). According to Stone and Colella (1996), there has been very little research conducted on the inclusion experiences of employees living with disabilities in the workplace. A much greater concern has been the recruitment and selection of employees living with disabilities, rather than their inclusion after they have been hired (Huang & Chen, 2015). Previous studies, according to Martins, Barkokebas and Guimaraes (2012) have failed to shed light on the everyday work experiences of employees living with disabilities, and there is a deficit of published articles on the subject of inclusivity of these employees.

It would be valuable to understand the circumstances employees living with disabilities work in, and to emphasise the importance of considering their experiences, the occupational hazards and their wellbeing. This workforce’s wellbeing should be highlighted, as these individuals contribute significantly to the world of work, but face daily challenges, impacting their wellbeing and hindering them from working optimally. The research for this study was conducted in the context of the SAPS as a workplace.

3. Research question

How do employees living with disabilities experience inclusion in the context of their workplace at SAPS?

4. Research aim

To explore the experiences and perceptions of employees living with disabilities with regard to inclusion in the SAPS.

5. Study objectives

The objectives of the study were to shed light on the experiences that influence the inclusion of employees living with disabilities, to explore barriers and facilitators to inclusion, and to explore perceptions of the extent to which reasonable accommodation is provided for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS.

6. Context

6.1 SAPS and employees living with disabilities

The research conducted for this study was focussed on gaining an understanding of what experiences enhance feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS. The SAPS has been chosen as the population under study because this department makes a significant contribution to the country in terms of safety and security. The SAPS as a government department is assigned to employ a minimum of 2% persons living with disabilities. With regard to the status of disability management, annual feedback reports are submitted to the Department of Public Administration (SAPS, 2018).

The SAPS have many and varied employment opportunities, but the extent to which persons with disabilities are included in this sector is unknown. There are a total of 25 583 employees in the SAPS in the Western Cape. Of those, 458 are employees living with disabilities, mostly in support functions (SAPS, 2018). Due to the unpredictable, varied and often physical nature of police duties, some employees have been injured on duty, and for other employees the disability is inherent. The disabilities in SAPS are diverse, ranging from physical disabilities to hearing and visual impairments and mental disabilities. This study will focus on employees in the SAPS with the following disabilities: physical, paraplegia, limping, mobility, hearing and visual impairments.

Disability management is a subsection of the quality of work-life of Employee Health and Wellness (EHW), which is responsible for rendering care and support and to ensure the mainstreaming of disabilities within the SAPS (SAPS, 2018).

Employees living with disabilities are encouraged to register on the SAPS disability management database so that they can benefit by receiving assistance with the payment of the shortfall for assistive devices (wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs, hearing aids) that the medical aid will not fully cover (SAPS, 2018). The SAPS is only obliged to assist with reasonable accommodation, including assistive devices, for employees living with disabilities once they are registered and their needs have been identified. The SAPS is able to plan, provide services, support, monitor and budget once it is known how many employees are registered on the disability management database (SAPS, 2018).

6.2 The registration process

The SAPS encourages employees living with disabilities to voluntarily disclose their disability by registering on the disability management database (SAPS, 2018). In order to register, employees need to complete the disability registration form, together with a medical report confirming the disability (SAPS, 2018).

To ensure successful implementation, the SAPS has an approved budget according to the needs of employees living with disabilities. Employees on medical aid are encouraged to liaise with their medical aids, and a needs assessment needs to be conducted. This, together with a letter stating that the employee qualifies for a certain device, is submitted, and then a budget is compiled. A letter is sent out for an assessment to gauge the needs, and a compiled business plan with the figures is attached. If an employee living with a disability is not on medical aid or if the devices are too expensive, the SAPS has a contract with the Department of Health, and these devices are then purchased through the contract and paid for at 100%.

The SAPS is an organisation that embraces disability. In order to ensure that the rights of employees living with disabilities are protected in the workplace, the SAPS have an approved disability management policy.

6.3 Disability management policy

The SAPS policy is pertinent to all SAPS employees, potential employees, service providers and communities accessing SAPS resources and facilities (SAPS, 2017).

6.3.1 Policy statement

The SAPS identifies the need to assimilate people living with disabilities in the workplace to offer them equal opportunities without discrimination. The organisation supports government ingenuity in mainstreaming disability by ensuring equality, justice and dignity for all employees (SAPS, 2017).

6.3.2 Aim of the policy

The aim of the policy is to offer a framework for the development of an empowering environment, equal opportunities, disability mainstreaming and a workplace free from barriers for SAPS employees (SAPS, 2017).

6.3.3 Objectives of the policy

- (a) To endorse a non-discriminatory, empowering and supportive environment for persons living with disabilities.
- (b) To ensure equal opportunities are created for persons living with disabilities.
- (c) To create a barrier-free environment for persons living with disabilities (SAPS, 2017).

7. Theoretical framework

In order to explore the inclusion experiences of employees living with disabilities in the SAPS, this study builds on Shore et al.'s (2011) model of inclusion and diversity in workgroups.

There has been a lot of research conducted on workgroup diversity; however, research on inclusion has only become a point of focus recently (Shore et al., 2011). Due to this, literature on inclusion is still under development. Shore et al. (2011) utilises Brewer's optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT) to develop a definition of inclusion in the workplace, measuring satisfaction of the needs of belongingness and uniqueness. A framework of inclusion is then given, which is used as a foundation for reviewing inclusion and diversity. Thereafter, potential contextual factors and outcomes associated with inclusion are proposed in order to guide future research.

Research on diversity has moved on to focusing on how it may improve work progression and organisational interventions that endorse the possible value of diversity (Gonzalez & De Nisi, 2009; Homan *et al.*, 2008). A particular focus of research that is developing is creating the kind of work environment where diverse individuals can feel included (Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008; Roberson, 2006). Researchers are now looking for ways to assimilate diverse individuals into the organisation (Thomas & Ely, 1996).

According to Brewer (1991, p. 477), ODT “explains tensions associated with human needs for validation and similarity to others (on the one hand) and a countervailing need for uniqueness and individuation (on the other)”. Individuals try to find a sense of balance with these two needs through an optimum level of inclusion in groups to which they feel they belong (Brewer, 1991). Individuals search for acceptance in groups of people with similar social identities, in order to fulfil a central human necessity of belongingness, which refers to the formation and maintenance of stable, strong interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Having a sense of connection and feelings of being accepted prevents seclusion for diverse individuals (Pickett, Silver & Brewer, 2002).

8. Inclusion framework

An inclusion framework is required in order for research to be conducted on a diverse workforce such as employees living with disabilities, as most literature disregard the fact that employees of diverse backgrounds have previously not been included in everyday work activities (Tang, Zheng & Chen, 2017).

	Low belongingness	High belongingness
Low value in uniqueness	<p style="text-align: center;">Exclusion</p> <p>The individual is not treated as an organisational insider with unique value in the work group but there are other employees or groups who are insiders</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assimilation</p> <p>The individual is treated as an insider in the work group when they conform to organisation/dominant culture norms and downplay uniqueness</p>
High value in uniqueness	<p style="text-align: center;">Differentiation</p> <p>The individual is not treated as an organisational insider in the work group, but their unique characteristics are seen as valuable and required for group/ organisational success</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Inclusion</p> <p>The individual is treated as an insider and also allowed/ encouraged to retain uniqueness within the work group</p>

Figure 1 –Framework for inclusion for diverse groups (from Shore et al., 2011)

6.7.1 *Inclusion cell*

According to Shore et al. (2011), the feelings of uniqueness and belongingness work together to create a sense of inclusion for diverse individuals. Uniqueness affords opportunities for enhanced group performance, when a unique individual is an accepted member of the group and the group values the certain unique characteristic of the individual (Shore et al., 2011). Individuals who are unique and portray a sense of belongingness with established networks reveal a higher level of career optimism (Friedman, Kane & Cornfield, 1998). Diverse work groups that implement an integration and learning perspective, combine uniqueness (through viewing diversity as a resource) and belongingness (through individuals feeling valued and respected), are able to establish high-value analysis and enable efficacious cross-cultural affiliation, and permit individuals within the group to develop their skills (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

6.7.2 *Exclusion cell*

According to Shore et al. (2011), this is where the individual is not perceived as an organisational insider with unique value in the work group; however, there are other employees in the organisation who are considered insiders. There can be detrimental cognitive, emotional, social and health outcomes when the need for belonging is prevented (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco & Twenge, 2005; Blackhart, Nelson, Knowles & Baumeister, 2009; DeWall, Maner & Rouby, 2009). According to Hitlan, Clifton and DeSoto (2006), exclusion in the workplace, and in particular rejection by managers and co-workers, was found to be damaging to the work attitudes and psychological health of diverse individuals. Colleagues who treat diverse individuals' unique

knowledge, information or perceptions as insignificant or inappropriate give rise to feelings of exclusion (Shore et al., 2011).

6.7.3 Assimilation cell

This cell, with high belongingness and low value in uniqueness, reflects circumstances in which an individual who is unique is treated as an insider when he or she adapts to the presiding norms of the organisation's culture (Shore et al., 2011). Research on stigma proposes that diverse individuals may sometimes not want to divulge information that accentuates a stigmatised characteristic they have in an endeavour to be accepted by others in the workplace (Shore et al., 2011). When individuals possess an "undesirable" characteristic such as a disability (Bell, Ozbilgin, Beauregard & Surgevil, 2011; Ragins, 2008), they can choose to disclose their unique experiences, perceptions and knowledge or not.

6.7.4 Differentiation cell

In this cell, individuals are low on belongingness but highly valued for their uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). According to Dollinger (2003), people with high uniqueness have a tendency to be more creative. Similarly, people who place a higher value on their uniqueness are more likely expected to publicly present those unique characteristics (Imhoff & Erb, 2008). Also, organisations, to an increasing extent, highlight the unique abilities of their employees as a form of human capital (Lepak & Snell, 1999) and a source of competitive gain. However, in some organisations there may be employees who present unique and infrequent proficiencies but who are not apprised as organisational insiders (Shore et al., 2011). Organisations with diverse individuals can put differentiation into practice by adopting an accepting perspective and acknowledging the value of diversity in the workplace (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

6.7.5 Antecedents and outcomes of inclusion

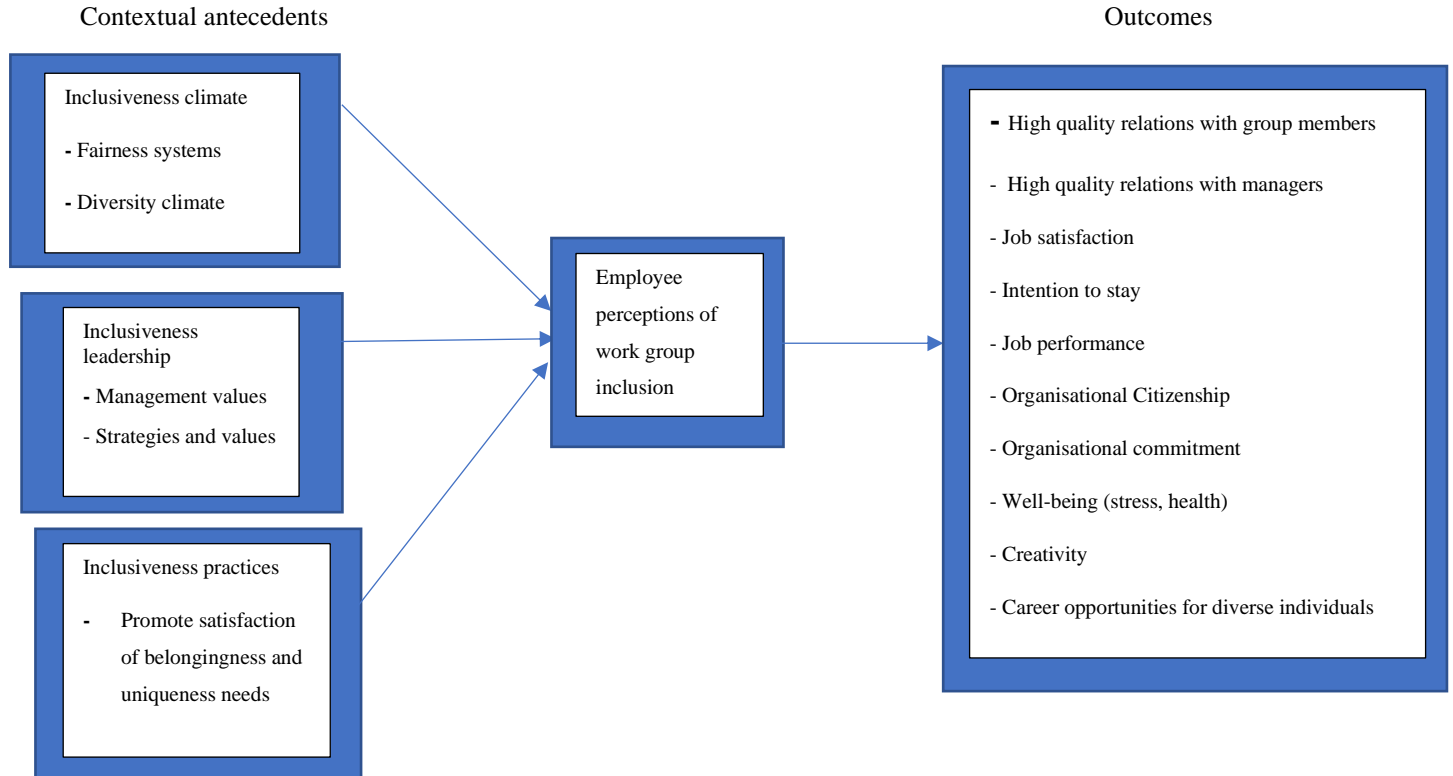


Figure 2 – Outcomes of inclusion (from Shore et al., 2011)

6.7.6 Contextual factors contributing to inclusion

Shore et al. (2011) suggest contextual factors that they believe may lead to perceptions of inclusion for diverse individuals. These factors could serve as a launching point for interesting research in this promising field (Shore et al., 2011). Factors such as an inclusive climate, inclusive leadership and inclusive practices contribute to creating the kind of work environment for the individual to experience feelings of inclusion (Bilimoria et al., 2008). Each of these will now be discussed.

(a) Inclusive climate

According to researchers, a diverse climate contributes to a feeling that the organisation values the contributions and efforts of all its employees (Gonzalez & De Nisi, 2009; Kossek & Zonia, 1993; Leslie & Gelfand, 2008; McKay, Avery & Morris, 2009; Mor Barack, Cherin & Berkman, 1998; Ely & Thomas, 1996). A diversity climate is associated with the inclusion of individuals from varied backgrounds (Gonzalez & De Nisi, 2009). Hayes, Bartle and Major (2002) proposed a

“climate for opportunity” and defined such a climate for opportunity as an individual’s general acuity of the fairness the organisation provides in terms of opportunities assigned and interpersonal treatment in the workplace. A climate for inclusion comprises the interpersonal integration of employees with diverse backgrounds and involving them in making decisions (Nishii, 2013).

A climate of inclusion is one where the organisation’s policies and procedures support the equal treatment of all diverse individuals that did not have many opportunities in the past and were subject to stigmatisation in the communities they live (Shore et al., 2011). Finally, in a climate of inclusion minority individuals can sense a feeling of being respected and belonging to the organisation to the extent that conflict and reluctance to accept are diminished. It is therefore important that future research on inclusion recognise and take into consideration the experiences of both minority and majority individuals to apprehend the effects of an inclusive climate on all employees in the workplace (Shore et al., 2011).

(b) *Inclusive leadership*

Managers can have a strong influence on the experiences of diverse employees, who may have differing perceptions and values (Shore et al., 2011). It is crucial that the manager displays behaviour that is conducive to an inclusive environment, since the manager is regularly the key person who determines access to opportunities and rewards for diverse employees (Douglas, Ferris, Buckley & Gundlach, 2003). Managers of diverse groups need to create a two-fold way of focussing on accepting diverse employees and pertinent means of performance, by displaying behaviours that are consistent with group values and goals (Douglas et al., 2003). Managers are important in creating a culture of organisational inclusion, and according to Wasserman, Gallegos and Ferdman (2008), should develop a story that supports the culture of inclusion and vigorously participates in resistance to diversity efforts. As a result of this engagement, inclusion efforts can be more effective, as a learning opportunity is created for the manager (Shore et al., 2011). Exploring the behaviours and processes concerned with inclusive leadership seems to be a topic ripe for research in the future (Shore et al., 2011).

(c) *Inclusive practices*

There has not been much attention on practices that facilitate inclusion in the workplace (Shore et al., 2011). Access to information, participation in making decisions (Mor Borak & Cherin, 1998;

Nishii, 2013), communication facilitation (Janssen & Zanoni, 2007), conflict resolution procedures (Roberson, 2006), and freedom from stereotyping (Bilimoria et al., 2008), are some of the types of practices likely to enhance inclusion in the workplace.

Research on practices that encourage unity among employees – which reflect feelings of belongingness – proposes that giving diverse employees difficult tasks and greater independence improves cohesiveness (Man & Lam, 2003). According to Beal, Cohen, Burke & McLendon (2003), a smaller group of diverse employees with more interdependence lead to stronger connotations between cohesion and employees' performance. Research relating to the development of unique ideas and creativity (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004), emphasise that workplaces with supportive managers and co-workers (Shalley et al., 2004) and high job intricacy (Tierney & Farmer, 2002) promote creativity.

