

**EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH
PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS STUDYING AT A TECHNICAL
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)
COLLEGE IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

**SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE ACADEMIC
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS IN
HIGHER EDUCATION**

BY

**BONGANI PRAISEGOD NTOMBELA
208525412**

SUPERVISOR: DR THOKO ESTHER MNISI

JUNE 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
DECLARATION	v
ABSTRACT	vi
KEYWORDS	viii
DEDICATION	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
FINANCIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xiv
CHAPTER 1	1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	1
1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	4
1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	4
1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	5
1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT GUIDED THE STUDY	6
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	6
1.8 LOCATION OF THE STUDY	6
1.9 POSITIONING MYSELF AS THE RESEARCHER IN THIS STUDY.....	8
1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	8
1.11 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS.....	9
1.10.1 Impairment.....	9
1.10.2 Disability	9
1.10.3 Access	10
1.10.4 Exclusion	10
1.10.5 Social Model	10
1.10.6 Assistive Devices.....	10
1.10.7 Disability Discrimination	11
1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	11
1.12 UNFOLDING OF THE STUDY.....	12

1.13 CONCLUSION	13
CHAPTER 2.....	14
LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	14
2.1 INTRODUCTION	14
2.2 BACKGROUND	14
2.3 INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES	15
2.4 SOUTH AFRICAN POLICIES PERSPECTIVE	19
2.5 DHET AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES	21
2.6 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	23
2.6.1 <i>Accessibility to higher education</i>	24
2.6.2 <i>Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure</i>	25
2.6.3 <i>Learning support</i>	27
2.6.4 <i>Institutional support</i>	29
2.6.5 <i>Stigmatisation and discrimination</i>	31
2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	32
2.7.1 Definition of disability	32
2.7.2 The Evolving Models of Disability (Conceptual framework)	33
2.7.2.1 <i>The Charity Model of Disability</i>	34
2.7.2.2 <i>The Medical Model of Disability</i>	34
2.7.2.3 <i>The Rights-Based Model of Disability</i>	35
2.7.2.4 <i>The Social Model of Disability</i>	35
2.7.3 <i>The Types of Barriers Negotiated by Persons with Disabilities</i>	37
2.8 CONCLUSION	39
CHAPTER 3.....	40
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	40
3.1 INTRODUCTION	40
3.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	40
3.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	41
PART 1: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	41
3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN	41
3.4.1 Qualitative research.....	41
3.4.2 Research paradigm	42
3.4.2.1 <i>The Positivist paradigm</i>	42
3.4.2.2 <i>Transformative / Critical Paradigm</i>	44
3.4.2.3 <i>Interpretivist / Constructivist paradigm</i>	44

3.5 RESEARCH approach: CASE STUDY	46
3.6 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING.....	47
3.7 DATA GENERATION TOOLS.....	47
3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews.....	48
3.7.2 Observation	48
PART 2: PREPARING FOR THE FIELD	50
3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	50
3.9 PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION	51
PART 3: IN THE FIELD	53
3.10 INTRODUCTION	53
3.10.1 DATA GENERATION SITE.....	53
3.10.1.1 Selection of participant's/ sampling procedure.....	53
3.10.2 Interview sessions	54
3.10.3 Observation sessions.....	55
PART 4: WORKING WITH DATA.....	57
3.11 DATA ANALYSIS	57
3.11.1 Qualitative data analysis.....	57
3.11.2 Thematic Content Analysis	58
3.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS.....	60
3.13 CONCLUSION	61
CHAPTER 4.....	62
INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	62
4.1. INTRODUCTION	62
4.2 MASTER THEMES	63
4.2.1 Theme 1: accessibility to higher education	63
4.2.1.1 <i>Accessibility, service quality, and inclusivity</i>	63
4.2.1.2 <i>Personal development</i>	65
4.2.2 Theme 2: Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure	67
4.2.2.1 <i>Lecture venues (classrooms and computer rooms)</i>	67
4.2.2.2 <i>Infrastructure accessibility</i>	69
4.2.3 Theme 3: Learning support.....	71
4.2.3.1 <i>Interpersonal support</i>	71
4.2.3.2 <i>Learner support levels</i>	73
4.2.3.3 <i>Financial support</i>	75
4.2.4 Theme 4: Institutional support.....	76

4.2.4.1 Learner support services	76
4.2.4.2 Customisation of services.....	77
4.2.4.3 Institutional support	78
4.3 CONCLUSION	79
CHAPTER 5.....	81
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	81
5.1. INTRODUCTION	81
5.2 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY	81
The following conclusions of the study emanated from the findings.	81
5.2.1 Accessibility to higher education.....	81
5.2.2 Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure.....	81
5.2.3 Learning support.....	82
5.2.4 Institutional support.....	82
5.3 IMPLICATIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY	82
5.3.1 Accessibility to higher education.....	82
5.3.2 Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure	83
5.3.3 Learning support.....	83
5.3.4 Institutional support.....	83
5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	84
5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	85
5.6 CONCLUSION	85
APPENDIX 1: LETTER SEEKING PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF THE COLLEGE.....	102
APPENDIX 2: A LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH	104
APPENDIX 4: UKZN ETHICAL APPROVAL	108
APPENDIX 6: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE.....	111
APPENDIX 7: TABLE OF THEMES AND CATEGORIES EMERGING FROM THE DATA	112
APPENDIX 8: LETTER FROM EDITOR.....	113
APPENDIX 9: TURNITIN CERTIFICATE	114

DECLARATION

I, Bongani Praisegod Ntombela, student number 208525412, declare that this study 'Exploring the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal' is my own work. However, the use of scholarly works has been properly acknowledged in the text using APA 6th. This study is not concurrently submitted nor is it being assessed elsewhere for any other postgraduate qualification.

Bongani Praisegod Ntombela

ABSTRACT

The study attempts to respond to three research questions:

- How do students with physical impairments experience studying at a TVET College in KZN?
- What are the perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment?
- What support does the institution offer for students with physical impairments studying at this TVET College?

This qualitative study is positioned within an interpretivist paradigm and employs a case study research approach. Only four participants were interviewed. A case study emphasises that even one candidate is enough as long as an in-depth study can be done. Observations and semi-structured individual interviews were the main data collection tools used in the study and were used to explore the key research questions focusing on experiences and attitudes experienced by students with physical impairments at a TVET College environment.

To answer the above questions, I examined whether resources were provided for students with physical challenges at a TVET College, the use of learner support services, infrastructure accessibility, community support and institutional support. This research study was conducted with students who were physically impaired only. Purposive sampling was used. The sample of the population included four participants who were physically impaired and who were registered in one college. Furthermore, participants comprised one female and three males who were doing different levels at the college, that is, NCV, NQF level two to level three and Nated 5 student. This study explored the experiences of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal in order for the College to meet these students' academic needs. The study was conducted in one TVET College in Northern Natal.

The conclusion and implications of the study indicated that there is inaccessibility of buildings, inadequate support from student support services and a lack of assistive devices for students with physical impairments. However, students with physical

impairments showed a positive attitude toward learning, irrespective of the challenges they faced.

Other findings suggest that the senior College management and student support services should do everything possible to create an environment in which students with physical impairments feel welcome and part of a community which embraces diversity and willingly accommodates their differences. All relevant role players at TVET Colleges should collaborate to overcome barriers, for example (name a few from your study), provide suitable access to buildings and endeavour to meet their academic, social and emotional needs thereby enabling them to attain their full academic development.

KEYWORDS

Disabilities, enabling environment, physical Impairment, social model, TVET.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to all students with physical impairments at a TVET College, who have been struggling to achieve equal educational opportunities education as able-bodied students. Keep up, the spirit of fighting for what is yours. AMANDLA! This dissertation is really for you!

I would also like to dedicate this work to my wife, Nozipho Diana Ntombela, and most adorable three children, my daughters, Alwande and Siyamthanda, and to my son, Malibongwe, who have supported me through thick and thin, just know that you are loved and are very special. My gratitude to you guys is beyond expression.

I further dedicate this work to my late mother and father, Zodwa and Zeblon Ntombela, in gratitude for imparting to me the values of hard work and dedication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the following individuals, groups and institutions:

Above all, I give thanks to Almighty God who helped me cope with this study

To my supervisor, Dr Thoko Esther Mnisi, for your hardworking and thoughtful supervision along with your support and encouragement that kept me focused on my study. I thank you, Doctor, for your diligent efforts and inspiration throughout my learning. May God richly bless you.

To my friends Michelle Appearly, Caleb Zuma, Sibonginkosi Nyengera, thank for your time, resources and support. You always availed yourselves to assist and answer my calls when I needed help. I am very indebted for your understanding and support.

To my participants, for their time and contributions. Thanks guys! The struggle continues!

To my loving wife, Nozipho Diana Ntombela, for your love, understanding and support. My children: Malibongwe, Alwande and Siyamthanda, love you so much.

Thank you all so much.

FINANCIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) for subsidising my tuition fees. I also thank my employer, the TVET College, for financial assistance and making it possible for me to study.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age and Gender	57
Table 2: Programme and level	57
Table 3: Nature of impairment and bursary grant status	57
Table 4: Themes and categories	76

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Disability Issues in Higher Education: by Sitali Wamundila (2019) 25

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA:	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADL:	Activities of daily living
CPD:	Centre of People Development
CSS:	Central Statistics Services
DHET:	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE:	Department of Education
DPSA:	Disabled People of South Africa
HE:	Higher Education
HEI:	Higher Education Institutions
HETMIS:	Higher Education and Training Management Information Systems
INDS:	Integrated National Disability Strategy
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
NATED:	National Accredited Technical Education Diploma
NC(V):	National Certificate (Vocational)
NSFAS:	National Students Financial Aid Scheme
OLU:	Open Learning Unit
RSA:	Republic of South Africa
SAIDE:	South African Institute for Distance Education
Stats SA:	Statistics South Africa
TVET:	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UDHR:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK:	United Kingdom
UKZN:	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNCRPD:	United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UPIAS:	Union of the Physically Challenged Against Segregation
USA:	United States of America
WHO:	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I provide an overview to the study. I begin by setting the context of the study through discussing the experiences of students with disabilities worldwide. This is done by the presentation of the problem statement. A brief description of the South African and international context follows, showing the current state of physical disability in the context of higher education and how the concept has evolved. The location of the study is detailed. I thereafter foreground my personal position and experiences with regards to the problem under study. This is meant to declare my positionality and biases during the research process (Creswell, 2007). I then present the rationale of the study, its focus, aims, and research questions which guided the study. Furthermore, the concepts used in the study are clarified. Finally, I describe the research design and methodology. I conclude the chapter with an outline of the remaining chapters. Lastly, I provide an overview of the full enquiry and outlined the unfolding of the study and what each chapter entails.

1.2 BACKGROUND

According to the World Health Organization (2011) about 15% of world's population, that is over 1 billion people, live with disabilities. About 80% of those with disabilities live in developing countries of which only 10% of children who have disabilities attend school. The average global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is estimated to be around 3%. In the United Kingdom 11.3% of the total full-time under graduates in 2013/14 were students with disability. In South Africa it is estimated that 7.5% of the country's population has disabilities out of which 20% are enrolled in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Of this percentage, white students represent the highest percentage and black students represent the lowest percentage (Statistics SA, 2014).

Disability is a challenge in a society. Some scholars view disability as a social matter while others view it as an individual issue (Harris & Enfield, 2003). Those who view disability as individual matter view persons with disabilities according to the Charity

Model. That is, people with disabilities are seen as victims of their impairment because they cannot walk, talk, see, learn or work (Tsai & Ho, 2010). Others view disability as an individual issue, and believe that people with disabilities need special services and special institutions such as special schools or institutionalised settings because they are different (Harris & Enfield, 2003; Mutanga, 2017).

As a result, people with disabilities are seen as needing to be pitied and needing help, sympathy, charity and welfare in order to be looked after. This, in turn, leads to some people with disabilities themselves adopting this concept and, as a result, it causes a low sense of self-esteem and waiting for others to assist them rather than trying for themselves (Harris & Enfield, 2003).

Those who believe that disability is an individual matter also believe that persons with disabilities are defined by their medical condition (Harris & Enfield, 2003). Kaplan (2000) states that the individual needs the care of their society as their life is regulated by medical conditions. Harris and Enfield (2003) concur that the Medical Model of disability considers people with disabilities as persons with physical problems which need to be cured through medical intervention. This means that persons with disabilities are defined by their medical condition. Kaplan (2000) is of the view that the Medical Model creates exclusion and oppressive reactions for persons with disabilities. The medical and charity models promote the exclusion of people with disability in society.

Scholars like Barnes and Mercer (2003), Fulcher (1989), Jali (2009) and Oliver (1996) view disability as a social construct, where persons with disabilities need to be accommodated in all activities, for example education and employment. These scholars argue that, as disability is a social construct, everyone has the right to equal opportunities and participation in society irrespective of their disabilities (Jali, 2009). Persons with disabilities often face a denial of their basic human rights, such as the right to basic health care, both physical and psychological health care or the right to and equal education and employment arrangements (Disabled People South Africa (DPSA, 2000).

Jali (2009) argues that social and environmental barriers set by society need to be changed in order to accommodate persons with disabilities. The social and environmental barriers promote barriers such as culture, economy, attitude and much

more that prevent people with impairments from participating in social interactions (Harris & Enfield, 2003).

People with disability experience exclusion and discrimination in society. Graham, Selipsky, Moodley, Maina and Rowland (2010) states that disability is something imposed on top of people with disabilities which result in unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. People with disability are labelled, while other cultures do not accept disability at all and view them as a curse. This promotes social inequities which leads to isolation, marginalization and exclusion in that particular social setting (Jali, 2009).

The Social Model of disability views disability as emerging by the way in which societies are structured or constructed, which hinders people with disability to participate fully in their social lives (Harris and Enfield, 2003). This model of disability is against the oppression of people with disability and promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities (Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 2005)).

According to Subrayen (2011) the Social Model provides us with ammunition to articulate the personal pain experienced by people with disability, which means that the Social Model views a person with disability as a capable individual (Africa, 2001) and disability is a socio-political problem (Albert, 2004).

Mole (2013) points out that the social model of disability allows for social change which provides the perspective the voices of persons with disabilities need to be included in the design and implementation of developmental plans and priorities. Therefore, it is the responsibility of society to ensure that the needs of people with disability are met and they are provided with suitable and accessible infrastructure. Jali (2009) highlights that people with disabilities endure or experience discrimination, ill-treatment and exclusion from mainstream society and this is a matter of concern.

Many countries have laws and policies, such as Education White Paper 6, Special Needs, Building the Inclusive Education (Department of education, 2001a), Disability Rights Education and Defence Fund (DREDF, 1979), World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 1945), which support persons with disabilities through social security and the promotion of their human rights, legally, or otherwise. Policies, however, vary considerably worldwide, with some countries such as United Kingdom,

United States of America, and African countries, prioritising education for disabled children in different settings such as special schools and centres. This could be in the form of special classes in integrated schools; or inclusive schools, which work to identify and remove barriers enabling every learner to participate and achieve in mainstream settings regardless of their disability.

Establishing inclusive schools is widely regarded as desirable for equality and human rights and it has educational, social and economic benefits (UNESCO, 2001). The 'social model' of disability promotes breaking down social and environmental barriers, which discriminate against persons with disabilities. It is about the inclusion of people regardless of their disability.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) promotes equality and non-discrimination of people with disabilities through recently developed policies such as Education White Paper 6, Special Needs, Building the Inclusive Education (Department of education, 2001a), Addressing the Equity and Imbalances of the Past (Department of Education, 2001), and Education White Paper 3, A Programme for Transformation of Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997) and Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education and Training System (DHET, 2018) and others.

Persons with disabilities were more marginalised before 1994. The government of National Unity after 1994 pushed for fair and equal opportunities in higher education through inclusive education. This study should assist in answering how a Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College as a learning institution implements recent South African development policies towards addressing the imbalances of the past. This study is important because it adds to a body of knowledge on the unique experiences of students with disabilities especially in the TVET College landscape.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A number of studies on physical impairment have been done. Most studies located in the literature focused on physical impairment amongst university students (Jali, 2009;

Nxumalo, 2017; Subrayen, 2011). Only one study concentrated on a TVET College environment (Buthelezi, 2014). Buthelezi's (2014) study focused on exploring challenges experienced by physically challenged students at a Further Education and Training College in KwaZulu-Natal Province. There is minimum available evidence on the experiences of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu Natal.

Disability is not confined to a certain group of people or only those who were born with it. Anyone can acquire a disability at any stage of life cycle development and progression. The acquisition of a disability later in life may be through accidental events, injury, medical reasons or natural causes. According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), disability is a condition that hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, cf 1.10.2. Impairment refers to the lacking part of or whole limb, or having a defective limb, organ and/or any other malfunctioning of the body (UPIAS, 1976) cf 1.10.1. This study focused on students with physical impairments, where the individual is lacking part of the body or having a defective limb, at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal. People with disabilities are among the most marginalised, excluded and underrepresented and are denied their right to quality education and freedom to choose (World Health Organization, 2011).

This study explored the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in Northern KwaZulu-Natal in relation to access to the TVET College in terms of physical access, learning support, and institutional support.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study explored the:

1. Experiences of students with physical impairments at a TVET College in Kwa Zulu-Natal.
2. Perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment and
3. The nature of support the institution offers to the students with physical impairments.

1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT GUIDED THE STUDY

This research study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How do students with physical impairments experience studying at a TVET College in KZN?
2. What are the perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment?
3. What support does the institution offer for students with physical impairment studying at this TVET College?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to explore the experiences of students with impairments and how they perceived the TVET College as a learning institution in terms of inclusive education. It will also help to add to the body of knowledge regarding the experiences of the TVET College students with impairments in the democratic era. This study hopes to alert the TVET College stakeholders such as senior management, College council, campus management, academic and non-academic staff, student representatives and students at large, about challenges faced by students with physical impairments and the social justice discourse and human rights of a student with physical impairments.

1.8 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The study took place at a TVET College in Newcastle in Northern KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Newcastle is a small town of about 389 408 population (IEC Stats, 2019) and with an approximate area of 75.79km². It falls under Majuba District Municipality. Newcastle is close to Ladysmith, Dundee and Utrecht in KZN, Volksrust which is in Mpumalunga, and Memel in Free State.

The TVET College is a higher educational institution and, as such, attracts students from all over KwaZulu-Natal. It has a very wide catchment area ranging from Mpumalunga, Eastern Cape and Free State stretching to Gauteng as well as Eswatini. Students come from different socio-economic backgrounds and are of different races

and cultures including Africans (who are the majority), Whites, Coloureds, Indians and foreign nationals.

This TVET College offers both business courses and engineering courses, and five of its campuses offer NC(V) courses and Report 191 Nated as well. The courses offered include Financial Management, Management Assistance, Economics and Accounting, Business Management, Civil Engineering, Engineering and Related Design, Electrical Infrastructure Construction, Hospitality and Catering, Tourism and many more.

