



**THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN THE  
KWAZULU-NATAL PRIVATE SECTOR: CURRENT EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS  
AND EXPERIENCES**

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## DECLARATION

**I, NISHITA ASHWIN DOOLABH,** declare that the research obtained for the development of this thesis is of my own original work. The following information obtained from other sources has been acknowledged and referenced accordingly. This research has not been submitted to any other university or institute for examination purposes.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Despite policies and legislation mandating the employment of persons with disabilities, individuals with hearing impairment continue to face barriers and challenges accessing the labour market and have typically experienced higher rates of unemployment or underemployment. In South Africa, the majority of individuals with disabilities remain dependent on social-welfare to meet basic needs and as a result, their potential remains grossly untapped. Misconceptions regarding the capabilities of hearing impaired individuals have resulted in the occupational marginalization of this population. **Objective:** This study aimed to investigate employers' perceptions and experiences in recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in KwaZulu-Natal Provinces' private sector. **Method:** A descriptive survey with quantitative methods of analysis was used to obtain information from employers, human resource personnel or management in various industries who have employed individuals with hearing loss. The Chronbach Alpha suggested that the self-administered questionnaire had good internal consistency ( $p = 0.858$ ). A total of 30 responses were obtained from the 19 companies who agreed to participate. **Results:** Approximately 75% of participants indicated either a medium or low level of awareness regarding disability. Legislation such as the Employment Equity Act (EEA, no 55 of 1998) and the Skills Development Act (SDA, no 97 of 1998) were considered the most useful legislature, as indicated by 66.7% of participants. Those who indicated that external services or resources, such as the KZN Blind and Deaf Society and eDeaf were used during recruitment and retention were more likely to report to the benefits of employing hearing impaired individuals, this being statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Less than half of the participants reported that reasonable accommodations were provided for their employees, and half indicated that they were willing to provide sign language interpreters. Most participants (70%) suggested that communication difficulties, particularly in meetings, contributed towards poor employment rates amongst individuals with hearing impairment. Communication difficulties were further endorsed by 73.3% of participants as a major challenge when recruiting and hiring persons with hearing impairment. Other concerns related to the safety of employees and attitudes of co-workers. **Conclusion:** The findings suggest that a lack of familiarity of disability and disability legislature can manifest in reliance on erroneous stereotypes that individuals with disabilities are poor job performers and incapable of working independently. However, with the use of reasonable accommodations which includes sign language interpreters and desensitization workshops, employers were able to successfully integrate hearing impaired employees into the workforce.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>COGP:</b> | Code of Good Practice   |
| <b>EEA:</b>  | Employment Equity Act   |
| <b>INDS:</b> | Integrated National Disability Strategy                                       |
| <b>KZN:</b>  | KwaZulu-Natal   |
| <b>LRA:</b>  | Labour Relations Act  |
| <b>MGDs:</b> | Millennium Development Goals  |
| <b>SDA:</b>  | Skills Development Act  |
| <b>SDGs:</b> | Sustainable Development Goals   |
| <b>TAG:</b>  | Technical Assistance Guidelines on the Employment of People with Disabilities |
| <b>USA:</b>  | United States of America  |

## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the background to the study, identifies the specific problem that it seeks to address, and outlines the rationale of the study. It defines specific terminologies used in this study, and concludes with an outline of the following chapters.

### **1.2. Study Background**

Hearing impaired individuals are faced with limited opportunities to access the job market and are typically rendered unemployed or accommodated into temporary, low-income jobs (Jang, Wang, & Lin, 2014; Jung & Bhattacharyya, 2012). Employment plays a vital role in maintaining financial wellbeing and low levels of employment have socio-economic implications, placing increased strain on government social security systems (Houston, Lammers & Svorny, 2010; International Labour Organisation Skills and Employment Department, 2007). In September 2000, the United Nations drafted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative in an effort to address the basic human needs and rights of the poorest, worldwide. The MDGs were to be achieved by the year 2015, and comprised of eight commitments that placed importance on the eradication of poverty and promotion of human development. While some progress was made in many developing countries, social and economic inequalities, particularly in Africa, have hindered the transformation required to attain these goals and consequently, progress in goal attainment was uneven (Mutasa & Paterson, 2015). Although many of the MDGs have not been achieved in Africa, their formalisation put the needs of people at the forefront and reshaped decision making globally (Kumar, Kumar, & Vivekadhish, 2016).

By 2015 many of the MDGs were not yet accomplished and new goals needed to be identified, thus leading to the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are unprecedented effort intended to encapsulate global health priorities and address a range of factors underpinning health, education, employment and the environment (Olusanya, Teeple, & Kassebaum, 2017). Unlike its precursors, the SDG are more universal in nature and accounts for global changes. The SDGs comprises 17 goals and 169 targets that represent the next collective effort towards attaining tangible and measureable improvements in quality of life on a global level (Wysokinska, 2017). The SDGs further advocates for persons with disabilities, with seven of the targets explicitly mentioning and addressing their needs in terms of education,

accessibility, inclusion and employment. Specifically, target 8.5 focuses on achieving equal pay for equal work and the productive employment of all individuals, including those with disability while target 10.2 promotes social, economic and political inclusion of all persons, irrespective of status (Olusanya et al., 2017). The idea of the SDGs is an important concept and could help in the development of a global sustainable trajectory. Goals and targets have been formulated to account for the pressing needs of developing countries and the support required from the international community (Osborn, Cutter & Ullah, 2015). The South African government, amongst most others, cannot rely on international support to create job opportunities for persons with disabilities. The challenge is to thus generate successful employment of persons with disability, specifically hearing impairment, as communication difficulties are becoming a growing concern. Hearing impairment is a hidden disability, which significantly impacts on an individual's quality of life. The sense of hearing is critical for communicating, engaging within an environment, independence and performing activities of daily living (Shaw, 2013).

It is estimated that hearing difficulties will constitute the ninth leading burden of disease, globally, in the year 2030. According to the 2011 South African census, the national disability prevalence rate is approximately 7.5% and the national profile further showed a prevalence rate of 3.6% for hearing difficulties (STATSSA, 2014). The 2016 South African Community Survery reported that approximately 1 885 653 individuals experience difficulty hearing (STATSSA, 2016). The Commission for Employment Equity Report 2017-2018 indicated that persons with disability were grossly under-represented in the workforce. As per this report, only 1.3% of the working disabled population were employed in top management level positions, and 1.3% were employed at a professionally qualified level. Furthermore, the percentage of individuals with disability employed at semi-skilled level and unskilled levels were both 0.9% (Republic of South Africa, 2018). When compared to previous reports from 2014-2015, the current employment equity report suggested a decrease in an already low employability rate of persons with disability across various levels. There was no data available specific to the employment of hearing impaired individuals, however, the burden of disabling hearing impairment is believed to be greatest in sub-Saharan Africa, southern Asia and the Asian Pacific region (Olusanya, Neumann, & Saunders, 2014).

Amongst other sub-Saharan countries, South Africa is the epicentre of the HIV/Aids pandemic, and has the added burden of tuberculosis (TB) as a co-morbidity (Khoza-Shangase, Mupawose, & Mlangeni, 2009). Medical advances have increased the life expectancy of individuals

disagnosed with HIV/Aids and Tuberculosis (Geffen, 2014). However, treatment regimes can negatively affect the auditory system and is one of the major causes of hearing impairment in this populatoin (Khoza-Shangase et al., 2009). These patients, as well as others with hearing impairment, experience difficulties entering into and retaining employment, as employers may believe the disability to be a hinderance towards productivity.

### **1.3. Problem Statement**

The South African working-age population has increased, which has resulted in an increase in the labour participation rate. However, the overall unemployment rate of 27.1% has remain unchanged (STATSSA, 2018). Unemploment is not new and not unique to South Africa, and as a result vulnerable populations, such as individuals with disability, are discouraged by the labour market. Despite South Africa having a number of legal frameworks in place to promote the employment of people with disbailities, including hearing, there remains challenges to their inclusion into the labour market, since employers are unwilling to take the assumed risks (Hindle, Gibson & David, 2010). Sub-Saharan Africa is considered to have one of the highest burdens of hearing disability, and hearing impairment affects an individual's ability to obtain and/or maintain a job (Copley & Friderichs, 2010). Technological advances and the development of special needs schools in KwaZulu-Natal has resulted in an increase in the national working aged population of hearing impaired individuals. Furthermore, absorption rate of employable individuals into the labour market in eThekwini has increased to 49.4%, suggesting that although the number of individuals seeking employment has increased, the likelihood of finding a job has also increased (Republic of South Africa, 2017). However, individuals with disability only represent approximately 1.3% of the labor force. Hearing impaired individuals are less likely to obtain full time employment, are typically underemployed and poorly represented in the labour force (Bradley, Ebener, & Geyer, 2013; Smit, 2012). Little research has been conducted to determine employers' perceptions and experiences in recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in KwaZulu-Natal Province's private sector, and therefore determine which constraints contribute towards employment, and the lack thereof, of this population.

There is a dearth of research focusing on the experiences of employers pertaining to the various challenges and benefits associated with employing of hearing impaired individuals. Studies have typically focused on employing persons with disability in general, and have mainly been conducted in developed countries, resulting in a lack of contextually relevant data in developing

countries. Recent research has focused on the effectiveness and impact of legislation in the South African public service workplace, and found that poor implementation has negatively affected the employment of people with disabilities (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016). Thus, as a comparison, this study focused on the private sector. In light of poor employment rates amongst persons with hearing impairment, it is necessary to examine current employment situations, and to identify issues influencing the hiring and job retention of individuals with hearing impairment. The current research study recognises the importance of the employer's perspective and needs, in an effort to address barriers that impede hearing impaired individuals from job acquirement, optimal performance and career advancement. This can be achieved through work support measures and the development of strategies and policies targeted at increasing employment opportunities (Gustafsson, Peralta, & Danermark, 2013; Chan et al., 2010), thereby allowing individuals with disability the opportunity to prove their capabilities and to function optimally (Snyman, 2009).

#### **1.4. Rationale for the study**

Knowledge of employers' expectations and needs regarding the employability of individuals with hearing impairment can be used to better understand and address any fears and concerns that prospective employers may have. Research that focuses on the perspective and experiences of various human resource personnel and employers who employ persons with hearing impairment will identify enabling factors to the successful employment of hearing impaired individuals (Punch, 2016). Identifying enabling factors can thus be used to address barriers preventing equality in the workplace and reduce the gap between individuals with hearing impairment and those without in the labour market. Further, more understanding of the various factors influencing employment and the retention of employees with hearing impairment is important for monitoring and evaluating current programmes and policies undertaken by the South African government and other stake holders in order to address the needs of persons with disabilities (Punch, 2016). In this regards, hearing impaired individuals would be provided with opportunities to achieve their potential and enhance their lives through active social participation and economic contribution.

Employers, employees and health professionals need to be knowledgeable regarding their rights and obligations in terms of disability legislation and the implications of hearing loss within the workplace. As part of the scope of practice, an Audiologist is required to improve the quality of life by reducing the effect of hearing impairment on activity and participation as well as address

environmental barriers that impact the individuals they serve (ASHA, 2004). Audiologists, amongst other rehabilitation professionals, must be able to address an employer's concerns regarding the employment of individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, an Audiologist should provide support to employers and offer advice on making their companies accessible to hearing impaired individuals by providing reasonable accommodations and thereby promote the social inclusion of hearing impaired individuals (Matthews, 2011; Mansour, 2009). Audiologists therefore need increased education in terms of the extensive range of reasonable accommodations available (Punch, 2016). Research in this area will provide valuable insight into recommendations and reasonable accommodations available in managing individuals with hearing impairment, and identify the gaps preventing the effective integration of hearing impaired individuals into the work environment. Further, knowledge obtained from this study are based on current issues relevant to the employment of hearing impaired individuals, and can be used to meet the needs of employers as well as the changing nature of workplace demands (Shaw, 2013). Findings from this study can be used as an example towards best practice, and to guide current human resource management practices and principles aimed at effectively employing individuals with hearing impairment. This will enable a positive and accommodating working environment, one in which disability and diversity is respected and promoted.

### **1.5. Definitions**

The following terms and definitions apply for this study:

**HEARING IMPAIRMENT:** A pathologic condition affecting the sound transduction pathway, resulting in a decreased ability to process verbal language that limits participation in meaningful communication and social connectivity (Agrawal, Platz, & Niparko, 2008). The extent of impact of hearing impairment on the ability to partake in conversations is dependent on the degree of hearing impairment, which can range from mild to profound (Stevens et al., 2011).

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS:** In terms of the Employment Equity Act, Section 1, Chapter 1, a reasonable accommodation is considered to be “any modification or adjustment to a job or to the working environment that will enable a person from a designated group to have reasonable access to or to participate or advance employment,” provided it did not result in unjustified hardship for the company (Republic of South Africa: The Employment Equity Act 55 of 198, 1998).

**RECRUITMENT:** Process undertaken in order to identify and select an individual with the necessary potential competencies and traits required to fill a vocational need and assist the company in achieving its objectives (van der Westhuizen & Wessels, 2011).

**RETENTION:** Rehabilitation, training or any other appropriate measure to ensure an employee with a disability maintains his/her occupational position, and requires all aspects to be considered prior to considering alternatives e.g. re-deployment (Republic of South Africa: The Code of Good Practice, 2002).

## **1.6. Outline of Chapters**

The study is presented in the following chapters

**Chapter 2: Literature Review.** This chapter reviews the aspects related to legislation and employment of individuals with disability. In addition, it focuses on theoretical aspects with regards to barriers and challenges to employment faced by hearing impaired individuals.

**Chapter 3: Methodology.** This chapter outlines the aims and objectives of the study, the study design, sample size, sampling method as well as the ethical and legal considerations of the study and data collection procedure.

**Chapter 4: Results.** This chapter presents the results of the study, which have been analyzed using quantitative methods of analysis, and are presented with respect to the five study objectives.

**Chapter 5: Discussion.** This chapter interprets and explains the results obtained in the study, and compares it to relevant literature.

**Chapter 6: Conclusion.** This chapter indicates the extent to which the study aim was achieved and the problem addressed, and does so by providing a summary of the five objectives. It outlines the limitations of the research study and provides recommendations for future research and practice.



## **CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework used in this study, and outlines the South African policies and legal framework on disability and employment. It also provides a detailed literature review that includes both international and local studies, and highlights current practices with regards to the employment of hearing impaired individuals.

### **2.2. Conceptual frameworks on disability and employment**

The contextualization of disability is largely influenced by the way in which society perceives it. Historically, disability was couched within a medical and welfare framework (Quinn et al., 2002) in which the main focus was placed on the medical needs of affected individuals. According to this model, disability is referred to as a health condition caused by disease or trauma, for which treatment from a medical professional is required (Segomotsotse, 2015; van Staden, 2011). An individual was considered disabled based on medical assessments performed and the results of which deviated from what is regarded as normal (van Staden, 2011). Since the medical model emphasised impairment, it gave rise to the belief that individuals with disability were inferiorly different, the implications resulting in a corresponding neglect of their social needs and subsequently fails to integrate them into society, thereby preventing them access to basic, fundamental rights (van Staden, 2011). The major forms of exclusion responsible for the cumulative disadvantage faced by individuals with disabilities are poverty, unemployment and social isolation (Republic of South Africa: Integrated National Disability Strategy: White Paper, 1997). The exclusion of individuals with disabilities from society has identified a need to reconstruct the way in which society recognises and addresses disability. One such approach is a paradigm shift in how disability is viewed; from a medical model to a social model (Department of Public Works, 2010; Snyman, 2009).

The Social Model is based on the belief that the circumstances of people with disabilities, and the subsequent discrimination they face, are largely a result of socially created phenomena rather than the disability itself (Shakespeare, 2013). For example, this model contends that it is society's lack of skill in accepting and using alternative ways to communicate that excludes an individual with communication disabilities. An individual is therefore considered disabled as a result of repressed interactions between disabled individuals and the wider population, and by

the inability of society to accommodate individuals with impairments. Thus, addressing disability lies in reconstructing society (Chitereka, 2010).

The social model has been effective in galvanizing change within the disability sector, allowing for the integration of disabled individuals into society and the open labour market (Watermeyer, 2013). However, in becoming the banner for revolution in disability, the social model reduced impairment to something that could be fixed simply by creating a barrier-free society (Watermeyer, 2013), and failed to consider the impact of impairment on daily life. Despite the downfalls of the social model, research suggests that this standpoint has positively influenced employment opportunities of people with disabilities (Goss, Goss, & Adam-Smith, 2000).

An alternate approach to disability, is Sen's capability approach, which provides a framework for defining disability and identifying its economic consequences. This approach focuses on the individual's capabilities or functioning, as per their personal characteristics, assets and environment. This approach encompasses an economic dimension and contributes towards the understanding of the economic burden of disability. A person is considered disabled if they are unable to work, however this understanding does not account for individuals who have the capability to work but prefer not to or do have the capabilities and are unable to work due to constraints from the environment or availability of resources. For example, an individual may be limited to a particular type of work because their employer is unwilling to accommodate the impairment. The individual is therefore limited by the work environment (Mitra, 2006).

Derived from the social model perspective, South Africa adopted a more socio-political approach (van Staden, 2011), which maintains that disability is a consequence of the social environment, with the addition of a supportive political environment. Thus, individuals with disabilities are able to advocate for change by lobbying in a political domain (van Staden, 2011). The South African government has therefore codified legislature to provide equal access to persons with disabilities, promoting transformative measures aimed at redressing social injustices created by Apartheid, namely the Affirmative Action approach (SegomotsoTsaie, 2015). However, research argues that the affirmative action approach is ineffective on its own and cannot be solely relied upon to guarantee employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and that it should be combined with a human rights approach (SegomotsoTsaie, 2015). According to the human rights approach, each individual has equal rights to protection from the state, with the government being obligated to ensure each individual's rights are

upheld. The law thus provides a safeguard and holds the government accountable should it fail to meet its obligations (SegomotsoTsaie, 2015). The adoption of this socio-political model in South Africa is representative of a progressive and transformative society. Understanding disability from a human rights and development approach raises the expectations of individuals with disabilities as it focuses on the removal of barriers to equal participation and elimination of discrimination against disability (Republic of South Africa: Integrated National Disability Strategy: White Paper, 1997).