9. Outcomes resulting from inclusion

According to Shore et al. (2011), there is limited literature on the outcomes resulting from inclusion. The outcomes presented below are proposed for the determination of interesting future research.

9.1 *Intent to stay*

According to Avery, McKay, Wilson and Volpone (2008), inclusiveness is positively related to diverse employees' intention to remain with an organisation. Diverse employees who feel more socially integrated are more likely to display higher levels of organisational attachment and identification, and are less likely to exit from the workplace (Avery et al., 2008). Job satisfaction and turnover intention are also perceived as feasible outcomes of inclusiveness (Shore et al., 2011).

9.2 *Organisational citizenship and commitment*

High-quality social exchange relationships that include common investment and concern by both parties in the relationship (Shore, Tetrick, Lynch & Barksdale, 2006) produce a commitment to share favourable treatment and evade detrimental activities consistent with the rule of mutuality. This relationship is related to enhanced job performance and higher levels of organisational citizenship behaviour (Wayne, Shore & Linden, 1997). Similarly trust, according to Konovsky and Pugh (1994) and Shore et al. (2006), is a significant, latent structure of social exchange, enabling altruism and commitment between the diverse employee and the organisation.

Research conducted by Cho and Mor Barak (2008), pointed out that perceptions of inclusion predict both job performance and commitment to the organisation. Further research also supports the relationship between diverse employees' perceptions of being accepted by the organisation and their commitment levels (Lawler, 1994; Mor Barak, Findler & Wind, 2001), and between how they perceive belongingness and organisational citizenship behaviours (Den Hartog, De Hoogh & Keegan, 2007). Treating diverse employees fairly would enable the development of feelings of commitment and trust, which enhance the mutual exchange of inclusive treatment between the diverse employee and the manager in the form of organisational commitment, optimal work performance and organisational citizenship behaviours (Shore et al., 2011).

9.3 Health and wellbeing

Building on previous research that has found health benefits due to the relations with others and feelings of inclusion and being valued (Firth-Cozens & Hardy, 1992; Mor Barak & Levin, 2002; Reynolds & Kaplan, 1990), additional substantial research, testing the effects of inclusivity on an individual's wellbeing, for example their health and stress level, is likely to be advantageous (Shore et al., 2016). There is some evidence to support the relationship between individuals' feelings of being included by others in the workplace and psychological wellbeing (Mor Barak, Cherin & Berkman, 1998; Shaufeli, Van Dierendonck & Van Gorp, 1996). Extremely inclusive climates that lower task and relationship conflict for diverse employees may lead to stress-reducing benefits of inclusion, according to Nishii (2013). Therefore, it is important to explore other background influences that may have potential benefits, such as lowering employee stress, even when organisations present inclusive practices and climates (Shore et al., 2011).

9.4 Creativity

According to Shore et al. (2011), research in future should explore if creativity is facilitated in work environments in which diverse employees' views and perceptions may be formed and fortified. Diverse knowledge can improve creativeness through cognitive processes that place emphasis on encoding information in many ways and creating connotations between notions (Leung, Maddux, Galinsky & Chiu, 2008). According to Simonton (1999), diverse individuals exhibit a high level of creativity. According to Shore et al. (2011), elaborating on this research would be stimulating to reflect on how the provision of conditions of belongingness augments the uniqueness offered by diverse employees. Evidence relating to this prospect includes research

findings showing that creativity is boosted through diverse groups that participate in teamwork (Levine & Moreland, 2004) and in groups where heterogeneous opinions and views are communicated (Simonton, 2003).

9.5 Career opportunities for diverse individuals

One more significant possible outcome of inclusion is career opportunities for diverse employees (Shore et al., 2011). Work groups and precursor environments that are inclusive would create greater opportunities and equality in the workplace for diverse employees by supporting the unique contributions they offer and reassuring full involvement in group events and activities, thereby enhancing feelings of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011).

10. Conclusion

This chapter commenced with an introduction to the study, followed by the rationale for this study. The background and context in which the study was conducted was then described, and it concluded with a discussion of the theoretical framework of inclusion for diverse employees.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

1. What is known about employees living with disabilities

Research on inclusivity confirms that employees living with disabilities experience exclusion and isolation in the workplace (Gray, Kurihara, Hommen & Feldman, 2007; Lopez, Hodson & Roscigno, 2009; Sanchez & Brock, 1995). Employees living with disabilities are given very few opportunities to interact and perform stimulating tasks in comparison to their colleagues without disabilities in the workplace (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Remaining at entry-level and low-earning jobs, employees living with disabilities experience little training and participation in the workplace (Bell, 2007; Schur, Kruse, Blasi & Blanck, 2009). Yet research on the topic of inclusion and employees living with disabilities is extremely limited.

According to Stone and Collela (1996), the way employees living with disabilities are perceived in the workplace are determined by the type of the disability the individual has. For example, research conducted in the workplace on employees living with disabilities, stated that the more unpleasant the disability, the more negative the reactions of colleagues will be towards the employee living with a disability (Stone, Stone & Dipboye, 1992). Due to this negativity, employees with disabilities are excluded from work activities, and perceived as being incompetent and having no self-confidence (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani & Longo, 1991). It has also been found, according to Stone and Collela (1996), that employees living with disabilities are less likely to be offered jobs that entail working in teams or interacting with others, are less likely offered assistance or given prospects for promotion.

The goal of this study is to increase awareness about experiences that enhance inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace in general, using SAPS as the context, to help increase the number of high-quality research studies in an organisational setting, and thereby advancing knowledge of the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace.

Employees living with disabilities should be empowered to gain a high level of inclusion and acceptance in the workplace (Coles and Scior 2012; EuroCommerce, 2012; Scior, 2011). In order for this goal to be attained, employees living with disabilities will need to receive support and sustainable employment in the workplace (Nelissen, Hulshager, Van Ruitenbeek & Zijlstra, 2016). Research on inclusion in the workplace conducted by Dwertmann (2016) stated that it is vital that

management and companies are offered knowledge about the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace, as poor inclusivity practices have disadvantageous effects for the company, such as unexploited personnel resources, lost business opportunities and discrimination lawsuits.

The following section presents information from the literature regarding the barriers to inclusion that employees living with disabilities face in the workplace, as well as how support can help employees living with disabilities reach their full potential in the workplace and therefore enhance their feelings of inclusion. As the main aim of this study was to explore the experiences that enhance feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS, it is also important to explore the barriers to inclusion. The reason for this is that literature shows that there is a clear and direct link between workplace barriers and inclusion (Nelissen et al., 2016).

This section examines the effect of employer and employee attitudes towards employees living with a disability. It is pointed out by Nelissen et al. (2016) that the manner in which an employer views a disability, usually has a direct impact on whether an employee living with a disability experiences full participation and inclusion in the workplace. Employees living with disabilities experience significant disadvantages with regards to their disabilities (Nelissen et al., 2016). It is therefore important to look at the barriers that hinder the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in their places of employment.

2. Barriers to inclusion

2.1 Attitudes towards disability within employment

Having a job is fundamental in people's lives, but sustaining employment for employees living with disabilities might be hampered due to their managers' and co-workers' attitudes towards them (Nelissen et al., 2016). Employees living with disabilities could be better assimilated into their jobs if inclusive behaviour is demonstrated (Nelissen et al., 2016). This section looks at the work situation of employees with disabilities who are already employed and how the stigma and stereotypes of colleagues relate to the amount of displayed inclusive behaviour.

According to McCaughney and Strohmer (2005), attitudes are either negative or positive evaluations that epitomise a tendency to act in a way that is predictable. Substantial literature exists to indicate that negative attitudes towards employees living with disabilities have been related to

discrimination in training and promotion opportunities, and the provision of salaries (Braddock & Bachelder, 1994, Hernandez, Keys & Balcazar, 2000; Holzbauer, 2004; Jones, 1997; Jones & Stone, 1995). In light of prior research that reveals the link between attitudes and inclusive behaviour, it is vital to explore the attitudes of employers towards employees living with disabilities (McDonnall, Crudden & O'Malley, 2015). Research conducted on employer attitudes have stated that the most constant findings among employer attitudes has been a connection between having been exposed to employees living with disabilities and employer attitudes that are more positive (Hernandez et al., 2000; Ju, Roberts & Zhang, 2013; Unger, 2002). Similarly, Stone and Colella (1996) emphasise the point that managers and co-workers who have had extensive contact with other people living with disabilities could react more positively to employees living with disabilities, thereby enhancing their feelings of inclusion.

According to Nelissen et al. (2016), employers and employees who display more positive attitudes towards employees living with disabilities in terms of their capabilities are more likely to practice inclusive behaviour, thus increasing feelings of belonging and overall inclusion for employees living with disabilities. Displaying negative attitudes towards employees living with disabilities are frequently directed towards a misconception of the disability, for example doubt and fear of management and co-workers regarding the employee's disability (Vornholt et al., 2018).

The next section will discuss stereotypes and stigma as negative attitudes that hinder inclusion in the workplace for employees living with disabilities.

2.2 *Stereotypes*

Stereotypes are basically untruthful, widespread beliefs about an individual of a group that are typically adverse (Nelissen et al., 2016). The most often mentioned stereotype about employees living with disabilities is that they would be incapable of appropriately completing their job tasks (Novak et al., 2011). Employees living with disabilities should be enabled to reach a higher level of acceptance and inclusion in the workplace (Coles & Scior, 2012). Upon entering the workplace, however, employees living with disabilities experience barriers such as stereotyping by employers and fellow employees (Bruyere, Erickson & Ferrentino, 2002; Hunt & Hunt 2004; Schur, Kruse & Blanck, 2005; Scior, 2011). Such negative discernment is one of the reasons why employees living with disabilities encounter bias in the way they are perceived in the workplace (Colella & Bruyere, 2011; Hunt & Hunt, 2004). Once in employment, some employees living with disabilities

are rated on the grounds of their employer's stereotypical views, rather than on their performance evaluations (Colella & Varma, 2001).

Employees living with disabilities are often misperceived as having lower capabilities in comparison to their colleagues without a disability. Due to this, employees living with disabilities are hesitant to ask for any assistance because they are concerned that their reputation will be stereotyped (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Similarly, other studies conducted on stereotypes have shown that, employees living with physical disabilities were often perceived as being dependent, quiet, helpless and inferior by their colleagues in the workplace (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Therefore, when there is a lack of interaction with or work experience for employees living with disabilities, managers and co-workers have a tendency to lean on their stereotypical behaviour to depict them as being incompetent, being absent regularly, and as conveying a feeling of awkwardness around them (Kaye, Jans & Jones, 2011).

As is evident from the literature, although stereotypes are certainly not true, they are resilient to change by disconfirming information and prolonged, unsubstantiated beliefs about employees living with disabilities, resulting in feelings of exclusion in the workplace by these employees.

2.3 Stigma

According to Cavanagh et al. (2017), the stigma that surrounds disability has a negative impact on the way employees living with disabilities are accepted into the workplace. Employees living with disabilities' skills and abilities are not well apprehended by their colleagues (Gormley, 2015). However, a detailed review of research on stigma has shown that employees living with disabilities can function effectively in a job (Kirsch et al., 2009; Luecking, 2011; Lysaght, Quелlette-Kuntz & Lin, 2012). As mentioned, misunderstandings can also lead to unconfirmed and stigmatic beliefs about decreased efficiency, and unexpected added expenses (Corrigan, Kerr & Knudsen, 2005; Siperstein, Parker, Norins & Widaman, 2011; Werner, Corrigan, Ditchman & Sokal, 2012).

This interpretation is contradicted by the findings of a study by Stone and Colella (1996), which discovered, according to data that has been evaluated, that employees living with disabilities perform even better than employees who are not disabled. They are also not frequently absent or have higher turnover rates than their non-disabled colleagues. Having emphasised the negative effects of stigmatisation on the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace, it is likely, according to Gormley (2015), that initial acceptance of an employee living with a

disability implicitly inspires other colleagues without disabilities to overcome their uncertainties of stigma. As more managers and colleagues accept employees living with disabilities into the work environment, the exclusionary barriers of the associative stigma may decrease and ultimately be rendered futile (Gormley, 2015).

2.4 Non-inclusive workplace environments

The inclusion of employees living with disabilities is hard due to difficulties such as the existence of architectural barriers in the workplace (De Guimaraes, 2015). It is therefore vital to understand the association between employees living with disabilities and the elements of the work system, based on architectural designs, so as to permit work to be matched to the functional capabilities of employees living with disabilities (De Guimaraes, 2015). According to Meager, Bates, Dench and Williams (1998), employees living with disabilities actually leave their jobs because workplaces do not make adaptations to meet their disability needs. According to Vohra and Chari (2015), inaccessibility is a major barrier when it comes to the successful inclusion of employees living with disabilities. Changing the physical infrastructure has substantial consequences in terms of cost and the amount of effort. Research conducted at companies who run detailed disability audits of buildings and workplaces, have found that employers are not interested in making amendments to suit the needs of employees living with disabilities (Vohra & Chari, 2015). Working with capacity-building organisations can assist workplaces to implement sensitisation training to encourage inclusion exertions (Vohra & Chari, 2015). Workplace accommodation in some organisations may occasionally just entail re-arranging or getting rid of some of the furniture or even installing better quality lighting (Kaufman-Scarborough, 1999), while other accommodation may need organisational adjustments such as restructuring toilets and the building of ramps (Kaufman-Scarborough, 1999). From the literature it is evident that although creating an accessible workplace can be conducted with minimal effort, many workplaces today still remain inaccessible for employees living with disabilities (Kaufman-Scarborough, 1999). Therefore, a better understanding of these structural barriers will lead to more evidence-based intentions for employers and management to create a more inclusive workplace, wherein all employees living with disabilities are provided with opportunities to be included in all workplace-related activities (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2013).

From the literature presented, it is apparent that these barriers have the potential to lead to employees living with disabilities feeling excluded in the workplace. However, there is much that can be done to mitigate the negative effects of these barriers. The barriers to inclusion have been discussed above, and now to conclude this literature review, the following section discusses support that might lead to enhancing feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities.

3. Support for and inclusion of employees living with disabilities

According to Gustafsson, Peralta and Danermark (2013), one of the best approaches that organisations can utilise to fight exclusion of employees living with disabilities is supported employment. They continue to say that this can be achieved through methods such as reintegration and other natural support (formal or informal social support). Supported employment aims to accomplish inclusion for employees living with disabilities through constant, close support after an employee living with a disability has been hired, thereby enhancing their self-confidence and ensuring that they are suitably integrated into the workplace (Wehman, Inge, Revell & Brook, 2007). It has been confirmed that supported employment has been more successful in achieving inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the workplace than traditional work integration approaches (Forrester-Jones, Jones, Heason & Di'Terlizzi, 2004). The provision of assistance and support to employees living with disabilities are the foundation that could possibly lead to a higher degree of inclusion in the workplace (Nelissen et al., 2016).

The next section mentions management support, co-worker support and reasonable accommodation as means of natural support that can enhance the inclusion of employees living with disabilities. Each of these will now be discussed with regard to inclusion in the workplace.

3.1 Management support

Managers, through their behaviour, commitment and credence towards diversity, can shape inclusion by creating opportunities to discuss differences and to obtain acceptable behaviour, and even amend rules and regulations (Kensbock & Boehm, 2016). A review of contemporary research on management, according to Kensbock and Boehm (2016), has shown that when managers solicit and value employee contributions, it helps to create a work climate that is high in psychological safety, especially for employees living with disabilities. A manager who displays inclusive behaviour establishes a cooperative leadership style, has the ability to deal with conflict,

exemplifies merit-based decision-making, possesses cultural competency, and creates a sense of collective identity for employees living with disabilities (Kensbock & Boehm 2016).

Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011) are of the opinion that managers offer support related to conducting tasks for employees living with disabilities and portray themselves as a source of informal support for personal matters in the workplace. Research on management support suggest that managers provide suitable accommodations, monitor and evaluate employees' effectiveness, and provide feedback and awareness with regard to the impact of the disability on the flow of work (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). The theory of inclusion, according to Tang et al. (2017), supports this claim by stating that an organisation that appreciates and is open to diversity will enable employees to feel more attached to the organisation, thereby enhancing their feelings of inclusion.

Groschl (2012) contributes to the debate in literature stating that managers should depict the right behaviours and act as role models, creating awareness of the lawful framework and showing no lenience for an antagonistic work climate. Managers are often in the best position to implement procedures and sustain control over disability-related issues in the workplace by rigidly enforcing the company's policies and procedures (Gewutrz & Kirsch, 2009). In this way, the theory of inclusion (Tang et al., 2017) supports the claim that management support is important in creating an inclusive climate through inclusive policies, and by accepting and treating employees with diverse backgrounds equally.