The NC(V) qualification is a three-year programme and, on completion of each of the NQF levels (level 2, 3 and 4), a certificate is issued. Level 4 is the equivalent of a matric certificate but only has one language. NC(V) is both a business and engineering studies programme depending on the field chosen. It has four vocational subjects with three fundamental subjects, Language, Mathematics/Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation. The vocational subjects depend on the field chosen while the fundamental subjects are common across all the programmes.

The Business Studies Report 191 Nated courses are six months per level, from N4 to N6 while the Engineering Studies Report 191 Nated courses are three months per level from N1 to N6. Each of the courses requires the student to pass four subjects per level in order to obtain a certificate in that particular level. Certificates are issued by DHET per level. To obtain a diploma a student is required to complete 18 months' relevant practical experience for the business studies component and 2 000 hours' relevant practical experience for the engineering studies component. The N3 engineering studies course is equivalent to grade 12 without the fundamentals. To become a qualified artisan in any engineering field a student requires the minimum of an N2 qualification.

The students enrolled at the college are both able-bodied and students with disabilities. The case study was carried out in one of the main campuses which is a Business Studies Campus, which is divided into two campuses (Centre for People Development - CPD and Open Learning Unit - OLU), which offer both NCV and Report 191 courses. This TVET College is situated about 15 km outside Newcastle.

1.9 POSITIONING MYSELF AS THE RESEARCHER IN THIS STUDY

I am a Senior Lecturer and a student development practitioner employed at a TVET College in Northern KwaZulu-Natal, where I volunteer to support students with disabilities.

As a Senior Lecturer at TVET College, I engage with a diverse range of students and this placed me in a position to explore the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments enrolled at this TVET College.

My study used a qualitative research approach. As Creswell (2003) suggested, researchers use a qualitative approach to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the participants' viewpoint. Creswell (2003) further states that the aim of qualitative research is to derive an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being investigated. This study therefore offered an opportunity for students with physical impairments to voice and share their thoughts about how they negotiate their unique experiences at this TVET College in KwaZulu Natal.

The names of the participants were kept confidential; hence pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the participants. I made sure that participants' rights and human dignity were not compromised. In the event of the dissemination of the findings of this study and or a publication of the findings of this study, the confidentiality of the participants and the TVET College will be protected and maintained at all times. All participants will have access to the findings of this study via email communication.

The College will be given a copy of the dissertation, and it will be kept at the library for ease of access to other researchers and students.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, I chose to adopt a qualitative approach. Qualitative research attempts to generate rich textual and descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context, with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I found qualitative research more suitable for exploring the experiences of student with impairments at the TVET College. The participants understand their context best and are able to recreate their worlds (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) in an attempt to understand their needs which are best known to and by them.

Interpretative paradigm is briefly discussed in this study. The data collection was done through semi-structured interviews and observation. Toward the end of the section the data analysis framework is discussed followed by the discussion on how ethical issues were addressed in the study.

1.11 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

This study adopted the following definitions:

1.10.1 Impairment

Impairment refers to the lacking part of or a whole limb, or having a defective limb, organ and/or any other malfunctioning of the body (UPIAS, 1976). Strategic policy framework on disability for the post education and training system (2018) points out that impairment is used to refer to the actual attributes to the abnormality of a person, whether in terms of limbs, organs or mechanisms, including psychological disabilities/shortcomings. While Kaplan (2000, p. 356) defines impairment as “any loss or abnormality of psychological or anatomical structure or function”. Impairment is a perceived or actual feature in the person’s body or functioning that may result in limitation or loss of activity or restricted participation of the person in society with a consequential difference of physiological and/or psychological experience of life (Department of Social Development, 2015).

1.10.2 Disability

Disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by social exclusions of social structures within that context. This prevents persons with physical disability mainstreaming and thus excludes them from the mainstream of social activities (UPIAS, 1976).

According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006, p.3, "disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

While White Paper on the rights of persons with disabilities (Department of Social development, 2015), define disability as being imposed by society when a person with a physical, psychosocial, intellectual, neurological and/or sensory impairment is

denied access to full participation in all aspects of life, and when society fails to uphold the rights and specific needs of individuals with impairments.

1.10.3 Access

Access means an opportunity to approach or enter a place. Access is an ability to benefit from things including material objects, persons, institutions, and symbols (Ribot & Peluso, 2003).

1.10.4 Exclusion

According to Walker and Walker (1997) social exclusion is viewed as the rejection of the civil, party-political and community rights of citizenship. While Madanipour, Cars, and Allen, (1998) view social exclusion as a multi-dimensional practice, where several practices of exclusion are combined such as participation in decision making, access to employment and material properties, and incorporation into common cultural processes. Exclusion is also found in the institutions of learning where educational opportunities and equality are denied (Howell & Lazarus, 2003). Where the individuals experienced exclusion from participating in activities that take place within the premises of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

1.10.5 Social Model

The British Council of Disabled People (as cited by Buthelezi, 2014) defines the social model of disability as the model “that some individuals have physical differences which can affect their ability to function in society” and it emphasises that it is a society which causes the individuals to be disabled. UPAIS (1976) defines the social model as a non-traditional diagrammatic model, like many psychological and sociological models, which aims to remove the barriers, for example, within society so that people with physical disability have the same opportunities as everyone else.

1.10.6 Assistive Devices

An assistive device is any device, equipment or tool that is designed or adapted to enable persons with disabilities to participate in activities, tasks or actions including:

- (i) mobility aids such as wheelchairs and crutches;
- (ii) communication aids such as hearing aids and Frequency Modulation (FM) systems;
- (iii) sensory aids such as white canes, noise reducing headphones and coloured lenses and;

- (iv) technology aids such as computers for alternate and augmentative communication, screen readers, magnifiers, and texts in audio format (Sackett & Wanek, 1996).

1.10.7 Disability Discrimination

Discrimination on the basis of disability means any exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability, which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, on all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It encompasses all forms of unfair discrimination, whether direct or indirect, including denial of reasonable accommodation (DHET, 2018).

1.10.8 Persons with Disabilities

White Paper on the rights of persons with disabilities (Department of Social Development, 2015), states that persons with disabilities include those who have perceived and or actual physical, psychosocial, intellectual, neurological and/or sensory impairments which, as a result of various attitudinal, communication, physical and information barriers, are hindered in participating fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with others.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There is a diverse range of disabilities, such as visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental health conditions, autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability and physical disability. This study focused only on physical disability. The study was limited to one TVET College in KZN with the assumption that the general set up of colleges is the same. The study was conducted in two of the six campuses at the TVET College. The sample was small, so results may not be generalised to the whole population. The students were not selected based on their age, gender, race, NSFAS or self-paying student (funding), part-time or full-time student or level of study.

1.12 UNFOLDING OF THE STUDY

Chapter One

This chapter outlines the introduction of the study, describes the background of the study, the problem statement, my position as a researcher, rationale of the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions that guided the study, the significance of the study, research aim of the study, unfolding of the study, and conclusion.

Chapter Two

This chapter is based on the literature relevant to the questions posed and the purpose of this study. It discusses the policies that underpin disability and is supported by literature that support this study. It further discusses the models of disability, that is, Medical model, Charity model, Rights-based model and Social model. It concludes by discussing the relation between the Social model of disability and accessibility of students with disability at HEIs, accessibility within the institutions, support from the staff and the institution as a whole, and conclusion.

Chapter Three

This chapter describes the research methodology. The study employed the qualitative approach. It consists of the research method, the research design, research paradigm, case study, methods of collecting data, selection of participants, purposive sampling, research tools, field notes, data analysis, data storage, data disposal, ethical considerations, location of the study, consent forms and conclusion.

Chapter Four

This chapter presents the analysis of the data used for research questions and responses received and the conclusion. Literature was used to confirm or disprove the findings of this study.

Chapter Five

This chapter makes conclusions and recommendations based on the findings emerging from the data obtained during the study and finally makes recommendations for further study before the conclusion of the study.

1.13 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the experiences of students with physical impairments at a TVET College in KZN as well as explore the perceptions that students with physical impairments have about this TVET College as a learning environment. The first chapter has provided an orientation to the study, which hoped to explore to what extent the institution offered support to students with physical impairments. This includes the background of the study, the problem statement, my position as a researcher, rationale of the study, the purpose of the study, the research question that guided the study, the significance of the study, research aim of the study, unfolding of the study and conclusion. The next chapter will present a critical discussion of precedent studies that were reviewed for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on relevant literature reviews and the conceptual framework that relates to and supports the primary study. It begins by discussing international policies and legislative initiatives persons with disabilities. Thereafter, South African policy initiatives and DHET and Institutional policies are highlighted.

This literature therefore discusses aspects of experiences of students with physical disabilities in higher education, accessibility to higher education, inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure, learning support and institutional support. This study also discusses stigma and discrimination experienced by students with disabilities at higher education institutions in particular TVET Colleges.

A discussion of the conceptual frameworks on disability follows, which includes an overview on the operational definitions of disability are highlighted, and evolving models of disability (Conceptual framework) i.e. the Charity model, the Medical model, the Rights-based model and the Social model. It concludes with a summary of how the relevant literature and conceptual framework unfolds.

2.2 BACKGROUND

Students with physical disabilities have a long-standing history of facing more challenges in accessing higher education compared to students without physical disabilities. This is, however, not an isolated case as both developed countries and underdeveloped countries face challenges although the case is severe in underdeveloped countries due to varied factors such as stigma, prior exclusion from primary and secondary education, social isolation, and resource constraints (Datta, Halder, Talukdar & Aspland, 2019; Lord & Stein, 2018).

To this end, the BBC News (2009) reported that some universities in the United Kingdom (UK), were failing to provide accessible accommodation or facilities to students with disabilities. It was discovered that about 40% of the 78 higher education institutions surveyed did not have accessible rooms to cater for students with

disabilities, thus resulting in students having to live at home. This is one of many challenges faced by students with disabilities in both developed and developing countries (Mutanga & Walker, 2017).

Students with physical impairments are part of a higher education institution's student population, but they have special needs arising from their disabilities. Riddell, Tinklin, and Wilson (2005) pointed out that the legal duties of higher education institutions towards students with disabilities have increased over years. Countries like the United Kingdom, which includes England, Scotland and Wales passed laws and policies that force higher education institutions to take responsibility by providing reasonable facilities which enable students with physical impairments to gain equal access to higher education (Matthews, 2009). This background shows that quite a number of countries, amongst others Australia, the United States of America, and African countries such as Uganda and South Africa, struggle to provide equal access for students with disabilities to higher education institutions (Foundation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis, 2011; Harpur & Stein, 2019).

This leaves one wanting in the context of South Africa where the country signed and adopted without reservation the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All in Jomtien, which seeks to ensure a universal "access to education for all children, youth and adults, as well as the promotion of equality" (Mutanga, 2018, p.229). In the next section, the focus is on international policies and legislation related to persons with disabilities.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Disability has become an international concern and thus international communities drew attention to policies to protect and promote the human rights and social justice concerns of persons with disabilities. In addition, according to Jali (2009), persons with disabilities have been included in international organisations and government discussions throughout the world. These international frameworks, conventions or policies related to: The International Disability Alliance (IDA, 1999), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), Disability Rights Education and Defence Fund (DREDF, 1979), World Conference on Special

Needs Education (1994), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 1945).

The main aim of these international frameworks, conventions or policies was to dismantle the systemic barriers imposed by society which prevented persons with disabilities from access, inclusion and full participation in society. There were many initiatives to address the issue of disability. These initiatives are presented below.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) foregrounds human rights, social justice and respect for the fundamental freedoms for all people. The UDHR (1948) highlights the educational call for equal access to higher education irrespective of gender, colour or race and what about disability as a human rights issue. Cooper (2015) concurs that in countries like Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, they develop the law which is seen as a driver for social change, hence forcing higher education institutions to prioritise, plan and develop accessible facilities to support students with disabilities.

In support of the call for the fundamental freedoms for all (UDHR, 1948), the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) drew attention to the principle of education for all which aimed for education for all, inclusive of disability, to be achieved by 2015. This goal clearly articulated that, regardless of gender, age or disability, everybody must have an equal opportunity to learn and be educated. The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) further stated that this goal could only be achieved when all nations recognised that the universal right to education, extends to persons with disabilities, and that nations were required to act upon their obligations to establish or reform public education systems to make them accessible, hence meeting the specialised needs of persons with disabilities.

The other human rights instrument, the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) is solely about the human rights and social justice concerns of persons with disabilities. The UNCRPD (2006) aimed at promoting, protecting and ensuring that there is full human development and the expansion of capabilities of persons with disabilities. This Convention also aimed to reaffirm human diversity, dignity, respect, equal access to higher education and the fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities.

Another important contribution towards combating discrimination against people with disabilities was a World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994) which was held in Spain. The Conference agreed on a statement to combat discriminatory attitudes and to foster building an inclusive society to promote education for all, inclusive of persons with disabilities. This Conference proclaimed that: "Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning; Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs; education systems and programmes should be designed and implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs of all students" (UNESCO, 1994, p. viii-ix).

Other countries, such as America, have several federal laws which were made to protect students with disabilities in learning institutions from discrimination. Laws such as the Rehabilitation Act (1973), Section 504 applies to all colleges that receive federal financial aid assisting students with disabilities. In addition to the Rehabilitation Act (1973) as stated above, America was the first developed country to introduce the anti-discrimination law, referred to as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990), which provided the legal basis for equal educational opportunities and access for students with disabilities (Riddell, Tinklin, & Wilson, 2005). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990) applies to three primary groups: employers; government entities such as state universities; and private entities that serve the public (Grossman, 2001).

Countries such as England passed the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995), which requires that education institutions should publish disability statements indicating policy, provisions and future plans for students with disabilities (Riddell, et al., 2005). The United Kingdom (UK) developed many policies which promoted the rights of persons with disabilities namely The Equality Act, (2010), Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 2005) which reports on the inclusion of students with disabilities in the UK higher education system.

Australia established many policies in combating the discrimination against persons with disabilities, for example, A Fair Chance for All (1990) which aimed at increasing the enrolments of student with disabilities in Australian higher education institutions (1992). United Nations developed Global Status Report on Disability and Development

(2015) which outlines a historical overview of the UN's work on disability and development and focuses specifically on education. The overall aims of the Global Status Report are: to provide a preliminary assessment of available information, successful policies and key issues for persons with disabilities.

Another World Report on Disability (2011) aims: To provide governments and civil society with a comprehensive description of the importance of disability and an analysis of the responses provided, and to make recommendations for action at national and international levels based on the best available scientific information.

International countries took the matter of disability seriously. Even the African countries followed suit by developing policies which promote the inclusivity of people with disabilities.

African continent developed policies such as African Union Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010 – 2019), aim to:

- Ensure the full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities in Africa;
- Develop programmes that alleviate poverty amongst persons with disabilities and their families;
- Ensure gender equality in all disability-related activities and programmes;
- Put in place programmes that create greater awareness and consciousness of communities and governments relating to disability;
- Ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in rural areas in all activities and programmes;
- Mainstream disability on the social, economic and political agendas of African governments;
- Apply all AU and UN human rights instruments to promote and monitor the rights of persons with disabilities.

Zambia developed The Persons with Disabilities Act (2012) and The National Policy on Disability (2015). The creation of the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD, 2012) promotes gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities (Wamundila, 2019; ZAPD, 2012).

The international policies mentioned above refer to the enablement, liberation and emancipation of persons with disabilities as critical to attain freedom from oppression, equal rights and self-representation (Subrayen, 2011). This was no exception in South Africa as the country also signed these international conventions without reservation.

2.4 SOUTH AFRICAN POLICIES PERSPECTIVE

In South Africa after 1994 the Supreme Law was developed (the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (section 29 (1) (b), the Bill of Rights) which promotes the values of human rights and prohibits all forms of discrimination. It entrenches the right of equality, access to equal education for all persons and provides for measures to address past imbalances (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). Chapter 2 (the Bill of Rights) of the Constitution of South Africa also promotes equality. The state may not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone in terms of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, belief, culture, language and birth (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). This was followed by many policies which aimed to address all forms of discrimination especially discrimination against marginalised persons.

In noting the anti-discrimination notions as mentioned in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the South African higher policy frameworks, emphasises the issue of redress of past inequalities and transforming the higher education system to serve a social order and marginalised persons including people with disabilities. It also addresses the goals and strategic objectives which promote the provision of increasing access to higher education to all irrespective of race, gender, age, class or disability (Department of Education, 1997).

The state provided the guidance and guidelines to government departments to create conducive environments for persons with disabilities (Handbook on Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities in the Public Service, 2007). This handbook provides information on reasonable accommodation and accessibility in terms of the physical environment of the institution.

The Department of Education formulated policy such as The National Plan for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001b) which emphasises the inclusion of students with disability into mainstream education, and specifies the expected number

of students with disability to be enrolled at a certain time within Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001b).

Another important policy framework developed in 2018 was the Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education and Training System (DHET, 2018, p. 15). The aim of this policy is to:

- “Create an inclusive PSET system for people with disabilities;
- Guide PSET institutions in the creation of an enabling environment for people with disabilities;
- Provide the DHET with a monitoring and evaluation instrument to ensure that disability compliance is mainstreamed in all PSET institutions;
- Realise the goals of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in PSET institutions; and
- Ensure the mainstreaming of people with disabilities in the PSET system”.

The Department of Social Development developed the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD) (Department of Social Development, 2015). The purpose of this WPRPD to mention a few is to:

- Provide a mainstreaming trajectory for realising the rights of persons with disabilities through the development of targeted interventions that remove barriers and apply the principles of universal design;
- Provide clarity on and guide the development of standard operating procedures;
- Stipulate norms and standards for the removal of discriminatory barriers that perpetuate the exclusion and segregation of persons with disabilities; Stipulate norms and standards to remove discriminatory barriers which exclude and segregate persons with disabilities;
- Broadly outline the responsibilities and accountabilities of the various stakeholders involved in providing barrier-free, appropriate, effective, efficient and coordinated service delivery to persons with disabilities;
- Provide the framework for a uniform and coordinated approach by all government institutions in the mainstreaming of disability across all planning, design, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of services;

- Guide gender mainstreaming to ensure that women with disabilities enjoy equitable access to all women empowerment and gender equality legislation, policies and programmes (Bucholz, 2017)

The South African policies promote right of equality, access to equal education for all persons and provides for measures to address past imbalances. They also embrace those students who have experienced exclusion of any kind such as barriers in environment, learning difficulties and socio-economic factors (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2006). The DHET has developed the number of policies which promote the access to education and address past imbalances. The policies will be detailed in the next session.

2.5 DHET AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

DHET has developed number of policies to redress the imbalances of the past and to accommodate students with physical impairments in HEIs.

A few of these policies are listed below:

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2014) (DHET, 2014b).

- A post-school system that can assist in building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa;
- A single, coordinated post-school education and training system;
- Expanded access, improved quality and increased diversity of provision;
- A stronger and more cooperative relationship between education and training institutions and the workplace;
- A post-school education and training system that is responsive to the needs of individual citizens and of employers in both public and private sectors, as well as broader societal and developmental objectives.

The Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework (DHET, 2014a) aims to assist public Higher Education Institutions in formulating and sustaining their own policies on social inclusion incorporating the inclusion of students with physical disability (DHET, 2014a). This policy framework highlights a number of significant elements that should be considered by Higher Education Institutions, to name but a few (Bucholz, 2017, p. 25)

- “Operational Disability Units and effective Transformation Offices are to be established at all HEIs.
- The rights of students with disabilities are to be met by formulating policies that stipulate reasonable adjustments to be made to accommodate these students and by ensuring that the core staff of all institutions have student support staff as central figures.
- Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are to be applied when modifying existing structures and building new structures, as well as when considering transportation issues and the accessibility of residences.
- The DHET must rework the Norms and Standards for providing infrastructure for students with disabilities.
- Develop national guidelines for persons with disabilities and national norms and standards for disability units in agreement with the CRPD.
- Provide funding for continuing research on the access to support and education of a wide spectrum of students with physical impairments.
- The DHET is to ensure that National Disability guidelines are being implemented at public HEIs and that annual reports indicating proposals for improvement are submitted to the Minister of Higher Education and Training.”

This Policy also aimed to redress social injustices, eliminate past inequalities and provide equal access to educational opportunities in higher education for all students. Moreover, students with disabilities need more support, which means the education institutions should be ready to accommodate students with disabilities.

Another policy is the Policy Framework on Disability for the Realisation of Social Inclusion in the Post-School Education and Training System (DHET, 2018). The aims of this policy framework are:

- To embrace all people irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, language, age, geography, HIV and AIDS status, citizenship, values or medical standing;
- To give equal access and opportunities and eliminate discrimination and intolerance;
- To provide a monitoring instrument to the DHET to ensure that the social inclusion priorities of the DHET are taken into account at all PSET institutions.

- It intends to create an inclusive PSET system for people with disabilities, guide PSET institutions in the creation of an enabling environment for people with disabilities, and provide the DHET with a monitoring and evaluation instrument to ensure that disability compliance is mainstreamed in all PSET institutions.
- It also aims to realise the goals of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in PSET institutions and ensure the mainstreaming of people with disabilities in the PSET system (Department of Social Development, 2015).
- DHET is creating an enabling environment for inclusion and mainstreaming of people with disabilities in PSET system that will ensure that disability-related policies and guidelines are implemented and monitored.

Although South Africa has made good progress regarding the policies and regulations toward transformation and marginalised groups, there is still a huge gap in implementation. For instance, in the TVET Colleges sector, there is no wing or unit seriously dealing with students with disability. The policy of inclusive education is in place but at the ground level implementation is not happening fast enough. It must be placed on record that students with disabilities have been diligent and focussed in empowering themselves on the available socially inclusive arrangements visible in policy documents. It is for this reason that this study sought to explore the experiences at TVET Colleges towards students with physical impairment.

The international policies all make a reference to the protection of people with disability from discrimination, promotion of the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities, equal enjoyment of all human rights and improved quality of life in their countries (Subrayen, 2011). The South African policies aimed to redress historical and contemporary inequalities in relation to disabilities. While the policies based on DHET emphasise the aim of changing fundamental prejudices about disability in higher education institutions and a guarantee to equal access, full participation, overall protection and promotion of fundamental human rights for all in all educational institutions (Subrayen, 2011).

2.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

In spite of all these measures from policies and regulations, further challenges remain. Scholars such as Bucholz (2017, p.24) highlight that “despite the call for

transformation and equity in these policies, the majority of students with physical impairments remain subjected to different challenges”. In this section, I discuss previous studies conducted on the experiences of students with physical impairments, regard to the accessibility to higher education, inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure, learning and institutional support; stigmatisation and discrimination are discussed.

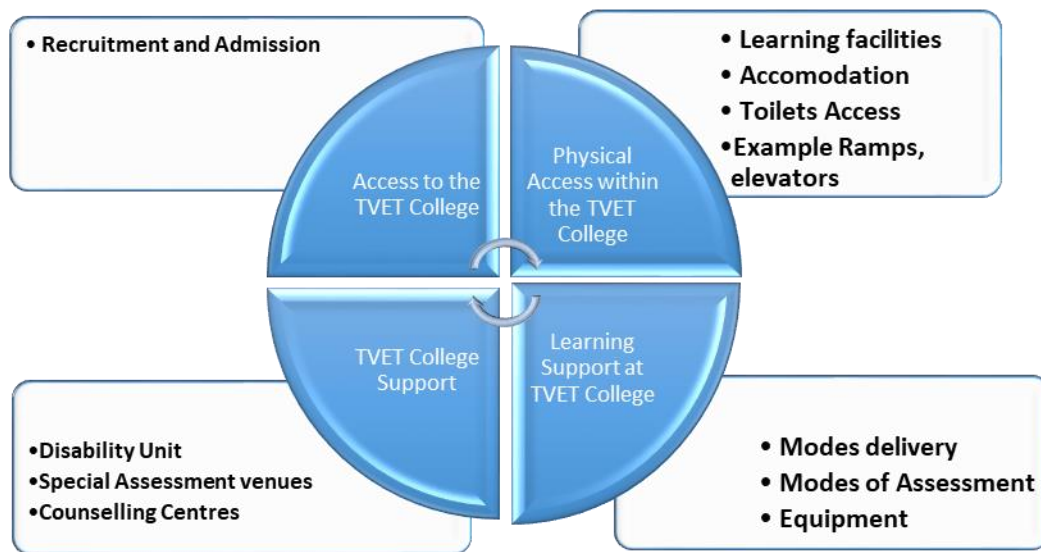


Figure 1. Disability Issues in Higher Education by Sitali Wamundila (2019)

2.6.1 Accessibility to higher education

When most countries address the issue of persons with disabilities, they apply the inclusion and integration principle (Jali, 2009). The inclusion principle emphasises equity while integration is a way of incorporating those members who are excluded or a marginalised group such as persons with disabilities back into the society (Jali, 2009).

The exclusion principle promotes that students with physical disabilities be excluded in the learning environment. The aim of inclusion education is to promote oneness within students because it embraces the diversity introduced by students with physical impairments in the learning environment. (Jali, 2009). The principle of equity encourages fair opportunities to enter higher education programmes and to succeed,

while the integration principle promotes the acceptance of all learners in the regular classrooms (Collins, Azmat, & Rentschler, 2018; Du Plessis, 2013; Jali, 2009).

During colonialism in African countries, access to higher education was restricted to able-bodied persons by colonial authorities (Teferra & Altbach, 2004) and the persons with disabilities were not even considered (Subrayen, 2011). In a study conducted by Gidley, Hampson, Wheeler and Bereded-Samuel (2010), they found that Australian Higher Education is based on concepts related to access, participation and success imperatives. This emphasised the inclusion of students with physical impairments in the mainstream of Higher Education.

The South African government encourages HEIs to recruit students with disability, to see the committed implementation of policies which encourage inclusion of students with disability into the mainstream. The Education White Paper 3: A Programme for Transformation of Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997) promotes the provision of increased access to higher education irrespective of race, gender, age, class or disability.

The inclusive education view incorporates equality of opportunities for every person. Mittler (2000) defines inclusion as a radical reform of the school in terms of access, curriculum, assessment and grouping of learners. Howell (2005) indicates that, due to inclusive education, the number of students with physical impairments who were previously marginalised has increased enrolment in HEIs. Social redress should include the provision of resources to education institutions who deal with the learning needs of students with disability.

2.6.2 Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) describe mobility as an ability to move around. According to Donald et al (2002), physical disabilities may range from the loss of a limb or limbs to conditions where the muscles are affected so that the person cannot adequately control body position or movement. As a result, students with physical disabilities need accessible infrastructure such as library, tuition block, lecture halls, accommodation, administration block, toilets, and safe and appropriate learning environment (Mutanga & Walker, 2017). The HEIs should ensure that their buildings' infrastructure, such as doors, office administration block, lifts, lecture halls, cafeteria,

library, and accommodation are accessible to everyone, as some students with physical impairments use crutches and wheelchairs.

It has been noted that, most often, the higher education institutions' infrastructure is not designed to be user-friendly for students with physical impairment or those with special needs, thus restricting easy access (Ahmad, 2017; Mosia & Phasha, 2017; Mutanga, 2017; Buthelezi, 2014; Engelbrecht & De Beer, 2014; Maotoana, 2014; Allen & Cowdery, 2009). They also further state that this challenge manifests itself when students with physical impairments go about their activities of daily living (ADL) at higher educational institutions. This challenge addressed by the South African government by drawing up The South African National Plan in Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001b) which requests institutions of higher education (including the TVET Colleges) to provide suitable infrastructure for students with disability.

There are a number of challenges faced by students with impairments based on inaccessible infrastructure, such as multiple storey buildings with no lifts for physically challenged students (Buthelezi, 2014). Other buildings have no ramps for wheelchair users, which makes it difficult for wheelchair users to access the tuition block, lecture halls and computer labs. Even lecture halls need to be redesigned to allow a safe and appropriate learning environment for students with impairments, especially wheelchair users (Allen & Cowdery, 2009). Furniture such as desks need to be adjusted lower to suit wheelchair users since they do not move to the normal chairs.

Another challenge is that the ablution facilities are not at all user friendly for persons with disabilities. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) argue that there must be accessible ablution facilities for wheelchair users to move around easily and the toilet seat must be of a similar height to a standard wheelchair to facilitate transfer from the wheelchair to the toilet seat. Administration buildings should be designed for wheelchair users to move through or to turn around; and passages and public spaces must not be obstructed in any way. Reception desks should be low enough so that a person of short stature or a person using a wheelchair can comfortably see the receptionist (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2007). All doorways should be sufficiently wide to admit a person using a wheelchair. Knoll (2009) highlights that education institutions should make their learning environments more

accessible and welcoming, especially to people with disabilities to promote full participation.

In this section, I unpack and discuss the learning support and institutional support for students with physical impairments at HEIs.

2.6.3 Learning support

The main objective of HEIs is to empower and equip students with the necessary knowledge and to ensure that particular knowledge is accessible to all students. The HEIs have a mandate to disseminate knowledge through different learning methods and support such as assistive aids, support from the HEIs staff, academic programmes, special examination venues and student development programs.

- *Assistive aids and technology as learning support resources*

HEIs should have assistive aids to enhance education for students with impairments. TVET Colleges should have video tapes, Braille, hearing aids, internet access and information available in large print, as well as awareness and good liaison among the institutional stakeholders (Van Jaarsveldt & Ndeya-Ndereya, 2015). Pudaruth, Gunpath and Singh (2017) highlighted that students with disabilities should be empowered to become more active users of technology. They should be assisted to make informed decisions about technology which will benefit their learning processes both on and off campus.

The use of assistive technology, for example, the Optical Character Recognition which scans text to be read aloud by the computer's sound card; or speech recognition for converting the spoken word to printed word on the computer screen, supports meaningful and accessible learning (Chataika, 2018). Mutanga (2017) illustrates that though assistive technology heightens admittance to learning for students with disability, though at times it eliminates other students because it is designed for a specific kinds of people Some software, for example could not read mathematical and scientific signs or graphic material (Mokiwa & Phasha, 2012).

- *Staff support to enhance learning outcomes*

The role of lecturing staff, non-lecturing staff, and administration staff is vital. Therefore, training of the staff at the HEIs is needed to be able to handle students with impairment. Students with physical impairments receive different responses from

lecturing staff and non-lecturing staff ranging from helpful to unsupportive (Holloway, 2001). A study conducted by Mutanga and Walker (2017) indicates that some lecturing staff distanced themselves from providing necessary support to students with disabilities because of negative attitudes. They further state that those who distanced themselves displayed a lack of involvement with students with disabilities and tended to refer them to the Disability Unit or Student Support Services at the institution.

In an earlier study, Haywood (2014) mentions that lecturing staff reveal their lack of disability awareness resulting in the non-visibility of appropriate academic reasonable accommodations for students with impairment. This lack of support from the staff resulted in suffering and discrimination within the educational institution.

In returning to Mutanga and Walker (2017) where they explored the academic lives of students with disabilities at South African Universities from the lecturers' perspectives, their study reveals that some lecturers do not understand diversity and, as a result, they eliminate students with disabilities in their teaching and learning activities. Their study also concurs with Buthelezi (2014) who found that lecturing staff lack professional training in dealing with diversity matters and particularly disability issues.

- *Academic programmes*

A study conducted by Swart and Greyling (2011) found that students are treated differently per department; those students with physical impairments in the Humanities and Social Sciences department were more positive about the support they receive from tutors than students in the Natural, Economic and Business studies department. Swart and Greyling (2011) further revealed that, in most of the HEIs where there is a low level of inclusion, disability was not viewed as an issue of social justice. This is concurred by Mosia and Phasha (2017, p.6) in their study where they "identified teaching and learning practices that deny students with physical impairments access to the learning spaces and educational attainment which they desire". Mosia and Phasha (2017) further argue that education institutions should find ways to adapt any programme which students with disabilities currently find inaccessible. Another next important infrastructure is exam venues.

- *Examination venues*

Madriaga, et al. (2010) and Knoll (2009) highlighted the challenges faced by students with physical impairments, especially for students who do not have limbs or non-functioning limbs that it is difficult during tests and exams. Gumbi, et al. (2015); Mosia and Phasha (2017) suggested that accessible exam venues and support mechanisms such as time concessions during examinations and tests for students with physical impairments should be arranged. TVET Colleges need to ensure inclusion and full and equal participation of students with physical disability, which would allow everyone to achieve better results.

2.6.4 Institutional support

According to the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of education, 2001a), students with disabilities should have equal opportunities within society and should be given the necessary support to enable them to exercise their rights. It further states that all students have equal rights to education and students with physical impairments have the right to receive the support needed for them to acquire knowledge.

The Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001a) also outlines the inclusion of students with disabilities such that each HEI should draft its own institutional plan to support students with disabilities (Department of Education, 2001b). This means that each educational institution should develop their own Disability Unit or Student Support Office, which will deal with the needs, matters and support of students with disabilities (Gumbi, et al., 2015). This unit should cater for both students and staff and provide some of the required services (Mutanga, 2017). The question of how the academic and administration staff who are disabled receive support in the HEIs remains unanswered.

Engelbrecht and De Beer (2014) noted that in some HEIs, even though students with disabilities disclosed their disability, the institution did not have any mechanism for routinely providing such information to student support services. Ahmad (2017) concurs with Engelbrecht and De Beer (2014) that disabled student services offered at the HEIs do not have relevant support services pertaining to specific disabilities

especially in the TVET Colleges. Disability Units / Students Support Offices are found mainly in Universities and not at TVET Colleges.

- *Support offered by the Disability Units and Student Support Services*

The main function of Disability Units is to assist in identifying and helping students with disability and allow people with disabilities to voice their concerns (Ntombela, 2013). It also assists students with physical impairments to communicate their frustration and misperceptions about them and their disability as well as to facilitate and coordinate specific support services for students with disabilities (Gobalakrishnan, 2013). In instances where Disability Units did not perform according to students' needs, students with disability felt unwelcome at their institutions (Mutanga, 2017).

Disability Units or Student Support Services must ensure equal opportunities for students with disabilities in teaching and learning (Shevlin, Kenny, & McNeela, 2004). They must also ensure that the needs of the students with impairments such as special exam venues, library, student residence, IT Technician, Orientation and Mobility Practitioner, Braille Assistant Practitioner and the Librarian are available.

The challenge of the Disability Unit or support services is that students do not receive expected help such as emotional support and counselling due to untrained staff or non-functioning of the offices (Moodley & Mchunu, 2019; Maotoana, 2014; Buthelezi, 2014). Naidoo (2010) concurs with Maotoana (2014) that even though Disability Units are there, the facilities and services offered are insufficient to assist students with disabilities. In most TVET Colleges, there are no such units, and students have no way to express their concerns. Another challenge is that not all Disability Units cater for all types of impairments at HEIs. Mutanga (2017) notes that, in newer and smaller Disability Units, it is primarily only those students with visual or mobility challenges who are catered for.

Mutanga (2017) highlights that students with impairments also experience exclusion in sports codes. At some stage, the HEIs do not have activities which can be accessed by disabled students. They are always left behind. Students with disability are also excluded in Student Development Programmes. They are not given opportunities to be class reps, assistants, etc. and they do not participate in the student body such as SRC.

2.6.5 Stigmatisation and discrimination

It is clear that there is distinction between the concepts of stigma and discrimination since they are not similarities, though the distinction has proved to be difficult (Deacon, Uys & Mohlahlane, 2009). Therefore, it is vital important to separate the two concepts since both present a challenge to people with disability. Stigmatisation and discrimination can be experienced in and outside the HEIs (Goffman, 1963).

Goffman (1963) defined stigma as a discrediting attribute assigned by society to those who differ in some custom from society's expectations. While discrimination refers to treating people from the same group differently, with some getting worse treatment than others (unfair or unequal treatment) (Larson, 2012). Deacon (2006) argues that stigma and discrimination are different processes, which can happen without following the other. Mnisi (2014) state that stigmatisation can happen where there is no active discrimination happening.

According to Abbey, Charbonneau, Tranulis, Moss, Baici, Dabby, & Paré, (2011) discrimination can occur when the stigmatisation has occurred by concrete behaviour such as exclusion and rejection. Deacon (2006, p. 421) concurs that "stigma as something that results in discrimination". For instance, stigma interferes with social interaction where society does not fully accept persons with physical disabilities due to certain physical attributes that are different from able-bodied persons. As a result, people with disability in that particular society experience exclusion and discrimination from full participating (Harris & Enfield, 2003). Stigmatisation can manifest as aversion to avoidance, social rejection, discounting, discrediting, dehumanization, and depersonalization of others into stereotypic caricatures (Dovidio, et al., 2000).

In HEIs, students with physical impairments experience stigmatisation because of their disability. For instance, no one is prepared to listen to their opinions because there are disabled (Pudaruth, Gunpath and Singh, 2017). Maotoana (2014) adds that those people with disability are exposed to discrimination because they are from minority populations. As a result, students with impairments may choose at times not to declare their disability for administrative convenience, for identity reasons, to pass as 'normal', or to avoid possible stigma and discrimination (Riddell & Weedon, 2014).

Another challenge faced by students with impairment is negative attitudes displayed by staff and peers (Seale, Draffan & Wald, 2008; Subrayen, 2011). It is worth noting

that students with impairments develop emotional and psychological problems due to lack of support from the HEI (Gorter, 2009). In the sub section below, scholarly evidence is provided on the experiences of institutional and learning support available for students with physical disabilities in higher education.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.7.1 Definition of disability

Altman (2001) defines disability in terms of the social model as a limit or loss of opportunities to take part in community life because of physical and/or social barriers. According to Driedger (1989) disability is created by physical and social barriers which limit the disabled person's ability to participate in a community's normal life on an equal footing. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) define disabilities as an amount of loss of function in the body or legs of the person concerned. Donald, et al. (2002) further state that this may range from the loss of a limb or limbs to conditions where the muscles are affected so that the person cannot properly control body position or movement.