### **2.3. South African policies and legal framework on disability and employment**

South Africa has recognised the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing the specific needs of people with various disabilities and is signatory to various United Nations conventions and declarations. Since democracy in 1994, governing bodies have developed policies and legislation, which are aligned with international policies, to address issues surrounding fairness and promote equality within society (Maja, Mann, Sing, Steyn, & Naidoo, 2011). Between 1993 and 2000, several important Acts were passed by South African governing bodies that cumulatively impacted on employment and workplace practices (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007). Although the legislation was not disability-specific, it made provisions for persons with disabilities (International Labour Organisation Skills and Employment Department, 2007). The legislative reform was more in line with the social model of disability and represented the commitment of the South African government to develop a more integrated society, one which included and enhanced the participation of working-age disabled individuals in the competitive labour market (Unger, 2002). Table 2.1. below describes the various relevant legislation and policies concerning persons with disabilities. The South African government has recently developed the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which takes its cues from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and several international instruments, including the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals. This white paper is relatively new and still in the process of being implemented, however included in the table below, it was not focused on in this study as many employers may not be aware of it as yet.

**Table 2.1.**

*South African legislation/policies concerning employment of individuals with disabilities*

| <b>Legislation/Policy</b>  | <b>Purpose/Objective</b>   |
|--|--|
| <b>Constitution of the Republic of South Africa No. 108 of 1996</b>        | All citizens are equal and acts of discrimination, including disability discrimination are prohibited in a democratic South Africa (Modise, Olivier, & Miruka, 2014). The rights of disabled individuals to equality and human dignity are central to the protection of persons with disability and are constitutionally entrenched in Section 9 (Majola and Dhunpath, 2016), offering protection against discrimination and ensuring their rights are upheld in the workplace.  |
| <b>The Labour Relations Act (LRA) No. 66 of 1995</b>                       | The law aimed to guide, educate and inform employers, employees and trade unions about their rights and obligations in an effort to support and encourage opportunities, fair treatment and the complete integration of people with disabilities in the workplace (Okechukwu, 2013). The introduction of the LRA was significant in that it provided job seekers and employees with protection against unfair discrimination and unfair dismissal on various grounds, including disability (Modise et al., 2014).  |
| <b>White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS) of 1997</b> | This white paper provides a blueprint for the integration of persons with disabilities, thereby promoting inclusiveness in all aspects of governance, and facilitates a transformation of attitudes, perceptions and behaviour towards affected individuals. While the INDS highlights unemployment gaps and encourages the vocational integration of individuals with disabilities, the policy is silent on how this population should be accommodated into the labour market (Modise et al., 2014). Emphasis is placed on altering mindsets and is not sufficiently useful to manage disability in the workplace (van Staden, 2011). |
| <b>The Skills Development Act (SDA) No. 97 of 1998</b>                     | It provides a framework for improving the skills of the workforce, thereby increasing opportunities of entering employment. It further aims to provide redress through education and training for individuals previously disadvantaged, as a result of unfair discrimination (Republic of South Africa: The Skills Development Act, 1997).   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>The Employment Equity Act (EEA) No. 55 of 1998</b>   | Regarding disability, the EEA is considered progressive as it aims to redress employment disadvantages as experienced by designated groups (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007), promote their rights, prohibit discrimination, and obligate employers to provide accommodations based on the needs of individuals with disabilities (Modise et al., 2014). It requires fair treatment in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, training and advancement for all, including people with disabilities (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016). The EEA was a measure that required employers to promote affirmative action to ensure a more proportional representation of all South African citizens within organizations. Its implementation resulted in a considerable change in work force demographics. The aim is to achieve a workplace that is diverse and supports employment equity by mandating employers to include suitably qualified disabled individuals (Matambo & Ani, 2015). |
| <b>The Code of Good Practice (COGP), 2002</b>   | The Code is a broader equity document that aims to ensure that the rights of individuals with disabilities are recognised in the labour market (Modise et al., 2014). It was developed to manage disability and the process of inclusion of employees with disability into the workplace, and to provide support to employers as well as employees regarding challenges associated with the promotion of equal opportunities and fair treatment. Additionally, it provides guidance regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations (Marumoagae, 2012).  |
| <b>Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment of People with Disabilities (TAG), 2002</b> | The TAG was developed to complement the COGP and offer guidance on implementing the EEA specific to the employment of individuals with disability (Snyman, 2009). It provides practical guidelines and examples for promoting equity in the workplace, and further aims to increase the employability of individuals with disabilities by assisting employers with reasonable accommodations in the workplace (van Staden, 2011).   |
| <b>White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD), 2015</b>                     | This White Paper was drafted with the intention of accelerating transformation towards the full inclusion, integration and equality of persons with disabilities. The aim is for government, civil society and the private sector to work together to ensure the socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities, and create an inclusive society in which they are able to enjoy the same rights as fellow citizens (Republic of South Africa, 2015).  |

## **2.4. Literature Review**

### **2.4.1. Employers' perceptions of disability and experiences utilizing policies enabling the employment of persons with disabilities**

The lack of a universally recognised definition of disability has allowed for a range of interpretations which has had direct implications on the rights of individuals with disabilities, as well as the application of policies. Society's approach to disability is determined by the manner in which disability is understood, which consequently influences policy interpretation. SegomotsoTsaie (2015) argues that the employer's viewpoint on disability is essential to the prioritisation of policies within the company environment, and thus the integration of disabled individuals into the workforce. The definition of disability is therefore a barrier to the inclusion of individuals with disability (van Staden, 2011). SegomotsoTsaie (2015) further suggested that the conceptualization of disability and employment equity in terms of the EEA is limiting to the inclusion of individuals who are "suitably qualified." Thus, there is the risk of excluding those individuals who do not meet the requirements, as focus is placed more on the physical ability rather than individual capabilities. Maja et al. (2011) stated that South African legislation does not place enough emphasis on persons with disabilities, nor does it provide adequate provisions for their employment. Dube (2005) argues that while there is no separate disability legislation in South Africa, the government has successfully facilitated an enabling environment for policy development in the area of disability, however, implementation remains a challenge for various reasons, including capacity constraints, discrepancies in implementation and variation in the classification of disability.

Similarly, Barnes and Sheldon (2010) suggested that while the development of new policies in South Africa has presented unique opportunities and increased awareness of disability needs, issues pertaining to funding and capacity are deterrents to their implementation. While disability-related policy formation and adoption has been effective, there is a severe lack of adherence to and implementation of legislation (Brynard, 2010). Therefore, the impact of policy implementation on the lives of the majority of individuals with disabilities has been negligible (Dube, 2005). Van Deventer (2014) put forward that lapses in legislation are one of the major contributing factors to the challenges persons with disabilities face. McKinney (2013) noted that legislation was criticised as ambiguous and unclear in terms of repercussion of non-compliance. Of the total number of participants in a study conducted by van Staden (2011), 80% felt that the EEA was not helpful in terms of disability management. Furthermore, the majority of the participants (44%) had never used the TAG and indicated a limited knowledge of legislation and

policy framework in South Africa, thus suggesting that policies were not user friendly and requires improvement.

Despite supportive legislature and policies placing certain obligations on employers, it is ultimately the decision of the employer to facilitate employment based on current policy (Maja et al., 2011). Poor monitoring of law implementation has resulted in government disability programmes having only achieved a modest impact, and a large number of individuals with disability remaining unemployed (Unger, 2002). Studies show that employers opted to pay a penalty fine for contravention rather than comply with the provisions of the act (Mitra, 2008; Dube, 2005; Thomas & Hlahla, 2002), and in most cases the stipulated provisions acted as a deterrent to employing individuals with disabilities (Mitra, 2008; Dube, 2005). Legislation and policies pertaining to disability and employment are important, and integral to redress systematic inequalities and discrimination that remain within social structures, practices, environments and attitudes, but by themselves cannot solve current employment challenges (Gilbride, Stensrud, Vandergoot, & Golden, 2003).

#### **2.4.2. Employers' experiences related to recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment, including the provision of reasonable accommodations**

Recent research has demonstrated a favorable attitude and moderate commitment towards hiring persons with disabilities (Chan et al., 2010). In a study by Kaye, Jans and Jones (2011) conducted in the United States of America (USA), employers showed a similar attitude regarding their experience with accommodating employees with disabilities. Research by Gilbride et al. (2003) indicated variations in the willingness of employers to hire and include individuals with disabilities. Employers admitted they focused exclusively on job performance (Kaye et al., 2011), and in order to hire a person with a disability, the applicants had to meet the criteria before they would be considered for a position (Gilbride et al., 2003). Santos, Viera and Faria (2013) conducted a research study in Brazil on hearing impairment in the workplace, and found varying views regarding the minimum requirements necessary for hiring affected individuals. Some companies felt employability was related to education, the company and job position being offered, while others required the applicant to demonstrate interest and responsibility (Santos et al., 2013). Gida and Ortlepp (2007) indicated that while employers included commitment to equal opportunities, only a few have policy specifications and a structured approach to recruit persons with disability. Maja et al. (2011) suggested that the lack

of internal recruitment policies, and the inefficient implementation of existing policies and guidelines, contributed towards difficulties achieving equity targets.

The literature states that recruitment was further restricted by a lack of adequate skills and qualifications amongst individuals with disabilities (Maja et al., 2011; Worsdworth, 2003). Educational levels and severity of hearing loss influence employment and income opportunities in various ways, with the more severe the hearing loss, the less the likelihood of obtaining paid work (Stam, Kostense, Festen & Kramer, 2013; Boutin & Wilson, 2009), whereas higher or tertiary education had a more positive effect on employment (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013; Schley et al., 2011; Rydberg, Gellerstedt & Danermark, 2011). Perkins-Dock et al. (2015) found that 100% of hearing impaired individuals with a Bachelor's or Master's degree were employed. Similarly, Walter and Dirmyer (2013) found that hearing impaired individuals, in the USA, with less than a bachelor's degree typically experienced a 4-5% higher unemployment rate than their hearing counterparts, whereas hearing impaired individuals with a Bachelor's degree experienced a 1-2% higher unemployment rate. However, in South Africa, due to financial constraints, there is a high level of functional illiteracy amongst individuals with hearing impairment and consequently a low skill attainment (SegomotsoTsae, 2015). Additionally, the rehabilitation process, which includes aural rehabilitation counselling, sensory management and communication intervention are necessary to optimize the individual's well-being. Through this process, the hearing impaired individual can be provided with the necessary training to communicate effectively, and provides the emotional support to cope with changes as well as challenges (Makhoba & Joseph, 2016). This type of training can provide an individual with the necessary vocational skills to function optimally in the work environment. However, the rehabilitation process is poorly implemented amongst Audiologists in South Africa. Consequently, hearing impaired individuals are unaware of the importance of reasonable accommodations, and experience difficulties attaining or retaining employment.

Reasonable accommodations, such as sign language interpreters and buddy systems, are essential to successfully integrating hearing impaired individuals into the work place (Haynes & Linden, 2012). The adoption of appropriate strategies supports more productive work performances and the ability to actively contribute to the working environment. However, due to a shift in structure and employee demands (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013) most employment environments are not disability friendly and albeit mandating of the provision of reasonable accommodations in terms of the EEA, employers are able to terminate the employment in the



event that the job requirements are not being met and reasonable accommodations cannot be provided (Maja et al., 2011). In most cases, employers and managers lack an understanding of accommodation needs and the availability of strategies that allow for optimal work performance for individuals who are hearing impaired (Kaye et al., 2011; Matthews, 2011). Subsequently, the majority of hearing impaired individuals remain unemployed, despite being capable of working if appropriate accommodations were provided.

#### **2.4.3. Employers' perceptions and attitudes for not employing individuals with hearing impairment**

Access into the labour market is a challenge on its own, with hearing impaired individuals being likely to face barriers to remaining in employment. The employer's viewpoint on disability often influences discriminatory practices, such as the extent of participation and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the workplace (McKinney, 2013). Evidence from a study conducted by Kaye et al. (2011) in the USA indicated that 80% of participants suggested employer bias, and that reluctance to hire employees with disabilities existed due to a lack of experience and unfamiliarity with handling their needs, resulting in employer discomfort. Similarly, Jansson (2015) suggested that low levels of employment amongst individuals with disability is largely due to unfamiliarity and lack of experience amongst employers. Resistance and discriminatory practices from employers negatively influences opportunities for employment and career advancement, as suggested by Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, Haslam and Rabinovich (2008) in a study conducted in the United Kingdom. A study by Stam et al. (2013) found that individuals with hearing impairment took at least a year longer to enter the labour market and were more likely to retire earlier than their hearing counterparts. The attitudes of employers, management and fellow employees strongly influence the employment experience of disabled individuals (Matthews, 2011; Schur, Kruse, Blasi, & Blanck, 2009). These discriminatory practices in the workplace pose a significant challenge to integration and career advancement or promotion opportunities.

In a review of research, Hernandez, Keys & Balcazar (2000) found that employers tended to promote positive global attitudes toward workers with disabilities, but were concerned with the productivity, demand for supervision, and promotability of workers with disabilities, as well as the cost of accommodating their needs. Further, in a study conducted by Kaye et al. (2011), 68.5% of the participants proposed that employers were concerned workers with disabilities would be unable to achieve the same standards as able-bodied workers, with more than 50%

believing that employers were not hiring disabled workers because they were unable to perform essential duties and tasks. Wordsworth (2003) found that biases and discriminatory assumptions have led to the belief amongst employers that their workplaces and positions were not appropriate for persons with disabilities. Similarly, according to Barnes (2003), employers believed a majority of the positions available within the company was not suitable for an individual with impairment. Exclusion from challenging roles prohibits opportunities for individuals with disabilities to prove their capabilities, and thereby hinders career development and advancement (Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2008).

Employers further identified communication skills as important when making decisions regarding promotions, with hearing impaired individuals being perceived to have challenges with interacting with co-workers. In a study conducted amongst graduates from the Australian College for the Deaf by Rosengreen and Saladin, (2010) all participants reported communication as a significant problem in the work environment, and that the lack of clear communication made it difficult to perform their jobs and meet job expectations. This was consistent with a study conducted in the USA by Perkins-Dock et al. (2015), where participants identified communication difficulties as the main barrier in the workplace. Poor communication skills, which included written communication, were considered a barrier to promotion and employment opportunities. Written language, use of signs and gestures, lip reading and asking for repetition were often alternate methods used to facilitate communication. Three quarter of the participants in a study by Rosengreen and Saladin (2010) identified the use of these communication strategies as effective.

Further, studies suggested that employers were concerned about the social skills, and were therefore unwilling to employ individuals with hearing impairment due to communication difficulties and concerns over work safety (Haynes, 2014; Shuler, Mistler, Torrey & Depukat, 2014; Rosengreen & Saladin, 2010). In a study conducted by Punch, Hyde & Power (2007), 49% of respondents identified participation in work related social functions as predominantly affected by their hearing impairment. Similarly, Boutin (2010) reported that communication difficulties largely impacts on social interactions, and resultantly hearing impaired individuals may be excluded and isolated. As spoken language typically prevailed in communication, hearing impaired employees were left out the loop and the proverbial “water cooler moments,” where critical work-related issues are often discussed (Rosengreen & Saladin, 2010).

In a study to examine employers' perspective on supported employment for people with disabilities in Sweden by Gustafsson, Peralta, & Danermark (2013) participants expressed uncertainty regarding the employment of individuals with disabilities, and suggested that they would be unable to achieve work standards that were on par with current standards of productivity. In the current competitive and demanding market, employers emphasized the importance of being flexible and able to multitask, and expressed concern that the inability to assume different roles would be a limitation for employees with disability (Kelly, 2015; Kaye et al., 2011). This unfamiliarity exhibits itself in stereotypes that people with disabilities are poor job performers, recurrently absent from work, and general social discomfort around employees with disabilities (Kaye et al., 2011). Additionally, employers were reluctant to hire persons with disabilities due to unfamiliarity with accommodating their needs, and concerned about the increased burden on managers, supervisors and other staff members (Kaye et al., 2011). Likewise, employers were reluctant to hire as they believed individuals with disability are unpredictable, less dependable, attend work sporadically, require costly accommodations and displayed unsafe work behaviour (Miceli, Harvey, & Buckley, 2002).

Concerns regarding the cost of accommodating employees with disabilities was also a major factor influencing employment. Despite research indicating that the provision of reasonable accommodations allowed the employer to retain an existing employee and increased productivity, evidence suggests employers viewed this as a financial obligation (Solovieva, Hendricks, Walls, & Dowler, 2010). More than 80% of respondents endorsed the cost of accommodation as the main reason for high unemployment rates amongst disabled individuals (Kaye et al., 2011). Further, 71.8% of participants in a study conducted by Kaye et al. (2011) endorsed additional cost concerns such as increased health insurance premiums and extra supervisorial time as a reason for low employment rates. On the contrary, in a study conducted by van Staden (2011), 51% disagreed that persons with disability required special attention from supervisors, 55% disagreed that persons with disability more costly and only 18% agreed that persons with disability were frequently absent. Additionally, employers were reluctant to hire individuals with disability due to concerns of potential legal complications in the event that the employment contract had to be terminated or if the employee were to be disciplined for poor job performance (Kaye et al., 2011).