3.2 Relationships with managers

Research on relationships with managers illustrate that having supportive and considerate managers and obtaining reasonable accommodations at work is extremely important for maintaining one's job (Dyck & Jongbloed, 2000; Kirsh, 2000; Pinder, 1995; Saint-Arnaud, Saint-Jean & Damasse, 2006). Such understanding, feelings of being accepted and support, creates a culture of self-confidence and feelings of trustworthiness for employees living with disabilities, which enhances inclusion (Gewurtz & Kirsch, 2009). A lack of support and understanding from managers could be damaging to employees living with disabilities in terms of performing and maintaining their jobs, as well as their job satisfaction and feelings of inclusion (Harlan & Robert, 1998; Pinder, 1995; Saint-Amaud et al., 2006). Studies by Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011)

stated employees living with disabilities who had supportive managers felt more open about their disability and any modifications they required.

3.3 Encouraging ideas and suggestions

Research has shown that when managers take the time to provide educational materials such as extra tutorials to employees living with disabilities, it creates a more positive work experience, increasing employees' confidence, skills and overall feelings of inclusion (Lattimore, Parsons & Reid, 2006). Studies conducted by Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011) support this assertion. By providing stimulating work assignments and providing feedback on performance, managers can create a work environment that directly facilitates inclusion for employees living with disabilities, as well as reassuring them that they add value to the organisation. According to Cook, Foley and Semeah (2016), managers can create an inclusive workplace environment by encouraging employees living with disabilities to participate in work wellness programmes that are easy to obtain and understand. Participation in these programmes encourages socialisation with other colleagues and feelings of belongingness, and may help employees to cope with stress (Cook et al., 2016). These authors believe that inclusive behaviour is displayed when the perceived work pressure is low, concluding that work interventions such as wellness programmes can influence inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace positively, therefore decreasing their stress levels and enabling them to have the same opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues (Cook et al., 2016).

3.4 Co-worker support

Research, according to Chadsey (2007), has turned its attention to the evolution of interpersonal relationships between employees living with disabilities and their co-workers. Their experiences of inclusion in the workplace can be significantly formed by their co-workers (Schur et al., 2016). Some employees living with disabilities are working in integrated workplaces, but continue to be socially separated from their co-workers (Mank, 1994; Murphy & Rogan, 1994; Wehman & Kregel, 1995). Through improved interaction and the expansion of social networks with co-workers, employees living with disabilities will perceive a greater sense of belonging in the workplace (Novak et al., 2011). To encourage the social inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace, intervention strategies aim at improving their social skills through

actively inspiring them to interact with their co-workers (Chadsey & Beyer, 2001; Storey & Lengyel, 1992).

The direct facilitation of social exchanges will strengthen the formation of interpersonal relationships with co-workers, which can enhance feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities (Novak et al., 2011). The way in which an employee living with a disability's job is designed, influences the provision of opportunities for inclusion, for example, relationship structures that entail working in physical proximity with co-workers, and having a job description similar to their co-workers (Chambless, 1996; Hagner & DiLeo, 1993; Mank, Cioffi & Yovanoff, 1997, Parent, Kregel & Wehman, 2007). Research discovered that in jobs which were more closely approximated, the optimum settings where employees living with disabilities had more contact with their co-workers, enabled them to experience social inclusion in the workplace (Novak et al., 2011). Co-workers of these employees living with disabilities had positive regard for them for being unique, independent and capable (Novak et al., 2011).

3.5 Interaction and acceptance

Co-workers who have worked with employees living with disabilities in the past or who have disabled friends know how to interact with and treat employees living with disabilities (Fillary & Pernice, 2006). Generally, employees living with disabilities depend on their co-workers to take note of their needs in the workplace (Fillary & Pernice, 2006). Co-workers are seen as important, as they offer assistance to employees living with disabilities with regard to understanding and performing their work tasks, as well as displaying social acceptance (Novak et al., 2011). Kulkarni (2013) confirms this by stating that employees living with disabilities would often approach their co-workers for assistance with understanding their jobs, perceived that their co-workers could relate and understand their work behaviours, their capabilities and limitations, and that their requests for assistance from their co-workers would not be rejected in the workplace.

The development of interpersonal interactions and social relationships between employees living with disabilities and their co-workers is a pertinent aspect in achieving inclusion in the workplace (Gormley, 2015). Co-workers function as natural support, accepting employees living with disabilities and helping to connect them with other colleagues (Kulkarni, 2013). When co-workers convey acceptance, others follow and offer acceptance, which enhance feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities (Kulkarni, 2013).

3.6 Effective communication

Research on communication has found that co-workers provide verbal instructions, feedback, physical cues and mentoring, which enhance the perception of inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace (Storey & Garff, 1997). Co-workers also provide support in terms of training to enhance skills, adjustment and adaptation (Storey & Certo, 1996). Barrett (2003) states clear communication between employees living with disability and their co-workers is a crucial trait for effective work relationships and inclusive behaviours. In a study conducted by Storey (2003), he mentions how co-workers utilise problem-solving methods in order to develop workplace interventions to assist employees living with disabilities to socially connect and fit in with the organisation and other co-workers. To permit employees living with disabilities to be productive in their jobs, communicating with them on a daily basis provides an opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of the workplace, thereby enhancing their feelings of inclusion (McDonnall et al., 2015). An organisation with an inclusive culture permits employees living with disabilities to gain vital information in the workplace via informal communication channels, such as conversations with co-workers (Freeman & Audia, 2006).

3.7 Workplace accommodations

Organisations can provide equal opportunities for all employees living with disabilities by providing effective workplace accommodations, such as redesigning of job tasks, procurement of assistive devices and by providing special transport (Butterfield & Ramseur, 2004; Springer & Siebes, 1996; Rumrill, Fraser & Johnson, 2013). Workplace accommodations aims to boost performance, increase self-confidence, remove barriers and enhance overall feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities (Lacaille, Sheps, Spinelli, Chalmers & Esdaile, 2004; Balser & Harris, 2008; Varekamp, Verbeek, De Boer & Van Dijk, 2011).

Examples of workplace accommodation will now be discussed with reference to inclusion for employees living with disabilities.

3.7.1 Flexibility and autonomy

According to researchers, flexibility and autonomy are enabling factors that enhance feelings of inclusion – for example when employees living with disabilities are allowed to adjust their job tasks in order to accommodate their needs, take time off from work, and rest breaks when necessary

(Butterworth, Hagner, Helm & Whelley, 2000; Dyck & Jongbloed, 2000; Kirsh, 2000; Pinder, 1995; Saint-Amaud et al., 2006).

Building on these findings, Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011) emphasised the importance of organisational flexibility in terms of working flexible hours (for example starting earlier and finishing earlier) for the successful inclusion of employees living with disabilities. According to Stone and Colella (1996), an organisation that values flexibility perceives employees living with disabilities as being competent, ensures their involvement in work-group activities, and extensively ensures they receive assistance from their managers. This, in turn, leads to enhanced feelings of inclusion as well as job satisfaction for employees living with disabilities.

3.7.2 Restructuring of job duties and physical modifications

While some employees living with disabilities require assistive devices, such as adapted computers, built-in ramps and technological assistance, other employees living with disabilities require assistance in the form of sign-language interpreters or some form of adaptation to their physical workspace (Mettavainio & Ahlgren, 2004). This could entail re-arrangement of furniture, addition of special equipment, re-assignment of job tasks or breaking down jobs into smaller more manageable elements to facilitate optimal job performance (Mettavainio & Ahlgren, 2004).

Similarly, according to Vohra and Chari (2015), other reasonable accommodation could include making physical modifications such as providing accessible toilets, providing specialised reading software for visually impaired employees, providing materials in large print for employees with low vision, or providing adaptive desks to accommodate employees using wheelchairs.

3.7.3 Assistive devices

Assistive technology refers to “any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customised, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities” (Balsler, 2007, p. 659). Assistive devices are fundamental for the integration and retention of employees living with disabilities, as they afford them the opportunity to participate independently in the workplace (West, 1991). According to research on assistive devices, Jakovljevic and Buckley (2011) stated that even though an employee may have a severe disability, with the genuine aid of assistive technology they will be able to maintain their employment and have the same opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues.

These include a wide range of customised cutting-edge devices such as speech synthesisers, screen readers that “read” text on a screen through speakers, eye movement tracking devices, special computer keyboards, and Braille attachments (Wagner, 1992; Schneider, 1999; Brett, 2000; Conlin, 2000; Hignite, 2000; Ohlhorst, 2000). In order to ensure the inclusion of employees living with disabilities, a comprehensive evaluation which focuses on their disabilities, and how it could affect their performance on the job should be conducted (De Guimaraes, 2015). Determining reasonable accommodations through the use of assistive devices is imperative in providing an environment that is inclusive for employees living with disabilities (De Guimaraes, 2015).

The inclusion of employees living with disabilities is a topic that requires greater attention from workplaces (Fujimoto et al., 2014). Despite numerous studies conducted on diversity, research on the inclusion of employees living with disabilities has only recently gained momentum. Perhaps more needs to be done in terms of non-disabled employers’ and employees’ limited knowledge with regard to employees living with disabilities. In the meantime, inclusive practices that are already in place should be given publicity to increase awareness and sensitivity towards employees living with disabilities should be heightened. The way forward requires the development of inclusive practices and policies that exemplify the voices of employees living with disabilities (Fujimoto et al., 2014).

4. Conclusion

The more confidence employers and managers have in their abilities to meet the support needs of employees living with disabilities, the more positive their attitudes will be on the road to ensuring inclusive behaviour and prospects of retaining these employees in the workplace (Huang & Chen, 2015). A greater understanding of the perceptions of employees living with disabilities regarding inclusion and support will be valuable in helping workplaces intervene so that employees have better control overcoming the barriers to inclusion and creating a more positive work environment facilitating the inclusion of employees with disabilities. This literature review described the barriers that employees living with disabilities encounter in the workplace, and concluded with an examination of possible support structures and inclusive practices that could enhance the inclusion of employees living with disabilities.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS, and to examine what their experiences are that contribute to making them feel more included in the workplace. This chapter presents the overall design and methodological approach to this study. The first section explains the use of a case study design within a qualitative framework. The second section describes the study sample selection criteria and process. The data collection tool, procedures and ethical considerations are further explained. The chapter concludes with the steps taken for the data analysis, validity and reliability, and reflexivity.

2. Research design

This study was an explorative-descriptive cross-sectional study, using a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach was considered most suitable to explore and describe the participants' experiences of inclusion within the SAPS. This approach provided the opportunity for understanding the points of view of employees living with disabilities and understanding their experiences of the work environment in relation to inclusivity.

Qualitative research starts with presumptions and makes use of explanatory or theoretic structures that appraise the research problems that report on a group of people or individuals assigned to a communal or human problem (Creswell & Poth, 2017). According to Creswell and Poth (2017), it is appropriate to use a qualitative research design to understand inclusivity in a particular setting; such as a case study of employees living with disability in the SAPS. It is also appropriate to conduct qualitative research when exploring the need to study a population or hear silenced voices (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The aim of exploring the experience of employees living with disabilities in the SAPS as a case study was to examine the lived experiences of inclusivity in their work environment. According to Yin (2009), case studies are the preferred method chosen when (1) questions such as “why” and “how” are to be explored, (2) the researcher is not able to exert control over proceedings or to direct participants' behaviour, and (3) the study is focussed on a contemporary phenomenon within

a veritable context. Through the description of precise cases, case studies permit for explanatory perceptions to come to the forefront (Yin, 2009). Case studies are well suited for exploring events that occur in real-life situations in natural surroundings (Yin, 2003). For this study, the case study approach is able to capture the phenomenon under study as well as its context (Yin, 2003). Case studies can be used in varied contexts, such as organisational and individual contexts, as well as public and project events (Yin, 2003); therefore, this method was deemed appropriate for this study, as it was conducted within the context of the SAPS.

The case study design was considered suitable for the current study, as the use of this design has been evidenced to be very successful, especially by way of stories that are personal in the field of research relating to people living with disabilities (Chambers, 1999). A qualitative case study approach was used to explore a social phenomenon (namely the experiences of employees living with disabilities in the workplace). This study is exploratory in design; therefore, a case study can be further defined as the exploration of a bounded system of a case through the collection of in-depth, detailed data (Creswell, 1988).

The study depicts certain characteristics that are precise to the exploratory research design. In order to permit an in-depth analysis, the research population was small in number, concerning a limited number of employees living with disabilities.

3. Sample

Purposive sampling was used in this study. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is generally used to identify and select information-rich cases that are related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). There are eight different types of purposive sampling:

- (1) maximum variation/heterogeneous purposive sample, which is best used when there is a need to provide a varied series of cases that are pertinent to a specific phenomenon or incident, by providing acuity to the phenomenon or incident under research (Crossman, 2018);
- (2) criterion purposive sample, which is best used when selecting cases that meet predetermined standards that are of important significance (Patton, 2002);
- (3) homogenous purposive sample, which is best used when the case selected possesses a shared set of characteristics (Crossman, 2018);

- (4) typical case purposive sampling, which is best used when the researcher wants to conduct a study on a trend or phenomenon that is related to what is considered typical members of the attained population (Crossman, 2018);
- (5) extreme/deviant case sampling, which is best used when researchers want to comprehend forms of behaviour by studying the outliers that deviate from the norm, with regard to a specific trend or phenomenon (Crossman, 2018);
- (6) critical case sampling, which is best used when the researcher chooses only one case for the study, as he or she assumes that studying the case will release acumens that can be applied to other cases that are alike (Crossman, 2018);
- (7) total population sampling, which is best used when the researcher wants to create appraisals of experiences and studies the total population that has shared characteristics (Crossman, 2018); and
- (8) expert sampling, which is best used when the researcher wants to gain more information about the topic before proceeding with the study, and apprehends knowledge engrained in a specific form of proficiency (Crossman, 2018).

The type used for this study was criterion sampling. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), criterion sampling seems to be used most frequently in employment studies. Employees living with different disabilities were targeted to provide a diverse range of experiences of inclusion in the SAPS. The purposive sampling technique is the intentional choosing of a person who is able to provide information due to the characteristics which that person holds (Tongco, 2007). The researcher determines what it is that needs to be known, and then goes out and finds the people who are willing and able to offer the information by morally sharing their experiences or expertise (Bernard, 2002; Lewis & Shepard, 2006). According to Tongco (2007), the purposive sampling technique provides data that is robust and reliable, and it is one of the most cost-effective and time-effective sampling methods available. Therefore, purposive sampling was considered the most appropriate technique for this study.

The reason for purposefully choosing a sample is that it results in the selection of information-rich cases for an in-depth study. With cases containing rich information, one can learn a great deal about matters that are centrally important to the purpose for which research is being conducted (Patton, 2002, p. 46). Different disabilities were used as the selection criteria for inclusion in the study, to represent a range of people with disabilities who were employed in the SAPS. It was

expected that by using a variety of disabilities would allow for the provision of a more complete and comparative representation, rather than using one specific disability, since theoretical repetition reinforces the level of confidence and validity of the findings (Yin, 2003; (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The participants had varying job duties and impairments, which led to opportunities to obtain an immediate and intimate understanding of each participant's experience of inclusion in the SAPS. The diversity of disabilities produced an opportunity to reflect on the influence of inclusion in a variety of experiences of employees living with disabilities. In order to be as representative as possible, participants were carefully chosen on the basis of age, race, gender and disability category. The disability categories used in this study included people with hearing, visual, mobility and physical disabilities.

In order to identify participants with disabilities, the researcher approached the SAPS' disability database. The inclusion of participants in this study was specific to three criteria. Firstly, persons with disabilities who, according to the Employment Equity Act (EEA), are defined as having an impairment that is physical, sensory, mental or mobile. Secondly tenure – persons with a disability who are currently employed at the SAPS with five years and above uninterrupted service; and thirdly the focus areas were police stations in the Southern suburbs of Cape Town, with one participant from Paarl East and one participant from the Southern Cape were considered.

In this study, interviews were conducted with fifteen people with disabilities who are employed in the (SAPS). This was done in order to examine the experiences of people with disabilities with regard to inclusion. A profile of participants for the study is presented in table 1.

No.	Age	Race	Gender	Disability	Onset	Job title	Academic level
1	53	White	F	Sight impaired	Motor vehicle accident	Admin clerk	Grade 12
2	33	Coloured	M	Sight impaired	Congenital	Phone operator	HR degree
3	35	Coloured	F	Mobility impaired	Injured on duty (IOD)	Admin clerk	Grade 12
4	46	White	M	Sight impaired	Sport injury	Admin clerk	Grade 12
5	44	Coloured	M	Sight impaired	Congenital	Admin clerk	Grade 12
6	44	Black	F	Mobility impaired	Congenital	Phone operator	Grade 12
7	44	Coloured	F	Paraplegic	IOD	Manager	Grade 12
8	43	Coloured	F	Paraplegic	IOD	Acting support head	Grade 12
9	33	Coloured	M	Paraplegic	IOD	Management information officer	LLB degree
10	49	Coloured	M	Paraplegic	IOD	Vehicle fleet manager	Grade 12
11	30	Black	M	Paraplegic	Congenital	Communications admin clerk	Grade 12
12	43	White	F	Hearing impaired	Congenital	Social worker	Social work degree
13	50	White	F	Hearing impaired	Acquired	Support manager	Degree in police administration
14	48	Coloured	M	Mobility impaired	Motor vehicle accident	Support manager	IT diploma
15	55	White	M	Amputee	IOD	Communications officer	Grade 12

Table 1 – Profile of participants

4. Data collection

4.1 Research instrument

The instrument utilised for the purposes of this study was an interview schedule. The interview schedule was made up of six open-ended questions, which the participants were required to answer.