In India, they define a person with a disability as being unable to do something with the implication that disability is a lack or flaw that gives rise to limited participation in all spheres of life (Ghai, 2012). In China, disability is defined as suffering from abnormalities arising from diminished psychological, physiological or anatomical functioning whereby the ability to perform an activity is limited (Ellsworth & Zhang, 2007). In South Africa, the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001a) defines a person with disability as "a person limited or impaired in one or more functional activities which prevents full and equal academic, social and economic participation". All the above definitions agree that the people with disability have limited opportunities in their social lives because of the loss of limb in their bodies and functions within the society (UPIAS, 1976).

After consideration, I prefer this definition for the current study, which comes from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (United Nations, 2006). It defines disability as "persons with disabilities include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in

interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis as others.” This definition touches on a few things such as long-term physical, mental and intellectual impairments which hinder the individual’s full participation in society on an equal basis. That gives us a clear indication that students with physical disability need support to perform and achieve as able-bodied people. It also provides arguments for disability as a human right and social justice issue.

Kaplan (2000) argues that the status of persons with disabilities in society is changing dramatically as policies and legislatures change. Kaplan (2000) also states that disability is a social construct, especially as people are perceived by others as having a disability. That means that the way the society views people with disability changes as their laws and policies change. The following terms such as disability and impairment need to be clarified to avoid misinterpretation and vagueness in understanding these terms. Disability according to Kaplan (2000) is lack or restriction of ability to perform an activity which society considers normal, as a result of an impairment. While impairment is the barrier, which is caused by environmental constraints or structures, where the individual lacks a whole limb, a defective limb, organ and/or any other malfunctioning of the body (UPIAS, 1976).

This study will adopt the definition of impairment by UPIAS (1976) as the aim of this current study is to exploring the experiences of students with physical impairments. UPIAS (1976) defines impairment as where the individual lacks a whole limb, a defective limb, organ and/or any other malfunctioning of the body (Physical).

2.7.2 The Evolving Models of Disability (Conceptual framework)

The way in which the community views disability influences the social institutions settings and social structures to accommodate people with disability (Tsai & Ho, 2010). Kaplan (2000) states that models of disability are useful conceptual frameworks which are used to underpin and understand the disability.

There are many models of disability, but they complement or oppose one another. Harris and Enfield (2003) identified three types of disability models. These are the Charity, Medical and Social Models of disability. These three types of models of disability form a clear basic guide as to how societal structures, government and

institutions view people with disabilities. The Rights-Based Model of disability is another model according to DPSA (2000). Naidoo (2010) points that models of disability change as society changes. That means the society structures changes the way they view people with disabilities, hence understanding and interpretations of disability is in a constant state of evolution. In the section below the Evolving Models of disability will be fully discussed.

2.7.2.1 The Charity Model of Disability

The Charity model, according to Harris and Enfield (2003) sees people with disabilities as victims, because of their impairment. Depending on the kind of disability, some persons with disabilities cannot walk, talk, see, learn or work (Tsai & Ho, 2010). Some persons with disabilities fail to assist themselves and as a result they cannot live an independent life. Harris and Enfield (2003,) note that, according to the Charity Model of disability, persons with disabilities need special services and special institutions such as schools or institutions. As a result, people with disabilities are to be sympathised with and need our help, assistance, charity and welfare in order to be looked after due to their disabilities. According to this model, people with disability have a low sense of self-esteem and depend on others to help them.

2.7.2.2 The Medical Model of Disability

The Medical Model of disability identifies people according to their medical conditions. Kaplan (2000) states that the life of people with disability is regulated by medical conditions and must be cured through medical intervention and treatment. Harris and Enfield (2003) concur with Kaplan (2000) that according to the Medical Model of disability, persons with disabilities are seen as persons with physical problems which should be cured by medical means. Kaplan (2000) further highlights that the medical model of disability provides the perspective that it is the person with disability that is the problem and not society.

The aim of this model is to make people with disabilities “normal” – which of course implies that people with disabilities are in some way abnormal (Jali 2009). This model also emphasises that disability is limited to the individual: in the case of disability, the disabled person needs to be changed and not society (Hickey, 2006).

2.7.2.3 The Rights-Based Model of Disability

The rights-based model of disability promotes human rights, social justice, inclusion, access and participation in all structures of society (Degener, 2016). Disability is imposed by society onto the individual who is living with disability to deny the right to participate fully and equally in all structures of society (South African Human Rights Commission, 2002).

This model promotes the right to equal opportunities and participation in society such as the right to health (physical and psychological) or the right to education and employment (DPSA, 2000). The rights-based model uses laws and policies to ensure that the barriers created by society are dismantled (Department of social Development, 2015). The two main elements of the rights-based approach are empowerment and accountability. Empowerment refers to the participation of people with disabilities as active stakeholders, while accountability relates to the duty of public institutions and structures to implement these rights and to justify the quality and quantity of their implementation (DPSA, 2000).

The rights-based model of disability and human rights-based model first consider an individual as a human being before the disability. The thinking behind this model is that everyone has a right to access and participate in all structures in society, including the right to an equitable and equal education. The rights-based model is closely related to the social model of disability as it aligns closely with the human rights and social justice concerns of persons with disabilities (DPSA, 2000).

2.7.2.4 The Social Model of Disability

The critique of the traditional interpretation of disability, which was transformed into the social model of disability, was developed from 1970 in the UK (Albert, 2004). UPAIS (1976) defines the social model of disability as a non-traditional diagrammatic model like many psychological and sociological models, but a progressive political concept opposes the medical model of disability commonly used in the health professions. The social model of disability argues that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment (DHET, 2018).

The aim of the social model of disability is to remove the barriers within society so that persons with disabilities, inclusive of persons with physical disabilities have access to

the same opportunities as everyone else (Tsai & Ho, 2010; Buthelezi, 2014). According to The White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Department of Social Development, 2015), the social model focuses on the abilities and capabilities of persons with disabilities. The social model respects disability as diversity and aims to address the social barriers that result in discrimination, stigmatisation, negative stereotyping, negative attitudes, labelling and ridicule (Tsai & Ho, 2010). It acknowledges that the social context, within which persons with disabilities live, impacts on their full participation, inclusion and acceptance into mainstream society. The model further acknowledges that disability is a social construct that results from the interaction of various actual or perceived impairments with barriers in the environment; promotes broader systemic and attitudinal changes in society; and promotes mainstreaming of disability.

The social model explores ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for people with disabilities so that they can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives (DHET, 2018; Tsai & Ho, 2010). It further states that the social model interpretation provides different ways of understanding and learning about the situation of persons with disabilities in society.

The social model argues that the way that the society is organised or constructed excludes people with disability (Harris & Enfield, 2003). UPIAS (1976) concurs that people with disabilities encounter a barrier in everyday life where there is a social exclusion of persons with disabilities by social practices and structures. The British Council of Disabled People (as cited by Buthelezi, 2015) highlights that the social model recognises that the potential of an individual to function fully in society can be affected by differences in their individual physical attributes. This means that social structures, inclusive of higher education institutions (HEIs), are one example of social structures that promote barriers against people with disability, which discriminate and exclude people with disability in societal involvement.

Harris and Enfield (2003), Kaplan (2000), The DHET, (2018) and The British Council of Disabled People (1981) highlight the following barriers that serve to exclude persons with disabilities. This is reflected in the sub section below.

2.7.3 The Types of Barriers Negotiated by Persons with Disabilities

There are number of barriers negotiated by persons with disabilities, this current study now briefly discusses attitudinal barriers, environmental barriers, institutional barriers, economic barriers and cultural barriers.

- **Attitudinal barriers:** People with disability also experience attitudinal barriers in society. This attitudinal barrier is based on prejudice or stereotyping in society (DHET, 2018). This causes people to fail to disclose their disability in the learning institution because of discrimination (Moodley & Mchunu, 2019).
- **Environmental barriers:** Environmental barriers restrict people with disabilities by not being accessible enough for them to move, function and communicate as effectively as people without impairments. In other instances, there are inaccessible buildings; absence of hand rails and inaccessible ablution facilities especially for wheelchair users (Allen & Cowdery, 2009; Gumbi, et al., 2015).
- **Institutional barriers:** This means legal discrimination. Persons with disabilities are excluded from certain rights, for example, discriminated against accessibility to the institution (UNCRPD, 2006); Opini, 2012). Discrimination and stigma by the community and educational institutions, staff and fellow students at the university manifested as high levels of intolerance, disrespect and human rights violation (Hammad & Singal, 2015).

According the study of Mayat and Amosun, (2011) they found that some institutions of higher learning still exclude students with disabilities from certain academic programmes like Engineering and Natural Science. Mayat and Amosun further state that even some lecturing staff exclude students with disabilities in these courses because they would be unable to fulfil all course requirements. This was concurred by Opini (2012) that students with disabilities were denied access to particular courses because they were not given recognition of their capabilities to meet their course requirements especially with courses entailing fieldwork.

- **Economic barriers:** People with disability are excluded from economic development opportunities such as work opportunities, education, and empowerment, whereby the society excludes them due to their disability

(Buthelezi, 2014). Chiwandire and Vincent (2019) point out that the introduction of progressive funding models in higher education institutions such as disability scholarships served to widen access for students with disabilities.

- **Cultural barriers:** Disabled females experience cultural discrimination because of their gender (Hammad & Singal, 2015). Prejudice is associated with the recognition of difference, and “disabled” people are not seen as normal in the eyes of “non-disabled” people (Swain, Finkelstein, French & Oliver, 1993). Cultural barriers form oppression that intersects with a student’s and/or instructor’s learning and teaching in the classroom (Knoll, 2009). Kasiram and Subrayen (2013) discovered that women with disabilities experienced additional exclusion and discrimination by society at large. The multiple marginalities they experienced led to loss of power in making decisions about their own lives. They further found that discrimination by the community and educational institutions, staff and fellow students at the university manifested as high levels of intolerance, disrespect and human rights violation.

Maotoana (2017) added social barriers and political barriers All the above barriers affect the daily living of people with disability both in and outside the HEIs. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2005, pp.59 – 61) emphasises the following points:

- “Educators’ attitudinal barriers need to be addressed;
- Resource disparities between HEIs need to be reduced;
- Collaboration between disability units, support staff and academics needs to be fostered. The faculty needs to become the focal point for change and students with physical impairment needs should be integrated into the teaching and learning process; and
- Disability issues need to become a part of the general processes of decision making in HEIs. Support for students with physical impairments needs to be assimilated into the core areas of the HEIs functioning”

This means that, according to the social model, a disability not only depends on the individual but also on the environment, institution, attitude, economic and culture which can be disabling or enabling in various ways (Harris & Enfield, 2003). All these barriers make the social and college life of people with disabilities difficult in most cases. A

conclusion can therefore be drawn that, according to the social model perspective, disability is a social construct (Mercer & Barnes, 2003).

Mole (2013) points out that, to bring about change from a social model perspective, it is important to consult and hear people with disabilities at the beginning of the design and implementation stages. This means that the social model must view a person with disability as a capable individual, and the society should take into account their physical or mental differences (DPSA, 2000). Albert (2004, p.3) points out that “from a social-model perspective disability is a socio-political problem.” Therefore, it is the responsibility of society to ensure that the needs of people with impairments are met and that they are provided with the infrastructure which best suits their needs (Jali, 2009).

Accessibility is the one of the key principles set out in the UNCRPD, the Bill of Rights (Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996) and in the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Department of Social Development, 2015) which is underpinned by social inclusion (DHET, 2018). This study sought to look at the social model in relation to accessibility to higher education institutions, physical accessibility within the institution, learning support and institutional support.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter began by providing a broad overview of students with disabilities in higher education by briefly highlighting the background on issues of physical disabilities as well as their historical basis. In addition, the global, South African and institutional policies and legislations around disability and models of disability, focusing mainly on the Social Model were explained. The bulk of the chapter, as expected, presents an exposition of international and local literature on issues of physical disabilities in higher education and mainly focuses on the experiences, challenges and support they receive from the IHE. In so doing, the gap in literature on lived experiences of students living with disability in South African TVET colleges was identified. Towards the end, I discussed the Evolving Models of Disability (conceptual framework) of the study including how it guided this study. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two discussed literature on how students with physical disability experience their daily life in their institutions of higher education. The literature review was followed by a discussion of the related conceptual frameworks that guided this study. This chapter provides details of the research methodology and design of the study. This chapter is divided into four parts. In Part 1, the focus is on the design and methodology together with a consideration of the conceptual framework based on methodological choices I made. I outlined the design of the study, qualitative research, research paradigm, research approach (case study), sampling and data generation tools. In Part 2, I outlined the activities that I undertook in preparation for the fieldwork, and the preparations that were necessary before entering the field. I discussed the ethical clearance process and the biographical information of the participants. This involves detailing the work involved in trying to gain access to the participants. This will be followed by Part three, where I give the description of the research setting, a detailed report of what happened in the field from accessing participants on the days of data generation. The data analysis and the trustworthiness of the data is discussed in the section I termed 'working with data'. I end this chapter with a conclusion.

It is vital to recap the purpose of this study and research questions as the methodology process takes place.

3.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore the:

- experiences of students with physical impairments at a TVET College in KZN;
- perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment; and
- the kind of support the institution offers to students with physical impairments.

3.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do students with physical impairments experience studying at a TVET College in KZN?
- What are the perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment?
- What support does the institution offer to students with physical impairment studying at this TVET College?

In the next section, the research design and methodology used are highlighted.

PART ONE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Kothari (2004) explains that a research design is both a plan and a strategy. The plan specifies relevant sources and types of information and the strategy specifies the approach to use when gathering and analysing data. In this study, I used the qualitative approach interpretive design.

3.4.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research was suitable for this study because it aimed to explore, discover, develop an understanding, describe and report on the study and gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations (Creswell, 2013). The research problem required myself as the researcher to allow the students with physical impairments to draw from their own experiences. Jali (2009) states that qualitative research is relevant to studying social relations because it helps the researcher to understand the actions and meaning of different societies and settings. Qualitative research analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions (White, 2005).

This study aimed to understand the experiences and attitudes of the students with physical impairment at a TVET College. The reality is socially constructed in qualitative research (Mertens, 2005). Thompson (1992) concurs that qualitative research is a

collection of approaches to enquiry, all of which rely on verbal, visual and auditory data (tape recorder). Another characteristic of social phenomenon, it provides the researcher a deeper understanding of a particular matter (Silverman, 2000).

From the above discussion, it is clear that qualitative research focuses on lived human experiences and the interpretations of the environment in which they live. Therefore, qualitative research was considered appropriate for this study as this study explored the experiences of students with physical impairments at a TVET College as it provided a clear understanding of how to generate descriptive data.

3.4.2 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a worldview and a framework that guides research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Babbie and Mouton (2001) point out that a paradigm is a framework for what can be seen and understood which guides the reality on how we interpret it. Paradigm is also the set of common beliefs about the reality (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be interpreted and solved (Kuhn, 1962). The concept paradigm refers to the way we observe, think and understand the settings or environments and draw conclusions about the phenomena (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Mnisi (2014) points out that paradigms influence both the choice of methodology and the methods used in research because they inform the practice and direction of inquiry and therefore play a vital role in research.

The next section comprises a brief explanation of three paradigms: the positivist paradigm, the transformative paradigm and the interpretivist paradigm. The paradigms differ in the way they respond to epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I will highlight how they differ, clarify these differences and discuss in detail why the interpretivist paradigm was suitable for this study.

3.4.2.1 The Positivist paradigm

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a positivist paradigm as a worldview to be researched, and note that it is a research method that is grounded in the scientific method of investigation. Positivist paradigm assumes that, through the scientific processes, the facts can be determined (Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, Martin, & Sustainability,

2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2007;). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) concurred with which scholar that the scientific method involves a process of experimentation which is used to explore observations and answer research questions.

Kivunja and Kuyini (2011) state that, to draw conclusions, positivist paradigm's research is reliant on logic which is deductive, hypotheses formulation and testing, operational definitions and mathematical equations, calculations, and extrapolations and expressions. They further elucidate that this paradigm's main aims are to explain and predict outcomes that can be measured. This means that it assists the researcher to predict what could happen in the future through scientific processes. The outcomes of positivist research can be generalised; meaning that it should be possible to observe the same occurrences in another phenomenon (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) emphasises that positivist paradigm mainly depends on a quantitative approach, which can be processed statistically and uses quantities and numbers to record facts.

- Positivist paradigm's **epistemology** is said to be objectivist (truth or knowledge is 'out there to be discovered' by research);
- its **ontology** is naive realism (theory is universal and law-like generalisations can be made across contexts);
- its **methodology** is experimental (research should follow the scientific method of investigation); and
- its **axiology** is beneficence (employs empirical or analytical approaches) (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 31).

Burns (2000) in Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) states that four criteria – both internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity – are usually employed to validate positivist paradigm. Considering the nature and focus of my study this paradigm would not benefit the purpose of my study.

The next discussion is about the transformative paradigm/critical paradigm.

3.4.2.2 Transformative / Critical Paradigm

Transformative paradigm is also known as Critical paradigm. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017); Thanh and Thanh (2015) explain that the Critical paradigm research is based in social justice and tries to address political, social and economic issues that lead to social ills such as oppression, conflict, struggle and power struggles at all levels. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017, p. 35) further state that transformative paradigm seeks to change the politics so as to confront social oppression and improve the social justice in the situation.

- “Transformative paradigm assumes a transactional **epistemology**, (in which the researcher interacts with the participants and the utilisation of participatory research);
- an **ontology** of historical realism, especially as it relates to oppression (to address issues of power, oppression and trust among research participants);
- a **methodology** that is dialogic (the treatment of research as an act of construction rather than discovery); and
- an **axiology** that respects cultural norms (it endeavours to expose conjunctions of politics, morality, and ethics)” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 35).

The aim of the study was to understand the phenomenon of College environment – while the understanding may bring about social change in terms of understanding what was not known from hearing from the participants’ voices, the ultimate aim rests with understanding. It was for that reason that I considered the critical paradigm as not blending with the study.

The next discussion is about the interpretivist paradigm and why it was deemed suitable for this study.

3.4.2.3 Interpretivist / Constructivist paradigm

The interpretivist paradigm is also known as Constructivist paradigm. It emphasises understanding of both the individual and their interpretation of their world (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The interpretivist paradigm is helpful when attempting to understand the experiences, perceptions, values and cultural norms of participants in their social settings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The reality in interpretivist

paradigm is socially constructed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). It allows for multiple reconstructions of the ideas, or that the data could lead to more than one conclusion (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The knowledge and conclusion are subjective. This means that the information is collected on the participant's experience from their perspective (Willing, 2001). Creswell (2003) concurs that the interpretive paradigm researcher relies upon the participants' views of the situation being studied while Winberg (1997) emphasises that interpretive paradigm displays how an individual interprets their reality. "This is why sometimes this paradigm has been called the Constructivist paradigm" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 33). Cohen and Manion (1994) emphasise that it is the world of human experience that interpretive researchers understand.