## **2.5. Conclusion**

For many adults in South Africa, employment is central to maintaining a good quality of life. In South Africa there is a severe lack of understanding of the needs of disabled individuals, and a lack of awareness of disability in the workplace and in society as a whole (McKinney 2013; Maja et al., 2011). Legislative reform has to some extent improved accessibility to the labour market for persons with disabilities, however, many individuals still face challenges entering and remaining in employment (Dube, 2005). The demands of the labour market have changed dramatically, and as a result, there has been a decrease in employment opportunities for low skilled hearing impaired individuals. Consequently, these individuals are rendered unemployed and dependent on a social grant.

Employers have shown a lack of awareness of disability, developing a narrow view that focuses on the visible physical impairment. Employers lack awareness of what it entails to employ an individual with disability and are thus unaware of the additional needs they require (McKinney, 2013). Research has shown that while some employers are willing to employ individuals with disabilities, they become overprotective of the employee, and cushion the disability by placing impaired individuals in positions of low status (Gartrell, 2010). Employer attitudes either result in access or create obstacles to employment (Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2008). Negative attitudes towards individuals with disabilities in employment reinforce feelings of hopelessness and a sense of failure (McKinney, 2013). As a result, individuals with disabilities feel they are required to work harder in order to prove their capabilities (Gartrell, 2010). Lack of deaf awareness amongst co-workers can result in isolation of hearing impaired individuals. It is evident that despite progress, there are still numerous limitations regarding inclusion of individuals with disabilities into employment, in South Africa.

The following study, therefore attempted to describe the perspectives and experiences of employers within the KZN private sector who have successfully employed individuals with hearing impairment. The research question therefore proposed is: What are the perceptions and experiences of employers, in the KwaZulu-Natal Province's private business sector towards recruitment and retention of individuals with hearing impairment?

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter provides a description of the methodology utilized in this study. It includes the aims and objectives, the study design, a description of the study population, sampling techniques and data collection instrument used as well as procedure followed to obtain the data. The data analysis is documented and furthermore, issues relating to the validity and reliability are addressed, as are the ethical and legal considerations.

### **3.2. Aim and Objectives**

#### **3.2.1. Aim**

The study aimed to determine employers' perceptions and experiences in recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in KwaZulu-Natal Province's private sector

#### **3.2.2. Objectives**

1. To determine employers' perceptions of disability and experiences utilizing policies guidelines and legislation enabling the employment of persons with disabilities, especially hearing impairment
2. To determine employers' experiences with the recruitment and retention of individuals with hearing impairment, including the provisions of reasonable accommodations
3. To determine employers' perceptions related to recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace
4. To identify barriers and challenges related to the employment of individuals with hearing impairment
5. To determine practical strategies that current employers suggest that could facilitate the recruitment and retention of individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace

### **3.3. Research Design**

A descriptive, survey study design was used in this study, with quantitative methods of analysis. This allowed the researcher to obtain the necessary information about the study population by asking relevant questions to achieve the objectives of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Descriptive research provides essential knowledge regarding the nature of persons and allowed for a closer observation into the participant's practices and behaviours (Paler-Calmorin &

Calmorin, 2007). Quantitative research is generally a structured research design and allowed the researcher to gain knowledge of a target population by asking appropriate questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). A survey design is a simple and efficient tool, and provides quantitative data about the attitudes, opinions and self-reported behaviours of a given population (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012). Surveys allows for greater anonymity (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012), which may encourage respondents to be more honest. A survey allowed the researcher to obtain information regarding the experiences of employers in the private sector, with regards to the recruitment and retention of employees with hearing impairment into the workplace. Furthermore, a survey will allow the researcher to quantify challenges, benefits and barriers to the employment of individuals with hearing impairment. This study design therefore supports the aim of the current study.

### **3.4. Study Population**

A list of companies within the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province's private sector that employ hearing impaired individuals was obtained from the KwaZulu-Natal Blind and Deaf Society, KwaZulu-Natal Deaf Association and Fulton School for the Deaf. A total of 30 companies were listed within KZN, and it was anticipated that at least two employees within human resources and/or management would complete the questionnaire. Due to the limited number of companies available, all companies listed were invited to participate in the study. A desired response rate of 50% is required to avoid response bias in quantitative research (Polit & Beck, 2008). The study was conducted at various companies, from a range of employment sectors within KwaZulu-Natal.

The following inclusion criteria were applied to this study:

- Companies must be within the KwaZulu-Natal private business sector
- Companies must have had employed at least one individual with hearing impairment within the last five years
- Participants must have been employed for at least six months and should be involved in the recruitment and/or retention process of hearing impaired employees.

The researcher restricted the study to KZN due to financial constraints, time limitations and convenience. The decision to omit the public sector was based on recent research that had focused on the effectiveness and impact of legislation in the South African public sector, and

found that poor implementation had negatively affected employment of people with disabilities (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016). Additionally, as per the 2014-2015 Commission for Employment Equity Report, private companies were the largest employing body, representing 5.1 million employees and were therefore considered for the research study. However, only companies that employed hearing impaired individuals were considered as appropriate and able to provide valuable insight. The willingness to employ individuals with hearing impairment represented a commitment towards a transformational organisational culture that integrated persons with disability. Therefore, individuals involved in recruitment and retention were expected to provide a wealth of knowledge in this regard.

### **3.5. Demographic profile of the study sample**

Of the total number of companies invited, 19 of the 30 (63.33%) companies were willing to participate in the study. As indicated on the gatekeeper permission letter, 50 individuals met the inclusion criteria and were able to complete the questionnaire. However, one participant had requested to withdraw from the study and therefore did not complete the questionnaire. Two participants were included in the pilot study. Furthermore, participants were lost as a result of departmental restructuring or resignation during the interim of obtaining all gatekeeper permission letters needed for full ethical clearance. A total of 30 responses were obtained and included in the main study for analysis, which resulted in a response rate of 60% being achieved. Low response rates are unavoidable and were not thought to be a cause of concern as it can be quite common in social research that requires voluntary participation (Halim, Bakar, Hamzah & Rashid, 2013).

Most responses were obtained from participants who were older than 40 years of age (46.7%,  $n = 14$ ). The male to female ratio indicated an equal number of male (50%,  $n = 15$ ) and female (50%,  $n = 15$ ) participants. English was predominately spoken as indicated by 65.5% ( $n = 19$ ) of the participants, followed by isiZulu (17.2%,  $n = 5$ ) and Afrikaans (13.8%,  $n = 4$ ). Participants commonly had 0.5-5 years of experience in their job position (50%,  $n = 14$ ) and 6-10 years of experience (35.7%,  $n = 10$ ). Of the 19 companies, majority (94.7%,  $n = 18$ ) were based within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. Participants represented companies from varying business sectors, with most common being the manufacturing industry (41.4%,  $n = 12$ ) and thereafter the retail industry (31.3%,  $n = 9$ ). The total number of employees in each company varied, with 22.2% ( $n = 6$ ) having between 2000-2500 employees, 22.2% ( $n = 6$ ) between 100-149 individuals and 18.5% having 1-50 individuals employed. Companies had typically

employed between 1-10 employees with hearing impairment (69%, n = 20). Almost all the hearing impaired employees were black. The above information is summarised in the table 3.1. below. Variations in the number of participants may occur as some did not respond to certain questions.

**Table 3.1.**

*Summary of demographics of participants*

| <b>Characteristic</b>                                       | <b>Values</b>     | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Gender (n = 30)</b>                                      | Male              | 15            | 50                |
|   | Female            | 15            | 50                |
| <b>Age in years (n = 30)</b>                                | 18-25             | 2             | 6.7               |
|   | 26-30             | 4             | 13.3              |
|   | 31-35             | 7             | 23.3              |
|   | 36-40             | 3             | 10                |
|   | >40               | 14            | 46.7              |
| <b>Role of participant within the organization (n = 27)</b> | Management        | 19            | 70.4              |
|   | HR Practitioner   | 2             | 7.4               |
|   | Other             | 6             | 22.2              |
| <b>Years of experience (n = 28)</b>                         | <1                | 1             | 3.6               |
|   | 1-5               | 13            | 46.4              |
|   | 6-10              | 10            | 35.7              |
|   | 11-15             | 3             | 10.7              |
|   | 16-20             | 1             | 3.6               |
| <b>Location of companies (n = 19)</b>                       | <b>eThekweni:</b> |               |                   |
|   | North Central     | 6             | 31.6              |
|   | South Central     | 2             | 10.5              |
|   | North of Durban   | 5             | 26.3              |
|   | Inner-Outer West  | 5             | 26.3              |
|   | <b>iLembe:</b>    |               |                   |
|   | KwaDukuza         | 1             | 5.3               |
|   | Manufacturing     | 12            | 41.4              |
|   | Retail            | 9             | 31.3              |
|   | NGO/NPO           | 2             | 6.9               |



|   |                |    |      |
|---|----------------|----|------|
|   | Automotive     | 2  | 6.9  |
|   | Communications | 2  | 6.9  |
|   | Construction   | 1  | 3.4  |
|   | Hotel          | 1  | 3.4  |
| <b>Range of total number of employees (n = 27)</b>                                    | 1-50           | 5  | 18.5 |
|   | 51-99          | 4  | 14.8 |
|   | 100-149        | 6  | 22.2 |
|   | 150-499        | 1  | 3.7  |
|   | 500-999        | 3  | 11.1 |
|   | 1000-1499      | 2  | 7.4  |
|   | 2000-2500      | 6  | 22.2 |
| <b>Number of hearing impaired employees per company (n = 29)</b>                      | 0              | 1  | 3.4  |
|   | 1-10           | 20 | 69   |
|   | ≥20            | 8  | 27.6 |
| <b>Race of hearing impaired employees (n = 29)</b>                                    | Black          | 24 | 82.8 |
|   | Asian          | 2  | 6.9  |
|   | Other          | 3  | 10.3 |
| <b>Qualification of hearing impaired employees as reported by management (n = 27)</b> | < Matric       | 18 | 66.7 |
|   | Matric         | 7  | 25.9 |
|   | Bachelors      | 1  | 3.7  |
|   | Masters/PhD    | 1  | 3.7  |

More than half (66.7%, n = 18) of the hearing impaired employees had not matriculated. Only 9 (30%) reported on the role of the hearing impaired employee within the organization, with the positions being receptionist, facilitator, packaging, frontline work, software developer, electrical work, operator and one had a managerial role. A total of 41.4% (n = 12) of hearing impaired employees were indicated to have been diagnosed with a severe hearing loss and 34.5% (n = 10) had a profound hearing loss. Congenital hearing loss was most commonly identified as cause of hearing loss (72.4%, n = 21). Regarding primary means of communication, written language and sign language were equally used as indicated by 31% (n = 9) of the participants. Hearing impaired employees had varying degrees of hearing loss and therefore participants indicated using more than one mode of communication e.g. both sign and written language was

used when communicating with employees with severe hearing loss. This information is illustrated in table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2.**

*Summary of demographics of hearing impaired employees*

| <b>Characteristic</b>  | <b>Values</b>       | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Estimated degree of hearing loss of hearing impaired employees as reported by management (n = 29)</b> | Mild                | 1             | 3.4               |
|  | Moderate            | 2             | 6.9               |
|  | Mod-Severe          | 4             | 13.8              |
|  | Severe              | 12            | 41.4              |
|  | Profound            | 10            | 34.5              |
| <b>Cause of hearing loss as reported by management (n = 29)</b>  | Congenital          | 21            | 72.4              |
|  | Disease             | 1             | 3.4               |
|  | Noise               | 0             | 0                 |
|  | Don't Know          | 5             | 17.2              |
|  | More than one cause | 2             | 6.9               |
| <b>Communication methods used as reported by management (n = 29)</b>                                     | Spoken              | 4             | 13.8              |
|  | Written             | 9             | 31                |
|  | Sign Language       | 9             | 31                |
|  | Multiple Modes      | 7             | 24.1              |

### **3.6. Data collection method**

A descriptive questionnaire survey was used for this research. Surveys provide descriptive, inferential and explanatory information that can be used to make generalizations based on the trends observed (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). A questionnaire was developed to obtain the necessary information regarding the experiences and attitudes of employers in the private sector towards the employment of individuals with hearing impairment. Parts of the questionnaire were adapted from a study conducted by Perkins-Dock et al. (2015), Kaye et al. (2011) and Maja et al. (2011). The remaining questions were developed based on an extensive review of literature. According to the 2011 Census, English is the most widely used language in South African businesses, politics and media (Writer, 2015), with the questionnaire therefore being developed in English. The various sections included in the questionnaire and motivation thereof are summarised in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3*****Description of Survey***

| <b>Type of Questions</b>   | <b>Areas</b>   | <b>Motivation</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Section A: Biographical information (<i>Questions 1 –8</i>)</b>   |  |  |
| All close-ended questions.   | Age, gender, type of organization, role within the organization, years of experience   | To establish if the individual were suitable for inclusion in the study and if their responses could therefore be used for analysis. Additionally, the researcher was able to determine the organizational structure of the participating companies.   |
| <b>Section B: Employers' perceptions of disability and experiences utilizing policies, guidelines and legislation enabling the employment of individuals with disabilities, especially hearing impairment (<i>Questions 9– 14</i>)</b> |  |  |
| Objective 1<br>All close-ended questions.<br>Rating scales, yes/no and multiple choice   | To determine employer's perceptions and awareness regarding current disability legislature   | There is a lack of knowledge of disability and poor understanding of disability legislation (McCrone, 2011; Houston et al., 2010). Identifying concerns affecting the implementation of legislation is needed in order to improve future policies and combat barriers (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016). |
| <b>Section C: Employers' experiences with the recruitment and retention of persons with hearing impairment, including the provision of reasonable accommodations (<i>Questions 15 – 20</i>)</b>  |  |  |
| Objective 2<br>All close-ended questions.<br>yes/ no', multiple choice   | To describe current hiring practices, challenges faced during recruitment and retention as well as identify perceptions regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations | To determine if hearing impaired individuals are underemployed, or are given work according to their qualifications (Bradley et al., 2013). Analysing factors influencing employment is needed to monitor and evaluate programmes/policies   |

undertaken by the SA government and other stake holders to address the needs of persons with disabilities (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016).

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**Section D: Employers' perceptions related to recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace (*Question 21*)**

|              |                              |  |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Objective 3  | To establish reasons for not | Identifying potential reasons for the  |
| Likert Scale | employing individuals with   | low employment rate amongst            |
|              | hearing loss                 | individuals with hearing impairment    |
|              |                              | is needed to remove barriers and       |
|              |                              | increase opportunities for integration |
|              |                              | (Maja et al., 2011).                   |

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**Section E: Barriers and challenges to employment of individuals with hearing impairment (*Question 22*)**

|                 |                                |  |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Objective 4     | To identify numerous           | Addressing these barriers affords      |
| Multiple choice | perceived and experienced      | hearing impaired individuals the       |
|                 | barriers preventing successful | opportunity to prove their             |
|                 | employment of individuals      | capabilities and function optimally in |
|                 | with hearing impairment.       | a business environment (Snyman,        |
|                 |                                | 2009).                                 |

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**Section F: Practical strategies that could facilitate the recruitment and retention of individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace (*Question 23*)**

|              |                                |                                     |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Objective 5  | To identify practical means of | These strategies can be employed to |
| Likert Scale | improving the employment       | facilitate and improve occupational |
|              | experience of individuals with | opportunities for hearing impaired, |
|              | hearing impaired as indicated  | working-age individuals, their job  |
|              | by employers.                  | attainment and retention (Perkins-  |
|              |                                | Dock et al., 2015).                 |

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The advantage of using a self-administered questionnaire was that it allowed for greater anonymity (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). Secondly, questionnaires can provide a researcher with comprehensive views of attitudes, beliefs and values of a random and large sample population (Cargan, 2007). The disadvantage of this method is a low return rate (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010).

Additionally, participants may be distracted whilst completing the questionnaire and as a result may not pay full attention to the questions, which can contribute to misinterpreting or missing out on questions (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012).

### **3.7. Data collection procedure**

In order to obtain the relevant data and meet the study objectives, participants were required to complete a self-administered questionnaire (Appendix A), which were delivered by the researcher to each participating company. This method was chosen to minimise a poor response rate. The respondents were given a timeframe of two weeks to complete the questionnaire. However, additional time was required by some participants, and an extension of another two weeks was granted. An information sheet detailing the purpose of the study was given to each participant (Appendix B), and addressed any ethical concerns which the participants may have had. Each participant was required to sign a form acknowledging consent to participate in the study (Appendix C) prior to completing the questionnaire.

Upon receiving provisional ethical clearance, each company was contacted telephonically and informed about the research study and their participation requested. A letter seeking permission (Appendix D) to conduct the research study was then emailed to the relevant gatekeepers at the companies that had expressed an interest in participating. Full ethical clearance was obtained once gatekeeper permission letters were submitted from all participating companies. The respondents were required to place the completed questionnaire and all relevant documentation into the unmarked envelope provided, which was then collected by the researcher upon completion.

### **3.8. Reliability and validity**

Various measures were taken to ensure validity and reliability of the study. The research tool comprised of 23 questions that were adapted from three research studies conducted by Perkins et al. (2015), Kaye et al. (2011) and Maja et al. (2011) as well as based on an extensive review of literature. Structured projective questioning was utilised to limit social desirability bias for questions pertaining to employer attitudes towards hiring hearing impaired individuals. Instead of asking respondents to comment on their organization, they were required to speculate attitudes and behaviours of employers in general (Kaye et al., 2011). According to the literature, this method has been successful in engaging respondents and prevents them from reporting on what they think the researcher wants to hear rather than expressing true attitudes that may be

socially unacceptable or run counter to legal requirements (Kaye et al., 2011). Additionally, a cronbach test was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire and a value of  $p = 0.858$  was obtained. Chronbach alpha is a statistical measure used to determine if the items of a survey set all measure the same construct and therefore correlate with each other. A critical value for alpha of 0.7 or greater suggests good coherency amongst items on the scale, and the researcher can thus be confident that the items on the scale are reliable (Trobia, 2008). Furthermore, a pilot study was conducted and amendments to the questionnaire were made accordingly.