4.2 Steps conducted prior to and during the data collection process

Participants were firstly approached via email and were sent a cover letter and consent form to indicate their permission to participate in the interview. Fourteen out of the fifteen participants were interviewed telephonically and were asked to verbally consent to the telephone interview before the interview began. The researcher downloaded a call recording app (Call Recorder),

which was available to download free of charge, which successfully recorded all interviews. The call quality was clear, with no technical problems experienced by either the researcher or participants during the conversation. Once the participants agreed to participate, the date and time of the telephone interview was scheduled, according to the participants' time and convenience to ensure privacy, avoidance of any distractions, or anything that could impact the disability of the participant. While most of the participants preferred to be interviewed at home, after working hours, some of the participants preferred to be interviewed in their offices at their places of employment. It was agreed that the participants who were called during office hours would be alone in their offices while conducting the interview. The researcher conducted the calls herself, in an office, during office hours, and in a closed room to ensure confidentiality and privacy, and to avoid any noise interruptions. The telephone interviews created a setting that was informal, relaxed and trusting for participants. Only one of the fifteen participants, who was hearing impaired, was interviewed face to face. This participant is able to read lips but has hearing limitations, and therefore the preferred method of interview was face to face to ensure that she was actively participating using her full capacity of communication skills. The participant wore her hearing aids during the interview and was able to hear and understand the interview questions. The researcher recorded the interview with a tape recorder. The interview was conducted in a closed office with no noise distractions, and with no one else present. Each participant signed a consent form, indicating that they understood the research objective and procedure, and that they were willing to participate voluntarily. These consent forms were emailed to the researcher. Participants were informed again during the telephone and face-to-face interviews that the data collected will be kept confidential. Interviews lasted between twenty-five and thirty minutes on average. Participants were informed that the interview was being recorded, and permission to record the interviews were obtained from all the participants.

4.3 Interviews

Interviews were considered a suitable approach, as it focused on participants' experiences, perceptions and opinions relevant to the research topic. A structured interview was the tool selected to enable the researcher to collect in-depth nuanced data which is organised in a consistent manner. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate when exploring the opinions and perceptions of participants with regard to sensitive and complex matters (Barriball & While, 1994). Conducting semi-structured interviews also allows the researcher to probe for more information, and to

elucidate answers (Barriball & While, 1994). The semi-structured interviews involved the use of a schedule of questions, which created flexibility for the researcher to enquire further for the purposes of gaining clarity and in-depth descriptions of experiences. The questions used in the interview were adapted from researching literature relevant to the constructs comprised in the study (Jacob & Ferguson, 2012), in order to create meaningful responses in terms of participants' experiences of inclusion in the SAPS. The interview was made up of six open-ended questions (see appendix B). Probing questions were asked in order to explore participants' experiences and perceptions; therefore, participants were able to easily and freely share their feelings, which provided context to their responses. Open-ended questions were used in the semi-structured interviews to obtain distinct data, capturing detailed descriptions of employees living with disabilities' experiences of inclusion and support offered by the SAPS.

The process of collecting data with semi-structured interviews administered via the telephone provided structure to the interview regarding sensitive issues (since some personal issues are sensitive), and some participants may have been reluctant to discuss them during face-to-face interviews (Opdenakker, 2006). Telephone interviews were also convenient to conduct, as the researcher did not need to travel. The advantages of using telephone interviews as a mechanism of collecting data, according to Musselwhite, Cuff, McGregor and King (2006), are that telephone interviews curtail the potential disadvantages affiliated with face-to-face interviewing, it contributes to developing positive relationships between researchers and participants, and it ameliorates the quality of data collection. This afforded participants the opportunity to share their experiences about how included they felt in the workplace (Williams, Unrau & Grinell, 2008).

4.4 Procedure

Prior to conducting the research, the researcher requested permission from the Commander of the Research Division of the SAPS to invite employees living with disabilities to participate in the study. Permission to conduct the study was approved with a written reply (see appendix C). Approval was also received from the University of Cape Town, Faculty of Commerce Ethics in Research Committee. A cover letter with request for consent was distributed to all participants. It outlined the nature of the study and provided information to participants regarding their voluntary participation and the confidentiality of data collected. The contact details of the researcher were provided so that participants would be able to ask questions, comment, make recommendations or

obtain clarification on any point if they so wished (see appendix A). Participants were provided with an explanation of the procedures that were to be followed, as well as what the interview process would involve (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). Participants were also enlightened about the likely interval of their participation, and that they were free to withdraw from the interview at any time if they felt the need to. General questions about their workplace and work setting were asked in the beginning, and more related questions about their disability closer to the end of the interview. This was vital, as it gave participants time to feel that they are taken seriously and trusted (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). The telephone interviews began with general information about the study and about the researcher, in order to introduce them once again to what this study was about, and to gain more trust from the participants, and to establish rapport. The researcher reassured the participants that their responses and the findings of the study would not have a negative impact on their particular roles in the SAPS.

When interviewing, the researcher did not probe if participants seemed hesitant to answer any of the questions. Once consent was granted, the participants' participation remained confidential. However, extracts from participants' responses were accurately extracted to accentuate key themes. Only the primary researcher and dissertation supervisor had access to the data for the purpose of overseeing any misinterpretations.

5. Data analysis

The dataset for this study consisted of transcribed interviews. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the researcher applied Braun and Clark's (2006) process of thematic analysis to analyse the data and identify patterns in the research. According to Braun and Clark (2006), thematic analysis is a six-phase process of interpreting and describing themes in order to present a profound comprehension of the data. The advantage of applying the process of thematic analysis is its "theoretically-flexible approach" (Braun & Clark, 2006). The researcher was able to explore and analyse all the data collected for meaningfully recurring patterns and identifying main themes, each with corresponding subthemes.

The first step of the data analyses process entailed transcribing the interviews and reading the transcripts to get acquainted with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The second step involved re-reading the transcribed data to identify any probable notions for coding that were highlighted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Step three entailed gathering all the data and arranging it into meaningful

classifications to identify participants' experiences of inclusion relevant to the study. Codes were identified with the intent to identify relationships in the data and transform them into themes (Braun & Clark, 2006; Saldana, 2015). Step four focused on reviewing and refining the themes, taking into consideration that each theme should be appropriate and relevant to its categorisation (Braun & Clark, 2006). During step five the themes were formally classified as per participant experiences, and step six involved reporting the findings (Braun & Clark, 2006). The researcher selected direct quotations relating to the differing experiences.

Thematic analysis permitted the researcher to discover certain themes that were engrained in the data, which may have not have been recognised or even thought about carefully in former research (Braun & Clark, 2006). With this approach the researcher was able to accentuate differences and similarities across the data, permitting for significant interpretations to emerge (Braun & Clark, 2006). Using the thematic analysis approach to analyse qualitative data complemented the research design of this study, due to the fact that it gave the researcher a great deal of flexibility when it came to the extraction of themes, and provided nuanced, rich, detailed data (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013).

6. Reliability and validity

In order to ensure a rigorous qualitative study, the researcher applied Lincoln and Guba's measure of trustworthiness, which is imperative to evaluating a study's worth (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness involves establishing credibility, dependability and confirmability. Credibility, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is concerned with establishing confidence in the truth of the findings. The researcher makes use of conventional methods of data collection to ensure confidence in the accuracy of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The audio recordings established credibility, as the researcher precisely transcribed all interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The "truth" of the findings was accomplished by establishing robust relationships amid the qualitative data and its analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), dependability refers to the way in which the findings of the study are constant across time and analysis. In order to achieve dependability, the researcher followed a stringent research method, according to good research practice, to confirm the reliability of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and kept comprehensive records of the research process (Gasson, 2004). Lastly, confirmability, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), refers to the degree of

impartiality or the extent to which the findings of a study are formed by the participants' and not the researcher's interests, enthusiasm or bias. Therefore, the researcher did not make any changes to participants' statements or phrases when transcribing the interviews. Confirmability was established as the researcher analysed the data with a degree of neutrality, in which the findings of the study were formed by the data that was collected. The researcher did not consciously let personal values or theoretic tendencies have an effect on the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

7. Reflexivity

According to Snape and Spencer (2003), reflexivity within qualitative research is related to the personal beliefs and background of the researcher. In order to limit the impact of possible bias, reflexivity concedes the importance of being objective (Snape & Spencer, 2000). In qualitative research, the researcher is intensely involved with the participants when collecting the data, as well as when conducting the analysis of the data (Kothari, 2009). Personal influences could thus be brought into the research process (Locke, Spirduso & Silverman, 2013). It is for this reason that the researcher recognises automatically any biases, opinions and values that could affect the way data is interpreted and presented (Creswell, 2013).

As an employee of the SAPS, the researcher was conscious of obeying the ethical principles throughout the research process, taking into consideration the possible harm and risks that may come about during any stage of the research process (Quinlan, Babi, Carr, Griffin & Zikmund, 2001). The researcher had knowledge of the organisation's operations and practices, which provided a basis to gain a profound understanding of participants' experiences of inclusion in the workplace. The researcher was heedful to remain unbiased and open to discovering the unique perceptions of participants. Therefore, she was able to gather expressive data, as participants found it easy to share their unique experiences, which increased the trustworthiness of her role as researcher.

The researcher was also mindful of participants' opinions and perceptions, and the necessity for her to stay objective. Therefore, she was very cautious not to share her own opinions, experiences or perspectives while conducting the interviews. The researcher also ensured that her knowledge of interpersonal relationships and situations did not steer or guide the dialogue between the participants and herself. The research results were used in an ethical way to ensure that participants would not be harmed or embarrassed, and that the research was not in any way deceptive. It is also

vital to also know that participants may have been hesitant to answer certain questions or share their experiences due to the researcher's role in the SAPS. Therefore, in order to dispel this possibility, the researcher strived to confirm the confidentiality of the research process before conducting the study.

8. Conclusion

This chapter addressed the methodological approach and overall design, and explained the use of an exploratory case study as a research strategy within the qualitative framework. It defined the study sample and the grounds on which people with disabilities were selected. The methods of data collection and data analysis were then explained. The chapter concluded by including the ethical considerations that were taken.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences that contribute to employees living with disabilities feeling more included in the South African Police Service (SAPS). This chapter presents findings from interviews conducted with employees living with disabilities and their experience of inclusion in the SAPS. Data collected from interviews was transcribed. To identify the themes from the data, the researcher applied Braun and Clarke's (2006) six step process of thematic analysis. Participants for this sample included fifteen employees living with disabilities working full time in support functions at the SAPS. The sample included six females and nine males. Regarding the race of the participants, five were white, two were black and eight were coloured. The age of the participants ranged from 30 to 55 years.

Collecting data from a diverse sample aided the researcher to explore and understand experiences in terms of inclusion in the SAPS. Overall, the participants shared both negative and positive experiences regarding inclusion in the workplace.

The analysis resulted in themes taken verbatim from the data. Extracts of the data were used to illustrate the analysis and reflect the themes that emerged. Findings of main themes and subthemes are presented. These experiences, together with their contribution to inclusion, will be presented with relevant quotes. Pseudonyms were used to protect the organisation and participants. Table 2 presents the main categories/themes extracted from the findings. These are discussed in detail below.

Main theme and subthemes	Positive experiences of inclusion
<p>Theme 1: The challenges of employees living with disabilities</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being productive • No involvement • Not being informed • Not taken seriously • Experiences of work overload • Made to feel incompetent 	<p>Theme 1: Feelings of accomplishment and belongingness</p>
<p>Theme 2: Physical work environment (the building is not conducive for hearing- and sight-impaired employees)</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of just being another number 	<p>Theme 2: Easy accessibility and independence</p>
<p>Theme 3: Non-supportive management behaviours</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences of not being empowered or motivated • Experiences of not being utilised properly • Experiences of not being appreciated • Experiences of being ignored 	<p>Theme 3: Feelings of being a part of the team and valued</p>
<p>Theme 4: Lack of knowledge – disability awareness</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences of being an embarrassment 	<p>Theme 4: Good working relationships with co-workers</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Experiences of being treated the same • Co-workers showing an interest in their wellbeing • Mentorship • Meaningfulness
<p>Theme 5: Lack of support provided to employees living with disabilities</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication regarding workplace activities • Inaccessible venues • No provision of transport • Feelings of being used 	<p>Theme 5: Experiences of not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities</p>
<p>Theme 6: Desired work practices</p> <p>Sub-themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To experience more opportunities to show their capabilities • To experience being considered for a promotion • To be recognised and acknowledged 	

Table 2 – Main themes and subthemes: Negative and positive experiences of inclusion

2. Main themes and subthemes

2.1 *Theme 1: The challenges of employees living with disabilities*

In response to the question, “What are your perceptions of your work environment?” participants reported their negative experiences with the challenges they faced in the working environment, and some of the participants reported on positive experiences of inclusion in the SAPS. The main theme identified with regards to the negative experiences of inclusion experienced by the participants were the challenges they experienced in terms of not them not being productive on the job, as there was the assumption that the participants could not perform as well as their other colleagues in the workplace due to their disabilities. Some were not involved in work activities, even though they were required to attend meetings and workshops, their input would not be considered.

Employees who were sight impaired were not being informed of obstacles lying on the floor, which evoked feelings of being scared. Some participants reported on how they were not taken seriously when it came to decision-making, and mentioned how they would work hard to make the organisation a successful place. Some participants experienced work overload and felt that the SAPS were taking advantage of them and overlooked the work being conducted. Negative experiences of inclusion seemed to intensify when participants mentioned how they were being perceived as being incompetent, and being looked down on, resulting in feelings of bitterness and being unimportant to the SAPS.

Some of the positive experiences reported by participants were feelings of accomplishment and belongingness.

Four of the fifteen participants interviewed experienced a perception of the workplace as being negative and rejecting, generating a feeling of “not being good enough”.

2.1.1 *Not being productive*

One participant, who is sight-impaired, reported that even though she had the necessary assistive devices to carry out her job duties, she did not feel productive enough, as she believed that she was capable of doing much more in the organisation.

2.1.2 No involvement

This participant mentioned how she would often not be involved in meetings, as workers would put up Power Point presentations and hand out papers, knowing that she is blind, which left her feeling left out.

2.1.3 Not being informed

This participant also spoke about instances where she was not informed about obstacles lying on the floor and she would walk into them, drawing a lot of attention to herself.

2.1.4 Not taken seriously

Another participant expressed his feelings of exclusion with regard to not being taken seriously when he tried to contribute in terms of his ideas in the workplace.

2.1.5 Experiences of work overload

According to one participant, work overload was a source of frustration and anger, as he was expected to perform job duties that were not in line with his job description.

2.1.6 Made to feel incompetent

One participant who was an amputee, mentioned an instance when he felt “stupid” because he is not considered for new opportunities.

Examples of negative experiences and challenges of employees living with disabilities are reported in table 3.

Challenges of employees living with disabilities		Participant quotes
(a)	Not being productive	<i>We got all the equipment we need to do our job, we got the jaws, we got the scanner, but we could be more productive, we [are] not productive enough ... you [feel] you not good enough, you can't do the job because you [are] blind (Participant 1)</i>
(b)	No involvement	<i>You often feel that you [are] left out, you [are] not involved ... in meetings they hand out papers, or they will have a Power Point thing, you [are] not involved [as] a blind person (Participant 1)</i>
(c)	Not being informed	<i>When they mop the floors, obviously the boards can't talk and they put the boards in the middle of the floor... I don't know that the board is there....and then I walk down and ... there goes the board, you don't know what's going on, you haven't been told or informed (Participant 1)</i>
(d)	Not taken seriously	<i>In terms of decision-making, when there's meetings we come with ideas, but our ideas are not used or taken very seriously, it makes me feel as if we are excluded in the organisation (Participant 13)</i>
(e)	Work overload	<i>I am now on the same rank, level 2, and doing a level 7's work, and now they expect more and more out of you, on a level 2 ... to do more, but they don't see the work that you [are] doing (Participant 10)</i>
(f)	Made to feel incompetent	<i>At one stage I considered going medically unfit because I feel that they feel I am not competent or that maybe they think I am stupid, because they don't consider me for anything (Participant 9)</i>

Table 3 – Reported experiences of the challenges of employees living with disabilities

2.1.7 Positive experiences of inclusion: Accomplishment and belongingness

Being able to assist and interact with other people enabled participants to achieve positive results. Contrasting views were shared as three out of the fifteen participants interviewed expressed positive experiences of their work environment in terms of accomplishment and belongingness. Portraying a positive attitude towards employees living with disabilities made integration in the workplace much easier.

(a) Accomplishment

Participants reported that, based on their interactions with colleagues and assisting the public, they routinely encountered feelings of joy helping people and feeling good that they accomplished something positive.

(b) Belongingness

One participant mentioned how he always felt a sense of belonging because he experienced positivity, which made him feel very included as an employee living with a disability in the SAPS. Examples of reported experiences of accomplishment and belongingness are reported in table 4.