It is for that reason I used interpretive paradigm, which aims to understand the world of human experience from an individual perspective (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). It was deemed suitable for this study since the reality to be studied was from the participants' subjective experiences, opinions and views regarding their disability at TVET College which means that they shared their individual experiences about their social context (College life). This also blended well with the qualitative techniques which were best suited for this purpose.

- "The interpretive paradigm assumes a subjectivist **epistemology** (knowledge is created by the findings, more personal, interactive mode of data collection socially constructed knowledge by experiencing the real life or natural settings);
- a relativist **ontology** (realities are multiple and socially constructed, reality can be explored and constructed through human interactions and meaningful actions);
- a naturalist **methodology** (data collected through interviews, discourses, text messages and reflective sessions, with the researcher acting as a participant observer; research is a product of the values of the researcher); and
- a balanced **axiology** (the outcome of the research will reflect the values of the researcher and present a balanced report of the findings)" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 33).

3.5 RESEARCH APPROACH: CASE STUDY

There are two terms used interchangeably by researchers, which have different meanings, i.e. method and methodology. The method is a “strategy of enquiry” which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data generation (Myers, 2009, p. 28) while methodology is the plan of action that lies behind the choice and use of particular methods (Crotty, 1998). Keeves (1997) concurs with Crotty that methodology refers to the research design, methods, approaches and procedures used in an investigation that is well planned to find out something. Methodology is a science of studying how research is done scientifically (Kothari, 2004). This means methodology comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods.

Sefotho (2015) further elucidated that methodology provides the researcher with why, what, from where, when and how data is collected and analysed. A case study is an approach was used in this study. This is one of the research methodologies suitable to be conducted in the interpretivist paradigm (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Ponelis, 2015). It is a research method involving an up-close, in-depth analysis of a single entity (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). According to Creswell (2013) a case study is a detailed examination of a subject of study, as well as helping to understand its world in detail. Yin (1994) defines case study as a research strategy, an empirical inquiry approach that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. Another characteristic of a case study is that it provides rich and thick descriptions of the participants’ lived experiences, thoughts and feelings about a particular phenomenon within a specific context, using multiple data sources (Merriam, 2009).

For the purpose of this study, I used case study as it allows in-depth and advanced understanding the experiences of the participants at the TVET College. I used one site, which I worked in and it has two campuses (CPD and OLU), out of six campuses of the College where participants freely shared their ideas, views, perceptions and experiences (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013) about their TVET College. The interpretive paradigm uses a case study approach to explore the experiences and perceptions of students with impairment at the TVET College.

It is for these reasons that a case study was most suitable for this study because it allows a researcher to examine through one or more of the several research methods (Kothari, 2004; Magagula, 2015). The case study allows the researcher to get more

information and thick descriptions of the participants lived experiences in their own natural setting environment (Creswell, 2013). This study allowed the researcher to interact with participants and gather data from their real-life context (TVET College), which led to in-depth understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon (Kothari, 2004).

3.6 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Purposive sampling was used in this study because it allows the judgement of the researcher to select the participants, which will provide the best information for the purpose of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; White, 2005). Purposive sampling gives a researcher a deliberate choice in identifying participants to answer the research questions (Pilot & Beck, 2014). Purposive sampling is one of the examples of non-probability sampling (Vehovar, Toepoel & Steinmetz, 2016). The aim of purposive sampling is to identify relevant participants who can give detailed information (Creswell, 2013).

The criteria for selecting the participants was that the students should: be enrolled at CDP or OLU full time; attending classes between 7:00 and 14:30 from Monday to Thursday; have a visible disability; and be willing to participate in the study. This study purposely excluded the students with other disabilities such partial visual impairment or deafness or hearing impairment. The current study aimed to explore the experiences of students with physical impairments.

3.7 DATA GENERATION TOOLS

Qualitative data collection methods vary using unstructured or semi-structured techniques. Qualitative uses methods such as focus groups, individual interviews, description and observations. Qualitative research uses a small sample of participants as it is indulging in in-depth investigation and participants are selected to fulfil a given quota (Miles, Huberman, Huberman & Huberman, 1994). I identified two suitable data generation tools to be used to collect qualitative data and answer the research questions posed. Semi-structured interviews and observation were used to collect data.

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

In line with qualitative research, this research employed interviews to find answers to the research questions. White (2005) states that interviews provide access to what is inside a person's head, making it possible to measure what a person knows or does not know, and what a person thinks (attitude and beliefs). Semi-structured interviews and face-to-face interviews were used together with observation to understand the experiences of students with physical impairments at the data generation site. Mishler (1986) corroborates White's views and states that interviews are face-to-face verbal interchanges in which one person attempts to elicit information from another person. Interviews allow open response questioning and follow ups to obtain more detailed participant opinions. Neuman (1997) concurs that interviews have the highest response rates, because they allow for follow up questions.

The aim of conducting interviews was to gather an authentic understanding of people's experiences in their real settings (Jali, 2009; Silverman, 1993). This allowed participants to be asked about their experiences, perceptions and their learning environment during the interviews.

3.7.2 Observation

Observation is a source of gathering information (Kumar, 2005) where the researcher compiles the notes while s/he is observing, a description of the participant, the setting and what happened. Creswell (2013) agrees that observation is a collecting tool to obtain information of the participants' behaviours during their engagement in activities or in someone's life.

However, Kumar (2005) warns that the observer may be biased. It is then critical for an observer to follow observer protocols and guidelines for conducting observation to avoid bias and produce valid information (Chaleunvong, 2009). A summary of features, which are in the observation sheet, were observed within the institution and are in Appendix 6 and in the subsequent section.

Observation was employed simultaneously with interviews. I wanted to get an accurate reflection of how participants were interacting within the institution. Participants were aware that they were under observation. The purpose of observing students with physical impairment as they were moving around their learning environment was to gather evidence on how each was dealing with their daily routine. This helped me to

better understand how the participants dealt with their challenges on a day-to-day basis.

I observed how the participants interacted and engaged with their lecturers and students. The purpose was to understand how well fellow students, lecturers and non-lecturing staff received them and how free they were to interact with them. Observation was also used to close the information gap left by the interview process.

PART TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FIELD

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I was aware of the ethical issues involved when doing research with people with disability. Polit and Beck (2012) point out those ethical values are vital in research that studies individuals. However, on the premise of doing 'least harm' and 'best' and in the quest for social justice I kept faith with the contemporary models of disability rather than the traditional models which undermine the dignity of a person with disability and encourage or discourage self-pity through silencing the voices of the affected people. I considered the rights-based model of disability and social based model, which first considers an individual as a human being before the disability. The thinking behind this the rights-based model is that everyone has a right to access all services available including the right to education. The social model stands against any form of discrimination and promotes equality and quality lifestyle unlike the social model, which seeks to remove barriers set by the society.

Although the research was set out to do 'best' and 'least harm' the possibility of trauma cannot be excluded. It was for that reason that debriefing sessions were conducted where the participants were asked to write reflective pieces on what they had done during the session, how they felt about the session, and what could have been done differently. In doing this, I followed in the steps of Rager (2005) who argues that it is very important to set aside debriefing time immediately after the data generation for the researchers and to go through the notes or recording themselves, to try to recreate the session while it is still fresh in their minds. The in-house Student Development Practitioner (SDP) from the TVET was also on stand-by for all the sessions that took place. While justifications for addressing ethical concerns throughout the research is put forward, what remains fundamentally important is the Belmont Report which emphasises that "research has to produce substantial social benefit while also maintaining the basic ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice" (National Institutes of Health cited in Mnisi, 2014, p. 95).

I was dealing with consenting adults in this study (see Biographical Information - Appendix 5) and the necessary ethical values were taken into consideration. The data collection was done after I received the ethical clearance certificate (see Appendix 3) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research

Ethics Committee after submitting a research proposal. I also obtained permission from the principal of the College (see Appendix 2). The signed written consent forms from all the participants (see Appendix 4) explained the purpose of the study and that their participation was voluntary and confidentiality was assured.

3.9 PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION

Marshall (1996,) explains that there is a need to adequately answer the research question by using an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study. Seven students with physical disabilities were identified using the above-mentioned criteria. The purposively selected participants were two students with dwarfism, two students using crutches, one student using a wheelchair, one student with one arm, and one student with a non-functional arm.

The two students using crutches gave many excuses and ended up not participating in the study. The student who had one arm kept promising to set an appointment, but it never took place. As a result, the interviews were conducted with three male students and one female student. Initially there were five male students and two female students. I explained the purpose of the study to the participants and that participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. Out of seven identified participants, only four were willing to participate in the study.

Biographical information of the participants is presented in the form of tables:

- Table 1. Age & Gender,
- Table 2. Programme & level, and
- Table 3. Nature of impairment & bursary grant status.

Age	Male	Female	Total
19-25	3	0	3
26-30	0	1	1
TOTAL	3	1	4

Table 1. Age & Gender

Table 1 summaries the age and gender of the participants. There were three males and one female who were interviewed. Their ages ranged from 19-above to 30 years old.

Campus	Programme	Course	Level	Total
CPD	(NCV)	Office practice	2	1
CPD	(NCV)	Unknown	3	2
OLU	Report 191	Management assistant	5	1
			Total	4

Table 2. Programme & Course level

Table 2 is the summary of the programmes and the levels participants are currently doing. It was noted that three of the participants are enrolled for NCV programme and one participant enrolled Report 191 programme. NCV programme is the year course while Report 191 programme is the semester course. Both are business studies programmes.

Participants	Disability	Bursary grant status
1	No limbs (using wheelchair)	Recipient
2	Dwarfism	Recipient
3	Dwarfism	Not disclosed
4	Has one hand	Recipient

Table 3. Nature of impairment & bursary grant status

Table 3 is the summary of nature of impairments and bursary grant status. Participant 1 was a female student who was born without limbs and she used a motorised wheelchair and received a bursary grant. Participants 2 and 3 live with dwarfism and both of them were males. Participant 2 disclosed his bursary grant status whilst Participant 3 did not. Participant 4 was using one hand, the other one being technically non-functional, and received a bursary grant.

Initially, seven students with physical disabilities were identified but only four participated in the study and the data was collected from the four participants. The next section gives a detailed description of activity that took place in the field.

PART THREE: IN THE FIELD

3.10 INTRODUCTION

This section gives a detailed activity that took place in the field; what the site looks like; how I selected participants and the actual data generation process.

3.10.1 DATA GENERATION SITE

The site was the two campuses selected from the TVET College, that is, the Centre of People Development (CPD) and Open Learning Unit (OLU) campuses. The tuition buildings are triple story, all computer rooms are either on the first or second floor, and not all the tuition buildings have lifts.

3.10.1.1 Selection of participant's/ sampling procedure

The participants were from one TVET College and selected from two campuses, that is, Centre of People Development (CPD) and Open Learning Unit (OLU) campuses. This study targeted students with impairments, especially those with physical impairments enrolled at the TVET College institution. By physical impairment, I refer to students with visible physical disabilities such as an amputee, non-functioning of limbs, using crutches and wheelchairs. White (2005) points out that the population is a collection of individuals who have some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying. The sample is taken from the population.

I requested the information from the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) office about students with impairments for selection of the participants. HEMIS office has all students' information in their system. For the purpose of this study, the target group were those students with different physical impairments to obtain multiple perspectives of their experiences and perceptions (Pilot & Beck, 2012). I then discovered that the HEMIS office does not have such information on students with disabilities in their records, which was puzzling as one could identify students with physical disabilities on campus attending lectures.

This confirmed what Watson (2002) argued that individuals with impairments may choose not to declare or disclose their disabilities for reasons associated with identity,

administrative convenience and they may also choose to pass as an able-bodied person to avoid discrimination and stigma.

I therefore approached both NCV and Report 191 staff assisted me with identifying seven students with visible physical disabilities. There are not many students with impairment doing Report 191. That is why I managed to get only one student and identified six students doing NCV but only four were willing to participate in the study.

3.10.2 Interview sessions

I am a lecturer in the same institution; however, the participants were available at different times. I needed to arrange with other lecturing staff for available accessible venues. The NCV students run their classes in the morning session, while some of Report 191 Nated classes start at 12h00. The appointments were not on the same day. There were four data generation sessions and each session lasted for approximately 30 minutes.

Each session started with introducing myself to the participant. Then I explained the purpose of the study to the participant. I then proceeded to explain to the participants that the whole exercise would be confidential, anonymity would be retained, and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so.

Before each interview started, the participants signed the informed consent form, which included consent for the audio recording of the interviews. The first exercise introduced to participants was to complete the one-page form Biography Information (see Appendix 4), which was followed by the interview questions. The interviewing process took place in different venues such as a classroom and the Senior Lecturer's office. Each session was voice recorded using a cell phone and later transcribed, and labelled by number from participant 1 to participant 4 for anonymity and confidentiality. The labelling assisted me during the analysis.

Participant 1, who uses a wheelchair, was interviewed in the classroom next to the staffroom. This venue was chosen as it supported the physical accessibility needs of the participant. Participants 2 and 3, who both live with dwarfism, were interviewed separately and at different times, in their classroom located in the tuition block. Participant 4 was interviewed in the Senior Lecturer's office, as this venue accommodated the physical accessibility needs of this participant.

The set of questions was prepared prior to interviews. Smith (2015) illustrates that, in semi-structured interviews, the investigator will have a set of questions in advance, which aims to answer the research questions. During the interview the participants shared their experiences. Babbie and Mouton (2006) emphasise that, in a qualitative study, participants speak for themselves and the researcher should provide redesigning of questions throughout the study for the smooth running of the conversation.

Prior to the interviews, physical meetings were undertaken to confirm appointments for the face to face interviews. Detailed descriptions of their lived experiences were shared during the interviews. During the interview process, some participants took time to respond to questions. Seidman (2006) encourages the researcher to respect the moments of silence from the participants because they might need time to think before they respond.

Through this process of interviews, I managed to gather more information about the experiences and perceptions of students with impairment at the TVET College. I followed an interview schedule (see Appendix 5) in the process and planned around the key research questions, which are documented in chapter 1 and this chapter of this study.

3.10.3 Observation sessions

I observed that, since the tuition buildings are triple story, there were no computer rooms in the ground floor but either on the first or second floor, and not all the tuition buildings have lifts to accommodate students using wheelchairs. Some students used motorised wheelchairs while others had manual wheelchairs. That means students using wheelchairs cannot use the computer rooms. In these instances, the lecturers who are teaching computer related subjects make arrangements to teach students using wheelchairs at ground level lecture venues, for example, office spaces. I also observed students using wheelchairs being assisted by other students, especially when students using wheelchairs had to navigate steep and uneven terrains. I noticed that students with physical impairments had friends and sympathisers amongst able-bodied students. The observation took place within and around classrooms and learning halls.

During the observation, I also noticed that, in the computer rooms, one of the students who lives with dwarfism sat on top of the desk since the chair was too low for him to use and type. As an observer, I found it awkward since the TVET College did not respond to the students' specialised needs or reasonable accommodations. I also observed that access to the classroom and other venues is limited as there is only one ramp with a steep gradient in close proximity to the administration block for all persons using wheelchairs. Students using wheelchairs needed assistance from other students to push them up the slope even though they used motorised wheelchairs. Another challenge they were facing was that they were unable to attend other lectures since these lectures were scheduled on the first and second floor and were inaccessible.

In another observation, I noticed that the doors to the lecture venues did not meet architectural specifications for persons using wheelchairs, that is, some doors were not wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs. Inside the classrooms, the desks were not user friendly and movable, and were sometimes too high for the wheelchair user. By using the observation tool, I noticed that students were enjoying being a part of the college environment and they went an extra mile to achieve what able-bodied persons could do. Participant 1, uses her mouth to write the assessments and is assisted by her colleagues to study. Unfortunately, I did not observe her during the computer session, so was unable to see how she manages to type and work on the PC.

During the observation I managed to get information; however, this did not give me sufficient evidence in terms of participants' experiences and perceptions about the institution. I was, however, able to combine what I had observed with the interviews. This enabled me to derive at a better understanding and interpretation of the ways in which students with physical disabilities negotiate their experiences within the institutions.

I must commend the student on his deep observation and insight of the many complexities experienced by students with physical disabilities. There are not many studies highlighting the higher education experiences of students with physical disabilities. Perhaps as a recommendation, Subrayen (2018) highlighted the experiences of students with physical disabilities in their teaching practice school placements.

PART FOUR: WORKING WITH DATA

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014) define data analysis as the process of organizing and arranging the mass data while White (2005) adds that data analysis is a process of collecting, sorting and managing data so that it can be studied in a meaningful way that will help in interpretation of the accumulated data. Bezuidenhout & Cronje (2014) further highlighted that qualitative data analysis and interpretation is the process through which collected data are changed into findings. They further state that this process reduces the large amount of raw data by identifying the patterns or similarities.

3.11.1 Qualitative data analysis

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in two languages namely, English and isiZulu. Participants were asked questions in English and gave responses in isiZulu. That means the responses had to be translated into English for the purpose of this research report.

It was a very challenging exercise to translate from isiZulu to English. The participants responses data were transcribed into written text before the actual analysis. This process involved transcribing every response by participants during interviews. Through translation we lose the meaning of certain phrases; it is therefore an assumption that during the data collection process we might not have captured the essence of what a participant really intended to say. Britten (1995) states that notes taken afterwards are likely to miss out some details. For instance, during the sessions, participants highlighted things, which were not relevant to the current study. All responses obtained from the semi-structured interviews were first organised and categorised according to questions from interviews. Also, data from observation was written down and analysed in conjunction with the interviews. This process assisted me to gain a deeper understanding of the generated data.

Since I was using cell phone recording during the semi-structured interviews, the transcribing was done afterwards. The transcription of tapes takes a long time compared to the tape-recording time (Smith, 2015). It took me approximately 2 hours per interview to transcribe the recordings. Britten (1995) confirms that it takes between

five and eight hours of transcription time per hour of interview. Subrayen (2011) states that the advantage of tape recordings and transcripts are that they: provide the researcher with a beginning; serve as public records to the scientific community; can be replayed for authentication purposes. In retrieving data, I was limited to the original transcripts and observation notes.

I transcribed all tape recordings and transcripts of each interview verbatim and analysed the data using thematic analysis based on the outline suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006).

3.11.2 Thematic Content Analysis

The study used Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to analyse and categorise the data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method for systematically analysing, identifying, organising and reporting themes or patterns across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Maguire, Delahunt, and Education (2017) agree with Braun and Clarke that the TCA process identifies patterns or themes within qualitative data. Maguire, Delahunt, and Education (2017) they further state that credible qualitative research requires data analysis. Lack of relevant thematic analysis has implications in terms of the credibility of the research process (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Maguire, et al. (2017) state that Braun and Clarke give a clear and usable framework for doing thematic analysis. Maguire, et al. (2017, further state that thematic analysis's objective is to address the research problem by identifying themes.