### **3.9. Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted on two participants from two companies that had agreed to participate. The questionnaire was further reviewed by a qualified audiologist with experience in job placement of deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals. The purpose of the pilot study was to identify and address any confounding factors. The pilot study allowed the researcher to determine if the questionnaire was linguistically appropriate, unambiguous and measured what it intended to (Brink, Van Der Walt, & Rensburg, 2006). The participants were provided with the information document, consent form and a copy of the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire was completed, participants were requested to provide feedback and comments on the information document and questionnaire via a feedback form (Appendix E). Areas considered were clarity of instructions, ambiguity with regards to the questions, and time taken to complete the questionnaire. The participants and responses obtained from the pilot study were not included in the main study.

#### **3.9.1. Results from the pilot study**

The results from the pilot study indicated that the data collection method was appropriate. No concerns were reported with regards to the time taken to complete the questionnaire. Both of the participants reported that the questionnaire was easy to complete. However, one participant reported difficulties understanding the instructions. Subsequent to the pilot study, appropriate amendments were made to the structure of the questionnaire, specifically, introductory instructions were added, and question 11 was divided into three separate questions. Adjustments were made to the word order of the instructions for question 10. No changes were made to the content.

### **3.10. Data analysis**

Data from the questionnaire was coded and analysed by administering descriptive and inferential statistics. A non-parametric statistical test was utilised as the questionnaire was based on categories. Simple descriptive statistics in the form of percentages and graphs was used to represent the data obtained. Pearson Chi-squared and Fisher tests of association were used to assess the associations between the categories. Data was coded on an EXCEL spreadsheet and analysed using SPSS version 25 software with the assistance of a statistician. Descriptive statistics provided information about the sample population and measures (Donnelly & Trochim, 2006). Inferential statistics were utilised to understand the current knowledge, attitudes and practices of disability and employment of individuals with hearing impairment amongst employers (Donnelly & Trochim, 2006).

### **3.11. Ethical considerations**

The researcher completed an online ethics course by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (Appendix F) in advance to ensure that ethical concerns relevant to the study were addressed. A proposal was submitted to the Humanities and Social Sciences Research and Ethics Committee for review prior to proceeding with the study. A research proposal was submitted for review by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Humanities and Social Research Ethics Committee, and provisional ethical clearance was obtained on 9 September 2016, subject to gatekeeper permission letters. A letter was submitted to the ethics committee in May 2017, requesting permission to extend the sample population to include companies in KwaZulu-Natal and not just eThekweni. The amendment was approved and a letter was received via email on 08 June 2017 for the same. Complete ethical clearance was granted on 3 August 2017 (HSS1463/016M) (Appendix G).

The current study was conducted in accordance to the ethical principles, as stipulated in the Declaration of Helsinki, which supports the participant's right to informed consent, confidentiality and free will. Each participant was given an information document, detailing the nature of the study, study requirements and its potential benefits. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to implementing the study. The questionnaire was self-administered and therefore completed anonymously by each participant. Participation in the research was voluntary and participants were entitled to withdraw at any given time. The names of the participants were not reflected on the study questionnaire, in the documentation or any publication thereof. Instead, information obtained was profiled by allocating a participant

number and coded accordingly. The data obtained was stored in a file in a locked cabinet that was only accessible by the researcher and the supervisor. The data will be stored for five years and thereafter will be destroyed with permission from the research supervisor. Data coded online was stored on a password protected computer which may only be accessed by the researcher. Data obtained will only be used for the purpose of the current research study. Additionally, electronic data will be deleted from the researcher's personal computer and external hard drive. Research outcomes will be communicated via email to participants who have expressed an interest in feedback.

### **3.12. Conclusion**

The study aimed to describe employers' perspectives and experiences with regards to the recruitment and retention of hearing impaired individuals, in the KZN private sector. A descriptive survey design with quantitative analysis was used to meet the study's aims and objectives. All ethical requirements were adhered to throughout the research process.



## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Introduction

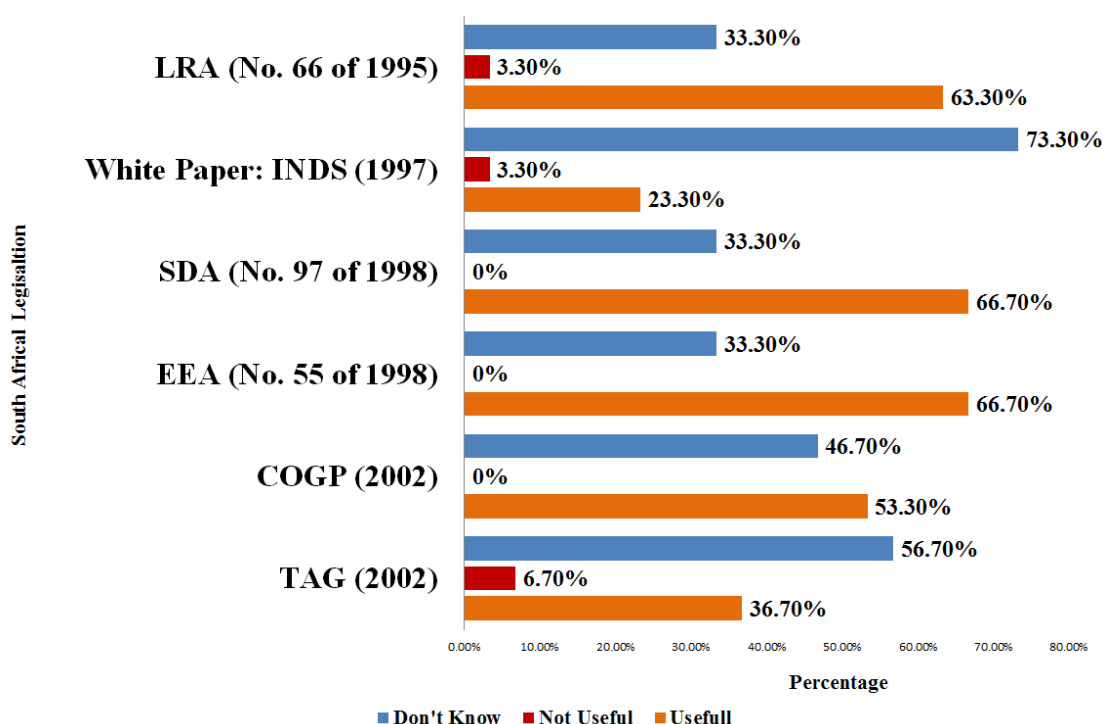
This chapter presents the results of the study with respect to the five study objectives. In order to realise the aim of the study, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The presentation of the research findings follow the order of the questionnaire, which was designed in accordance to the research objectives. It should be noted that participant numbers may vary in the presentation of the result as some did not respond to certain questions.

### 4.2. Objective 1: To determine employers' perceptions of disability and experiences utilizing policies, guidelines and legislation enabling the employment of persons with disabilities, especially hearing impairment

This objective aimed to provide an overview of employers' perception regarding various disability legislatures with regards to usefulness, requirements, implementation and repercussions for non-compliance. As the legislation relates to the integration and retention of individuals with disabilities, rating scales were used to identify whether the intent of the various laws is clear, which will enable shortfalls in implementation to be accounted for. Additionally, participants were required to indicate if the company had any internal policies or guidelines governing the employment of individuals with disabilities. This section is based on questions 9 – 14. The number of responses for this section varied per question, and was quantified using descriptive statistics.

Half (50%,  $n = 15$ ) of the participants indicated a medium level of knowledge regarding disability, 23.3% ( $n = 7$ ) suggested a low level and 26.7% ( $n = 8$ ) regarded their knowledge as high. No statistically significant association were noted between disability knowledge and job position ( $p = 0.754$ ) or disability knowledge and years of experience ( $p = 0.467$ ). Participants were presented with two definitions and were required to indicate which they felt more accurately conceptualised a disability. Most (63%,  $n = 17$ ) indicated that an individual was disabled based on their circumstances and society's lack of ability to accommodate the disabled individuals. However, of concern is that 37% ( $n = 10$ ) felt that disability was the result of a physical, sensory or mental condition only, and that it is the responsibility of the impaired individual to integrate into society.

Participants were required to indicate their perceptions regarding six employment policies/legislations/guidelines. The results indicated that 63.3 % (n = 19) felt that the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995 was useful, whereas 33.3% (n = 10) were unsure. More than half (66.7%, n = 20) indicated that the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 and the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 were useful. The majority, (73.3%, n= 22) indicated that they did not know if the White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997, was useful or not. The results suggested that 56.7% (n = 17) of respondents did not know if the TAG was useful or not Figure 4.1. below summarises the above information and indicates the employers' viewpoint on the usefulness of South African legislation/policies/guidelines.



**Figure 4.1. Usefulness of relevant employment legislations/policies/guidelines**

With regards to the requirements of the employment policies/legislations/guidelines, 65.5% (n = 19) felt that this was clearly outlined in the LRA (No. 66 of 1995). A total of 58.6% (n = 17) felt that the implementation of the LRA was clearly outlined and 46.4% (n = 13) felt that the repercussions for non-compliance was clear. More than half (65.5%, n = 19) reported that the requirements of the EEA (No. 55 of 1998) was clearly outlined, 62.1% (n = 18) suggested that the implementation was clear and 42.9% (n = 12) suggested that the repercussions for non-compliance was clearly outlined. With regards to the white paper: INDS, the majority indicated that they were unaware of the requirements, implementation and repercussions for non-

compliance. Similarly, the majority reported that they were unsure if the requirements, implementation and non-compliance to the TAG were clear. Table 4.1, below, summarises the employers' perceptions on the requirements, implementation and repercussions of non-compliance of disability legislation.

**Table 4.1.**

*Employers' perceptions on requirements, implementation and repercussions of non-compliance of disability legislation*

| Policy                                | Requirements |      |            | Implementation |      |            | Repercussions for non-compliance |      |            |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------|------------|----------------|------|------------|----------------------------------|------|------------|
|                                       | Yes          | No   | Don't Know | Yes            | No   | Don't Know | Yes                              | No   | Don't Know |
| Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995   | 65.5         | 3.4  | 31         | 58.6           | 3.4  | 37.9       | 46.4                             | 17.9 | 35.7       |
| White Paper: INDS, 1997               | 20.7         | 10.3 | 69         | 17.2           | 13.8 | 69         | 14.3                             | 21.4 | 64.3       |
| Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 | 62.1         | 6.9  | 31         | 55.2           | 10.3 | 34.5       | 39.3                             | 21.4 | 39.3       |
| EEA No. 55 of 1998                    | 65.5         | 3.4  | 31         | 62.1           | 3.4  | 34.5       | 42.9                             | 17.9 | 39.3       |
| Code of Good Practice, 2002           | 48.3         | 6.9  | 44.8       | 41.4           | 10.3 | 48.3       | 39.3                             | 17.9 | 42.9       |
| TAG, 2002                             | 37.9         | 6.9  | 55.2       | 31             | 10.3 | 58.6       | 28.6                             | 17.9 | 53.6       |

The majority (33.3%, n = 10) indicated that the organization they worked for did not have any internal policies or guidelines governing the employment of persons with disabilities. A total of 20% (n = 6) reported that their organization was in the process of developing internal policies guiding the employment of persons of disabilities and 16.7% (n = 5) reported that they were unaware if the organization had any such policy. Interestingly, 17.9% (n = 5) participants indicated that the internal policies were aligned with national or international legislature, and only 6.7% (n = 2) stated that they felt it was unnecessary.

#### **4.3. Objective 2: To determine employers' experiences with the recruitment and retention of persons with hearing impairment, including the provisions of reasonable accommodations**

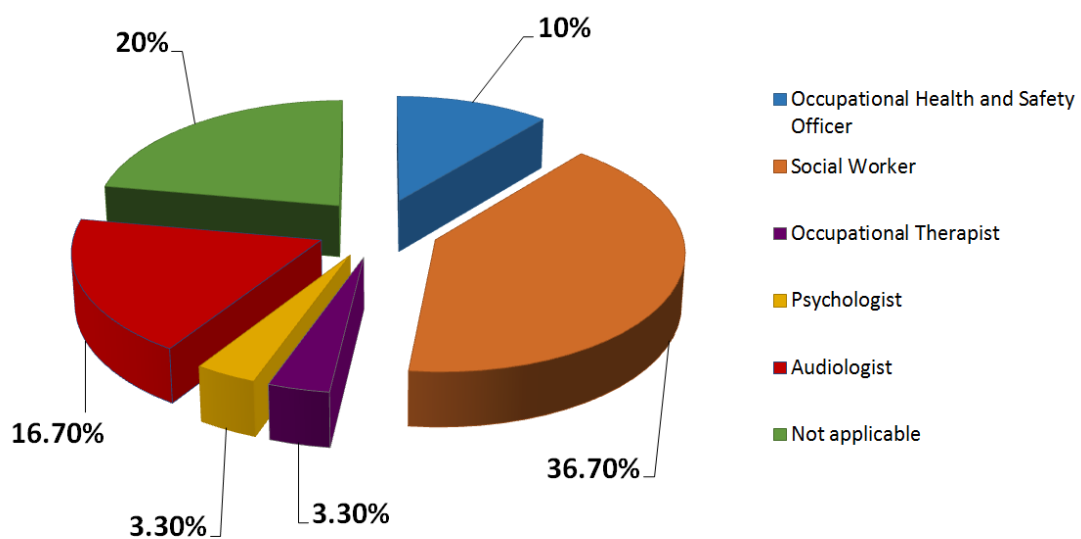
The purpose of this objective was to identify recruitment strategies, which included the use of recruitment agencies or external consultants that contributed towards the successful employment, and retention of individuals with hearing loss. Additionally, any challenges experienced integrating the employee into the workplace were determined. Participants further reported on the provision of reasonable accommodations and the steps the organization was willing to take to meet the needs of hearing impaired employees. Multiple choice and dichotomous yes/no questions were used to achieve this objective, and is derived from answers to question 15-20.

In majority of the cases, the employers were aware that the employee was hearing impaired, as indicated by 92.9% (n = 26) of participants. The results indicated that 62.1% (n = 18) actively recruited hearing impaired employees. More than half (57.1%, n = 16) suggested that there were benefits to having employed a person with disability. The benefits reported included better performance, self-actualisation for person with disabilities, BEE compliance, awareness amongst other staff members who were also given the opportunity to learn sign language, and the opportunity for hearing impaired individuals to work and prove their capabilities. Of the total, 82.8% (n = 24) reported that their organization included a commitment to equal opportunity statement to encourage individuals with disabilities to apply.

Only 48.3% (n = 14) indicated that their made use of services or resources offered in KZN to assist companies that employed persons with hearing impairment. Participants had typically made use of the KZN Blind and Deaf Society, eDeaf or internal training. One participant indicated that the KZN Blind and Deaf Society provided a motivational speaker to address hearing impaired employees. A total of 46.4% (n = 13) participants reported that services in KZN that provided training to people with hearing impairment was used during the recruitment or hiring process. There was a statistically significant association between participants who indicated that external services or resources were used to assist companies with the employment of persons with hearing impairment and likelihood to report to benefits of employing hearing impaired individuals, ( $p < 0.001$ ). The majority of the participants had used the services offered by eDeaf for sign language training and worked closely with the KZN Blind and Deaf Society.

Some participants suggested that they used in-house skills training or were in the process of having a team trained.

More than half (57.1%,  $n = 16$ ) of the participants experienced challenges integrating employees with hearing impairment into the workplace. Of the participants who experienced challenges, almost all suggested that this was related to communication. However, some companies did suggest that training was being conducted to facilitate better communication. The majority had used various external consultants to assist with the recruitment and retention process, as illustrated in Figure 4.2. Of the 30 participants, 23.3% ( $n = 7$ ) felt that the use of external consultants to assist with the recruitment and retention process was not applicable. Companies that did make use of external consultants typically required them for training purposes. Social workers and audiologists were most commonly used to assist with the recruitment and retention process and, were mainly used during the placement stage. These professionals assist both the employee and the employer with appropriate placement, provide guidance and support and ensures that the employee is integrated into the company without discrimination.



**Figure 4.2.** *External consultants used during the recruitment and retention process*

Less than half (42.9%,  $n = 12$ ) of the participants reported that reasonable accommodations were provided for employees with hearing loss. Almost all the companies that were not currently providing reasonable accommodations indicated that their organization would not be willing to do so. However, when asked to indicate the steps the organization had taken or were willing to

take in order to meet the needs of the hearing impaired employees, the majority were willing to provide training on hearing loss for hearing colleagues, with nearly half (48.3%,  $n = 14$ ) being willing to provide sign language interpreters. An overall 51.7% ( $n = 15$ ) were willing to allow employees to share the work load and 48.3% ( $n = 14$ ) indicated they were willing to provide counselling. Of the 30 participants, 93.1% ( $n = 27$ ) were unwilling to allow the hearing impaired employees to work from home. However, it is possible that the job for which they have been employed could not be completed from home. With regards to reasonable accommodations, 86.2% ( $n = 25$ ) of the participants agreed that their employees required reasonable accommodations. Only 10.3% ( $n = 3$ ) suggested reasonable accommodations were too costly. Table 4.2 provides more details on the various steps employers were willing to take to meet the employees' needs. A Fisher test indicated that the type of industry did influence whether the organization would be willing to provide reasonable accommodations ( $p = 0.012$ ).