Feelings of accomplishment and belongingness		Participant quotes
(a)	Accomplishment	<i>What I'm enjoying is to assist the public, and to go the extra mile and to know that you fixed something, you feel rewarded because you done something positive and people are benefiting [from] it" (Participant 3)</i> <i>If [you] help a member and that member is grateful for what you did for them, then that gives you joy because you feel that you accomplished something ... to help somebody else, that makes you feel good (Participant 7)</i>
(b)	Belongingness	<i>If you have a positive attitude, you will have positive results, so what I am experiencing now is that is that ... what I give my colleagues at work, they are giving me ... that will also make inclusion in the workplace much easier ... the moment you have that positiveness (sic) in you, you will experience a sense of belonging (Participant 4)</i>

Table 4 – Reported positive experiences of inclusion

2.2 Theme 2: Physical work environment

2.2.1 Building is not conducive for hearing-impaired and sight-impaired employees

In response to the question, “What are your experiences of working in this building or location?” it was reported that the building was very disability-friendly for employees with physical or mobility impairments. However, the majority of SAPS buildings are not equipped with any warning signs for hearing-impaired employees, and there are obstacles that hinder accessibility for sight-impaired employees. Some of the participants reported positive experiences of inclusion with regard to easy accessibility and feelings of independence in the SAPS.

Two of the fifteen participants expressed challenges with the building design in terms of it having no warning signs for employees with hearing disabilities, making it difficult to recognise when the alarms in the building go off. The other participant, who is sight-impaired, reported on how he was not informed about obstacles on the floor and open cupboard doors.

2.2.2 Feelings of just being another number

This participant expressed feeling like “just another number” in the workplace, as she was often not informed when they had fire alarm testing being conducted. She indicated feeling betrayed and not cared for by the SAPS as an employee living with a disability, because no one considered her disability when such health and safety procedures are implemented. The participant who was sight-impaired, mentioned how his colleagues would not always inform him of the obstacles, for example wet signs on the floor, or when they leave the cupboard doors open in the office where

he sits. He mentioned that it was not very safe inside the building, as he would knock over the signs and walk into the open cupboard doors.

Examples of reported experiences of the building not being conducive for hearing-impaired and sight-impaired employees are reported in table 5.

Building is not conducive for hearing-impaired employees	Participant quotes
(a) Feelings of being just another number	<p><i>This building [is] very disabled-friendly in the sense that it has Braille, it [has] talking lifts, it [has] ramps, adequate lighting ... however, it is not compatible for hearing-impaired/deaf people, because there are no warning signs (Participant 14)</i></p> <p><i>We had a bomb threat, and I was sitting in my office doing my work without knowing that everybody just left the building ... I didn't hear the alarm, nor the intercom; imagine if it was a real bomb and you just exploded with the bomb... oh shame, poor her, just gone, may your soul rest in peace ... that's how I see it, you [are] just another number (Participant 14)</i></p> <p><i>If there is a wet sign on the floor, and no one informs me, I will knock it down, or when the cupboards are open in the control room, and no one informs me that it is open, I will knock into it (Participant 3)</i></p>

Table 5 – Reported experiences of the buildings not being conducive for employees with hearing and sight disabilities

2.2.3 Positive experiences of inclusion: Easy accessibility and independence

Most of the SAPS buildings are disability-friendly, making access into the building easy, and the provision of assistive devices enable participants to be independent. Two of the fifteen participants interviewed reported that the SAPS were particularly accommodating around the need for easy access into the buildings and the provision of assistive devices.

(a) Easy accessibility

This participant who is using a wheelchair reported his satisfaction with the building designs of the SAPS. He explained that all the different stations in the SAPS are designed with regard for the needs of employees living with disabilities in terms of easy accessibility. He spoke about the built-in ramps and disability-friendly toilets, which makes moving around easy for him.

(b) Independence

One participant who is sight-impaired explained how he feels independent, as he has access to a software program installed on his computer, assisting him to carry out his job functions, which are at the discretion of the SAPS. He indicated positive feelings of inclusion because using the devices

affords him the opportunity to conduct his work duties at the same level as his non-disabled colleagues.

Examples of experiences of easy accessibility and independence are reported in table 6.

Easy accessibility and independence		Participant quotes
(a)	Easy accessibility	<i>You have your ramps, you have the doors opening easily, wheelchair-friendly environment, disabled bathrooms, very level terrain, so everywhere I can go it's very accessible, it's easy to get there (Participant 4)</i>
(b)	Independence	<i>They bought the Jaws software, it's a speech program, acting as a screen reader for a blind person, they trained me how to work with the equipment, eventually that assisted me to do my job on a competing level with my other colleague, so they went the extra mile to accommodate me in that sense ... I can do my job independently (Participant 3)</i>

Table 6 – Reported experiences of easy accessibility and independence

2.3 Theme 3: Management behaviours

2.3.1 Non-supportive management behaviours

In response to the question, “What are your experiences working and interacting with your managers?” the experiences of non-supportive practices at the SAPS were mainly determined by managers’ behaviour. Participants reported negative experiences and attitudes, which often impacted on their inclusion in the SAPS. The participants primarily spoke of how they did not experience feeling motivated or empowered and felt that there was a lack of engagement with their managers, and that their managers were distant. Practices such as being sent on training courses was not documented by their managers, and they were often discreet when it came to aspects relating to the enhancement of employees living with disabilities’ knowledge and skills. Some participants expressed their experiences of feelings useless in the SAPS, as they felt that they were not being used properly in the workplace. Participants also stated that they felt negative and down at times when management did not appreciate the work that was being done. In some cases, managers were reportedly insensitive of the needs and feelings of employees living with disabilities with regards to ignorance in the workplace. Some of the participants reported positive experiences with regard to management, in terms of feeling like part of the team and valued.

Six of the fifteen participants interviewed reported that they do not experience any management support in terms of encouragement and appreciation; instead they experience feeling useless, rejected and not good enough for management.

2.3.2 Experiences of not being empowered or motivated

One of the participants mentioned how she considers leaving the SAPS because she is unhappy, and she feels the SAPS is not doing enough in terms of an organisation supporting its employees living with disabilities.

2.3.3 Experiences of not being utilised properly

One participant who is sight-impaired mentioned how she was just used to answer the telephone because she is blind. Another participant mentioned always getting negative feedback from his managers in terms of the work he does, making him feel that he is of no good use.

2.3.4 Experiences of not being appreciated

One participant mentioned low levels of motivation to go on with the job. This participant also mentioned how his managers will not even say “thank you” when he does any extra job tasks.

2.3.5 Experiences of being ignored

One participant who was sight-impaired shared her disappointment when she was intentionally disregarded by her managers. They would talk to her other colleagues in the office and totally ignore her as if she was not present.

Examples of experiences of non-supportive management behaviours are reported in table 7.

Non-supportive management behaviours		Participant quotes
(a)	Experiences of not being empowered or motivated	<p><i>There's no good experience given by managers in terms of empowerment and development ... no training courses, no growth, no development ... it doesn't make me feel good; if I could get another job, I would leave the police, I don't want to lie (Participant 12)</i></p> <p><i>There is [a] lack of motivation ... in terms of courses, our managers don't even ask what courses we need now for you to improve your working methodology (Participant 13)</i></p>
(b)	Experiences of not being utilised properly	<p><i>You always get put on a telephone in an office one side, why can't we be used a bit more? I was sent on training, but we [are] not utilised ... it makes you feel useless (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>They make me feel like I can't do the work, they want to tell me how to do the work, but they [are] not doing the work ... actually, it's me who's doing the work ... it makes me feel like I'm no use at all in the reception (Participant 10)</i></p>
(c)	Experiences of not being appreciated	<p><i>You feel like you [are] not appreciated, and if your big commander at supply chain ... can, I mean, never ever even say thank you for what you have done on that side ... I mean that is what you experience, it makes me feel bad, you feel a bit negative (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>It makes you feel down because I believe that as an individual you need to be congratulated on what you have done, so that it can give you some more energy to do things that are out of your way (Participant 13)</i></p>
(d)	Experiences of being ignored	<p><i>They would walk into the office and they won't even talk to me ... I'm the senior in the office, they talk to the clerk, as if I'm not even there (Participant 1)</i></p>

Table 7 – Reported experiences of non-supportive management behaviours

2.3.6 Positive experiences of inclusion: Supportive management behaviours

Having the opportunity to assist management led to participants feeling more part of the SAPS, and gave them a sense of contributing something valuable.

Two of the fifteen participants interviewed reported positive experiences working and interacting with their managers in terms of their managers making them feel part of the team and valuable.

(a) Feeling like part of the team

The sense of managers' reliance on employees living with disabilities' knowledge seemed to evoke positive feelings of inclusion for some employees. One participant emphasised how his managers would approach him if they needed assistance. He mentioned experiencing feelings of trust between him and his managers and feeling part of the team at work when he assisted his managers.

(b) Feelings of being valued

Another participant stated how she felt that management made good of her knowledge about disability, which made her feel valued in the SAPS. This participant described that her managers'

approach for her assistance significantly determined how she felt about herself as an employee with a hearing disability. She specifically appreciated the value of her input that was considered by her managers, which resulted in her not feeling excluded.

Experiences of feeling part of the team and valued are reported in table 8.

Feeling a part of the team and valued		Participant quotes
(a)	Feeling like part of the team	<i>The work that I do ... they know they can trust me with certain stuff, and ... if they don't know they will come to me and say, listen I'm not 100 per cent sure, is that the right procedure or what do you do ... so that makes me feel [like] part of the team (Participant 2)</i>
(b)	Feelings of being valued	<i>The management relies quite a lot on me, often they will come to me and ask me is that the correct way to approach a different disability ... or they will ask me to review a policy; the management makes good use of my knowledge about disability, it makes me feel valuable ... someone values what I am saying, I don't feel like an outsider (Participant 14)</i>

Table 8 – Reported experiences of feeling part of the team and valued

2.4 Theme 4: Lack of knowledge

2.4.1 Disability awareness

In response to the question, “What are your experiences working and interacting with your co-workers?” one participant reported negative experiences with regard to disability awareness in the SAPS. The majority of the participants interviewed, however, reported positive experiences of inclusion with regard to the good working relationships they shared with their co-workers in the SAPS.

2.4.1 Experiences of being an embarrassment

Co-workers do not understand their daily challenges or how hearing-impaired participants interact with others. One participant shared her negative experiences when she first started working at the SAPS, emphasising how she was perceived as an embarrassment because she was unable to hear in meetings, and the fact that her co-workers did not seem to understand her disability. She mentioned how difficult it was at first because she used to lip-read and was often perceived as someone who was charming the police men. She experienced that social perceptions and the stigma of her disability came from her co-workers, irrespective of her trying to explain to them. This participant mentioned how bad she felt and that she often cried about it, as she was just trying to

make herself less of an embarrassment but felt that her co-workers did not have any knowledge about her disability.

Experiences about the lack of knowledge regarding disabilities are reported in table 9.

Lack of knowledge about disability		Participant quotes
A	Experiences of being an embarrassment	<p><i>It was like you don't understand ... you don't know what I am going through ... it's easy for you because you can hear even if someone would whisper to you (Participant 14)</i></p> <p><i>One of my co-workers said to me, you know today you were just such an embarrassment ... [the] embarrassment was that my battery got flat, so I walked out the meeting, I said excuse me, I can't hear, I just want to get my batteries ... sorry, I didn't mean to embarrass you but I am not going to sit in a meeting wasting your time repeating to me twenty times (Participant14)</i></p> <p><i>When I was just starting in the police it was extremely difficult because they [would] think it's funny if I am lip-reading, if there was a nice-looking policeman coming in, they feel like I am charming him, and I tried to explain to them that I'm not trying to get attention [from] him, I'm just trying to read his lips because I can't hear (Participant 14)</i></p>

Table 9 – Reported experiences about the lack of knowledge of disabilities

2.4.2 Positive experiences of inclusion: Good working relationships with co-workers

Encountering good relationships at work was the main theme identified which was manifested through participants' co-workers being accepting and not seeing the participants as employees living with a disability. Participants who believed they were treated well reported an inclusive environment in terms of being treated equally as their co-workers without disabilities. Co-worker's performance of expressing concern and a willingness to assist, resulted in participants experiencing a sense of meaningfulness in the workplace. Six of the fifteen participants interviewed reported favourable experiences with regards to the valuable relationships they had with their co-workers. The findings indicate that participants in this study had supportive relationships with their co-workers.

(a) Acceptance

One participant explained how her co-workers accepted her and would often communicate to her about their whereabouts, even though she could not see. She mentioned how well she got along with her co-workers.

(b) Experiences of being treated the same

One participant mentioned how his non-disabled co-workers would approach him for help because of his experience. Another participant mentioned how they would always try and include him and make him feel part of the team. One of the participants drew on his experiences of being treated “normal”, which made him feel good.

(c) Co-workers showing an interest in their wellbeing

Another participant confirmed these positive attitudes and reported that she felt important, as her co-workers would always show an interest in her wellbeing, which made her feel very good since she spends most of the day at work with her co-workers.

(d) Mentorship

One participant stated how his co-workers were always willing to show him the things he needed to know about his job. He mentioned how they would never shun him when he approached them for assistance.

(e) Meaningfulness

One participant who was using a wheelchair felt meaningful to his co-workers. He mentioned how his co-workers had meaningfully contributed to his feelings of inclusion, as they always helped him get into and out of the car and always ensured his comfort at work.

Experiences of good working relationships with co-workers are reported in table 10.

Good working relationships with co-workers		Participant quotes
(a)	Acceptance	<i>They often will say, you [are] the senior in charge ... they will notify me [if] they [are] going to the other building or the call centre ... they will inform me where they are, even though I can't see, I can hear when they are there [and] when they [are] not there ... but they will come and tell me or ask me ... I get accepted well (Participant 1)</i>
(b)	Experiences of being treated the same	<i>We carry on as if I am not blind, most of the people in the passage will come ask me things like where is this and that what's this, because they know I got the experience, so I'm treated very well in the passage where we work with my co-workers (Participant 1)</i> <i>It is the simple fact that they treat me as a colleague, and not this disabled guy, he's sitting in the corner and they are feeling sorry for me, I'm a part of everything, they don't try any excuses to exclude me, their aim is to include me and make me feel part of the team (Participant 3)</i> <i>I'm not treated differently, people just act and react as if I am normal, I don't have issues with their reactions, they just treat me as a normal person ... [it] makes me feel good (Participant 9)</i>
(c)	Co-workers showing an interest in their wellbeing	<i>They always ask me are you alright, so they show interest in your wellbeing, so for me that is important, it makes you feel good because you spend most of your time at work, and when they show interest when things are not right, then it makes you feel better, to know that there is somebody else who is interested in your wellbeing (Participant 7)</i>
(d)	Mentorship	<i>If I don't know something, I will ask, and they wouldn't say oh you must wait ... no they will show me this is how you do it, this is what you must do, this is what you need, this is where you get it (Participant 8)</i>
(e)	Meaningfulness	<i>They are helping me a lot with regard to getting into and out the car, making myself comfortable at my working station, that makes me feel like yoh, I mean something for these people (Participant 4)</i>

Table 10 – Reported experiences of good working relationships

2.5 Theme 5: Lack of support provided to employees living with disabilities

The question here was, “What are your experiences of being included in workplace activities?” i.e. how not having adequate support in terms of communication, venues that are not disability-friendly, transport not being available, and feeling used, have contributed to feeling excluded from workplace activities – whether it was work or social activities. Some participants reported positive experiences of inclusion by stating that they did not feel disadvantaged when it came to inclusion and participation in workplace activities in the SAPS.

Six participants reported negative experiences and feeling excluded from workplace activities. They shared some of their challenges.

2.5.1 Lack of communication

The first subtheme identified was associated with the perceived lack of communication regarding workplace activities. Participants indicated that they felt frustrated at how they were often not informed when there were activities taking place at work. Not being informed caused the participants to believe that their needs were not important to the SAPS, and they were not being catered for, as they required better all-round communication from the organisation.

2.5.2 Inaccessible venues

Closely linked to these challenges, some participants also spoke about how they were unable to attend meetings and other work functions due to inaccessible venues. The lack of support from the SAPS in terms of these aspects was perceived as unacceptable and not conducive to an inclusive working environment for employees living with disabilities. These participants mentioned wanting to be a part of these activities but felt that the organisation would not necessarily go out of their way to accommodate them in these circumstances.

2.5.3 No provision of transport

One of the participants, who is a paraplegic, mentioned how she would often miss out on important events because there is no transport available, as the station commanders in the SAPS refuse to provide transport for employees living with disabilities.

2.5.4 Feelings of being used

The last subtheme identified was that of participants' experience of being used. These participants generally believed that there was a lack of action and decisiveness from their employers in terms of how to actively engage employees living with disabilities while considering their contribution and abilities. The general feeling was that of questioning whether they were only good enough when needed, and to promote the organisation's image. Such circumstances led to these participants feeling excluded.

Experiences regarding a lack of support provided to employees living with disabilities are reported in table 11.