I followed the following six phases associated with Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) (Braun & Clarke, 2012). These six phases are reflected below as:

- **Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data**

At this phase I was familiarising myself with the responses by reading and re-reading the observation notes and listening to the audio recordings repeatedly. During this stage I made notes as I listened to the audio recorder. I grouped together the responses per question, and tried to analyse what the data meant (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

- **Phase 2: Generating initial codes**

In this phase I started to organise the data in a meaningful and systematic way through coding which reduces lots of data into small chunks of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The open coded method was used during the coding. Coding was done at the semantic level of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Once I was done with coding, the codes were then compared, new codes were generated, and some were adapted. This exercise was completed on hard copies of the transcript and using pencil.

- **Phase 3: Searching for themes (coding)**

At this phase I examined the codes that were identified in phase 2. I managed to put together the codes that were related to formulate the themes and sub themes. It was noticeable that some codes overlapped, which means they were associated with more than one theme. At this stage I also started to review the themes that would answer the research questions and the codes that did not fit to the themes were put together (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This is explained below.

- **Phase 4: Reviewing potential themes (elaboration)**

I read and re-read the labelled themes through the hard copy. At this stage, I revisited the identified themes in phase 3 with the aim of modifying them and doing a quality check. The themes were checked against the collected extracts of data to explore whether the theme worked in relation to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Maguire, et al. (2017, p. 3358) state that the researcher must also check the following: “Do the themes make sense? Does the data support the themes? Am I trying to fit too much into a theme? If themes overlap, are they separate themes? Are there themes within themes (subthemes)? Are there other themes within the data?”

- **Phase 5: Defining and naming themes (interpretation and checking)**

At this phase I was refining the themes to identify “the essence of what each theme” was about (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 66). I had to find the meaning of each theme and subtheme if there were any. I also revisited the objectives of the study to identify the connections with the identified themes. Each theme had been identified with a clear focus, scope, and purpose, to relate them with the research questions.

- **Phase 6: Producing the report (reflection)**

At the final phase, I filtered the themes through the conceptual framework of this study. The purpose of the report was to provide a compelling story about the collected data based on the analysis. The report makes an argument that answers the research questions.

3.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Mnisi (2014) states that to justify the issue of trustworthiness depends on the chosen paradigm. For the purpose of this study, I had chosen the interpretive paradigm where the idea is to understand the phenomenon being studied.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the key criteria of good qualitative research lies in trustworthiness. Qualitative research can only be transferable if it is credible, transferable, confirmable and dependable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These terms, which are regarded by many qualitative researchers as terms that are better suited to the nature of qualitative inquiry, replace the traditional quantitative terms of internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

- **Credibility:** For research to be credible, a researcher must convince his/her audience that descriptions or interpretations of findings will be recognised by people who share the same experience (Mnisi, 2014,; Aliyu, et al. 2014). All interview processes were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim, and notes were taken during observation. Credibility was also obtained through consistent observation viewing interpretations in alternate ways in the process of analysis. During the data collection, participants were encouraged to be frank and it was indicated that there were no wrong or right answers. Participants were also encouraged to ask questions.
- **Transferability:** Transferability means the manner in which the findings can be applied to other contexts or with other participants (Carcary, 2009;Subrayen, 2011). That means that the findings can be applied to other contexts. But in qualitative studies it is difficult to transfer the findings since the sample size is small and for a specific context (Mnisi, 2014). Therefore, it should be noted that qualitative findings are not necessarily generalisable to other contexts.

- **Confirmability:** Confirmability ensures freedom from bias on procedures and results (Cope, 2014). To ensure confirmability the results and findings were based on the experiences of the participants and not on the preferences of the researcher.
- **Dependability or reliability:** This is when a method or procedure used allows the same results to be obtained if that method is repeated in a similar context (Sackett & Wanek, 1996). The research provided a detailed research design, data generation, and data analysis. According to Babbie and Mouton (2006) there cannot be credibility without dependability and a demonstration of credibility is sufficient to show the existence of dependability. Dependability in this study was addressed by giving detailed descriptions of how the data were gathered and analysed.

3.13 CONCLUSION

The research design and methodology was discussed in this chapter. I began with a discussion of qualitative research and kinds of paradigms. Positive, transformative and interpretivist paradigms were discussed in detail especially defining what interpretivist paradigm is and justifying its use in the study. I also presented a discussion on how data was generated using semi-structured interviews and observations, and discussed data. Thematic Content Analysis phases were discussed. The next chapter presents the findings thematically together with discussions of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The current chapter builds on chapter three which dealt with methodological and data generation procedures. The previous chapter featured issues of ethical clearance and the data collection site. In this chapter, I present and discuss the data that were produced from the responses of the participants who took part in the interview sessions. The findings were deliberated upon and re-contextualised using applicable literature as supporting and disputing the evidence. The data has been categorised into themes, which emerged from the interview questions and from observations. As indicated in the previous chapter, I used Thematic Content Analysis to analyse the data.

I managed to observe students within the premises, lecture rooms and in the computer rooms. The data is presented according to the five themes and categories that emerged from the participant's' responses and discussion of the critical research questions of the current study. The themes and related categories will be presented in the form of a table for ease of referencing. These themes are as follows: access, admission and enrolment, community support, infrastructure, learning support and institutional support. Following the tabulation, each theme will be discussed in relation to participant's responses and relevant literature. In each case, I made some deductions which I considered valuable to the study. The chapter concludes with a summary.

The data was generated from the four students with visible physical impairments registered in two campuses, CPD and OLU. These students were encouraged to share their experiences of physical disabilities as students at a TVET College. The students in this study were referred to as Participant 1 to Participant 4.

4.2 MASTER THEMES

During the data analysis process, five master themes were identified, together with their categories:

THEMES	CATEGORIES
Theme 1: accessibility to higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility, service quality, and inclusivity• Personal development
Theme 2: Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lecture venues (classrooms and computer rooms venues)• Infrastructure accessibility
Theme 3: Learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpersonal support• Learner support levels• Financial support
Theme 4: Institutional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learner support services• Customisation of services• Institutional support

Table 4: Themes and categories

For clarity, all these themes will be discussed in more detail.

4.2.1 Theme 1: accessibility to higher education

During the study, issues related to participants' access to higher education, admission criteria and enrolment emerged as central ideas. The theme is discussed under two categories which are: accessibility, service quality and inclusivity as well as personal development. The two categories are discussed in the following subsections.

4.2.1.1 Accessibility, service quality, and inclusivity

Since this study was focused on students with visible physical impairment, they stated clearly that during the enrolments they just came in as walk-ins at the TVET College to apply for admission and if accepted, to enrol.

They also highlighted that the screening process was simple and fair for every prospective applicant. The recruitment and admission procedure of this TVET College was simple. It was just necessary to complete an application form, attach minimum required qualifications, and be captured on the computer system to be registered.

The participants responded by saying when they were asked:

“How did you apply at TVET College?”

Participant 1 said: *“I came straight to enrol. I did walk-in application.”*

Participant 2 said: *“I just came to the college. I was helped on the first day with the registration. I couldn't finish because there was a strike on that day. I came back on the following day when I received a road map registration. The registration process took the whole week.”*

Participant 3 said: *“I just walked in to apply. I received a warm welcome on my arrival.”*

Participant 4 said: *“I just walked in to apply.”*

Participants reported that during their registration at the college they been welcomed in various ways.

Participant 1 said: *“I was given special attention on my arrival. They sent me to the class, where my enrolment was. I did not move around.”*

Participant 2 said. *“I did receive special attention. The former Student Representative Council (SRC) President organised an SRC member to assist me with registration and not to stand in the long queues during the enrolment.”*

Participant 3 said: *“I can say no. I had to stand in long queues like everybody.”*

Participant 4 said: *“Yes, I was helped by Student Support Services (SSS) to register, not to stand in long queues.”*

According to the responses, Participant 1 was assisted in a separate room during her registration process, while Participant 3 had to follow queues. Participant 2 was assisted by an SRC member because he was a current student and Participant 4 was assisted by SSS, which showed they knew him. This is a good indication that the

institution was aware of and did not exclude students with physical impairment, but there was no proper plan or structure on how to assist them during the registration/enrolment process. Jali (2009) confirms that there are still more areas within the educational institutions which need attention to fully accommodate students with physical impairments. Whether they received assistance or not depended on the individuals (enrolment officials) handling them. Though this institution is complying with The National Plan for Higher Education by accepting students with physical impairments into education, it needs to prepare for them first (Department of Education, 2001b).

4.2.1.2 Personal development

It was encouraging to hear the responses about why the participants decided to further their studies at TVET College. They were confident and self-assured about why they were there. They proved that impairment is in the body not in the mind.

The rights-based model of disability and human rights based model considers an individual as firstly a human being before the disability. These are young people who are ambitious about their lives; they want to change their life for the better. Participants 2, 3 and 4 are between the ages 19-25 years while participant 1 is between 26-30 years old.

During the interview process, I noticed that participants were committed to achieve their goals and the issue of disability did not affect their determination. They showed a positive attitude irrespective of the challenges they encountered within the college. They also took individual responsibility for their lives. During the interview process, it became apparent that each participant was representing himself/herself, and that no one was representing them in their private or individual matters. I also observed them visiting the administration block to attend to their academic matters. These students were able to attend to their challenges with their lecturers. Participants showed themselves to be independent and focused irrespective of their disabilities, and they saw themselves as being suitable for employment in the near future. Participant 1 responded by saying her dream was to work at this college as an administrative officer.

They were asked:

“Why TVET College was their best choice of learning institution?”

They responded by saying:

Participant 1 said: *“Because of the course I want to study, it was here at this college. I enrolled as an office administrator. This college, I know will assist me to get a job or an internship once I am done with a theory.”*

Participant 2 said: *“This college is the best in the whole of KwaZulu-Natal and it is the nearest college to me. The quality of services attracted me to this college.”*

Participant 3 said *“I can say TVET College to me is the best choice I made. It has the best education since I want the best education, so that I will make a difference in my life.”*

Participants highlighted different reasons for choosing this institution of learning and furthering their studies. Participants took responsibility to further their studies regardless of their physical barriers. Their responses support what the rights-based model identifies which is that it promotes that people with disability have the right to equal opportunities and participation in society such as the right to education (DPSA, 2000).

They showed determination and willingness to achieve their goals regardless of social barriers. They showed confidence in themselves in conquering some of the barriers they might face. They believed that they had the potential to achieve their goals. It is clear from the responses of the participants that they are determined to make a better future for themselves. According to The South African Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS, 1997), people with disabilities have the right to education, are responsible for improving their lives and having their voices heard. Through their positive attitudes, students have conquered discrimination and stigma shown by some members of society.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure

Infrastructure was identified as one of the five themes emerging from the study. The theme is categorised into two subthemes which are: lecture venues and infrastructure accessibility. The two categories are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.2.1 Lecture venues (classrooms and computer rooms)

From the responses of the participants, it was clear that the college infrastructure was not user friendly to students with physical impairment, especially for those who use wheelchairs and crutches. It transpired that some tuition buildings have multi-levels without lifts. It is very important that the tuition buildings and infrastructure be accessible since the core business of the institution, which is teaching and learning, takes place there.

The question was **“Are the learning facilities such as classrooms, lecture theatres, libraries, computer rooms accessible to the students with disabilities?”** Participants responded by saying:

Participant 1 said: “Some classes are upstairs. If I have a class I need to book a ground floor class for an extra session. I don’t go to the Library because I cannot access it. I can go to the lecture theatre but I will need assistance to be lifted up because there is no ramp there. The same thing applies at the hall there is no ramp and the stairs are very high.”

Participant 2 said: “The buildings are categorised in floors. There are classes and lecture venues which are on the ground floor and accessible to everyone living with disability or not. There are not enough ramps and no lifts. It is not easy to climb up the staircase.”

Participant 4 said: “No it is not easy, but for me it is easy because our disabilities are not the same. I can express my side; I don’t have any problem to move around the campus.”

During the interviews, most of the participants showed their dissatisfaction with the setup of the tuition buildings. For instance, most of computer room venues are on the first and second floor, which makes it hard for students with physical impairments, especially wheelchair users, to reach those classes.

It was also highlighted that some venues have fixed desks which are not movable. As a result, students using wheelchairs have to sit outside the desk to be comfortable.

Another challenge is that there are not enough ramps; that alone excludes wheelchair users from attending classes, but it was encouraging to hear that some teaching staff made arrangements to have sessions in an accessible venue. However, that did not give the full period session as it compromised contact time.

Another challenge I observed was that the computer room setup is not favourable or accessible for people living with dwarfism. The computer laboratories were designed for able-bodied students. During my observation, I saw Participant 3 sitting on the computer desk and trying to type. The participant indicated that such an arrangement was uncomfortable for him.

Participant 1 also had a similar challenge, since she does not have upper limbs.

Participant 1 said: "Since there is a staircase, the computer venues are on the first or second floor. My problem is understood by all lecturers. I only attend ground level classes since there are no lifts. For computer related subjects my lecturer makes arrangements for me to write in the one of the admin offices."

The structure of this college's buildings was made for able-bodied people only. The tuition buildings have multi floor levels and there are no lifts at all. Mutanga (2017) and Ahmad (2017) concur that the inaccessibility of buildings limits the full integration of students who use wheelchairs and crutches into campus life. Inaccessible and unsafe buildings are still the major barrier to students with impairments (DoE, 2001).

Although the White Paper on Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS, 1997) stated that the inclusion of people with impairments in the social environment and educational sphere is essential, it looks as if this TVET College is not ready to

accommodate the needs of students with impairment. That alone can have a negative impact on learning, which can result in these students leaving the institution. Moreover, the students with disabilities need an accessible and conducive environment, which means the education institutions should be ready to reasonably accommodate them.

4.2.2.2 Infrastructure accessibility

According to the South African National Plan in Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001b) institutions of higher education were requested to prepare and provide suitable infrastructure for students with disability. These students rely on the availability of good roads, ramps and pathways leading to the venues for effective teaching and learning. Participant 1 mentioned that there are not enough ramps and she cannot access the lecture theatres or main hall because the walkways are not favourable for wheelchair users. She only attends classes which are on the ground floor.

The question was:

“Does the college infrastructure provide easy access such as ramps, elevators, wider doorways or automatic door openers for students with physical disability?”

Participants responded by saying:

Participant 1 said: “No, there is not enough infrastructure. To move within the college premises is very difficult. As a wheelchair user, it is very difficult to use the toilets, the toilet door is small and the space inside is very small. There are not enough ramps, no automatic door openers, no elevators. Everything becomes difficult for me.”

Participant 2 said: “There is no proper infrastructure. Some students who use the wheelchairs still find it difficult to get to the lecture venues due to ramps are not available. They find it difficult to move around the campus. One of the students who uses a wheelchair could not attend her computer related subject since it was on the first floor. I do not know how they cope because it is a serious problem. There is no lift, or special toilets for wheelchair users. This building

was built for non-disabled people since it has multiple buildings with only staircases.”

Participant 3: There was no response from Participant 3.

Participant 4 said: *“No there is no such, it is difficult to open doors for those using the wheelchairs, they ask others to assist them.”*

Most of the participants in this study indicated that they use the same venues as normal bodied students. Wheelchair user students at this institution experienced exclusion due to the inaccessibility of some venues. It was highlighted during the interview that the institution does not have accessible toilet facilities for students with impairment, especially for students with physical disabilities who are wheelchair users.

It was indicated that the library was accessible to students using wheelchairs. There is an internet cafe inside the library, which most of students use to prepare their work. The only problem experienced by students using wheelchairs was that the bookshelves in the library were unreachable, hence they became dependent on the librarians to assist them.

During the interviews with the participants, it was clear that there is no hope for redesigning of the premises to accommodate students using wheelchairs. During my observation, I noticed Participant 1 pushed by her peers up the sloping areas. Life for wheelchair users is very hard in this institution.

With the above reference, it shows that the institution has done less to recognise the presence of students with impairments (especially wheelchair users). Infrastructure accessibility has become the student’s problem together with those lecturers who feel sensitive to the needs of students with impairment or disability. It is noted that students are doing their level best to get an education, but inaccessible infrastructure is discouraging this since the college offers no hope of improving the situation. According to the UNCRPD (2006) the institutions should promote, protect and ensure that there is full human development of people with disabilities and easy accessibility within the institution.

The experience of Participant 1 did not discourage her from pursuing her education. The college has a challenge to look into its policy and consider the fact that these students are here to stay, and provision must be made to accommodate them and make teaching and learning as easy as getting into a class. According to Knoll (2009) education institutions should make their learning environments more accessible and welcoming, especially for people with disabilities.

The inaccessibility of essential buildings has a negative impact on students with impairment and indicates poor planning and not recognising various disabilities. Scholars such as Allen and Cowdery (2009) and Gumbi, et al. (2015) concur that infrastructure accessibility is a major challenge to people with impairment, which needs immediate attention.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Learning support

Under the theme learning support, three subtopics emerged from the data analysis; that is, interpersonal support, learner support levels and financial support. The three categories are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.3.1 Interpersonal support

Participants were asked about the support they received from the lecturing and administrative staff. Most of them indicated that lecturing staff assisted and accepted them. Participants were very pleased about the services they received from lecturers and administrative staff.

The question was:

“Does the teaching and administrative staff give enough support towards the students with disabilities?”

Here are their responses:

Participant 1 said: *“Yes, teachers do give me the support, such as 15 minutes extra time per 1 hour during the test session. They also give me extra sessions*

if I want clarity. The admin staff have a positive attitude and they are welcoming, always willing to assist me. They assist me with a smile.”

Participant 2 said: *“Yes, teachers give me 15 minutes extra time per 1 hour during the test session and admin staff is always supportive.”*

Participant 3 said: *“I can say the teaching staff is supportive, welcoming and understanding. The admin staff is supportive and friendly every time, and assists when I need help, such as a file or whatever.”*

Participant 4 said: *“Yes, as I indicated earlier teachers give me 15 minutes extra in every 1 hour during the test session.”*

Participant 1 further said:

“Since there is a staircase, the computer venues are on the first or second floor. For computer related subjects my lecturer makes arrangements for me to write in the one of the admin offices.”

The participants appeared encouraged to know that their lecturers were helpful, cooperative and supportive. It also came out from the interviews that lecturers made provision to meet and teach or administer tests to wheelchair users in convenient venues. Holloway (2001) agrees that lecturing staff give different responses to students with physical impairment that range from helpful to unsupportive. It was encouraging to note that the students have recognised the lecturers who are helpful.

A positive lecturer's attitude towards students with impairment has a positive impact and assists them in achieving their goals of completing their studies. I observed that there was no formal procedure within the institution on how students with physical impairment are assisted. Participant 1 said they made arrangements with her lecturer to attend or write a test in one of the offices. This shows a commitment from the side of the lecturer. If all offices are in use that day, the student will not be able to write or attend. That means lecturers use their own discretion to assist students with physical impairment. Buthelezi (2014) states that some lecturers' attitudes may have been

caused by frustrations if they were not professionally trained on how to deal with students with physical impairments.

Participants also responded by saying they received 15 minutes extra per hour during the test session. Scholars such as Gumbi, et al. (2015) and Mosia and Phash (2017) point out that support mechanisms such as time concessions during examination and tests sessions assist students with physical impairments to achieve better results.