**Table 4.2.**

*Steps employers have or are willing to take to meet the needs of hearing impaired employees ( $n = 29$ )*

|   | Yes      |      | No       |      |
|---|----------|------|----------|------|
|   | <i>N</i> | %    | <i>N</i> | %    |
| Provide training on hearing impairment for hearing colleagues | 17       | 58.6 | 12       | 41.4 |
| Job sharing   | 15       | 51.7 | 14       | 48.3 |
| Provide counselling   | 14       | 48.3 | 15       | 51.7 |
| Provide sign language interpreter                             | 14       | 48.3 | 15       | 51.7 |
| Provide additional job support or assistance                  | 13       | 44.8 | 16       | 55.2 |
| Provide specified/modified equipment/assistive devices        | 11       | 37.9 | 18       | 62.1 |
| Modify work station   | 8        | 27.6 | 21       | 72.4 |
| Restructure working hours                                     | 5        | 17.2 | 24       | 82.8 |
| Employees do not require reasonable accommodations            | 4        | 13.8 | 25       | 86.2 |
| Reasonable accommodations are too costly                      | 3        | 10.3 | 26       | 89.7 |
| Work from home  | 2        | 6.9  | 27       | 93.1 |

#### **4.4. Objective 3: To determine employers' perceptions related to recruiting and retaining individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace**

For this section, based on question 21, a Likert scale was used to determine participant's level of agreement regarding perceptions and attitudes of employers for not employing persons with

hearing impairment. Participants were required to report why they felt companies, in general, were not employing individuals with hearing impairment, this being done to limit social desirability bias. The total number of participants that responded varied for each question.

Interestingly, 70% (n = 21) of the participants agreed that individuals with hearing impairment rarely applied for jobs. Concerns over communication difficulties, particularly in meetings and trainings, were common reasons for not employing individuals with hearing impairment (70%, n = 21). Additionally, 63.3% (n = 19) suggested that communication difficulties affected the employee's ability to interact with co-workers and therefore contributed towards poor employment rates. Consistent with the literature, concerns regarding employee safety were agreed upon by 83.3% (n = 25) as a reason for not employing hearing impaired individuals. Concerns regarding costs of accommodations was not endorsed as a reason, as suggested by literature. Converse to research, participants commonly disagreed that there were no opportunities for promotion. Overall, half (50%, n = 15) of the participants were concerned about the attitudes of co-workers. This is further demonstrated in table 4.3 below. The responses for the categories, strongly agree and agree, and strongly disagree and disagree, were combined to two categories for ease of reference. A more detailed table can be found in the appendices (Appendix H). The mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean was calculated for each response and can be viewed in the extended table in the appendices (Appendix H).

**Table 4.3.**

***Employers' perceptions and attitudes for not employing persons with hearing impairment***

|  | Agree |      | Disagree |      |
|--|-------|------|----------|------|
|  | N     | %    | N        | %    |
| Concerns about safety of the hearing impaired employee (n = 30)                                  | 25    | 83.3 | 5        | 16.7 |
| Individuals with hearing loss rarely apply for jobs (n = 30)                                     | 21    | 70   | 9        | 30   |
| Communication difficulties affecting participation in training activities and meetings (n = 30)  | 21    | 70   | 9        | 30   |
| Employees with hearing loss cannot use the telephone (n = 30)                                    | 20    | 66.7 | 10       | 33.3 |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability to interact with co-workers (n = 30)               | 19    | 63.3 | 11       | 36.7 |
| Require extra time from supervisors and management (n = 30)                                      | 16    | 53.3 | 14       | 46.7 |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability to understand/complete instructions given (n = 30) | 16    | 53.3 | 14       | 46.7 |
| Do not know how to handle the needs of employees with hearing loss (n = 30)                      | 15    | 50   | 15       | 50   |
| Concerns about attitudes of co-workers (n = 30)  | 15    | 50   | 15       | 50   |
| Concerns regarding costs of reasonable accommodations (n = 30)                                   | 11    | 36.7 | 19       | 63.3 |

|  |    |      |    |      |
|--|----|------|----|------|
| Employers are uncomfortable and unsure how to behave (n = 30)  | 10 | 33.3 | 20 | 66.7 |
| Unable to do basic functions of the jobs they apply for (n = 29)                                       | 7  | 24.1 | 22 | 75.9 |
| Employers are unable to discipline/fire employees because of potential lawsuits (n = 29)               | 6  | 20.7 | 23 | 79.3 |
| Employers discriminate against applicants with hearing loss (n = 29)                                   | 6  | 20.7 | 23 | 79.3 |
| There are no opportunities for professional development (n = 28)                                       | 5  | 17.9 | 23 | 82.1 |
| Employees with hearing loss do not have the necessary skills/experience to perform job duties (n = 30) | 4  | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| There are no opportunities for promotion (n = 30)  | 4  | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| Employers cannot ask the applicant about their impairment (n = 29)                                     | 4  | 13.8 | 25 | 86.2 |
| Unable to work up to the same standards as employees without hearing loss (n = 30)                     | 3  | 10   | 27 | 90   |
| Employees with hearing loss are frequently absent (n = 29)   | 3  | 10.3 | 26 | 89.7 |
| Employers are concerned about increased health insurance/worker's compensation premiums (n = 27)       | 3  | 11.1 | 24 | 88.9 |
| Employees with hearing loss are poor performers and less dedicated (n = 30)                            | 1  | 3.3  | 29 | 96.7 |

#### **4.5. Objective 4: To identify barriers and challenges related to the employment of individuals with hearing impairment**

Participants were required to select from the list provided (question 22), the main barriers and challenges they may have encountered, in an effort to identify problems experienced relating to recruiting and hiring of individuals with hearing impairment. These issues influence employment rates and therefore need to be addressed. All 30 participants responded to this question.

Almost all (86.7%, n = 26) the participants agreed that some barriers or challenges were experienced regarding hiring of individuals with hearing impairment and reported communication difficulties to be the greatest challenge. The majority of participants indicated that their organization already provided reasonable accommodations or had used external consultants, with 86.7% (n = 26) not experiencing challenges regarding knowledge about reasonable accommodations when hiring employees with hearing loss. Less than half (36.7%, n = 11) endorsed the lack of sign language interpreters as a challenge, and may be due to the fact that many organizations provided sign language training or hired external trainers when required. Only 13.3% (n = 4) identified the cost of training as a barrier, with most organizations having provided training either through an internal training programme or the use of external organizations. Social barriers was not identified as a challenge (76.7%, n = 23). Overall, the results suggest that participants did not experience many barriers or challenges to employing



hearing impaired employees, with the barriers typically requiring minor adjustments to be accommodated. The barriers and challenges are presented below in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 .**

***Barriers and challenges encountered when recruiting/hiring persons with hearing impairment***

|   | Yes |      | No |      |
|---|-----|------|----|------|
|   | N   | %    | N  | %    |
| Communication difficulties                            | 22  | 73.3 | 8  | 26.7 |
| No availability of sign language interpreters         | 11  | 36.7 | 19 | 63.3 |
| Misunderstanding of instructions for job applications | 11  | 36.7 | 19 | 63.3 |
| Inadequate qualifications                             | 10  | 33.3 | 20 | 66.7 |
| Conflict related to Deaf culture                      | 8   | 26.7 | 22 | 73.3 |
| Social based barriers                                 | 7   | 23.3 | 23 | 76.7 |
| Lack of familiarity with dealing with HL              | 7   | 23.3 | 23 | 76.7 |
| Abilities do not meet essential job requirements      | 5   | 16.7 | 25 | 83.3 |
| Low morale amongst hearing impaired individuals       | 4   | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| Lack of knowledge on reasonable accommodations        | 4   | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| Physical/environmental barriers                       | 4   | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| Cost of training                                      | 4   | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| No barriers   | 4   | 13.3 | 26 | 86.7 |
| Additional cost of supervision                        | 3   | 10   | 27 | 90   |

#### **4.6. Objective 5: To determine practical strategies that current employers suggest could facilitate the recruitment and retention of individuals with hearing impairment in the workplace**

In order to improve job attainment and retention of persons with hearing impairment, participants were presented with a list of practical strategies and were asked to identify if it would be helpful in increasing employment rates. A Likert scale was used to address this study objective and 28 participants responded to this question, being question 23.

The participants identified practical strategies they felt would help with hiring and retaining hearing impaired employees. The most practical solution endorsed as “very helpful,” was sign language interpreters, as indicated by 85.7% (n = 24) of participants. Additionally, there was strong support for pre-employment preparation of vocational skills (78.6%, n = 22), with all

participants suggesting that this would either be very helpful or somewhat helpful. Three quarter (75%, n = 21) suggested that more or better training on hearing loss and the needs of hearing impaired individuals for other staff members. Additionally, sign language training for hearing colleagues was rated as very helpful by 71.4% (n = 20). A total of 85.7% (n = 24) indicated that enforcing of existing legislation and policies would be helpful to some degree. Written guidelines for dealing with hearing loss were considered very helpful by 71.4% (n = 20), with written company policies on non-discrimination being considered very helpful by 64.3% (n = 18) of participants. Furthermore, 67.9% (n = 19) indicated that more efficient methods of recruiting hearing impaired employees would be very helpful. Increased effort needs to be placed on desensitization workshops (60.7%, n = 17) in which it is communicated to co-workers that employees with hearing loss are effective and reliable employees. Additionally, companies were in support of external mediation and diversity specialists to deal with disability related matters. The participants agreed that more support from HR and management would be a helpful strategy when hiring and recruiting hearing impaired employees. These strategies are presented in table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5.**

***Practical strategies for hiring and retaining employees with hearing impairment, n = 28***

|  | Very Helpful |      | Somewhat Helpful |      | Not Helpful |      |
|--|--------------|------|------------------|------|-------------|------|
|  | N            | %    | N                | %    | N           | %    |
| Sign language interpreters                                     | 24           | 85.7 | 1                | 3.6  | 3           | 10.7 |
| Pre-employment preparation of vocational skills                | 22           | 78.6 | 6                | 21.4 | 0           | 0    |
| More/better training on hearing loss and needs of HI for staff | 21           | 75   | 7                | 25   | 0           | 0    |
| Written guidelines for dealing with hearing loss               | 20           | 71.4 | 7                | 25   | 1           | 3.6  |
| Improve corporate culture/staff relations                      | 20           | 71.4 | 7                | 25   | 1           | 3.6  |
| Buddy systems  | 20           | 71.4 | 6                | 21.4 | 2           | 7.1  |
| Improved awareness of communication strategies                 | 20           | 71.4 | 7                | 25   | 1           | 3.6  |
| Sign language classes for hearing colleagues                   | 20           | 71.4 | 6                | 21.4 | 2           | 7.1  |
| More efficient ways to recruit applicants with HI              | 19           | 67.9 | 7                | 25   | 2           | 7.1  |
| More support from HR and management                            | 18           | 64.3 | 9                | 32.1 | 1           | 3.6  |
| A written company policy of non-discrimination                 | 18           | 64.3 | 6                | 21.4 | 4           | 14.3 |
| Desensitization workshops                                      | 17           | 60.7 | 9                | 32.1 | 2           | 7.1  |
| Government programme to pay for/subsidize RAs for employees    | 15           | 53.6 | 8                | 28.6 | 5           | 17.9 |
| External mediation for guidance on disability and RA           | 14           | 51.9 | 8                | 29.6 | 5           | 18.5 |

|   |    |      |    |      |    |      |
|---|----|------|----|------|----|------|
| Tax breaks for hiring/retaining employees with HI               | 13 | 46.4 | 5  | 17.9 | 10 | 35.7 |
| A diversity specialist to deal with disability issues           | 13 | 46.4 | 10 | 35.7 | 5  | 17.9 |
| Salary subsidies for employees with HI                          | 11 | 39.3 | 6  | 21.4 | 11 | 39.3 |
| Central organization source for expertise on RA issues/requests | 11 | 40.7 | 7  | 25.9 | 9  | 33.3 |
| Enforce existing legislation and policies                       | 11 | 39.3 | 13 | 46.4 | 4  | 14.3 |
| Centralized fund within the organization to pay for RA          | 10 | 35.7 | 6  | 21.4 | 11 | 39.3 |
| Probation period for employees with HI                          | 8  | 28.6 | 13 | 46.4 | 7  | 25   |

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#### 4.7. Conclusion

This study aimed to describe employers' experiences and perspective regarding the employment of individuals who are hearing impaired. Most of the findings of the current study were similar to those reported in the literature. The development of legislation that promotes the employment of individuals with disabilities is a progressive step in the right direction, but has not been sufficient in promoting employment and addressing challenges to the integration and retention of employees. New knowledge was gained, of particular importance was the various reasons for the non-employment of individuals with hearing impairment in a South African context, and the practical strategies to address these barriers. Management of these constraints is central to creating employment opportunities for individuals with hearing impairment. Employment impacts directly on quality of life, empowerment and distribution of resources. Creating employment opportunities not only allows individuals who are hearing impaired to acquire wealth independently, but further reduces the strain on their families and the government to provide for them.

## **CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results of the research with reference to appropriate local and international literature. It further examines whether findings in the current study differs or concurs with the literature presented in Chapter 2.

### **5.2. Discussion**

The results of the research study suggested that employers' perception of disability was aligned with a more current understanding of disability, which is in keeping with the social model and follows a human right's approach. Although earlier guiding policies influencing the employment of disabled individuals are based on a medical approach to disability, the shift in viewpoint amongst employers acknowledges that activity and participation is limited by the way in which society is organised. Employers demonstrated an understanding of their role in the inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the labour market and that the organisational structure of the workplace is critical to their successful integration (SegomotsoTsae, 2015).

The South African government has enacted several policies, guidelines and legislations to ensure the non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in employment. The question of disability and employment is therefore not just a social concern, but also a constitutional right (SegomotsoTsae, 2015). The six legislations, policies or guidelines included in the research study specifically focus on employment practices, and advocated for the removal of barriers that contribute to discrimination in the workplace. The intent behind the development of several legislations and policies is a step forward in the right direction, the aim being to entrench human rights and promulgate a barrier free society for persons with disability, but at the liberty of the employing organization (Maja et al. 2011, Snyman, 2009). While significant gains have been noted at the level of policy and legislation, employment of persons with disabilities did not change significantly, suggesting that disability progress has not been sustainable. The introduction of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities serves to rectify the marginalisation that individuals with disabilities face by building on existing efforts, policies and programmes in an effort to make more meaningful changes for persons with disabilities. It is

hoped that the introduction of the WPRPD will result in economic security and empowerment of persons with disabilities through the provision of decent jobs (Republic of South Africa, 2015). However, little research has been conducted to determine the effectiveness of this white paper and it may be an inordinate length of time before persons with disabilities are able to reap the benefits.

Currently, the alarmingly low employment rates amongst disabled individuals suggests there is still a gap between adoption and implementation of the legislation, potentially due to a lack of clarity of the documentation (McKinney, 2013). This gives rise to the belief that the legislation, policies or guidelines are vague and therefore difficult to execute. In general, the findings of the current research study suggests that respondents have a limited knowledge of certain legislation, policies and guidelines. A lack of knowledge of legislation results in a lack of its effective implementation, which proposes a challenge to integrating and retaining employees with disabilities. The lack of usefulness of these important documents is a constraint, and suggests that the South African legislation is not sufficiently used in disability management (van Staden, 2011).

Furthermore, the results from the current study suggest that despite individuals with hearing impairment having being employed, companies still displayed a limited knowledge of the implementation, requirements and repercussions of non-compliance of legislation, policies and guidelines, particularly the TAG. The TAG and Code of Good Practice represented progress towards entrenching labour rights, and provide employers with appropriate steps for accommodating persons with disabilities in the workplace. Employers will inadvertently fail to consult with these guidelines if they are unaware of its existence, and will therefore be unable to effectively include and address the employment needs of disabled individuals in South Africa (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016). A similar finding was noted by Heaver et al. (2004), where companies indicated they were aware of the legislation but not of its implications.

Government guidelines, such as the TAG, have illustrated the need for developing internal company policies that assist in guiding the employment of individuals with disability, as well as other disability related concerns. However, despite encouragement from government, companies remain unclear on the requirements of legislation on a national level, thus making the development of internal policies a challenge. The lack of internal guiding policies negatively impacts on the effective integration of persons with disabilities (Majola and Dhunpath, 2016).

Similarly, Maja et al. (2011) suggested that the absence of internal policies results in the absence of clear guidelines to deal with any difficulties that may arise. Research argues that a lack of internal policies promotes a work environment which does not prioritise disability related matters (van Staden, 2011). If policies are not developed at the workplace level it is unlikely that persons with disabilities will witness much progress (Majola and Dhunpath, 2016). Workplace policies demonstrate the organization's commitment to the employment of persons with disabilities. Although participants in the current study had successfully employed individuals with hearing impairment, the majority of the companies had not developed internal policies. However, it is possible that companies may have drafted specific policies but the lack of handover from a continuously changing work force may impact on the implementation of drafted policies and thus policies are not being used.

Human resource practitioners and management are the key role players in recruiting, integrating and motivating employees in the organization. It is therefore essential for human resources and management to be equipped to understand the legislative policy frameworks describing disability and management and implement it in the South African workplaces (Punch, 2016). All HR managers should be trained on how to incorporate the content of the Disability Code and the TAG into current recruitment policies to enable them to comply with the requirements stipulated in the EEA, thereby creating an organisational environment that will lead to the increased employment of persons with disabilities. However, the inherent job specificities of human resource management is not clearly defined (van Staden, 2011), and as a result of the demanding nature of their job, disability needs are not prioritised. Additionally, while human resources have traditionally focused on equity targets, and have placed considerable attention on gender and racial integration in South Africa, the same cannot be said for disability in the workplace (Majola & Dhunpath, 2016; Marumoagae, 2012; Smit, 2012). The EEA is one of the most advanced legislative measures obliging employers to remove any barriers preventing designated groups from accessing employment, including individuals with disability. However, it is evident that many business organisations experience challenges with regards to effective and efficient implementation of the EEA (Oosthuizen & Naidoo, 2010).