Lack of support provided to employees living with disabilities		Participant quotes
(a)	Lack of communication regarding workplace activities	<p><i>We don't always get the information, emails that are sent don't always come to the people that need to know about it, there is a communication gap ... that's kind of frustrating because you would like to be part of these things, but then you don't get the information (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>For the last year there was no meetings, it's concerning for me ... you hear the police is so much for disabled people, that is a lot of bull, because it's no use having an office and they say they catering for the disabled people but that office is not functional ... [there is] just no communication (Participant 2)</i></p>
(b)	Inaccessible venues	<p><i>You will find that the place is not suitable, they don't make room for us, it's just like we need to get on the list, but whatever else is needed for us to get there or if the venue is on the other side is our problem ... we want to be there so it's just like whatever (Participant 15)</i></p> <p><i>They won't really go out of their way and look for a place better to have a meeting, it's always there at the PC building and normally the lift [is] broken, so you can't get in there and it's very hard to get out of the car there ... so they won't change it because it's always there in their board rooms (Participant 5)</i></p>
(c)	No provision of transport	<p><i>In terms of transport for people with disabilities, that is sometimes a challenge because the station commanders don't want to give transport ... (Participant 15)</i></p>
(d)	Feelings of being used	<p><i>When we had a team building at the Houtbay harbour to have lunch I was good enough ... when we sat at the table eating, I could mix with them, but when they went to the beach to walk in the water, I was left alone at the table, then I felt excluded (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>I was good enough to take the minutes, but then when the parade started outside, they all went outside to watch, but they left me inside ... you don't know where you must be, you don't know if you [are] welcome or [not] ... [do they] just want to use me when [they] need me (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>For me inclusion is [sending] me for the women's network where it's not only about disability or [sending] me to a CPF meeting where we can talk about the social crime, what can we as social workers do to promote the wellbeing of the policemen ... sometimes it feels like you [are] only good enough to promote SAPS' image (Participant 14)</i></p>

Table 11 – Reported experiences on the lack support provided to employees living with disabilities

2.5.5 Positive experiences of inclusion: Experiences of not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities

Having the opportunity to be engaged and play a role in workplace activities enhanced participants' feelings of inclusion. Contrasting views were shared, as two of the participants interviewed expressed positive experiences regarding being included in workplace activities. Positive

comments shared were in terms of not feeling disadvantaged when it came to being included in workplace activities and the opportunity to participate in the activities.

(a) Experiences of not being disadvantaged

One of the participants mentioned how she was always included in meetings, and did not experience feeling disadvantaged when it came to aspects of her work, since she felt that she was well integrated in the SAPS.

(b) Participation in workplace activities

Another participant, who is a paraplegic, mentioned how he would often be used as a motivational speaker, which made him feel good, as he was inspiring other employees living with disabilities.

Experiences of feeling not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities are reported in table 12.

Feelings of not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities		Participant quotes
(a)	Feelings of not being disadvantaged	<i>They include me in ... the meetings and forums, so I don't feel disadvantaged when it comes to my work or when it comes to things concerning the office ... they include me, so I feel included (Participant 11)</i>
(b)	Participation in workplace activities	<i>I'm included in the activities ... they will use me as a motivational speaker, I'm also included in crime meetings, I'm on the equity committee at the station (Participant 9)</i>

Table 12 – Reported experiences of not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities

2.6 Theme 6: Desired work practices

The final theme explored practices that are perceived as most valuable to ensure positive experiences of inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS. The closing question asked participants to share any other experiences they felt would make them feel more included as an employee living with a disability in the SAPS. The question was, “Is there any other experiences of your workplace that would contribute to your inclusion in the workplace?” In order to experience feeling more included as an employee living with a disability in the SAPS, six out of the fifteen participants interviewed expressed a desire to show that they are capable of so much more if given the opportunity to demonstrate it, to advance in the organisation, and to be recognised for their efforts. The perception was that if participants were given more opportunities to showcase

their abilities, get promoted, and be recognised for the work they do, they would definitely feel more included.

2.6.1 More opportunities to show their capabilities

Participants expressed their unhappiness and feelings of being discriminated against due to not being given the opportunity to display their abilities. They expressed their needs to do more in the organisation and to feel esteemed as employees living with disabilities. One of the participants mentioned how she would like to be given the opportunity to motivate other employees who have disabilities and to give them hope. Another participant mentioned that, he would like to be given an opportunity to show the SAPS that he can contribute positively to the organisation in terms of his knowledge and experience, despite having a disability,

2.6.2 Being considered for a promotion

Some of the participants expressed their disappointment when it came to being promoted within the SAPS. One participant mentioned how disheartened he feels when other employees get promoted and he is still at the same rank for many years, despite his contribution, as an employee living with a disability. Another participant mentioned how she would like to be given a challenge, and an opportunity for promotion, as she believes that she is capable of performing well, but the SAPS will not even consider her due to her disability.

2.6.3 Being recognised and acknowledged

Some of the participants spoke about how they would feel more included as an employee living with a disability if the SAPS and management would appreciate and recognise their efforts in the workplace. One of the participants even mentioned performing more tasks than he is expected to do, but his efforts are still not acknowledged. Another participant expressed her desire to just be thanked for a job well done, which will motivate her in her job.

Experiences of the practices that employees living with disabilities would value are reported in table 13.

Practices that employees living with disabilities would value		Participant quotes
(a)	To experience more opportunities to show their capabilities	<p><i>If you were given more opportunities to show what you can do, there are places that you as a disabled person can be utilised, who [wouldn't] be more motivated ... if I go as a blind person and tell you that I could see at one stage, this is what happened to me, I didn't delay, I stood up and carried on, I'm still positive, I'm giving you hope and I'm showing that the police still kept me in, but if you [are] not given a chance, you can't do it (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>How are you going to do certain things without giving you a chance to demonstrate to them ... they will discriminate [against] you by looking at your face ... I can show them that a blind person specifically can be a good leader (Participant 3)</i></p>
(b)	To experience being considered for a promotion	<p><i>It is not always a good feeling when you hear other people are promoted, you are still a constable, you get all those beautiful attributes and you [are] contributing a lot, only to sit in that position for years ... you don't see any progress or development ... I mean if you get promoted, you will really feel important (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>It is not for you to decide or the police management to decide what this person is able to do, it's for the disabled person to decide I want to try ... the challenges I can do it, put me on a probation and give me a chance to integrate and get promoted (Participant 14)</i></p>
(c)	To be recognised and acknowledged	<p><i>I think if they can just see what I'm doing every day, and just appreciate it, because one day, one officer told the commander he should be glad he has me because of the work I've done ... [it] is more than what they can expect from me, if they appreciate me, I will feel more included (Participant 10)</i></p> <p><i>What would make me feel more included is to now and then say like well done or good job done, that will make you feel good about yourself, and then you feel that need to go on, so just appreciate what we do (Participant 11)</i></p>

Table 13 – Valued work practices

3. Conclusion

This chapter addressed the findings from this study, which point to the way inclusion is experienced from the perspective of employees living with disabilities in the SAPS. Through interviews, participants were able to openly discuss a range of negative and positive experiences with regard to inclusion. Through this methodological approach the study was able to explore and obtain a richer understanding of employees living with disabilities' experiences of inclusivity in the SAPS.

The findings from this study highlight that the provision of support, reasonable accommodation, accessibility and acceptance are not the only aspects which can effectively improve inclusion for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS. The responses illustrate how employees living with disabilities may not always be treated with sufficient knowledge, understanding or respect regarding their unique needs.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

Having a job is vital in people's lives, but for employees living with disabilities, feeling included in the workplace could be impeded due to physical barriers and non-supportive colleagues (Nelissen et al., 2016). If workplaces exhibit inclusive behaviour, employees living with disabilities will be well accepted into the organisation, thereby enhancing their experiences of inclusion (Nelissen et al., 2016). Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore how employees living with disabilities experience inclusion in the SAPS. The study aims to shed light on the experiences that contribute to the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in the workplace.

In general, the perception of inclusion in the SAPS was fair, according to the sample in this study. Some of the participants described the SAPS as a work environment that did afford inclusive practices and offered supportive and inclusive work relationships. However, there is certainly a need for development and improvement in the areas of promotion, recognition, support with regard to availability of resources, and awareness of the different disabilities in the SAPS. The experiences, according to the sample, that contribute to making employees living with disabilities feel included or excluded in the SAPS will now be discussed.

Quotes from the participants are used to illustrate common main themes and subthemes that emerged relating to their experiences. These themes are examined against a backdrop of relevant literature.

The challenges of employees living with disabilities

According to most of the participants in this study, the perception of their working environment in the SAPS is one of negativity and disappointment, as participants expressed the challenges they face as employees living with disabilities.

According to Gewurtz and Kirsh (2009), the characteristics relating to the interrelation of social factors and an individual's behaviour and thoughts in the workplace are imperative to the experiences of employees living with disabilities. The majority of studies conducted point out that there is an impalpable culture of understanding and integration (Dyck & Jongbloed, 2000; Kirsh, 2000; Pinder, 1995; Saint-Arnaud et al., 2006). The manner in which tolerance and acceptance are

perceived in the workplace has an impact on the way disability-related matters are integrated into the routine job functions (Dyck & Jongbloed, 2000; Kirsh, 2000; Pinder, 1995). Gewurtz and Kirsh (2009) state that employees living with disabilities feel inimitable when disability-related matters and their personal characteristics are integrated in the workplace.

Not being productive

Participants in this study have indicated that although they had reasonable accommodation with regards to assistive devices, some felt that they were not being productive in their jobs as employees living with a disability in the SAPS.

According to Barnes and Mercer (2005), studies confirmed that there is a link between the exclusion of employees living with disabilities and the assumption that they lack productivity in the workplace. Employees living with disabilities are also perceived as being incapable of adapting to “work discipline” (Barnes & Mercer, 2005). Participants’ experiences of not being productive resulted in them feeling like they were not good enough for the job. This finding supports the statement posed by Johnson, Greenwood and Schriener (1988), who state that employers have a tendency to doubt whether employees living with disabilities hold the necessary job-related expertise such as work excellence and productivity. The assumptions that employees living with disabilities lack productivity does not necessarily have anything to do with the restrictions that arise as a result of their impairments, but more with the manner in which they are perceived in the workplace (Fevre, Robinson, Lewis & Jones, 2013). Studies conducted by Barnes and Mercer (2005) support the notion that it is not an impairment that prevents an employee living with a disability from being productive in the workplace, but the nature of the work environment and attitudes they experience. If employees living with disabilities continue to be reserved at the boundaries of the workplace because of the assumption that they are not as proficient (Barnes & Mercer, 2005), their presumed lack of productive worth will become a self-fulfilling prediction (Fevre et al., 2013).

No involvement

According to a participant in this study, she often felt excluded in meetings and other work-related activities. She indicated how she felt that her disability was not considered, as her colleagues will conduct certain activities, by which she would not be able to comprehend what was taking place.

The above supports the claim made by Chadsey-Rusch, Gonzelez, Tines and Johnson (1989) that employees living with disabilities are the least likely to get involved in job-related activities. According to Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011), non-disabled workers may have a tendency to avoid wanting to interact with employees living with disabilities, due to the assumption that they are incapable of executing a task. However, efforts made to involve employees living with disabilities enhance their independence (Grawitch, Ledford, Ballard & Barber, 2009). In line with suggestions from past research, strategies that consist of high involvement of employees with disabilities were found to be related to the quality of their work life, self-esteem, performance and organisational efficacy (Cohen, Ledford & Spreitzer, 1996; Gibson, Porath, Benson & Lawler, 2007; Vandenberg, Richardson & Eastman, 1999).

Not being informed

One of the participants in this study expressed her experiences of feeling excluded in the SAPS when her colleagues fail to inform her of impediments in the workplace, resulting in her creating an unnecessary scene.

According to Golub (2006), employers should take into consideration that their employees who are sight-impaired can benefit significantly from having their fellow workers and managers provide verbal prompts that will give them adequate information about their surroundings, for example by informing them when they enter the room, and creating an awareness of other types of social interaction for them. However, according to Boyle (1997) and Scheid (1999), it is frequently documented that one of the many challenges' employees living with severe disabilities face is exclusion from social interaction in the workplace.

Not taken seriously

A further challenge facing employees living with disabilities in the SAPS is not being taken seriously. One participant expressed his experiences of exclusion when his ideas are not considered when making decisions in the workplace.

This finding is in line with studies conducted by Schur et al. (2009), who mention that employees living with disabilities reported having fewer chances of participation, along with lower levels of satisfaction when it came to decision-making in the workplace. Studies conducted by Foster-Fishman and Keys (1997) suggest that there should be workplace interventions that encourage empowerment and the inclusion of employees living with disabilities in decision-making.

Experiences of work overload

According to Schur et al. (2016), once discerned work pressure is low, inclusive behaviour is presumably displayed in the workplace. One of the participants in this study expressed his feelings of exclusion when he experienced work overload and felt like the work, he was doing was being disregarded. This finding is in line with studies conducted by Vornholt et al. (2018), who state that one of the many barriers that hinder the successful inclusion of employees living with disabilities is work overload.

This finding supports the claim by Schneider and Nkoli (2011) that employees living with disabilities feel that they are being taken advantage of by their employers, because they think that employees living with disabilities do not comprehend their rights, as well as aspects relating to the culture and norms of the workplace. Research, according to Robert and Harlan (2006), states that employees living with disabilities are also not permitted to perform duties that are within their job description. This participant also explained that he was expected to conduct work that is of a higher level than the level he is supposed to be at. In line with suggestions from past research, Colella, Paetzold and Belliveau (2004) state that employers should allow employees living with disabilities to voice their opinions regarding how extra workloads are disseminated through workplace policies.

Made to feel incompetent

Studies conducted by Robert and Harlan (2006) state that the most mutual and perhaps the most detrimental identity experienced by employees living with disabilities are that they are incompetent. One of the participants in this study shared that he was often perceived as someone who lacked intelligence.

This finding supports the statement by Robert and Harlan (2006), that employees living with disabilities are inadvertently contemplated as being “slow learners”, possessing “inadequate intellect”, not able to “keep up”, and even as being “stupid”. According to Louvet, Rohmer & Dubois (2009), employees living with disabilities are judged as being less competent, from a professional point of view, in comparison with non-disabled employees, and perceived as poor performers who lack the essential competencies to be productive in the workplace (Jones & Schmidt, 2004). The existing literature proves that to date employees living with disabilities are still encountering challenges in various aspects of the workplace.

Positive experiences of inclusion: Feelings of accomplishment and belongingness

According to Backenroth (2001), employees living with disabilities need to experience that they are needed in the working environment and that they have a vital role in the workplace. Some participants in this study shared experiences of how good they felt when they were able to assist people, as it gave them a sense of gratification and feeling optimistic in the workplace. These positive experiences of inclusion were mainly due to the fact that these participants were able to socialise with other workers and even the public due to the nature of their jobs.

The above findings support the statement by Gates (1993), that the effective integration of employees living with disabilities into the workplace is related to them having the capability to socially connect with other people, the extent to which they take delight in the work they do, and the extent to which they can see themselves staying with the organisation.

Another participant expressed his experiences of inclusion by feeling a sense of belongingness and positivity in the workplace, as there was an atmosphere of understanding and social interaction between him and his colleagues. This participant spoke about having a positive outlook and by showing competence in a positive way, changing other workers' attitude towards employees living with disabilities.

These findings appear to offer support to the suggestion made by Gascon (2009), that the social nature of workplace activities provides employees living with disabilities opportunities to experience a sense of belonging in the workplace. According to previous studies, activities such as substantial listening (Hazen, 2003), and even laughing together (Terrion & Ashforth, 2002), boosts employees living with disabilities' sense of belonging in the workplace. Cognisance of how employees living with disabilities are perceived in the workplace needs to be raised, as well as a comprehension of how they can successfully cope with their daily challenges (Backenroth, 2001).

Physical work environment: Building is not conducive for hearing- and sight-impaired employees

The design of a workplace is very important for the successful inclusion of employees living with disabilities (Barnes & Mercer, 2005). While most participants were accommodated with regard to the SAPS building designs and structures, one participant described her experience of not having

her needs as an employee living with a hearing disability taken into consideration. This led to feelings of betrayal for this participant.

According to Bruyere (2000), Johnson and Baldwin (1993), and Balser (2007), often employers lack experience and knowledge about the provision of suitable accommodation for employees living with disabilities. Employees living with hearing impairments require different types of accommodation, in comparison to for example employees with mobility impairments; therefore, accommodations should be made according to each employee's unique needs (Balser, 2007).

Another participant, who is sight-impaired, shared his experiences of an unsafe working environment in the SAPS where he knocked down notice boards and walked into doors that were left open because he was not informed. According to Golub (2006), it is vital that accessibility for employees living with visual disabilities is ensured. Employers should make significant and relevant changes to their workplace policies and practices in order to ensure a reciprocal accommodation model that guarantees the safety of employees with visual disabilities (Golub, 2006). Employees living with visual impairments should be aware of the latest information regarding their orientation, assistive devices and mobility skills, and have access to an established system where information is readily available (Golub, 2006).