4.2.3.2 Learner support levels

The level of support needed by students with physical impairment is not the same. Some students with physical impairments do not have limbs, some have only one hand and others have hands that are are dysfunctional which makes it difficult for them to take notes in class (Madriaga, et al., 2010; Knoll, 2009). It is for this reason that learning institutions should be prepared to accommodate diverse students. Participant 1 does not have limbs and it is very hard for her to take notes in the class because she uses her mouth to write. Participant 3 is living with dwarfism; he has small hands. It is hard for him to use an ordinary keyboard.

Participant 4 was single-armed which allowed him to write without any problem yet typing was a challenge because he uses only one hand. Participant 2 is living with dwarfism. Like Participant 3, Participant 2 has small hands and has challenges using the ordinary keyboard and computer desks.

The question was: **“Does the college offer any assistive devices to assist students with disability during the learning process?”**

Participants responded by saying:

Participant 2 said: “No there are no hearing aids offered to students who suffer from hearing impairment. No aids for students who don’t have hands, they still use the keyboard to type and the mouse to select, which makes things difficult for them.”

Participant 4 said: *“I received nothing from the college. As I am using one hand nothing assists to make my learning life easy.”*

Participant 3 said: *“Nothing from the college. During the computer class I tried to type, but the problem is the keyboard is too big for my hands, as a result I don’t finish the work.”*

Participant 1 said: *“I received no assistance from the college. Since I don’t have hands I need assistive aids like head phones or ear phones which will assist me during my learning since I cannot take notes for revision or study. I use textbooks like everyone.”*

According to the responses, it is clear that the institution has done nothing to meet the needs of these students. The participants complained about the big keyboards, since their hands are small. Participant 3 was enrolled for information processing which demands a certain level of typing professionalism. His computer lecturer gave him a concession of 15 minutes extra in every 1 hour. Participant 2 is studying computer practice which in many respects has demands similar to information processing. The participants suggested that the use of touch screen computers could solve most of their typing challenges. Assistive technology enhances the disabled student’s access to learning (Mutanga, 2017).

During data collection, I observed participant 2 sitting on top of the desk typing. Jali (2009) states that it is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that the learning needs of people with impairments are met and that they are provided with the learning support which best suits their needs.

I also observed that participant 1, who had no hands, used her mouth to hold a pen and type. The college should have assistive devices such as video tapes, braille, hearing aids, internet access and information available in large print, to assist such students (Van Jaarsveldt & Ndeya-Ndereya, 2015).

The lack of resources at the college meant that it did not have the necessary equipment to meet the academic needs for students with physical impairment. This

challenge negatively affected students with physical impairments in their academic development. Gumbi, et al. (2015); Mosia and Phasha (2017) suggest that support mechanisms such as the provision of necessary equipment to students with impairment enhances proper teaching and learning.

4.2.3.3 Financial support

In 2017 the government declared free higher education for those students whose combined annual household income was less than R350 000 per year. Students need to apply via NYDA or NSFAS office which is campus based. This bursary covers the following: tuition fees, prescribed learning material, transport allowance, food allowance and student accommodation.

This financial aid is for everyone, including students with impairments, who meets the NSFAS requirements. The NSFAS office, which deals with bursary applications, is within the college premises. The location of NSFAS office is on the ground level and even wheelchair users can access it easily.

According to the biographic information:

Participants 1, 2, and 4 are South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) grant recipients and they applied for NSFAS to supplement the learning cost. Participant 3 indicated that his parents are responsible for his tuition fee, since he does not have a NSFAS bursary.

During this study a student with physical impairment had no clue about the disability grant. Students with impairment could get both NSFAS and the disability grant, since they have a special need that will make students with impairment feel that they are being considered. Another concern of participants was about NSFAS pay-outs; it takes a long time to make payments to students. This economic barrier was addressed by the State in 2017 where the former president declared free higher education. "Scholarships such as disability grants serve to widen access" for students with disabilities in higher education institutions (Chiwandire & Vincent, 2019).

4.2.4 Theme 4: Institutional support

Another theme that was identified during the data analysis was institutional support. Three aspects emerged from this theme, that is: learner support services, customisation of services, and institutional support. The three are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.4.1 Learner support services

The educational institutions should have support services for students with disability. Student Representative Councils are compulsory bodies, which are to be established at each institution of learning. According to the responses, it looks as if students are aware of this office. However, they seem to have no idea about the office which deals with matters related to disability.

The question was; **“Does the college have a Disability Unit?”** Participants revealed:

Participant 1 said: *“There is no disability unit, only SRC which represents all students. There is no group or association representing students with disability where we meet and discuss our relevant matters. They just mix us with everyone.”*

Participant 2 said: *“There is no disability unit in this college. There is only SRC I know.”*

Participant 3 said: *“There is no such. There is no disability unit, there is only SSS I know and I don't know what it stands for. I cannot lie.”*

Participant 4 said: *“There is a place where we report our matter, SSS caters for all students.”*

According to the responses, participants reported that they refer their concerns to Student Support Services (SSS) or Student Representative Council (SRC) for assistance since the institution does not have a Disability Unit, which caters for the needs of the students with impairment. Ahmad (2017) agrees that Disability Units are found mainly in Universities but not at TVET Colleges.

Participant 2 also indicated that SRC members assist during the registration. In addition, Participant 3 reported that he was assisted by SSS. That shows it depends on whom you know. Others do not get special treatment.

The services offered at TVET Colleges through SSS and SRC do not have relevant support pertaining to disabilities. Therefore, it is important for this institution to have one office to cater for all the special needs of students with impairment. Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001a) emphasises the importance of the development of a Disability Unit in HEIs to cater for the needs of students with disability. Gumbi, et al. (2015) suggests that Disability Units or Student Support Offices provides specialised support services to students with disabilities.

Moodley and Mchunu (2019) revealed that Disability Units would assist students with disabilities in respect of counselling and other emotionally related matters. It is also noted that students with impairments develop emotional and psychological problems due to a lack of support from the HEI (Gorter, 2009). It is therefore management's responsibility to develop this unit to accommodate and assist students and staff with disabilities.

4.2.4.2 Customisation of services

Designated places are very important to customise services. Participants reported that, at this college, there are no accessible places for disabled students. For example, during the examination, all students are expected to use same venue, hence creating exclusionary arrangements for students with disabilities especially those students using wheelchairs.

The question was: **“Does the college have special centres during the examination or assessment for students with disability?”**

Participants responded by saying:

Participant 1 said: *“No, they just mix us with everyone in one place. There are no such as special venues for us.”*

Participant 3 said: *“No, there is no such. We write with everyone even the computer subjects, we use same room. We use the same keyboard. No special arrangement.”*

Participant 4 said: *“No there are no special venues for us.”*

The participants' responses showed clearly that this institution of learning does not have accessible and user-friendly venues which will accommodate the specialised needs of students with disabilities in higher education. Mole (2013, p. 64) points out that, to bring change from a social model perspective, “people with disabilities need to be included at the design and implementation stages” and they need to be heard. It is a fact that students with impairment need accessible venues.

4.2.4.3 Institutional support

Students with a physical impairment experience unique challenges and have specialised needs which must be catered for in order for them to fully participate in all spheres of life.

The question was: **“Does the college offer any support such as wheelchairs or crutches?”**

Participants revealed:

Participant 1 said: *“I have received nothing from the college as I am using the wheelchair which was donated by a private company. There is no support or assistance or whatsoever from the college.”*

Participant 2 said: *“There is no such help from this TVET College. It became the family matter or get a private sponsor.”*

Participant 3 said: *“I am not sure about the support from the college, I am still new. But so far I never received anything from the college.”*

The institution should be able to assist the students with impairment by networking and collaborating with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) getting donations such as crutches, wheelchairs, and reading glasses if possible and to make students' lives easier. That is a benefit of being a registered student in that particular institution of learning. It shows poor planning if all participants reported that they had received nothing from the college.

From the responses of the participants, it was stressed that there is a need for a Disability Unit office, which would assist in helping them with their needs. The main concern is that students with impairments have to adapt themselves within the learning environment, instead of a learning environment changing to accommodate these students. This clearly goes against the social and rights based model of disability.

For example, the institution should have a Disability Unit or office to attend to disability management and counselling and the academic, financial, social and living arrangements of both staff and students with disabilities (Mutanga 2017).

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the information obtained through data on the experiences of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College. Most of the information was categorised into themes. The students with physical impairments had positive and negative experiences like any other student studying in a TVET College.

For these students with disabilities, most of their challenges and complexities were due to lack of facilities and architecturally inaccessible venues. Such matters, however, need to be addressed by the Disability Unit, which will concentrate on matters related to disability. The lack of a Disability Unit office adds to the exclusion since those who should be addressing them do not know the needs of these students. The environment barrier, which is a serious challenge, needs to be brought to the

urgent attention of management. Participants in the study made proposals which could improve their lives; it is now up to us as a TVET College to make a difference. The next chapter will provide the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. It will also provide the implications of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the findings regarding the perceptions and attitudes experienced by students with physical impairments at TVET College were discussed. This chapter provides conclusions drawn from the findings of the study, and the implications from the findings which form recommendations arising from this study in relation to the perceptions and attitudes experienced by students with physical impairments at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal. This chapter, in addition, documents the limitations of this study, future research and, lastly, a conclusion is provided.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The following conclusions of the study emanated from the findings.

5.2.1 Accessibility to higher education

It was found that accessibility to TVET College for students with physical impairment is still a challenge. It was also noted that the TVET Colleges do not have a set plan to accommodate students with physical impairment and that, on its own, reveals that inclusive education is not yet fully implemented at this TVET College. All public institutions have a mandate to enrol every student irrespective of their disability. With regard to personal development, participants showed a positive attitude irrespective of challenges they faced within the institution. Most of them there were focused on showing that they want education to improve their lives and break barriers.

5.2.2 Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure

From this theme it was gathered that the physical structure of the college is not user friendly for students with physical impairments. Students with physical impairments experienced challenges such as inaccessible venues (lecture theatres, computer

rooms, halls and library). There are no special examination venues for students with disabilities. The inaccessibility of the tuition block can lead to absence from lectures hence impacting negatively on the students' academic performance. Howell (2005) highlights that, due to inclusive education, the number of students with physical impairments entering Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has increased. The principle of equity encourages fair opportunities to enter higher education programmes and to succeed, while the integration principle promotes the acceptance of all learners into regular classrooms (Collins, Azmat, & Rentschler, 2018; Du Plessis, 2013; Jali, 2009).

5.2.3 Learning support

It was noted that learning support such as assistive devices were not available to assist students with disability to have the same opportunities to participate in an equal education for all in comparison to able-bodied students. Trained staff are necessary to assist with support.

5.2.4 Institutional support

The study revealed that the college does not have an office/unit that caters for students with disabilities. The students felt that the absence of a Disability Office/Unit affects them and affects the support they get

5.3 IMPLICATIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this section, I present implications or recommendations from the findings.

5.3.1 Accessibility to higher education

The research findings from the study imply that:

The institution should use trained coordinators who should assist students with a disability during registration at the beginning of the term, semester or year. Not only that, but the institution should accommodate the different types of disabilities in the kind of support offered. Another suggestion is to have each TVET College with a

specific context inclusive policy pertaining to students with disabilities; a policy that is directed to the climate of each TVET college not a one size fits all. All this can work even better if staff engaged with the enrolment of students with disabilities should be trained and engage in inclusive practices to support the needs of students with disabilities.

5.3.2 Inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure

Students recommended that the institution should make provision for wheelchair users in terms of desks with the requisite specifications. In addition, the computer rooms should have specialised sitting and writing arrangements for wheelchair users and persons living with dwarfism. The college should provide lifts to cater for mobility accessibility for students with physical disabilities. Widened and resurfaced walkways and pavements to support physical accessibility for students using wheelchairs must be available. All ramps should be constructed to assist students who are using wheelchairs to travel to the tuition block. All buildings should have accessible toilet facilities to cater for the needs of students using wheelchairs.

5.3.3 Learning support

Concerning learning support, the institution should embrace the students with disabilities and support them as equal partners in relation to learning support. There is a need for using computing technology, for example, e-books, for tasks such as reading and writing documents, communicating with others and searching for information. Other support such as the use of voice controls to navigate smartphones for those students without limb functionality. It is also important to provide training or workshops for lecturers for inclusive education practices.

5.3.4 Institutional support

The institution should have a Disability Unit Office responsible for providing necessary support and guidance to the students with disabilities. There must be qualified professional and skilled staff employed to work in the Disability Unit Office. The College Management Office must work hand in hand with the Disability Unit Office in addressing the diverse needs of students with disabilities. This working together

should apply even in planning and procurement of specialised resources for students with disabilities. This office should also be responsible for identifying and understanding the unique experiences of students with disabilities at the TVET College. If the Disability Unit is present, it would seek support and collaboration from relevant external stakeholders to provide the necessary assistive devices and specialised technologies to support the learning needs and environment of students with physical disabilities in higher education.

In addition, such a unit should provide and undertake learning assessments of the need for specialised support, for example, special concessions during tests and examinations. The same unit can be responsible for counselling and support. This counselling and support should take the pathway of direct coaching and consultation. Students with disabilities can get help as this unit can facilitate their registration processes as well as applications for the Disabled Students' Allowance and determine appropriate academic adjustments in the form of curriculum reform to suit the academic and learning support needs of students with physical disabilities.

As an inclusive developmental plan and priority, the TVET College, in consultation with students with disabilities should consider prioritising the design of inclusive policy arrangements to allow for equity and equality for students with disabilities at the TVET College.

This inclusive disability policy must consider: equity and equality for students with disabilities; accessible infrastructure; specialised technology and assistive devices. The policy must be available to all members of the TVET community. What is of particular importance is an ongoing disability education and awareness aligning to the Social Model of disability and the Rights Based Model of disability to make visible the human rights and social justice concerns of students with disabilities in higher education.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted on one site with two campuses and not the entire TVET College. The research site was easily accessible to the researcher since the researcher is employed at the TVET College. This study was limited to four

participants, therefore the findings cannot be generalised. The choice of four participants was inspired by the time I had available and resource limitations as well as participant availability and willingness to take part in the study. This study eliminated those students who had nonvisible or hidden disabilities. Time constraints were a challenge since I was a lecturer at the same campus facing college work and was expected to meet deadlines and a family man with other demands.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- It is suggested that future studies could be done in other colleges or campuses to meet students with a wider variety of physical disabilities.
- It is also suggested that future studies could be done with more participants to increase the generalisability of results.
- The current study was on physical impairments. It is suggested that future studies could be on other impairments such as visual impairments.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The objectives of the current study were threefold. These objectives related to firstly identifying the experiences of students with physical impairments at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal. The second objective related to understanding the perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment. The third objective related to the kind of support the institution offered to students with physical impairments. It was thus aimed at exploring the various experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal Province. This was in terms of the facilities and services offered at the TVET College in meeting its students' needs. This study was located within the social and rights based models of disability. The study adopted a qualitative method for data collection and analysis. The qualitative analysis entailed Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) which generated a plethora of critical findings.

This study reflects findings which mostly concur with those outlined in the literature on studies done on physical disability. The study explored a small sample of four students with physical impairments from one college. The study was located within an interpretivist paradigm and enabled the students to make their voices heard through

semi-structured interviews. Observation was used to complement what was really happening in their setting. This study relied on the students' willingness, availability and time constraints, which influenced their participation. Only four participants were part of this study. As a result, findings from this study cannot be generalised. However, qualitative research implies an in-depth description of the meaning that people construct from their experiences. Due to the limited scope of the current research study, I only focused on students with physical impairments. Ideally, supplementary systems can contribute to a richer, deeper understanding of the issue under investigation. This opens up new opportunities for future researchers. Prospective research possibilities could include conducting research on students with other disabilities who studied at a TVET College, such as partially visual students.

REFERENCES

- Abbey, S., Charbonneau, M., Tranulis, C., Moss, P., Baici, W., Dabby, L., ... & Paré, M. (2011). Stigma and discrimination. *Can J Psychiatry*, 56(10), 1-9.
- AHEAD, (2015). *Numbers of students with disabilities studying in higher education in Ireland 2014/15*, Retrieved 18 March 2019, from <https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/ParticipationRatesReport2014-15.pdf>
- Ahmad, W. (2016). Higher Education for Persons with Disabilities in India: Challenges and Concerns. *Journal of Disability Management and Rehabilitation*, 2 (1):1-4.
- Albert, B. (2004). Briefing Note: The social Model of disability, human rights and development. *Disability Kar Research Project*, 1-8.
- Albrecht, G., Seelman, K., Bury, M. (2001). *Handbook of disability studies*. London: Sage Publication Ltd.
- Aliyu, A. A., Bello, M. U., Kasim, R., Martin, D. J. J. M., & Sustainability. (2014). Positivist and non-positivist paradigm in social science research: *Conflicting paradigms or perfect partners*. 4, 79.
- Allen, K. E., & Cowdery, G. E. (2009). *The exceptional child: Inclusion in early childhood education* (6th ed.). Clifton Park, NY: Thomson/Delmar Learning.
- Altman, B. M. (2001). Disability definitions, Models, classification schemes, and applications. *Handbook of disability studies*, 97-122.
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 - ADA: Public Law 101-336. Washington, D.C.: Government of the United States. Retrieved 20 April, 2019, from <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (2001). *The practice of social research*. New York: Oxford.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (2006). *The Practice of Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barnes, C., & Mercer, G. (2003). *Disability*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Basser, L. A., & Jones, M. (2002). The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth): a three-dimensional approach to operationalising human rights. *Melb. UL Rev.*, 26, 254.
- BBC News. (2009). *University sites 'fail disabled'*. Disabled student. Some UK universities are failing to provide accessible accommodation or facilities to disabled students, an investigation has found. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/8204999.stm
- Bell, D. (2013). *Investigating teaching and learning support for students with hearing impairment at a university in the Western Cape*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Stellenbosch University, South Africa.
- Bertram, C., & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding Research: An Introduction to Reading Research* (Vol. First edition). Hatfield, Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. Retrieved from

<http://search.ebscohost.com.ukzn.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1243049&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Bezuidenhout, R. & Cronje, F. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis*. In F. du Plooy-Cilliers, C. Davis & R. Bezuidenhout (Eds.) *Research Matters* (pp. 18-35). Cape Town: Jutta & Company Ltd.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Bos, A. E., Pryor, J. B., Reeder, G. D., & Stutterheim, S. E. (2013). Stigma: Advances in theory and research. *Basic and applied social psychology*, 35(1), 1-9.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In APA handbook of Research Methods in Psychology, (2), *Research Design*, 57-71.

British Council of Disabled People. (1981) *The Social Model of Disability*, Retrieved 20 April 2019, from: <http://www.bcodp.org.uk/about/research.shtml>

Britten, N. (1995). *Qualitative research: qualitative interviews in medical research*. *Bmj*, 311(6999), 251-253.