Despite disability being a target of the EEA, it is viewed as an optional “add-on”, and government has thus far focused on the racial aspect of Affirmative Action and equity (Smit, 2012). Smit, (2012) reported that penalties were imposed on companies who failed to employ historically, racially prejudiced individuals into management and positions of seniority. However, no fines were imposed if companies failed to include persons with disabilities into the

workplace and no requests were made by the Department of Labour for the same. The success of race and gender driven efforts is highlighted in the increased employment rates in this regard. However, the adoption of this quota system cannot be solely relied upon as it is ineffective in accounting for persons with disabilities. Further, Brennon (2010) argues that the use of a quota system gives rise to the perception that individuals with disability are unable to compete for employment opportunities in the open labour market, and may restrict persons with disabilities to a fixed level of employment. Majola and Dhunpath (2016) suggest that more focus is now needed on promoting the successful integration of individuals with disability into the labour market and that targets should be set to achieve a balance between race, gender and disability. The South African government has been slow to enforce the implementation of legislation, and the repercussions for non-compliance have been unclear. Consequently, adherence to and implementation of policies and legislation has largely been unsuccessful (Brynard, 2010).

It is the duty of the South African government to develop and form the economic climate, and to initiate policies that support and promote the hiring of disabled employees into the business community (Harris, Owen, Jones & Caldwell, 2013). If the government has thus far been unable to set precedence by failing to achieve its own targets, it is difficult to expect private businesses to comply. It can be said that employers are not being challenged enough to employ individuals with disabilities (Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu & Lewins, 2008). Many decades may pass before gainful employment amongst persons with disabilities is achieved, in which they are able to enjoy their constitutional rights through full and active participation in the labour market (Majola and Dhunpath, 2016). Policies that are clear and unambiguous are critical to the removal of barriers. Legislation alone cannot lead to equality in the workforce, but rather forms part of a guidance structure. However, the general lack of knowledge about legislation, guidelines and policies contributes towards an unsupportive working environment (Punch, 2016; Snyman, 2009). Poor knowledge results in low levels of employment, and therefore results in the marginalization of individuals with disability (van Staden, 2011).

Globally, the growing economy has resulted in increased employment opportunities for persons with disabilities to compete fairly for jobs, however instability in the South African economy has resulted in limited availability of jobs, and created a labour market that is highly competitive. In contrast to the findings by Gida and Ortlepp (2007), where only six organizations suggested they had advertised posts targeted specifically at persons with disabilities, the majority of the participants in the current research study included a commitment to equal opportunity statement

in advertisements for vacancies. This implies that persons with disabilities are being encouraged to apply for job positions and are being considered for a range of positions and unique job designs. However, despite assumingly adequate recruitment practices, the gap in earning rates persists between persons with disability and their non-disabled counterparts (Punch, 2016).

Consistent with the current study, a commonly cited reason amongst employers for the poor employment rates amongst individuals with hearing impairment is that they rarely apply for positions (Kaye et al., 2011), the reason for which possibly being be two-fold. Firstly, hearing impaired individuals may lack confidence due to social isolation and feel that they are unable to meet job requirements (Snyman, 2009), and continued rejection from previous applications may have resulted in despondency (van Staden, 2011). Secondly, individuals with hearing impairment may not actively seek employment due to a lack of employment choices, resulting in accepting work that is less than desired or a preferred reliance on disability grants (Shaw, 2013). Dependency on social welfare has had a disempowering effect (van Staden, 2011), and individuals with hearing impairment are not willing to forego disability grants for potentially temporary work. While the contextual challenges in South Africa cannot be ignored, the continuous exclusion of persons with disability from the workforce will remain a financial burden on the state.

It is also plausible that individuals with hearing impairment may be unaware of job opportunities. Difficulties seeking employment may stem from limited educational opportunities resulting in poor literacy levels. Onset of hearing loss and educational levels are important factors influencing employment opportunities (McKinney, 2013). The majority of the South African population access healthcare through public hospitals and facilities. These institutions, particularly in KZN, lack early identification services, such as neonatal screening programmes. Consequently, children with early onset of hearing loss are faced with the challenge of delayed diagnosis. Additionally, parents or caregivers of patients with hearing loss have limited awareness and experience with disability. Thus parents or caregivers typically return to seek medical care when the child may already be three years of age or later. Critical years for language development are passed without intervention as a result of late diagnosis, and the challenge thereafter being to access appropriate education to develop the necessary language and communication skills required for employment prospects.



Currently, education inclusive policies for disability do exist, however severity of impairment differs and not all individuals with hearing impairment can be accommodated into mainstream educational facilities. Institutions such as special schools are available, however, the argument is that there is a lack of teachers with the appropriate specialised training, and secondly, that the education provided does not prepare students with the confidence, skills and qualifications needed to find work (Luft & Huff, 2011). As a result, many employees lacked adequate skills required for positions of seniority. If individuals with disabilities are not provided access to basic education and literacy skills, they will continue to be restricted to unskilled employment (Gartrell, 2010). Hart et al. (2004) put forward that completion of further education improves opportunities to secure meaningful employment. While higher education facilities are available, they are not always accessible, and having higher levels of qualifications does not guarantee a place in the labour market (Rydberg et al., 2011). Individuals with hearing impairment are further disadvantaged due to diverse socio-economic conditions and as a result the greater population of hearing impaired individuals are unable to afford higher education. As is the case in the present study, in which a large number of the employees were typically from a previously disadvantaged background and potentially poor economic conditions. It is likely that education was not affordable and schools for the deaf were not accessible. Research further argues that although specialised public schools are in existence, the level of education provided is subpar, and teachers do not have the necessary knowledge to equip learners with the required transitional skills to compete in a predominantly hearing labour force (Luft, 2012; Luft and Huff, 2011).

Employees are able to acquire some foundational, employment and independent living skills through the various programmes offered by Deaf organizations, however these organizations are burdened to capacity (Luft, 2012). Additionally, due to the hearing loss mostly being congenital (as a result of birth), the development of language was generally negatively impacted. Prevocational hearing loss often results in significant deficits in literacy and academic learning (Luft, 2012). Various vocational organizations are available to bridge the gap between employers and employees with disabilities. It should be noted that hearing impaired individuals in the present research study were typically employed after being approached by an organization for the deaf, and not necessarily because of effort on the part of the employer to actively recruit an individual with hearing impairment, and companies had networked with organizations within the disability sector in an effort to understand disability needs. This was in contrast to the research conducted by Gida and Ortlepp (2007). Furthermore, it is likely that initial positive and successful experiences of having employed persons with hearing impairment, and reliance on the

support received by the organization may have resulted in the employer's willingness to employ more than one individual with a hearing impairment.

The external organisations that facilitated the placement of individuals with hearing impairment had typically conducted training with the companies in which hearing related concerns were addressed. Training, as mandated in the TAG, is critical to successful integration, as it promotes awareness on aspects related to disability, and provides employees with the necessary skills to overcome communication barriers, which was reported to be a major barrier to successful integration. These external organizations are likely to be well versed in policy guidelines and are able to provide direction, which allows for successful integration. Thus employers may not have experienced challenges integrating employees as a result of the technical support they received from external disability organizations. Additionally, the disclosure of hearing status prior to employment may have resulted in employers being better prepared to integrate the employee into the work environment (Spirito-Dalgin, 2008). Deaf awareness training in which co-workers become informed and develop an understanding of the implications of hearing loss is critical to levels of success and relates positively to retention of employees (Punch, 2016).

Although steps have been taken to ensure the successful integration of employees with hearing impairment, little has been done to retain disabled employees wishing to resign. Efforts to retain employees are critical to maintaining the efficiency and culture of the work environment. Van Staden (2011) pointed out that retention strategies are a fairly unknown approach in South Africa, and efforts are rarely made to promote growth amongst employees and to retain them. The low levels of employment in general, and amongst persons with disabilities in particular, means that any individual employee can be easily replaced. If employees are not appropriately orientated and integrated, it is less likely that they will be retained. Failing to retain staff who have undergone training to acquire relevant knowledge and expertise specific to the work environment can be economically illogical and a wastage of human resources. Employees with disability who are appropriately accommodated, exhibit high job retention and employers are able to save on costs associated with high turnover rates (Donnelly & Trochim, 2006).

Reasonable accommodations are critical to the successful retention of employees with hearing impairment, boost overall company morale and shapes new attitudes amongst co-workers and employers, bringing skill sets to the forefront (Shaw, 2013). Kooser (2013) suggested that employers who support awareness training related to hearing loss for co-workers encourages the

use of appropriate communication strategies, assumes responsibility for the provision of necessary accommodations and display a commitment to maintaining efficiency and productivity. This was noted amongst participants in the current study. Reasonable accommodations prevent occupational injustices and afford the hearing impaired employee the opportunity to break stereotypes by proving their potential, skills and competence (Shaw, 2013). Studies show that there are more benefits to accommodating employees with disabilities, with 56% of employers indicating that the accommodation increased productivity, and 91% agreeing that it helped to retain a qualified employee (Solovieva et al., 2011).

Despite the provision of reasonable accommodations being a legal requirement, as stipulated in the EEA, less than half of the participants indicated that their organization provides them for employees who require them. Similar to a study by Gussenhoven et al. (2015), the majority of participants were under the impression that employees with hearing impairment did not require accommodations to conduct the tasks for which they had been employed. Reasonable accommodations in the workplace are not typically well understood, and this wide lack of knowledge can be identified as one of the main reasons for its poor implementation (Gussenhoven et al., 2015). Hearing aids and assistive devices have minimal benefit for individuals with profound hearing loss who therefore require accommodations in the form of alternative communication methods, critical to their inclusion in the workplace. Employers in the current study displayed cognisance of the communication difficulties experienced by individuals with hearing impairment and indicated a willingness to take necessary steps to meet their needs. Employers therefore demonstrated some understanding of the negative impact that hearing impairment has on the ability to meet work place demands.

In contrast to the literature, employers in the current study did not consider the cost of accommodations as a barrier to employment (Kaye et al., 2011; Donnelly & Trochim, 2006). It is likely that the disclosure of hearing status prior to employment may have positively influenced relationships with management and co-workers who were able to identify and implement support systems. However, in most cases employers felt that the hearing impaired employees did not require any accommodations, which may be due to employees being placed in elementary positions. Opportunities for employment exist in almost any occupation as long as reasonable accommodations are made available. Onus should also be upon employers and management to consult with the hearing impaired employee to identify ways in which the disability needs can be met.

Arguably, modernization has changed the face of the labour market, and this shift has placed increased demands on communication and interpersonal skills (Gustafsson et al. 2013). The workforce has seen a shift away from physical labour and emphasis is now placed on employment which involves greater interpersonal communication (Neitzel, Swinburn, Hammer & Eisenberg, 2017), consequently changing the employment status of hearing impaired individuals and potential earning rates (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013). The productivity of companies is based on constant interaction between co-workers which include spontaneous meetings, telephonic interactions or video conferencing. Situations in the workplace require and predominantly use verbal communication for effective engagement (Kooser, 2013). Collectively, communication difficulties in various situations was identified, by participants, as the main barrier to the employment of hearing impaired individuals, which was supported by the findings in a study by Punch (2016) and Perkins-Dock (2015). Increased communication demands may place added stress and functional limitations on employees who experience communication difficulties. Even in the presence of sign language interpreters and assistive technology, active “listening” in group settings can be exhausting (Punch, 2016). This may give rise to the belief that persons with disabilities are incapable and does not allow for their capabilities to be proven. The ability to seek employment and advance within a career requires a range of communication skills (Punch, 2016), and it is possible that a lack of verbal communication skills, particularly amongst those individuals with severe to profound impairments, may result in limitations towards effective engagement (Kooser, 2013).

Furthermore, with increased communication demands, employers rated communication skills and the ability to be social as crucial to promotion, and were therefore a barrier to opportunities for job maintenance and career advancement amongst hearing impaired individuals (Perkins-Dock et al. 2015; Rosengreen & Saladin, 2010). Communication skills were also central to receiving task related instructions and meeting workplace demands, and the lack thereof may affect relationships between co-workers and resultantly individuals with hearing impairment may be excluded and isolated (Boutin, 2010). Additionally, the lack of clear communication makes it difficult for hearing impaired employees to perform job requirements and meet job expectations (Rosengreen & Saladin, 2010). While participants in the current study did not endorse the lack of opportunities for promotion, research suggested that companies did not necessarily foster promotion opportunities (Hernandez et al. 2008). Employees would typically become comfortable with current job positions, inhibiting the desire to be promoted (Hernandez,

2008). Consequently, employees rarely sought promotions and employers rarely encouraged them.

Contrary to the popular belief suggested in literature, employers did not consider hearing impaired employees to be poor performers, less dedicated, frequently absent and unable to work up to the same standards as co-workers (Gustafsson et al., 2013; Kaye et al. 2011). Furthermore, employers were not typically concerned regarding legal matters and financial implications. This suggests that employers are more concerned about having a workforce that is efficient and employees who are dedicated, something that participants noted hearing impaired employees to be. Participants in the present study reported that hearing impaired employees generally required extra time from supervisors or management which contributed towards poor employment. This was similar to a study conducted by Kaye et al. (2011), where 70.9% of participants agreed that supervisors needed extra time to assist workers with disabilities. Employers may be concerned of the effect of this increased burden on managers and productivity, which may be the result of a lack of familiarity dealing with the needs of hearing impaired employees. As suggested by Kaye et al. (2011), a lack of familiarity can manifest in reliance on erroneous stereotypes that individuals with disabilities are poor job performers and incapable of working independently. Consequently, employers may tend to continue employing equally qualified able-bodied constituents.

Similar to the literature, concerns about the attitudes of co-workers were also considered a significant barrier by the study respondents (Jansson, 2015; Kaye et al. 2011). Negative attitudes and perceptions are a constant predicament individuals with hearing impairment face (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007). Disclosure of hearing status to co-workers, although advisable, is not an obligation. Co-workers who are unaware may not understand how to engage with the hearing impaired employee and this may lead to conflict between employees. However, disclosure of hearing status may be inappropriately interpreted and marked with stigma, causing co-workers to act out in accordance with stereotypes, and treating the hearing impaired employee differently. Negative attitudes caused by myths contribute to the ideology that hearing impaired individuals are different and not equivalent to their hearing counterparts (Snyman, 2009). These attitudes may not present as openly hostile, but emphasizes the difference between co-workers, and as a result, discourages the hearing impaired employee (Smit, 2012). These attitudes and perceptions are driven by a lack of understanding and often lead to isolation, and unsupportive working environments (Baldrige & Swift, 2016; Punch, 2016). It is therefore essential for authoritative

figures to engage in ongoing communication with hearing impaired employees to ensure that their needs are being met (Punch, 2016).

In contrast to the findings by Rosengreen and Saladin (2010), most of the organizations in the present study had employed sign language interpreters to assist during meetings or to training hearing colleagues. These positive experiences are evidence of the benefit of sign language interpreters. Additionally, employees are orientated on expectations and given exposure to the working environment and are better prepared to integrate into the work force. Training and coaching of hearing impaired employees in advance prepares the employee to interact with hearing colleagues thereby reducing chances of isolation. Further deaf awareness and education provides hearing colleagues with education and de-mystifies the myths or stigmas hearing co-workers may have regarding hearing loss (Punch, 2016). It provides co-workers with necessary information to understand that hearing impaired individuals are usually more than capable (McKinney, 2013). Sign language training can be once off, and reduces the need as well as costs of having to acquire an external interpreter. Acquiring knowledge on this method of communication will help bridge the gap between hearing and hearing impaired employees. Furthermore, it fosters a more inclusive environment, one in which the hearing impaired employee is seen as an equal.

Additionally, Baldridge and Swift (2016) suggested human resource professionals and management are essential for fostering work environments that are supportive and encourage understanding amongst co-workers. Similarly, Miceli et al. (2002) suggested that a key intervention strategy is disability sensitisation workshops, the purpose being to increase awareness relating to disability, alter attitudes towards disability, overcome communication barriers and equip employers with the necessary skills and tools to do so. Disability sensitisation programmes also focused on training relating to appropriate terminology that should be used when communicating with persons with disabilities. Studies have shown the effectiveness of these workshops in overcoming negative stereotypes and that the education programme provided a solution to discrimination in the workplace (Shier, Graham & Jones, 2009; Potts, 2005). Despite its value, many employers do not provide training programmes. There is a pressing need for disability sensitisation programmes to address and overcome attitudinal barriers, however, this will not occur overnight or without sufficient interventions (Miceli et al., 2002).

Governing bodies need to provide incentives that encourage the employment of individuals with disability, and to set an example that motivates other private companies to comply. Tax breaks and government programmes to pay for or subsidize reasonable accommodations for hearing impaired employees can encourage more companies to employ persons with disabilities, especially for those organizations that are concerned about the financial burden of doing so, this finding was supported by Kaye et al. (2011). Furthermore, it was indicated that an organization wide system would be useful for dealing with accommodation requests (Gida & Ortlepp, 2007). Outsourcing disability management to governing bodies or disability champions would effectively reduce the burden placed on an individual supervisor or management, and as these individuals have expertise in disability and diversity, they would be able to provide support to management and supervisors who are then enabled to do the same for other relevant staff.