Positive experiences of inclusion: Easy accessibility and independence

In terms of inclusion, much of what needs to be addressed to increase the feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities, is accessibility of the physical workplace environment (Schneider & Nkoli, 2011). The architectural designs in the SAPS buildings, according to the sample, take the needs of employees living with disabilities into consideration. Having their disabilities considered in the workplace lead to feelings of inclusion, especially for mobility-impaired participants in the sample.

According to Kaufman-Scarborough (1999), accessibility is related to state of mind as well as physical surroundings, as it confirms the perception that employees living with a disability can be independent and achieve what they need to do at work without feeling stressed or embarrassed.

One of the participants in this study expressed his feelings of inclusion, as he was able to carry out his work duties independently due to having assistive devices, which afforded him the opportunity to compete on an equal basis as his non-disabled colleagues. This finding is in line with Vornholt

et al. (2018), who point out that employees living with disabilities can become professionally competitive if they are assimilated into a work environment that is modified to suit their needs.

Performing job duties that are worthwhile improves self-confidence and a sense of being independent (Solovieva, Denetta, Dowler & Walls, 2011). According to Luecking (2008), the job of employees living with disabilities should permit the progression of their knowledge and abilities, and should provide reasonable accommodation to empower employees living with disabilities to conduct their work tasks independently and productively.

Non-supportive management behaviours

According to the findings of Stone and Collela (1996), managers are fundamental to ensuring the inclusion of employees living with disabilities. Some participants in this study shared their views on how they did not experience feeling included in the SAPS due to their manager's behaviour towards them in terms of no enhancement, showing no appreciation, and ignorance.

If management does not create an inclusive environment for employees living with disabilities, it is possible that other members in the organisation may not interact with employees living with disabilities and this may have a negative impact on the inclusive behaviour displayed in the workplace (Stone & Colella, 1996). Several studies, such as by Cook and Burke-Miller (2015), Lerner et al. (2004), and MacDonald-Wilson, Rogers, Massaro, Lyass and Crean (2002), have stated that managers often do not have an awareness of proper disability management or even efficient retention strategies.

Experiences of not being empowered or motivated

According to Foster-Fishman and Keys (1997), employee empowerment strategies are more constructive, suitable and achievable for employees living with disabilities. Some of the participants in this study described how they did not feel motivated in terms of advancing in the SAPS, as they were not even invited to attend courses or training to enhance their knowledge.

This statement supports the research conducted by Nickson, Warhurst and Dutton (2005) that managers often perceive employees living with disabilities as lacking mandatory, essential work-related qualities. In line with these studies are the research conducted by Eide and Allen (2005), Burchardt (2004), and Bruyere (2000), which reveal that the majority of challenges faced by employees living with disabilities are due to a lack of training. Similarly, studies by Schur et al.

(2009) support this claim, stating that the deficit of explicit training on the job presented to employees living with disabilities is reflected in their limited benefits, and even a lower wage, in comparison to non-disabled employees. Schur et al. (2009) are also of the opinion that due to the lack of training offered to employees living with disabilities there is a negative relationship between promotions and disability. They go on to say that this is vital, as most of the learning on the job is through training. The lack of on-the-job training supports the view that employees living with disabilities are not entirely integrated into the workplace by their managers (Schur et al., 2009).

Experiences of not being utilised properly

A crucial problem employees living with disabilities have to face daily in the workplace is that of a lack of self-esteem (Kensbock & Boehm, 2016). Some of the participants in this study expressed how they often felt useless in the SAPS, as they were not being suitably used on the job.

This finding is in line with studies on employees living with disabilities conducted by Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011), who mention that respondents often spoke about how their skills were not being pertinently utilised in the workplace. Employees living with disabilities are usually allocated menial and monotonous job tasks, and because of this there is no support with regard to advancing in their careers and opportunities for promotion (Cavanagh, 2017). It is interesting to note that Harlan and Robert (1998) found at some workplaces that managers would allow employees living with disabilities to conduct routine job tasks and enforce rigid rules on work scheduling, just so that they could uphold the control of organisational costs. These resistance tactics, according to Harlan and Robert (1998), involves demoralising employees living with disabilities and prohibiting their eligibility. Contradictory to this claim are studies by Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011), who mention that managers may allocate simple, routine tasks to employees living with disabilities not intentionally, but sometimes don't realise it could hinder the development and successful integration of employees living with disabilities in the workplace.

Experiences of not being appreciated

According to the theory of inclusion by Tang et al. (2017), appreciating employees with diverse backgrounds is a critical component of inclusion practices. Some participants in this study drew on their experience of not being appreciated by their managers. Their experience of negativity affected their ability to go the extra mile in the SAPS, according to the participants.

The above findings support the statement by Robert and Harlan (2006) that managers frequently perceive employees living with disabilities “as a liability instead of an asset”. Being appreciated satisfies the feeling of the esteemed employee (Tang et al., 2017). Appreciation from managers improves the perception of inclusion for employees with diverse backgrounds, as well as commitment and mutual trust, which further encourages the employee to put in more effort and proactively take more accountability in the workplace (Tang et al., 2017). Also, according to the theory of inclusion for diverse employees, experiences of appreciation in the workplace make employees with diverse backgrounds feel devoted to the organisation, which will augment their subjective-fit perceptions (Tang et al., 2017). Managers could learn from inclusion practices to embrace employees with diverse backgrounds and recognise their value and uniqueness. Such behaviour will enhance inclusiveness (Tang et al., 2017).

Experiences of being ignored

Stone and Colella (1996) state that non-disabled people often do not know what to say to a person living with a disability, and due to this they feel apprehensive and evade interacting with them. One of the participants in this study, who is sight-impaired, mentioned how her managers would often intentionally disregard her.

This finding is in line with studies conducted by Robert and Harlan (2006), which state that certain managers would evade interacting with employees living with disabilities, especially those who have visible or life-changing impairments, because they often felt very uncomfortable around them. They go on to say that employees living with disabilities are often deprived of social support from their managers in the workplace. Vohra et al. (2015) are of the opinion that non-disabled managers try to avoid uncomfortable situations by alienating themselves physically and emotionally, and reduce interaction with employees living with disabilities because they feel pity towards them. Schneider and Nkoli (2011) suggest that a change in the attitude of non-disabled employees can foster a robust disability visibility, which will inevitably make the inclusion of employees living with disabilities more mutual and normal. Through continuous interaction with employees living with disabilities, their uncertainties and fears could be diminished (Schneider & Nkoli, 2011).

A lack of management support could lead to non-work roles serving as barriers to the full engagement and contribution of employees living with disabilities, resulting in them feeling excluded (Ryan & Kossek, 2008). Managers who offer support to employees living with disabilities can benefit from improved productivity in the workplace (Gates, 2000; Lagerveld, Blonk, Brenninkmeijer & Schaufeli, 2010).

Positive experiences of inclusion: Feeling part of the team and valued

According to Schneider and Nkoli (2011), managers have a vital role in creating an inclusive environment where employees living with disabilities can participate in workplace activities. For a few participants in this study, managers in the SAPS directly played a key role in making them feel part of the team, especially when they approached these participants for assistance. The participants felt more valued when their knowledge was put to good use in the SAPS.

According to Fillary and Pernice (2006), workplaces that exhibit a strong culture and more support accentuate the significance of a more tranquil and supportive management style, positive attitudes and an experience of feeling part of the team in the workplace. In line with these findings is the view of Cavanagh et al. (2017), that situations that promote intimate contact between management and employees living with disabilities will enhance the development of meaningful relationships.

A work environment with a culture that values its employees and understands the impact that the work environment can have on employees' disability can go a long way in fostering inclusive, healthier work relations (Coduti et al., 2016). One of the participants drew on her experiences of feeling valued at the SAPS.

According to the theory of inclusion, when employees with diverse backgrounds experience being valued (Shore et al., 2011), they experience feelings of inclusion, which ultimately enhances their psychological wellbeing (Mor Barak & Cherin, 1998; Schaufeli et al., 1996). Brown et al. (as cited in Novak et al., 2011), are of the opinion that when employees living with disabilities display productivity in the workplace, they can confute adverse stereotypes and assure a valued role in the workplace. Also, according to the theory of inclusion, when the work of employees with diverse backgrounds is aligned with the values of the organisation, they are more likely to feel included (Tang et al., 2017).

Lack of knowledge – disability awareness

One of the participants, who is hearing-impaired, recalled often being called an embarrassment at work. This was largely due to the fact that her co-workers did not understand her disability.

This finding is in line with studies by McDonnall et al. (2015), who pointed out that the negative attitudes exhibited towards employees living with disabilities may mainly be due to a lack of knowledge about certain disabilities. Houtenville and Kalargyrou (2012). Cavanagh et al. (2017) were of the same opinion, and stated that co-workers in general had inadequate understanding and even training of how to support employees living with disabilities. According to Schur et al. (2016), enriching awareness about disabilities could be essential to empower employees living with disabilities to develop a feeling of respect and trust, which entails certain co-worker behaviours and support to augment a more inclusive work environment. This statement supports those of previous studies by Perry (2002), who found that diversity training that involves matters related to disability can assist to dissipate misconceptions and myths, and create a more inclusive work environment for employees living with disabilities.

Positive experiences of inclusion: Good working relationships with co-workers

Research evidence increasingly stipulates that having close interpersonal relationships with co-workers is a vital element of happiness and well-being for employees living with disabilities (Myers, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Having good relationships with co-workers, according to the participants in this study, creates a kind of environment that directly facilitates organisational inclusion in the SAPS. Where co-workers created an environment of acceptance, equal treatment and concern most participants felt comfortable to ask for information, advice and assistance.

In line with this finding, studies conducted by Kulkarni (2013) states that co-workers of socially included employees living with disabilities demonstrate positive regard for their individuality and abilities; therefore, co-workers especially drive socialisation and offer direct social support and help in understanding and executing day-to-day tasks for employees living with disabilities.

Acceptance

One of the participant's experiences of inclusion contributed to her perceptions of how well she was accepted by her co-workers within the SAPS. This participant, who is sight-impaired, shared

her experiences of the positive interactions between her co-workers despite the fact that she was blind.

Findings from past studies on acceptance, such as Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall, (2011), also suggest that once employees living with disabilities gain the acceptance of their co-workers, they enforce fewer personal limitations on themselves and perceive fewer barriers to integrating and feeling included in the workplace. Kulkarni (2013) points out that an absence of interpersonal acceptance might develop into feelings of being inferior and other self-limiting behaviours that would restrain inclusion in the workplace. According to Stone and Colella (1996), previous extensive contact with employees living with disabilities can enhance acceptance in the workplace.

Experiences of being treated the same

The main goal for some participants in this study was being treated like everyone else and treated normal in order to feel included. This is viewed as important, as it contributes to participants not being looked at differently and feeling a part of the organisation. Employees living with disabilities do feel included when co-workers treat them like the rest of the employees. Being treated like everyone else also means being perceived as “normal” for some participants.

Kaufman-Scarborough (1999, p. 490) states that “people with disabilities indicate that they want to feel like “normal, average” persons. Kreiner and Ashforth (2004) opine that co-workers’ “practice of fairly treating diverse employees conveys to them that they have a respected position in the workplace”. According to the theory of inclusion, employees from diverse backgrounds perceive inclusion when they are treated equally and trusted by their co-workers, which results in employee commitment, and encourages employees to take more accountability and exert more effort in the workplace (Blau, as cited in Tang et al., 2017). Similarly, according to Copeland, Chan, Bezyak & Fraser (2010), co-workers have positive attitudes about treating employees living with disabilities the same as non-disabled employees, and the positive attitude about treating employees living with disabilities equally leads to the provision of reasonable accommodation for these employees in the workplace.

One participant, who is hearing-impaired, shared her experiences of how her co-workers always showed an interest in her wellbeing, which was perceived as important for this participant, as her job entailed extensive interaction with her co-workers on a daily basis.

Co-workers showing an interest in their wellbeing

This finding is in line with Cook (as cited in Stone & Colella, 1996), who found that the interaction between employees living with disabilities and their co-workers enables the co-workers to accumulate comprehensive information about these employees so that they are not perceived as a member of a stereotyped group but as an individual. Stone and Colella (1996) are of the opinion that the values and norms of an organisation could impact on the experiences of employees living with disabilities. According to them, the prime motive for this is that the values and norms of an organisation recognise the nature of behaviours that are suitable in the workplace. Co-workers who interact with employees living with disabilities will lead to more positive than negative outcomes, and they will least likely experience uneasiness or bitterness (Stone & Colella, 1996).

Mentorship

The reason why one participant knows everything he knows today about his job was because of his co-workers who mentored him. This participant indicated that his co-workers were always willing to assist him when it came to aspects of his job duties.

This finding is in line with studies conducted by Louis (as cited in Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall, 2011), who states that co-workers are significant because they assist employees living with disabilities to understand the organisation's rules, regulations and norms, share information and provide assistance. According to Groschl (2012), non-disabled employees should be actively involved in the process of assimilating their co-workers living with disabilities, operating as mentors in the workplace. However, according to Backenroth (2001), there is a lack of mentors for employees living with disabilities in the workplace. Similarly, Kulkarni and Lengnick-Hall (2011) state that unsuccessful integration in the workplace results when there is less mentoring and interaction of employees living with disabilities by their co-workers.

Meaningfulness

An inclusive working environment is one that enhances the self-confidence of employees living with disabilities and improves their working behaviours (Kalef, Barrera & Heymann, 2014). One of the participants in this study, who is a paraplegic, expressed his feelings of being meaningful to his co-workers and serving a vital purpose, as they were always willing to assist with his needs.

Akkerman, Cees, Janssen, Kef and Meininger (2014) purport that meaningfulness is about performing a job that has purpose, a job that has substance, and portrays a sense of achievement

for employees living with disabilities. Meaningfulness is related to feeling respected and valued, and by getting commendations and advice from within the organisation, for example from their co-workers. According to Fillary and Pernice (2006), some employees living with disabilities are dependent on co-workers recognising their needs in the workplace.

Lack of support provided to employees living with disabilities

Participants in this study shared their experiences of having no support when it came to participating in social or work-related activities in the SAPS. They mentioned how they lacked support in terms of receiving important information, inaccessible venues, no provision of transport, and experiences of being used, which impacted negatively on the opportunity to participate as employees living with disabilities.

Lack of communication regarding workplace activities

Inclusive workplaces allow employees living with disabilities to obtain vital information via colloquial communication channels (Freeman & Audia, 2006). However, according to Barrett (2003), successful communication in the workplace entails commitment to a two-way exchange of information. Good communication is something the participants in this study emphasised as important in order to overcome barriers and problematic situations related to their disabilities. Communication, according to some participants in the sample, is seen as important as it is related to feelings of respect and inclusion.

This fits in with previous studies, which have shown that an open communication climate contributes to making employees living with disabilities feel trusted, confident and secure, therefore increasing feelings of inclusion (Kulkarni, 2013). However, some participants felt frustration regarding a lack of communication about activities taking place at the SAPS, which led to their exclusion. This finding is in line with studies by Liu, Luksyte, Zhou, Shi and Wang (2015), that such behaviour towards employees living with a disability forms a barrier for effective communication, makes them feel a sense of hostility and causes them to shy away from social interaction, which results in feelings of exclusion and loneliness. Similarly, studies by Hagner, Dague and Phillips (2015) have found that non-inclusion has a perpetual effect by eradicating employees living with disabilities from being considered to participate in work programmes, and

even causing them to not be available for other work-related activities such as meetings or social activities.

Inaccessible venues

The workplace seems to be a negative environment when spaces are formed without taking the needs of employees living with disabilities into consideration (Rocco, 2011). Some participants in this study, especially those with mobility impairments, explained how they were often not included in work activities due to the fact that these activities were taking place at venues that were not accessible, and although they were required to attend nothing was done to reasonably accommodate them.

Robert and Harlen (2006) point out that social isolation in the workplace is related to building design limitations and poor planning, for instance employees living with disabilities are sometimes socially excluded because their colleagues would gather at an inaccessible place. Therefore, Marsay (2014) suggests that workplaces need to communicate and cooperate in order to ensure that the specific disabilities are addressed, and it is essential to comprehend the exact needs of each employee living with a disability and not make any presumptions. It could be suitable for workplaces to consider the psychological and social factors and their complex interaction in understanding an employee's disability, and to pay strong attention specifically to the layout and infrastructure of the workplace (Marsay, 2014). Specific and general psycho-education is required in order for employers to know how they can reasonably accommodate the workplace environment to match the unique needs of employees living with a disability (Marsay, 2014).

No provision of transport

According to Vohra et al. (2015), one practice that reflects an organisation's commitment to inclusion of employees living with disabilities is the arrangement of transportation. In this study, participants spoke about their challenges when it came to being transported to other venues, as the SAPS did not want to release vehicles for the transportation of employees living with disabilities. Due to this they were unable to attend events.

This is in line with findings by Green (2005), who stated that the most significant barrier in the workplace was a lack of access to flexible transportation for employees living with disabilities.

Feelings of being used

It was stated on numerous occasions by participants in this study, especially those who were sight- and hearing-impaired, that they were only being used to publicise the image of the SAPS, or when there was work that needed to be done. Backenroth (2001) stated that, particularly if the work includes a substantial amount of social contact, employees with visible, clear disabilities are the least to be considered for participation. These participants explained how they felt like they were only good enough to do the work on certain occasions, but not good enough when it came to other activities, whether it was social or work-related activities.