Enforcement of legislation and policies will allow for the government to identify gaps in the legislation and develop more appropriate guidelines for organizations to follow. Furthermore, it will force governing bodies to prioritise monitoring of the implementation of legislation and evaluate its effectiveness or shortfalls, which can thereafter be addressed. Written guidelines developed by South African governing body exist, however, the findings in the present study are indicative of the shortcomings. While documents such as the Code of Good Practice and the TAG have been developed to assist employers with appropriately accommodating persons with disabilities, the guidelines focus on disability in general. This indicates that people with disability are seen as a homogenous group, which can be challenging, as disability is unique to each individual. Organizations are therefore encouraged to consider disability candidates, and develop internal policies to guide the process.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

The outcome of the research study aimed to understand the perspective and employment experiences of employers within the South African private business sector. The results highlight that most employers were concerned of communication difficulties as a result of hearing impairment, and felt this to be one of the main reason for poor employment rates. The research further brings to light the impact of education on employment opportunities. The current educational curriculum is insubstantial, and fails to provide individuals with hearing impairment with the necessary vocational skills to acquire skilled employment. This research anticipates that

individuals with hearing impairment will see little career progress if leadership fails to actively prioritise disability related matters.



## **CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter highlights the main findings of the current research, its limitations and strengths as well as recommendations for future clinical practice and research.

### **6.2. Concluding summary**

Globally, hearing impaired individuals are faced with limited opportunities to access the job market, and are therefore unemployed or underemployed. Restrictions on employment and career opportunities continue to contribute towards a gap in earning rates between hearing impaired individuals and their hearing counterparts, and consequently results in an increased dependence on government social security. In order to address low employment rates amongst hearing impaired individuals, it is important to understand the barriers impeding, as well as practical strategies contributing towards their successful employment. Thus, this study aimed to identify current perceptions and experiences amongst employers regarding the employment of hearing impaired individuals.

The findings indicate an overall limited usefulness of current South African legislation, policies and guidelines, the main reason being that it is ambiguous and fails to provide assistance with the employment of disabled individuals. This was supported by the majority of the participants, who indicated that the requirements and repercussions of non-compliance were unclear. As a result, employers are unaware of their obligations and failed to comply. However, the introduction of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is indeed a more progressive step and it is hoped that this paper will be promulgated to an Act, and will contribute positively towards the lives' of individuals with disabilities. Nevertheless due to poor monitoring of the execution of the legislations, policies and programmes may remain unsuccessful. Effective monitoring of policy implementation will positively contribute towards the transformation of the business environment, and enhance the management of disability related matters.

The focus has thus far been on policy development rather than implementing existing policies. The aim of policies that have been developed may never be achieved if systems are not in place to monitor the extent of implementation. Onus is upon the government to monitor the

implementation of legislation and policies developed, and to identify barriers affecting effective implementation. Failure to monitor the implementation of legislation has resulted in a lack of accountability amongst employers, and thus the law does not explicitly guarantee a disabled individual's right to employment. Employers will remain unaware, and will continue to be in breach of laws in terms of non-compliance, as long as these laws are not enforced and regularly monitored by the Department of Labour.

The study uncovered that communication skills were central to employment, with associated difficulties being the main reason for poor employment rates amongst individuals with hearing impairment. The severity of hearing loss impacts on communication ability, with the majority of the participants identifying that employees presented with severe to profound degrees of hearing loss. Written language was therefore identified as the main method of communication due to a lack of sign language interpreters. This relates to the lack of commitment to provide reasonable accommodations and create an inclusive working environment. Although cost of accommodations was not identified as a concern, most participants were not willing to provide accommodations and typically felt it to be unnecessary.

For majority of adults, employment is a major aspect affecting quality of life, not only in terms of economic survival, but also instrumental in meeting the social and psychological needs. Legislative and social changes have resulted in some advances in employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, although income levels continue to lag behind. Attitudes of employers are the greatest challenge, and changing the perceptions of employers towards individuals with hearing impairment will contribute towards empowering businesses to deal with disability.

### **6.3. Strengths and limitations of the study**

The study has the following strengths:

- The research study recognized the importance of the employers' perspective, which is essential for ensuring the successful employment of hearing impaired individuals and providing work support measures. The research highlights the challenges and enabling factors to employment, as experienced by current employers, and the participants were presented with an opportunity to suggest practical strategies that may facilitate the employment of hearing impaired individuals. These suggestions can thus be collaborated to enhance existing literature and create more disability specific guidelines that may be

endorsed by relevant stakeholders to advocate for increased and better employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

- The current findings support the need for amendments to legislature to be more meaningful in terms of management practices and the employment of persons with disabilities.
- Findings of the current study may also be used by educators, vocational programmes and audiologists to enhance curricula, and will thereby ensure that hearing impaired employees are provided with transitional skills, in alignment with the needs of employers.
- The research study has application value, and contributes to both labor relations and human resource management.

The study had the following limitations:

- Due to the willingness of organizations to participate and the limited availability of organizations employing hearing impaired individuals, the results obtained were based on a small sample size. Additionally, the sample population was limited to a specific geographical location, in KZN, which poses a challenge regarding the generalization of the research findings.
- The current research findings are specific to the employment of hearing impaired individuals and cannot be generalized to other disabilities.
- The research study focused specifically on companies that have experience with employing individuals with hearing impairment, and it would be interesting to note the responses of a non-purposive sample.

#### **6.4. Research Implications**

The following research implications are noted:

- Future research on a larger scale should be conducted and aim to include an increased number of participants from various geographical locations.
- A comparative study focusing on the viewpoint of employers who have no experience with having employed individuals with hearing loss would substantiate the study findings.
- The current research study focused on the employment of hearing impaired individuals with predominantly reported congenital deafness. Additional research is needed on employers' perceptions and willingness to retain employees that acquired deafness during employment.
- Reasonable accommodations should be contextualized, and research into this area will assist in demystifying related aspects, such as the benefits to providing reasonable

accommodations, thereby advocating for its need and the various types of accommodations that are available to meet the needs.

- The South African government should conduct a specialized census specific to the various disabilities in order to better develop employment equity planning and ensure that the conceptualization of disability is in alignment with the objectives of disability management. Furthermore, the South African government should review current disability strategies, and ensure that sufficient capacity is available to effectively monitor the implementation of the legislation.

## **6.5. Clinical Implications**

The following clinical implications are noted:

- Current management of patients with hearing impairment should go beyond just the fitting of hearing aids, and rehabilitation should focus on empowering patients to lead an independent life that includes enhancing their employment potential.
- As per the Health Professions Act No. 56 of 1974, it is part of the scope of practice of Audiologists, to advocate for the communication needs, rights and social inclusion of individuals with hearing impairment. Audiologists further have the duty to make recommendations about educational and vocational programming. However, despite this being part of the scope of practice, it is not being implemented by Audiologists. Audiologists require more training in this regard and further research should be conducted to identify gaps in service delivery.
- Audiologists should develop relationships with educational facilities and vocational programmes, and facilitate the referral of patients to these organizations as appropriate. Audiologists can be made aware of potential job opportunities available through these various organizations, which they are then able to communicate to patients.
- Audiologists should counsel patients and encourage individuals with hearing impairment to apply for jobs rather than be reliant on social grants.
- The current research study aims to encourage fellow audiologists to intensify advocacy for the employment of the individuals with hearing impairment. Audiologists practicing in educational facilities, such as deaf schools, should strive to enhance the current programmes that are in place to meet transitional needs in terms of skills and knowledge development. Current programmes should allow for individuals with hearing impairment to be exposed to and interact with hearing peers.

- Greater public health efforts should be made to create awareness and understanding of hearing impaired individuals and their needs, thereby eliminating negative perceptions.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

Legislation and social changes can have an influence on improving the educational and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. However, despite these advances in creating awareness of their needs, individuals with disability continue to experience very low employment rates. In light of this, the current research aimed to identify the employment experiences of individuals with hearing impairment from the perspective of the employer, in order to better identify areas influencing their recruitment, hiring and promotion that are in need of intervention. Participants in the study had displayed an overall positive approach to the employment of hearing impaired individuals, and identified contextually relevant strategies that can be adopted to allow for their successful employment. It is hoped that the findings of the study encourages reformed recruitment and retention strategies among employers, and guide organizations in disability management. Furthermore, the findings can be used to motivate for more in-depth disability related policies and re-conceptualize disability, such that affected individuals are viewed as equal constituents rather than targets to be achieved. The findings from the research study may encourage relevant stakeholders to intensify current programmes and human resource management practices in a manner that advocates for the employment of individuals with hearing impairments. In this regard, hearing impaired individuals will have the opportunity to achieve their potential and fully participate and in a work environment that is satisfying and supports improved quality of life.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Questionnaire

School of Health Sciences  
Discipline of Audiology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Westville Campus  
Tel: 031 260 7438  
Fax: 031 260 7622



The following document contains a number of questions relating to the employment of hearing impaired individuals. Note, there are no correct or incorrect answers and confidentiality of your responses will be maintained. The questionnaire consists of 23 questions and should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Kindly complete each question to the best of your ability. Please mark your responses with an X.

#### **SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL/ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**1. Age:**

|             |  |             |  |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| 18-25 years |  | 31-35 years |  |
| 26-30 years |  | 36-40 years |  |
| >40 years   |  |             |  |

**2. Gender: Male**

☐

**Female**

☐

**3. Race:**

|       |  |       |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|
| Black |  | Asian |  |
| White |  | Other |  |

**4. Home Language:**

|         |  |           |  |
|---------|--|-----------|--|
| English |  | Afrikaans |  |
| isiZulu |  | Xhosa     |  |
| Other   |  |           |  |

**5. Please indicate your current job position within your organization and length of employment.**



|  | <b>Job<br/>Position</b> | <b>Number of years<br/>employed in this<br/>position</b> |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Management                             |                         |  |
| Human resource practitioner            |                         |  |
| Occupational health and safety officer |                         |  |
| Other (please specify):                |                         |  |

**6. How many individuals are currently employed by your organization?**

**7. Please indicate the type of industry/employment sector.**

|                         |  |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Financial               |  | Wholesale/Retail/Repair |  |
| Communications          |  | Construction            |  |
| Manufacturing           |  | Transport               |  |
| Construction            |  | Beauty                  |  |
| Automotive              |  | Restaurant/Hotel        |  |
| Other (please specify): |  |                         |  |

**8. Please provide an approximate value, where necessary for the following, as applicable to your organization.**

|  |  |          |  |                       |  |            |          |
|--|--|----------|--|-----------------------|--|------------|----------|
| Number of individuals with hearing loss        |  | 0-10     |  | 11-19                 |  | ≥20        |          |
| Percentage of Males                            |  |          |  | Percentage of Females |  |            |          |
| Race of majority of persons with disabilities: |  |          |  |                       |  |            |          |
| Black  |  | White    |  | Asian                 |  | Colored    | Other    |
| Level of hearing loss of majority:             |  |          |  |                       |  |            |          |
| Mild   |  | Moderate |  | Mod-Severe            |  | Severe     | Profound |
| Cause of hearing loss:                         |  |          |  |                       |  |            |          |
| Birth  |  | Disease  |  | Noise                 |  | Don't know |          |
| Primary means of communication                 |  |          |  |                       |  |            |          |

|                                      |  |         |         |               |  |             |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------|---------|---------------|--|-------------|--|
| Spoken                               |  | Written |         | Sign Language |  | Other       |  |
| Role within the organization:        |  |         |         |               |  |             |  |
| Qualifications possessed by majority |  |         |         | <Matric       |  | Matric      |  |
| Bachelors                            |  |         | Diploma |               |  | Masters/PhD |  |

**SECTION B: EMPLOYER'S PERCEPTIONS OF DISABILITY AND EXPERIENCES UTILIZING POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION ENABLING THE EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, ESPECIALLY INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT**

**9. How would you describe your awareness of disability related issues?**

|     |  |        |  |      |  |
|-----|--|--------|--|------|--|
| Low |  | Medium |  | High |  |
|-----|--|--------|--|------|--|

**10. In your opinion, which one of the following more accurately defines what a disability is?**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Disability is a result of a physical, sensory or mental condition and it is the responsibility of the impaired individual to find a way to fit into society |  |
| An individual is disabled based on their circumstances and society's lack of ability to accommodate disabled individuals.                                   |  |

**11. Please indicate if you have found the following policies/legislations useful or not, with regards to the employment of individuals with disability.**

| Policy   | Useful | Not Useful | Don't Know |
|--|--------|------------|------------|
| Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995                        |        |            |            |
| White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997 |        |            |            |
| Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998                      |        |            |            |
| Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998                       |        |            |            |
| Code of Good Practice, 2002                                |        |            |            |
| Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment           |        |            |            |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| of People with Disabilities (TAG), 2002 |  |  |  |
| Other useful policies (please specify): |  |  |  |

**12. 1. In your opinion, are the requirements of the following South African employment policies/legislations/guidelines clearly outlined?**

| <b>Policy</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995  |            |           |                   |
| White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997                               |            |           |                   |
| Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998  |            |           |                   |
| Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998   |            |           |                   |
| Code of Good Practice, 2002  |            |           |                   |
| Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment of People with Disabilities (TAG), 2002 |            |           |                   |

**12.2. In your opinion, is the implementation of the following South African employment policies/legislations/guidelines clearly outlined?**

| <b>Policy</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995  |            |           |                   |
| White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997                               |            |           |                   |
| Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998  |            |           |                   |
| Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998   |            |           |                   |
| Code of Good Practice, 2002  |            |           |                   |
| Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment of People with Disabilities (TAG), 2002 |            |           |                   |

**12.3. In your opinion, are the repercussions for non-compliance of the following South African employment policies/legislations/guidelines clearly outlined?**

| <b>Policy</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Don't Know</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995  |            |           |                   |
| White Paper: Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997                               |            |           |                   |
| Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998  |            |           |                   |
| Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998   |            |           |                   |
| Code of Good Practice, 2002  |            |           |                   |
| Technical Assistance Guideline on the Employment of People with Disabilities (TAG), 2002 |            |           |                   |

**13. Does your organization have internal policies or guidelines governing the employment of persons with disabilities?**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Yes                      |  |
| No                       |  |
| Currently developing one |  |
| Don't know               |  |
| It's unnecessary         |  |

**If yes, please specify:** \_\_\_\_\_

**14. If yes, are these policies aligned with any national or international legislations, policies or guidelines?**

|     |  |    |  |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes |  | No |  |
|-----|--|----|--|

**If yes, please specify:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C: EMPLOYER’S EXPERIENCES WITH THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

**15. The following table refers to recruiting/ hiring individuals with disability. Please indicate yes/no where applicable. Where asked to specify, please do so in the *comment* column.**

|   | Yes | No | Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| In the majority of the cases, were you aware of the disability prior to hiring the individual?  |     |    |         |
| Were there any benefits to hiring someone with a disability?<br>If yes, please specify.   |     |    |         |
| Does your organization proactively recruit job applicants with hearing loss?  |     |    |         |
| Does your organization include a commitment to equal opportunity statement within recruitment procedures to encourage individuals with disabilities to apply?               |     |    |         |
| Does your organization make use of any services or resources offered in KZN that assist companies with the employment of persons with hearing loss? If yes, please specify. |     |    |         |
| Does your organization make use of any service offered in KZN that provide training to people with hearing loss? If yes, please specify.                                    |     |    |         |
| Were there any challenges integrating employees with hearing loss into the workplace?<br>If yes, please specify:  |     |    |         |

**16. Has the organization used any of the following consultants to assist with the recruitment and retention process?**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Occupational Health & Safety Officer |  |
| Social Worker                        |  |
| Occupational Therapist               |  |
| Psychologist                         |  |
| Audiologist                          |  |
| Not applicable                       |  |
| Other (please specify):              |  |

**17. If external consultants were used, please indicate the stage in which they were involved.**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Recruitment               |  |
| Selection                 |  |
| Placement                 |  |
| Training                  |  |
| Reasonable accommodations |  |
| Not applicable            |  |
| Other (please specify):   |  |

**18. Does your organization provide reasonable accommodations for employees with hearing loss?**

|     |  |    |  |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes |  | No |  |
|-----|--|----|--|

**If yes, please specify the types of reasonable accommodations provided**

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**19. If no, will your organization be willing to provide employees with hearing loss with reasonable accommodations?**

|     |  |    |  |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes |  | No |  |
|-----|--|----|--|

**20. Please indicate which of the following steps the organization has taken or is willing to take in order to meet the needs of the employee with hearing loss.**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Provide specified/modified equipment/assistive devices        |  |
| Modify work station   |  |
| Restructure working hours                                     |  |
| Job sharing (share the work load with other employees)        |  |
| Work from home  |  |
| Provide additional job support or assistance                  |  |
| Provide sign language interpreter                             |  |
| Provide training on hearing impairment for hearing colleagues |  |
| Provide counselling   |  |
| My employees do not require reasonable accommodations         |  |
| Reasonable accommodations are too costly                      |  |
| Other (please specify):                                       |  |

**SECTION D: EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS RELATED TO RECRUITING AND RETAINING INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

**21. Referring to employers in general, and not necessarily the organization you are employed by, please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following perceptions and attitudes of employers for not hiring/retaining individuals with hearing loss.**

| <b>Reason</b>  | <b>Strongly Agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Employers believe that employees with hearing loss cannot do the basic functions of the jobs they apply for                                      |                       |              |                 |                          |
| Employers cannot ask the applicant about their impairment which makes it difficult to assess if they will be able to fulfil the job requirements |                       |              |                 |                          |
| Individuals with hearing loss do not have the necessary skills and/or experience to perform job duties   |                       |              |                 |                          |
| Employees with hearing loss cannot use the   |                       |              |                 |                          |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| telephone  |  |  |  |  |
| Employees with hearing loss are poor performers and less dedicated to their jobs   |  |  |  |  |
| There are no opportunities for promotion   |  |  |  |  |
| There are no opportunities for professional development  |  |  |  |  |
| Employees with hearing loss are frequently absent  |  |  |  |  |
| Employees with hearing loss will not be able to work up to the same standards as employees without hearing loss                          |  |  |  |  |
| Employees with hearing loss require extra time from supervisors and management   |  |  |  |  |
| They are concerned about attitudes of co-workers towards the employee with hearing loss  |  |  |  |  |
| They are concerned about the safety of the hearing impaired employee   |  |  |  |  |
| Communication difficulties affecting participation in training activities and meetings   |  |  |  |  |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability of hearing impaired employees to understand and complete instructions given                |  |  |  |  |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability of hearing impaired employees to interact with co-workers both socially and professionally |  |  |  |  |
| They do not know how to handle the needs of employees with hearing loss  |  |  |  |  |
| They are uncomfortable around individuals with hearing loss and are unsure how to behave   |  |  |  |  |
| They are unable to discipline or fire employees with hearing loss because of potential lawsuits  |  |  |  |  |
| They are concerned about the costs of  |  |  |  |  |



|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| reasonable accommodations   |  |  |  |  |
| They are concerned about increased health insurance or worker's compensation premiums |  |  |  |  |
| They discriminate against applicants with hearing loss                                |  |  |  |  |
| Individuals with hearing loss rarely apply for jobs                                   |  |  |  |  |

## **SECTION E: BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT**

**22. Please indicate, if any, all the challenges that the organization has encountered when recruiting/hiring a person with hearing loss**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Social based barriers (stigma, stereotypes, attitudinal) |  |
| Communication difficulties                               |  |
| Physical/environmental barriers                          |  |
| No availability of sign language interpreters            |  |
| Financial/cost implications for accommodations           |  |
| Lack of knowledge on reasonable accommodations           |  |
| Inadequate qualifications                                |  |
| Abilities do not meet essential job requirements         |  |
| Low morale amongst hearing impaired individuals          |  |
| Lack of familiarity with dealing with hearing loss       |  |
| Conflict related to Deaf culture                         |  |
| Misunderstanding of instructions for job application     |  |
| Cost of training   |  |
| Additional cost of supervision                           |  |
| No barriers  |  |

**SECTION F: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES THAT COULD FACILITATE THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING LOSS**

**23. In your opinion, please indicate whether you think the following policy and practical strategies for hiring and retaining employees with hearing loss are *very helpful*, *somewhat helpful* or *not helpful*.**

| <b>Strategy</b>   | <b>Very Helpful</b> | <b>Somewhat helpful</b> | <b>Not Helpful</b> |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Enforce existing legislation and policies   |                     |                         |                    |
| More or better training on hearing loss and needs of the hearing impaired for staff                             |                     |                         |                    |
| More support from human resources and management  |                     |                         |                    |
| Pre-employment preparation of vocational skills (training, mentoring, coaching of individual with hearing loss) |                     |                         |                    |
| A probation period for employees with hearing loss  |                     |                         |                    |
| Salary subsidies for employees with hearing loss  |                     |                         |                    |
| Tax breaks for hiring/retaining employees with hearing loss   |                     |                         |                    |
| Written guidelines for dealing with hearing loss  |                     |                         |                    |
| More efficient way to recruit applicants with hearing loss  |                     |                         |                    |
| A written company policy of non-discrimination  |                     |                         |                    |
| A diversity specialist to deal with disability issues   |                     |                         |                    |
| Central organization source for expertise on reasonable accommodation issues and requests                       |                     |                         |                    |
| External mediation for guidance on disability and reasonable accommodations                                     |                     |                         |                    |
| Government programme to pay for or subsidize reasonable accommodations for employees with hearing loss          |                     |                         |                    |
| A centralized fund within the organization to pay for reasonable accommodations                                 |                     |                         |                    |
| Improve corporate culture/staff relations   |                     |                         |                    |
| Desensitization workshops   |                     |                         |                    |
| Sign language interpreters  |                     |                         |                    |
| Buddy systems   |                     |                         |                    |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Improved awareness of communication strategies |  |  |  |
| Sign language classes for hearing colleagues   |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify):                        |  |  |  |

**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for participating. Your time and effort is highly appreciated.**

## **Appendix B: Information Letter**

School of Health Sciences  
Discipline of Audiology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Westville Campus  
Tel: 031 260 7438  
Fax: 031 260 7622



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### **The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employer's perceptions and experiences**

Dear Participant

I am currently undertaking my Masters of Communication Pathology (Audiology) through the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus. You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research pertaining to employment and hearing loss.

I am interested in identifying the successful factors which enable the recruitment and retention of hearing impaired individuals in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector. The focus of my research is thus on the perceptions and experiences of employers regarding the employment of hearing impaired individuals. The research study further aims to identify current reasonable accommodations companies in KwaZulu-Natal have adopted and explore the degree to which employers are willing to provide accommodations to employees with hearing loss.

The study is expected to enroll participants in Management and Human Resources from the various companies within the KwaZulu-Natal private sector. The duration of your participation, should you agree, is approximately 15 minutes.

Your input will provide insight into the attitudes of employers in South Africa and ascertain factors which have been beneficial in enabling positive work experiences for individuals with hearing impairment. Further, analysing the various factors influencing employment and the retention of individuals with hearing impairment is critical for monitoring and evaluating current programmes and policies and renew efforts to address barriers which impede hearing impaired individuals with regards to job attainment and career advancement.

There will be no risk, injury, discomfort or costs incurred by participants in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary; if at any point you no longer wish to participate, your decision will be respected. All efforts will be made to ensure the identity of the respondent will be kept confidential along with all data obtained.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC), (HSS/1463/016M).

In the event of any problems, concerns or questions you may contact the researcher, supervisor or HSSREC. The contact details are as follows:

Researcher:

Name: Miss Nishita Doolabh

Tel: +27 83 781 6101

Email: [nishidoolabh@gmail.com](mailto:nishidoolabh@gmail.com)

Supervisor:

Name: Mrs Nasim Khan

Tel: +27 82 312 4430

Email: [khanna@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:khanna@ukzn.ac.za)

HSSREC Administrators:

Name: Miss Prem Mohun

Tel: +27 31 260 4557/2384

Email: [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Name: Miss Phumelele Ximba

Tel: +27 31 260 3587

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

HSSREC:

Email: [HssrecHealthsciences@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HssrecHealthsciences@ukzn.ac.za)

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Nishita Doolabh

## Appendix C: Consent Form

Participant Declaration:

- I \_\_\_\_\_ have been informed about the study entitled ***The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employer's perceptions and experiences*** by Nishita Doolabh.
- I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.
- I have been given an opportunity to ask questions regarding the study and have received answers that are satisfactory to me.
- I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and I understand that I may withdraw at any time.
- I agree the data obtained may be used for educational and research purposes.
- All information provided by myself will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity.
- I understand that this study is for research purposes only and I cannot expect any financial benefits or gains.
- If I have any further queries, concerns or questions related to the study or my rights as a research participant, I understand that I may contact the researcher, supervisor or the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the contact details provided.

I hereby give my consent to participate in this study

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Consenting Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Gatekeeper Permission Letter

School of Health Sciences  
Discipline of Audiology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Westville Campus  
Tel: 031 260 7438  
Fax: 031 260 7622



---

Date

**To Whom It May Concern**

**RE: Permission to Conduct Research within (name of company)**

My name is Nishita Doolabh. I am currently undertaking my Masters of Communication Pathology (Audiology) through the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus. As part of my postgraduate degree requirements, I am required to conduct a research project. The title of my research project is: *The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employer's perceptions and experiences (Reference number: HSS/1463/016M).*

The focus of my research is on the perceptions and experiences of employers regarding the recruitment and retention of employees who are hearing impaired, within the eThekweni municipality. The research study further aims to identify current reasonable accommodation practices as well as identify practical strategies which facilitate the recruitment and retention of individuals who are hearing impaired. You are being invited to participate as your experience and expertise, having already employed individuals with hearing impairment will provide great insight that could assist prospective employers.



In order to achieve the aims of this study, I humbly request your participation and permission to conduct the research study within the organisation. The nature of this study requires all members of management and human resources unit involved in recruitment and retention of employees to complete a short survey, which will take approximately 15-20 minutes. Participants will be informed of the study through an information document. Further, participants will be required to sign an informed consent document. Participation in this study is voluntary. All efforts will be made to ensure the identity of respondents will remain confidential and anonymity maintained.

As part of the ethical requirements, should you agree to participate, kindly provide written consent at your earliest convenience.

I thank you in advance for your assistance. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact myself or my supervisor. The contact details are listed below:

Researcher:

Name: Miss Nishita Doolabh

Tel: +27 83 781 6101

Email: [nishidoolabh@gmail.com](mailto:nishidoolabh@gmail.com)

Supervisor:

Name: Mrs Nasim Khan

Tel: +27 82 312 4430

Email: [khanna@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:khanna@ukzn.ac.za)

HSSREC Administrators:

Name: Miss Prem Mohun

Tel: +27 31 260 4557/2384

Email: [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Name: Miss Phumelele Ximba

Tel: +27 31 260 3587

Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

HSSREC:

Email: [HssrecHealthsciences@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HssrecHealthsciences@ukzn.ac.za)

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Nishita Doolabh

School of Health Sciences  
Discipline of Audiology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Westville Campus  
Tel: 031 260 7438  
Fax: 031 260 7622



---

I have been informed of the research study being conducted by Miss Nishita Doolabh, entitled: ***The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employer's perceptions and experiences (Reference number: HSS/1463/016M).***

The request to conduct research within our company is:

Approved

☐

Not approved

☐

The following number of employees are eligible to participate:

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Company Stamp

## Appendix E: Pilot Study Feedback Form

Dear Participant

I require feedback from the questionnaire you have completed. Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability. Any further comments or suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

1. Approximately how long did it take you to complete the survey?

|               |  |             |  |
|---------------|--|-------------|--|
| 15-20 minutes |  | >20 minutes |  |
|---------------|--|-------------|--|

2. Did you have any difficulties understand the instructions provided?

|     |  |    |  |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes |  | No |  |
|-----|--|----|--|

If yes, please specify which instructions and why

---

---

---

3. Did you have any difficulties answering any of the questions?

|     |  |    |  |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes |  | No |  |
|-----|--|----|--|

If yes, please specify which questions and why

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4. Please provide any comments or suggestions that you may have for the research questionnaire.

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## Appendix F: Certificate of completion of online ethics course



## Appendix G: Ethical clearance letter



19 April 2018

Ms Nishita Ashwin Doolabh (215082346)  
School of Nursing & Public Health  
Howard College Campus

Dear M/s Doolabh,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1463/016M

New project title: The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employers' perceptions and experiences

### Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 25 May 2017 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for period of 3 years from the date of original issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Ms Nasim Khan  
cc. Academic Leader Research: Dr Tivani Mashambo-Thompson  
cc. School Administrator: Ms Caroline Dhanraj

### Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/9250/4857 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4608 Email: [simbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:simbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymenm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymenm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville



3 August 2017

Ms Nishita Ashwin Doolabh 215082346  
School of Nursing and Public Health  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Doolabh

Protocol reference number: HSS/1463/016M

Project title: The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in the eThekweni private sector: Current employers' perceptions and experiences

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 24 July 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Ms Nasim Khan  
cc. Academic Leader Research: Professor B Satorius  
cc. School Administrator: Mrs Caroline Dhanraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/93504557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4809 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymann@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymann@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohungu@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohungu@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville



08 June 2017

**Ms Nishita Ashwin Doolabh (215082346)**  
School of Nursing and Public Health  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Doolabh,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/1463/016M**

**New project title:** The employment of individuals with hearing impairment in KwaZulu-Natal private sector: Current employers' perceptions and experiences

**Provisional Approval – Amendment Application**

This letter serves to notify you that your application received 5 September 2016 in connection with the above, has been provisionally approved, subject to the following:

- Gatekeeper permission letter required

**Amendment Approved:**

1. Change in title

**This approval is granted provisionally and the final approval for this project will be given once the above condition has been met. In case you have further queries/correspondence, please quote the above reference number.**

**Please note that the research study cannot start until Full Approval has been granted.**

Kindly submit your response to the Chair: Dr Shenuka Singh, Research Office as soon as possible

Yours faithfully

**Dr Shamila Naidoo**  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Ms Nasim Khan  
cc. Academic Leader Research: Professor M Mars  
cc. School Administrator: Ms Caroline Dhanraj

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**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

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**Appendix H: Table 4.3: *Employers' perceptions and attitudes for not employing persons with hearing impairment (extended)***

|  | Strongly Agree |      | Agree |      | Disagree |      | Strongly Disagree |      | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error of mean |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|----------|------|-------------------|------|------|----------------|--------------------|
|  | N              | %    | N     | %    | N        | %    | N                 | %    |      |                |                    |
| Concerns about safety of the hearing impaired employee   | 6              | 20   | 19    | 63.3 | 2        | 6.7  | 3                 | 10   | 2.07 | 0.83           | 0.15               |
| Individuals with hearing loss rarely apply for jobs (n = 30)                                     | 2              | 6.7  | 19    | 63.3 | 6        | 20   | 3                 | 10   | 2.33 | 0.76           | 0.14               |
| Communication difficulties affecting participation in training activities and meetings (n = 30)  | 5              | 16.7 | 16    | 53.3 | 6        | 20   | 3                 | 10   | 2.23 | 0.86           | 0.16               |
| Employees with hearing loss cannot use the telephone (n = 30)                                    | 11             | 36.7 | 9     | 30   | 8        | 26.7 | 2                 | 6.7  | 2.03 | 0.96           | 0.18               |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability to interact with co-workers (n = 30)               | 4              | 13.3 | 15    | 50   | 6        | 20   | 5                 | 16.7 | 2.40 | 0.932          | 0.17               |
| Require extra time from supervisors and management (n = 30)                                      | 3              | 10   | 13    | 43.3 | 7        | 23.3 | 7                 | 23.3 | 2.60 | 0.97           | 0.18               |
| Communication difficulties affect the ability to understand/complete instructions given (n = 30) | 2              | 6.7  | 14    | 46.7 | 9        | 30   | 5                 | 16.7 | 2.57 | 0.86           | 0.16               |
| Do not know how to handle the needs of employees with hearing loss (n = 30)                      | 4              | 13.3 | 11    | 36.7 | 8        | 26.7 | 7                 | 23.3 | 2.60 | 1              | 0.18               |
| Concerns about attitudes of co-workers (n = 30)  | 0              | 0    | 15    | 50   | 9        | 30   | 6                 | 20   | 2.70 | 0.79           | 0.15               |
| Concerns regarding costs of reasonable accommodations (n = 30)                                   | 3              | 10   | 8     | 26.7 | 12       | 40   | 7                 | 23.3 | 2.77 | 0.94           | 0.17               |
| Employers are uncomfortable and unsure how to behave (n = 30)                                    | 2              | 6.7  | 8     | 26.7 | 10       | 33.3 | 10                | 33.3 | 2.93 | 0.94           | 0.17               |
| Unable to do basic functions of the jobs they apply for (n = 29)                                 | 4              | 13.8 | 3     | 10.3 | 11       | 37.9 | 11                | 37.9 | 3    | 1.04           | 1.92               |
| Employers are unable to discipline/fire employees because of potential lawsuits (n = 29)         | 3              | 10.3 | 3     | 10.3 | 13       | 44.8 | 10                | 34.5 | 3.03 | 0.94           | 0.18               |
| Employers discriminate against applicants with hearing loss (n = 29)                             | 2              | 6.7  | 4     | 13.3 | 9        | 30   | 14                | 46.7 | 3.27 | 0.98           | 0.18               |
| There are no opportunities for professional development (n = 28)                                 | 1              | 3.6  | 4     | 14.3 | 9        | 32.1 | 14                | 50   | 3.29 | 0.85           | 0.16               |
| Employees with hearing loss do not have the necessary  |                |      |       |      |          |      |                   |      |      |                |                    |

|  |   |     |   |      |    |      |    |      |      |      |      |
|--|---|-----|---|------|----|------|----|------|------|------|------|
| skills/experience to perform job duties (n = 30)                   | 0 | 0   | 4 | 13.3 | 12 | 40   | 14 | 46.7 | 3.33 | 0.71 | 0.13 |
| There are no opportunities for promotion (n = 30)                  | 1 | 3.3 | 3 | 10   | 16 | 53.3 | 10 | 33.3 | 3.17 | 0.75 | 0.14 |
| Employers cannot ask the applicant about their impairment (n = 29) | 1 | 3.4 | 3 | 10.3 | 17 | 58.6 | 8  | 27.6 | 3.10 | 0.72 | 0.14 |
| Unable to work up to the same standards as employees without       |   |     |   |      |    |      |    |      |      |      |      |
| hearing loss (n = 30)  | 1 | 3.3 | 2 | 6.7  | 8  | 26.7 | 19 | 63.3 | 3.50 | 0.78 | 0.14 |
| Employees with hearing loss are frequently absent (n = 29)         | 0 | 0   | 3 | 10.3 | 11 | 37.9 | 15 | 51.7 | 3.41 | 0.68 | 0.13 |
| Employers are concerned about increased health insurance/worker's  |   |     |   |      |    |      |    |      |      |      |      |
| compensation premiums (n = 27)                                     | 1 | 3.7 | 2 | 7.4  | 15 | 55.6 | 9  | 33.3 | 3.19 | 0.74 | 0.14 |
| Employees with hearing loss are poor performers and less           |   |     |   |      |    |      |    |      |      |      |      |
| dedicated (n = 30)   | 0 | 0   | 1 | 3.3  | 8  | 26.7 | 21 | 70   | 3.67 | 0.55 | 0.10 |

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