Studies by Kalef et al. (2014), suggest the provision of more learning opportunities for employees living with disabilities in more than one subject area. In order for this to occur, workplaces must convey an interest and see the value of the contribution of employees with disabilities. Workplaces and management should turn their attention to enhancing employees living with disabilities' self-knowledge, and encouraging them to follow higher-level goals and a line of action (Kensbock & Boehm, 2016), which could benefit employees with disabilities who have low self-esteem. Employees living with disabilities should be motivated to take on innovative tasks and should be assisted to develop a sense of dignity and feel valued by the organisation (Kensbock & Boehm, 2016). Nota, Santilli, Ginevra and Soresi (2014) are of the opinion that campaigns in aid of employees living with disabilities should be presented, to showcase their knowledge and skills, which they have acquired through their work experience and on-the-job training.

Positive experiences of inclusion: Experiences of not being disadvantaged and participation in workplace activities

Focusing on organisational culture, some researchers suggests that the stronger the workplace culture, the greater the possibility for participation and inclusion for employees living with disabilities (Park, Chadsey-Rusch & Storey, 1998, Butterworth et al., 2000; Chadsey, Sheldon, Horn De Bardeleben & Cimera, 1999). Some of the participants shared their experiences of being included in workplace activities, as they were given the opportunity to participate in events.

Similarly, Coduti et al. (2014) stated that employees living with disabilities' participation efforts empower them, increases their independence, and allows them to participate in making decisions, which ultimately enhances inclusion in the workplace. These findings support the theory of inclusion by Tang et al. (2017), which states that participation in the organisation is a significant result of organisational inclusion and is representative of the degree to which diverse employees

display more positive attitudes and behaviours and accomplish better organisational status. Focusing on participation of diverse employees empowers the workplace to apprehend the important behavioural and attitudinal outcomes of organisational inclusion (Tang et al., 2017).

Desired work practices

Even though the SAPS is perceived as fairly inclusive, and some participants expressed their positive experiences of feeling included, participants still felt that the SAPS could do more in terms of making them feel included as employees living with disabilities. These participants expressed their desire to be given more opportunities to demonstrate their abilities, consideration when it came to promotions, and to feel that they are acknowledged for what they do as employees in the SAPS.

More opportunities to show their capabilities

Opportunities for employees living with disabilities in the workplace enhance social inclusion and even encourage recovery (Hall, 2009; Dunn, Wewiorski & Rogers, 2008). However, some participants in this study, especially those who are sight-impaired, expressed their dissatisfaction, as they are never given an opportunity to show that they are indeed capable of performing other tasks. They are not afforded an opportunity to realise their potential and use their skills and knowledge, which indeed decreased their feelings of inclusion. They elaborated on their perceptions of learning experiences and indicated how it influenced their feelings of inclusion in the workplace negatively, as they were not given this opportunity to demonstrate what they know. This finding is in line with studies conducted by Robert and Harlan (2006), which states that employees living with disabilities are devalued and deprived of opportunities in comparison to non-disabled employees, and are also often assumed to be lacking the necessary competencies.

Backenroth (2001) suggests that it is essential to value the contribution of employees living with disabilities and to look for ways to improve their experiences by identifying new opportunities for them. Emphasising the knowledge, strengths and skills of disabled employees to employers, encouraging innovative ideas that could be carried out in the workplace, and simultaneously improving the skills of employees living with disabilities, will help them to become aware of their capabilities and activities that can increase their prospects of inclusion (Nota et al., 2014).

Providing opportunities to employees living with disabilities increases their capabilities, skills, and knowledge (APA, 2014). The more employers are committed to including employees living with disabilities in the workplace, the more these employees will be given the opportunity to be allocated stimulating jobs, be guided by colleagues, be included in formal and informal work group activities, and be recommended for opportunities for career progression (Stone & Colella, 1996).

Being considered for a promotion

According to Schur et al. (2009), no methodical studies have been conducted regarding discrepancies in vital job characteristics, such as opportunities for promotion of employees living with disabilities. Some participants in this study expressed their dissatisfaction when it came to promotions, as they felt that the process was unfairly conducted.

This finding is in line with Cavanagh et al. (2016), who claim that some employees living with disabilities reported how they were deliberately excluded from promotion, or promotions were unfairly postponed. Even though they had the necessary years of service and relevant qualifications and experience, promoting an employee living with a disability was something the SAPS did not consider. Participants in this study frequently discussed their desire to be promoted, and this is very disappointing for some of the participants, as they feel like they are not competent enough to be promoted within the SAPS. Robert and Harlan (2006) reported that once an employee living with a disability is regarded as incompetent or helpless, they become “liabilities” to the organisation, and regardless of their actual abilities, talents and skills, it is assumed that these workers cannot compete with their non-disabled colleagues when it comes to opportunities for promotion.

Fillery and Pernice (2006) state that the promotion of employees with disabilities is seldom taken into consideration in the workplace. Schur et al (2009) opine that in some organisations, lower levels of training are expected to lead to the expectation of fewer promotions, which is consistently related to the negative relationship between disability and opportunities for promotion. Employers and management need to diminish misconceptions about employees living with disabilities, and proclaim practices that are positive and will provide employment experiences that are positive and lead to the promotion of employees living with disabilities (Nafukho, Roessler & Kacirek, 2010).

To be recognised and acknowledged

When employees living with disabilities are being recognised and acknowledged, it can lead to efficacious diversity management in the workplace (Schneider & Nkoli, 2011). Some participants in this study expressed their desire to feel more recognised for what they contribute as employees living with disabilities in the SAPS. Not being recognised negatively affects the extent to which these employees want to go the extra mile.

Workplaces that are inclusive have been found to have an impact on the self-confidence of employees living with disabilities and their enthusiasm to give more than is expected of them in their daily job-related tasks (Vohra et al., 2015). Similarly, previous studies have shown that when employees living with disabilities are recognised for their efforts, their self-esteem, engagement and efficiency are improved (APA, 2014). According to the theory of inclusion (Tang, Zheng and Chen, 2017), recognition approaches enable diverse employees to develop an attachment to the organisation, which inevitably improves their individual fit in the organisation. Employers and management should embrace employees from different backgrounds, and acknowledge their individuality and value (Tang, Zheng & Chen, 2017). Studies conducted by Vohra et al. (2015) state that perceptions of inclusion have been shown to be related to the appreciation of these employees' contributions in the workplace. Studies by other researchers have concluded that employees living with disabilities are becoming more recognised as valued individuals in public and private workplaces (Vornholt et al., 2018).

This section covered the interpretation of findings in relation to the literature reviewed. More specifically, the discussion addressed both the negative and positive inclusion experiences of employees living with disabilities as being influenced by various behaviours and factors. In assessing the existing literature, an overview of the behaviours and factors that influence employees living with disabilities' experiences of inclusion in the SAPS was provided. The SAPS is perceived by some participants of this study as a fairly inclusive and supportive organisation; however, there is a definite need for improvement and development of opportunities for promotion, recognition, support and raising awareness for employees living with disabilities.

2. Conclusion

There is a need to expand the inclusion experience of employees living with disabilities. Although this field of research has gained momentum, various topics could still be researched, given organisations' cultural dynamics. Employees living with disabilities remain a highly pertinent yet

mostly under-researched group in diverse workplaces (Lengnick-Hall, 2008; Shore et al., 2009). Related to research on other diversity categories, employers and management should become more interested in identifying what are the organisational characteristics that encourage the effective inclusion of and support for employees living with disabilities in the workplace (Baumgartner, Dwertmann, Boehm & Bruch, 2015).

The experiences of employees living with disabilities in the SAPS was explored and described in this study. The theoretical model proposed in the literature review was discussed to strengthen future research in this area. An exploratory case study design was used in the study and worked well to capture data on the real-life experiences of participants (Yin, 2003). The data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews that were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data was then analysed using Braun and Clark's (2006) process of thematic analysis and provided information-rich data from which themes emerged. These produced findings. While there were positive experiences of inclusion, the study revealed that most participants encountered negative experiences of inclusion. These negative experiences extended from their interactions with non-disabled employees, the lack of support in terms of management behaviours, and inaccessibility, to no opportunities for growth and development in the workplace. This highlights the need for regular disability sensitisation workshops and programmes to dispel myths and misconceptions about disability. It is in the best interest of the organisation to facilitate such workshops and to provide adequate, reasonable accommodation, as research has shown that the successful integration of employees living with disabilities is beneficial to employers in terms of staff morale, loyalty and productivity. This progression creates a positive culture of inclusivity within the workplace (Hartnett, Stuart, Thurman, Loy & Batiste, 2011).

Furthermore, the experiences shared were very personal, and it is felt that this study was successful in linking everyday experiences with comprehensive phenomena that are believed to affect the working lives of employees living with disabilities. The study provided insights into the many negative experiences of inclusion and apprehension that employees living with disabilities encounter on a daily basis.

As part of a big, unexploited human resource, research regarding the experiences of employees living with disabilities in the workplace will need to gain much more momentum. Studies of this nature should move outside the boundaries of mainstream disability discourse and continue to

stimulate dialogue within organisations, management and diversity disciplines. Although it was not possible to comprehend every employee living with a disability's unique experience of inclusivity within the workplace, this study has met its objective of providing insights for employees living with disabilities, employers and researchers regarding how employees living with disabilities experience inclusion, the barriers and facilitators to inclusion, and how they assimilate to the work environment. It is hoped that a better understanding of the factors that lead to feelings of inclusion may help organisations ameliorate the barriers faced by these employees in the workplace and create a context in which they can fully contribute and experience inclusivity in the world of work.

3. Expected contribution to knowledge

The aim of this study was to add to the body of knowledge regarding how employees living with disabilities experience inclusion in the workplace. This study explored these employees' perceptions of inclusion and support in the SAPS. This research investigated the real experiences of employees living with disabilities and how included they feel in the SAPS. The knowledge produced from this study is pertinent in terms of managing diversity in the workplace and can help create a greater understanding of the challenges diverse employees face in the working world. The benefits of such knowledge can enable employers and managers to understand the needs of employees living with disabilities in terms of inclusive practices, attitudes towards employees living with disabilities, and the provision of reasonable accommodation, and this could help workplaces to develop awareness of employees living with disabilities accordingly. This can in turn help employees living with disabilities to improve their self-confidence and overall work performance. Employees living with disabilities would be less hindered by the effects of non-inclusiveness if a greater understanding of their inclusion is implemented in workplace policies and programmes.

4. Recommendations

Future research should include exploration to determine how other organisational factors can enhance the experiences of inclusion for employees living with disabilities. A particular scope of interest would be the experiences of hearing- and sight-impaired employees in other organisations, or research conducted with a sample of hearing- and sight-impaired employees and their

experiences, in particular with inclusion. Further research is needed to identify knowledge gaps among employers and employees with regard to sensitisation training and how to approach employees living with different types of disabilities. Effective interventions to assist employees living with disabilities to understand their rights and responsibilities under the law, should be determined. Increasing awareness for the contribution employees living with disabilities make in the workplace, and considerations for promotion should also be fostered.

The integration and inclusion of employees living with disabilities require investment in virtuous human resource management practices, especially development and training (Groschl, 2012). These interventions should comprise skills training for employees living with disabilities and disability awareness programmes for non-disabled managers and co-workers. Managers should search outside the organisation's boundaries when looking for progressions that support the inclusion and integration needs of their employees living with disabilities (Groschl, 2012). A general reconsideration of negative attitudes, misconceptions and stereotypes of employees living with disabilities' work performance should be adopted in the workplace (Nota et al., 2014). Attention and resources could also be directed at the structures and systems that support the implementation of policies and programmes in the workplace that strive towards a culture of inclusive practices in order to enhance feelings of inclusion for employees living with disabilities. To promote and encourage a change in attitudes towards disability, it is recommended that awareness with regard to disabilities be promoted, including among policy developers. It is also recommended that employers treat employees living with disabilities equally with regard to opportunities for growth and development, as well as reasonable accommodation.

5. Limitations

The present study produced meaningful information from the participants, but it was not without limitations. Due to the researcher's role as an employee of the organisation, the study is probably limited to socially desirable responses from participants.

Although participants shared both negative and positive experiences of inclusion, they may have not been entirely honest in expressing their experiences. In order to overcome this limitation, the researcher reassured participants of their anonymity in the research process, and that their identities would be obscured when the findings of the research are presented. Secondly, the research was

limited to only a few stations. The experiences and challenges of employees living with disabilities with regard to inclusivity were location-specific and therefore cannot be applied to other stations of the SAPS.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH STUDY



Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is Rachel Govender and I am currently undertaking my master's degree through the University of Cape Town. It entails interviewing people with disabilities for my dissertation.

The focus of my research is on people with disabilities experiences with regards to inclusion in the workplace. Your input will provide an insight into the factors that contribute to feelings of inclusion and support in the SAPS.

I would like to obtain your consent to conduct an interview where you will be asked questions relating to your experiences with inclusion in the SAPS. The duration of the interview will be determined by your needs and willingness to share your experiences. There will be no risk, injury, discomfort or cost involved with participation in this study. All information obtained from the interviews will be kept confidential. Participation in this study is voluntary; if you do not wish to participate, your decision will be respected. Your name will be kept confidential. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The information from the transcribed interviews will be kept

confidential. The results will be used for academic purposes only, and any findings reported will be anonymous.

I can be contacted via e-mail rachelgovender22@gmail.com or 0815776409 for any comments, queries or suggestions.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Yours Faithfully

Rachel Govender

Participant declaration

I have read and understood the information given above. I hereby give my consent to participate in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Inclusivity and support for employees living with disabilities in the SAPS



Research question: How do employees living with disabilities experience inclusion in the context of their workplace at SAPS?

Opening

The interviewer will begin by firstly introducing herself and explain the purpose of the study. I would like to ask you questions about your experiences of working with this department

How long have you been working at SAPS?

Which department do you work in?

What are your job duties?

Demographic information

Age

Gender (prefer not to answer)

Race (prefer not to answer)

Semi-structured interview questions

Question 1: What are your perceptions of your work environment? (Adapted from Nelissen et al., 2016)

What do you enjoy/like?

What don't you enjoy?

Can you give me a specific example of that?

How do you perceive your interaction with your colleagues? Can you please explain?

Is there anything that happens in your work environment that causes you concern/joy?

Can you tell me about the last time you experienced that or felt that way?

How did that make you feel?

Do you personally feel that way?

Question 2: What is your experience of working in this building/location? What challenges do you face working in this location? (Adapted from Gewurtz & Kirsh, 2009)

Did you experience anything that has been found helpful for you?

Can you give me a specific example of that, and what were your experiences?

What was the situation?

Question 3: What are your experiences working and interacting with your managers? (Adapted from Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011)

How do they contribute to making you experience feeling included in the SAPS?

Tell me more about that?

Can you think of another example of this?

What was the situation?

What was the outcome?

What did your manager say or /do?

How did that make you feel?

What kind of feedback did you get?

Question 4: What are your experiences working and interacting with your co-workers

(Adapted from Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011)

How do they contribute to making you experience feeling included in the SAPS?

Tell me more about that?

Can you think of another example of this?

What was the situation?

What was the outcome?

What did your co-worker say or do?

How did that make you feel?

What kind of feedback did you get?

Question 5: What are your experiences of being included in workplace activities? (Adapted from Balsler, 2007)

How does management or leadership ensure you don't feel left out?

What other strategies does the SAPS use to promote your inclusion?

What are your experiences with that?

Question 6: Is there any other experiences of your workplace that contribute to your inclusion in the workplace?

Can you think of another example that would make you feel more included as an employee living with a disability in the SAPS?

Can you expand on your answer?

Can you explain your answer?

Closing

The researcher will thank the respondents for their time and participation.

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY

<i>South African Police Service</i>		<i>South African Police Service</i>	
			
Postcode: Private Bag 334	Address: 6001	Phone No: Fax No:	(012) 353 2125
Your reference/ID number(s):			
My reference/ID number(s):	33473		
Recipient name(s):	Lt Col Joubert AC Thanga		
Tel:	(012) 353 3118		
Email:	JoubertG@saps.gov.za		
			THE DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER RESEARCH SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE FACTORIA 6001

Ms R Govender
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: INCLUSIVITY AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS); UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN; DOCTORATE DEGREE: RESEARCHER: R GOVENDER

The above subject matter refers.

You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above mentioned topic in terms of National Instruction 1 of 2006.

Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following offices:

The Provincial Commissioner: Western Cape:

- **Contact Person:** Col Ngobeni
- **Contact Details:** (021) 417 7105
- **Email Address:** wc.od.stratcomm@saps.gov.za

The Divisional Commissioner: Personnel Management:

- **Contact Person:** Maj Gen Temba
- **Contact Details:** (012) 353 5167
- **Email Address:** tembabusu@saps.gov.za

Kindly adhere to paragraph 6 of our Attached letter signed on the 2018-07-06 with the same above reference number.

signature removed to avoid exposure online

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL
DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER: RESEARCH
DR BM ZULU**

DATE: 2018 / 11 / 07