Bucholz A, W. (2017). *The experiences of a student with cerebral palsy at a higher education institution: a case study*. Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Support in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University.

Buthelezi, M. M. (2014). *Exploring challenges experienced by physically challenged students at a Further Education and Training College in KwaZulu-Natal Province* (Masters dissertation, University of South Africa).

Carcary, M. J. E. J. O. B. R. M. (2009). *The Research Audit Trial--Enhancing Trustworthiness in Qualitative Inquiry*. 7(1).

Chaleunvong, K. (2009). *Data collection techniques*. Training Course in Reproductive Health Research Vientiane.

Chataika, T. (2019). *The Routledge Handbook of Disability in Southern Africa*. (Ed), London: Routledge.

Chiwandire, D. & Vincent, L., (2019), 'Funding and inclusion in higher education institutions for students with disabilities', *African Journal of Disability* 8(0), a336. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v8i0.336>

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education*. London; New York: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. London; New York: Routledge.

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2013). *Research Methods in Education*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Collins, A., Azmat, F., & Rentschler, R. (2018). 'Bringing everyone on the same journey': revisiting inclusion in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-13.
- Constitution of South Africa (1996). Constitution of South Africa. Pretoria: Government publishers.
- Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. (2010–2019). German Cooperation supported the development of this Continental Plan of Action and its production in four languages. *Department of Social Affairs*. Addis Ababa. Ethiopia. Retrieved from: www.africa-union.org
- Cooper, M., 2015, 'Symposium report: Impacts of ICT on supporting students with disabilities in higher education', *The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 30(1), 93–96.
- Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. *Paper presented at the Oncology nursing forum*.
- Council on Higher Education. (1997), *Higher Education Act 101 of 1997*. Retrieved 03 March 2019, from http://www.che.ac.za/media_and_publications/legislation/higher-education-act-101-1997
- Council on Higher Education. (2005). South African higher education responses to students with disabilities. Equity of access and opportunity? *Higher Education Monitor*, 3.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods design*. London: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research designs: Choosing among five approaches*, (3rd ed.). New York: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* 2nd ed. New York: Sage.
- Crotty M 1998. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crous, F. (2004). The social needs and problems of higher education students with impairments. *Acta Academia*, 36(2) 200 – 220.
- Dakar Framework. 2000. Dakar Framework for Action - Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. Retrieved 7 January 2020, from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- Datta, P., Halder, S., Talukdar, J., & Aspland, T. (2019). *Barriers and Enablers to Inclusion of University Students with Disabilities in India and Australia*. In *Inclusion*,

Equity and Access for Individuals with Disabilities (pp. 525-553). Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.

Deacon, H. (2006). Towards a sustainable theory of health-related stigma: lessons from the HIV/AIDS literature. *Journal of community & applied social psychology*, 16(6), 418-425.

Degener, T. (2016). Disability in a human rights context. *Laws*, 5(3), 35.

Department of Education. (1996). *A framework for transformation. Report of the National Commission on Higher Education*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. (1997). Education White Paper 3: A program for the transformation of higher education. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (2001a). Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: *Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (2001b). National Plan for Higher Education. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2014a). *Draft social inclusion policy framework of the Department of Higher Education and Training*. Government Gazette Republic of South Africa. Pretoria: Government Printer. www.gpwnline.co.za.

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)., (2013), *White Paper for post-school Education and training – Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school education system*. Retrieved 15 March 2019, from http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/37229_gon11.pdf

Department of Higher Education and Training. (2014b). White paper for post-school education and training. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Higher Education and Training. (2018). Strategic disability policy framework in the post-school education and training system, viewed 30 January 2019, from <http://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/Gazettes/Approved%20Strategic%20Disability%20Policy%20Framework%20Layout220518.pdf>

Department of Public Service and Administration. (2007). Handbook on Reasonable Accommodation for People with Disabilities in The Public Service.

Department of Social Development (2015). The *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, (WPRPD). Retrieved 17 October 2019 October 19.

Department of Social Development, (DSD). (2016). White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2002). Educational psychology in social context (2nd edn) (Cape Town, Oxford University Press).

- Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2006). *Educational Psychology in social context*, 3rd. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Douglas, J.D., & Waksler, F.C. (1982). *The sociology of deviance: An introduction*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
- Dovidio, J.F., Major, B., & Crocker, J. (2000). *Stigma: Introduction and overview*. In T.F. Heatherton, R.E. Kleck, M.R. Hebl & J.G. Hull (Eds.), *The social psychology of stigma* (pp. 1-26). New York: Guilford Press.
- DPSA. (2000). *Disable People of South Africa. Pocket Guide on Disability Equality: An Empowerment Tool*. In: The DPSA Parliamentary Office Cape Town. Retrieved from <http://www.dpsa.org.za/documents/Pocket%20>
- Driedger, D. (1989). *The last civil rights movement: Disabled Peoples' International*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Du Plessis, P. (2013). Legislation and policies: Progress towards the right to inclusive education. *De Jure*, 46(1), 76-92.
- Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. (2014). Research Paradigms and traditions. In F. du Plooy-Cilliers, C. Davis & R Bezuidenhout (Eds.) *Research Matters* (pp. 18-35). Cape Town: Jutta & Company Ltd.
- Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. (2014). The research proposal. In F. du Plooy-Cilliers, C. Davis & R Bezuidenhout (Eds.) *Research Matters* (pp. 18-35). Cape Town: Jutta & Company Ltd.
- Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). *Collecting quantitative data: Sampling and measuring*. In M. Terre Blanche, K. Durrheim & D. Painter (Eds.).
- Efinger, J., Maldonado, N., & McArdle, G. (2004). PhD Students Perceptions of the Relationship between Philosophy and Research: A Qualitative Investigation. *The Qualitative Report*, 9(4), 732-759.
- Ellsworth, N.J., & Zhang, C. (2007). Progress and challenges in China's special education, development, observations, reflections and recommendations. *Remedial and Special Education*, 28(1), 58-64.
- Engelbrecht, L., & De Beer, J. J. (2014). Access constraints experienced by physically disabled students at a South African higher education institution. *Africa Education Review*, 11(4), 544-562.
- Etikan, I. Musa, S.A. Alkassim, R.S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(11-4).
- Foundation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis (FOTIM). (2011). *Disability in higher education: Project report*.
- Foundation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis. (2011). *Disability in higher education project report for the Ford Foundation*. New York, NY: Ford Foundation.

- Fulcher, G. (1989). *Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability*. London: Falmer Press.
- Ghai, A. (2012). Engaging with disability with postcolonial theory. In Goodley, D., B. Huges & L. Davis (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research* (pp. 270-286). New York: Palgrave Macmillian
- Gidley, J. M., Hampson, G. P., Wheeler, L., & Bereded-Samuel, E. (2010). From access to success: An integrated approach to quality higher education informed by social inclusion theory and practice. *Higher Education Policy*, 23(1), 123-147.
- Global Status Report on Disability and Development. (2015). Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Unedited Version. United Nations. New York.
- Gobalakrishnan, C. (2013) Problem Faced By Physically Challenged Persons And Their Awareness Towards Welfare Measures. *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development Supreme Court*, 2017, The Supreme Court of Mauritius: Legislations alphabetical. Retrieved 07 May 2019, from <https://supremecourt.govmu.org/Layouts/CLIS.DMS/Act/ActGroup.aspx>
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma*. Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Spectrum.
- Gorter, J.W. (2009). Determinants of students' attitudes towards peers with disabilities. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*, 15 (6), 417-418
- Government United Kingdom, 2016, 'Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)', Government United Kingdom. Retrieved 23 April 2019, from <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/what-youll-get>
- Graham, L., Selipsky, L., Moodley, J., Maina, J. & Rowland, W. (2010). Understanding Poverty and Disability in Johannesburg. Retrieved 20/09/2020, from <http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/Faculties/humanities/researchcentres/csda/research/Documents/poverty%20Disability%20Content%202010%20>
- Grossman, P. D. (2001). Making accommodations: The legal world of students with disabilities. *Academe-Bulletin of the AAUP-*, 87(6), 41-46.
- Gumbi, D., Cekiso, M., Gqweta, Z., Makiwane, B., Majeke, L., Bojanyana, N., . . . Wakaba, L. (2015). An exploration of challenges related to inclusion of students with disabilities at a university of technology in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 8(2), 261-266.
- Hammad, T., & Singal, N. (2015). Education of women with disabilities in Pakistan: enhanced agency, unfulfilled aspirations. *International Journal of inclusive education*, 19(12), 1244-1264.
- Harpur, P., & Stein, M. A. (2019). *Children with disabilities, human rights, and sustainable development*. In C. Fenton-Glynn (Ed.), *Children's rights in international sustainable development law*. Manuscript in preparation.
- Harris, A., & Enfield, S. (2003). *Disability, equality and human rights: A training manual for development and humanitarian organisations*: Oxfam GB.

- Haywood, C. (2014). *The opinions of lecturers at a university of technology regarding their role in supporting students experiencing barriers to learning*. Master's thesis. North West University, South Africa.
- Hickey, H. (2006). Replacing medical and social models of disability by a communities-based model of equal access for people of differing abilities: A Maori perspective. *He Puna Korero: Journal of Maori and Pacific Development*, 7(1), 35.
- Holloway, S. (2001). The experience of higher education from the perspective of disabled students. *Disability & Society* 18(4), 597-615.
- Howell, C. & Lazarus, S. (2003). Access and Participation for Students with Disabilities in South Africa Higher Education: Challenging Accepted Truths and Recognizing New Possibilities. *Perspectives in Education*. 21(3), 59-74.
- Howell, C. (2005). *Higher Education Monitor, South African Higher Education responses to Students with impairments*. Western Cape: Centre for the Study of Higher Education.
- Howell, C., (2005), *South Africa higher education responses to students with disabilities*. Equity of access and opportunity? Higher Education Monitor no. 23, The Council on Higher Education, Pretoria.
- Integrated National Disability Strategy. (INDS), (1997). Integrated National Disability Strategy White Paper. *Office of the President*. South Africa.
- Jali, L. (2009). *Experiences of students with physical impairments studying at Durban University of Technology*. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the academic requirements for the degree of Masters in Higher Education. Centre for Higher Education Studies. Faculty of Education. UKZN
- Kamil, N. M. (2011) The Quagmire of Philosophical Standpoints (Paradigms) in Management Research, *Postmodern Openings*, Year 2, No. 5, Vol. 5, March, Year 2011.
- Kaplan, D. (2000). The definition of disability: Perspective of the disability community. *J. Health Care L. & Pol'y*, 3, 352.
- Kasiram, M., & Subrayen, R. (2013). *Social exclusion of students with visual impairments at a tertiary institution in KwaZulu-Natal*. *South African Family Practice*, 55(1), 66-72.
- Keeves, J. P. (1997). *Educational research methodology and measurement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. J. I. J. O. H. E. (2017). *Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts*. 6(5), 26-41.
- Knoll, K. R. (2009). Feminist disability studies pedagogy. *Feminist Teacher*, 19(2), 122-133.
- Knox, K. (2004). A researcher's dilemma-philosophical and methodological pluralism. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 2(2), 119-128.

- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*: New Delhi: New Age International.
- Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kumar, R. (2005). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. London: SAGE.
- Landsberg, E. (2005). *Addressing barriers to learning: A South African perspectives*. Pretoria: van Schaik Publishers
- Larson, L.K. (2012). *Larson on employment discrimination*. Employee Health AIDS Discrimination, 10. Retrieved 25 June, 2019, from <http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/catalog/booktemplate/productdetail.jsp?pageName=relatedProducts&prodId=10110>.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. (2005). *Practical research: Design and planning*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. C. (2001). Conceptualizing stigma. *Annual review of Sociology*, 27(1), 363-385.
- Lord, J. E., & Stein, M. A. (2018). Pursuing inclusive higher education in Egypt and beyond through the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. *Social Inclusion*, 6(4), 230-240.
- Mackenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research*, 16(2), 193-205.
- Madanipour, A., Cars, G. and Allen, J. (eds) (1998). *Social Exclusion in European Cities*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Madaus, J., W. (2005). Navigating the College transition maze: a guide for students with learning disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children* 37(3): 32-7.
- Madriaga M, Hanson K, Heaton C, Kay H, Newitt S (2010) Confronting similar challenges? Disabled and non-disabled students' learning and assessment experiences. *Studies in Higher Education* 35, 647-658.
- Magalgula L.M. (2015). *Female student's experiences in learning geography as a major at tertiary education level: A case study of a teacher training College in Swaziland*. University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Maguire, M., Delahunt, B. J. A.-J. T. A. I. J. O. T., & Education, L. il H. (2017). *Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars*. 9(3).
- Maotoana, M. R. (2014). *The challenges experienced by students with physical disability* (SWPD's at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus). University of Limpopo.

- Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), 522-526.
- Matshediso, K. R. (2007). The Challenge of Real Rights for Disabled Students in South Africa. *South African Journal in Higher Education*. 21(4): 706-716.
- Matthews, N. (2009). Teaching the 'invisible' disabled students in the classroom: disclosure, inclusion and the social Model of disability. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14(3), 229-239.
- Mayat, N. & Amosun, S.L., (2011). 'Perceptions of academic staff towards accommodating students with disabilities in a civil engineering undergraduate program in a University in South Africa', *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability* 24(1), 53–59.
- McDonald, K. E., Keys, C. B., & Balcazar, F. E. (2007). Disability, race/ethnicity and gender: themes of cultural oppression, acts of individual resistance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 39(1-2), 145-161.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry*, My Education Lab Series. Pearson.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. Revised and Expanded from "Case Study Research in Education.": ERIC.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Merriam, S. B., & Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mertens, D.M. (2005). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches*. (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*, California: Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., Huberman, M. A., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*: sage.
- Ministry of Education. (2001). Retrieved 25 February 2019, from <http://www.justice.gov.za/commissions/FeesHET/docs/2001-NationalPlanForHigherEducation.pdf>
- Mishler, E. (1986). *Research Interviewing: context and narrative*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Mittler, P. (2000). *Working towards inclusive education: social contexts*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Mnisi, T. E. (2014). *Digital storytelling to explore HIV-and AIDS-related stigma with secondary school learners in a rural community in KwaZulu-Natal*. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

- Mokiwa, S. A. & Phasha, T.N. (2012). Using ICT at an open distance learning (ODL) institution in South Africa: The learning experiences of students with visual impairments. *Africa Education Review* 9(1), 136–151.
- Mole, H. (2013). A US Model for inclusion of disabled students in higher education settings: the social Model of disability and Universal Design. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 14(3), 62-86.
- Moodley, S., & Mchunu, G. (2019). Current access and recruitment practices in nursing education institutions in KwaZulu-Natal: A case study of student nurses with disabilities. *African Journal of Disability (Online)*, 8, 1-9.
- Morley, L., & Croft, A. (2011). Agency and advocacy: Disabled students in higher education in Ghana and Tanzania. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 6(4), 383-399.
- Mosia, P. A., & Phasha, N. (2017). Access to curriculum for students with disabilities at higher education institutions: How does the National University of Lesotho fare? *African Journal of Disability (Online)*, 6, 1-13.
- Mouton, J. (1996). *Understanding social research*: Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Muhammad, F. J., Muhammad, A. K., Aijaz, A., Syeda, T. F., & K. H. (2011). Paradigms and Characteristics of a Good Qualitative Research. *World Applied Science Journal*, 12 (11), 2082-2087.
- Mutanga, O. (2017). Students with disabilities' experience in South African higher education—a synthesis of literature. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 31(1), 135-154.
- Mutanga, O., & Walker, M. (2017). Exploration of the academic lives of students with disabilities at South African universities: Lecturers' perspectives. *African Journal of Disability (Online)*, 6, 1-9.
- Myers, M.D. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Business and management*. California Sage. Thousand Oaks.
- Naidoo, A. (2010). *Students with Disabilities' Perceptions and Experiences of the Disability Unit at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus*. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- National Institutes of Health. (1979). The Belmont report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. Bethesda: Maryland.
- Neuman, W.L. (1997). *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (3rd ed). USA. Allyn and Bacon.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007). *Analysing qualitative data*. In K. Maree (Ed.), First steps in research (pp46-68). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007). *Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques*. In K. Maree (Ed.), First steps in research (pp. 69-97). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Ntombela, S. & Soobrayen, R., (2013). 'Access Challenges for Students with Disabilities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: A situational analysis of the Edgewood Campus', *Journal of Social Sciences* 37(2), 149–155.

Ntombela, S. (2013). Inclusive education and training in South African higher education: Mapping the experiences of a student with physical disability at university. *Africa Education Review*, 10(3), 483-501.

Nxumalo, S. (2017). *A social history of the experiences of Africans with physical disabilities who were associated with the Cripple Care Association (renamed the Association for the Physically Challenged) in KwaZulu-Natal, 1970s to 2000s* (Masters in Social Sciences in the Department of Historical Studies,). University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Odendaal-Magwaza, M., Farman, R. (1997). *Unpublished submission by the University of Natal to Education Portfolio Committee at the public hearing on the Draft White Paper 3. A Programme for Higher Education Transformation at the National Assembly, Parliament, Cape Town.*

OECD Higher Education Programme IMHE, (2014). *Fostering equity in higher education compendium of practical case studies: Fostering inclusion of disadvantaged students*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Office of the President. (1997). *South African Integrated National Disability Strategy*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Okoye, U. O. (2010). Support systems and coping strategies available to physically-challenged students in University of Nigeria Nsukka. *Educational Research*, 1(11), 666-671.

Oliver, M. (1996). The social Model in context. *In Understanding Disability* (pp. 30-42). Palgrave, London.

Opini, B. (2012). Barriers to Participation of Women Students with Disabilities in University Education in Kenya. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, 25(1), 65-79.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (2003). *Diversity, inclusion and equity: Insights from special needs education, Education Policy Analysis*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Pallais, A., & Turner, S. (2006). Opportunities for low-income students at top Colleges and universities: Policy initiatives and the distribution of students. *National Tax Journal*, 357-386

Phukubje, J. & M. Ngoepem M. (2016). Convenience and accessibility of library services to students with disabilities at the University of Limpopo in South Africa. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*: 1–11.

Pickard, A.J. (2007). *Major research paradigms. In research methods in information* (pp. 12-18). London: Facet Publishing.

- Polit, D., & Beck, C. (2012). Essentials of nursing research. *Ethics*, 23(2), 145-160.
- Polit, D.F., & Beck, C.T. (2012). *Nursing research: generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice* (9th ed). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Ponelis, S. R. J. I. J. o. D. S. (2015). *Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: A case of Information Systems research in small and medium enterprises*. 10(1), 535-550.
- Pudaruth, S., Gunpath, R.P. & Singh, U.G., 2017, 'Forgotten, excluded or included? Students with disabilities: A case study at the University of Mauritius', *African Journal of Disability* 6(0), a359. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v6i0.359>
- Rager, K.B. (2005). Self-care and the qualitative researcher: When collecting data can break your heart. *Education Researchers*, 23-27.
- Rensberg Van J. (2005). *The interpretive framework in qualitative education* The Open University.
- Ribot, J. C., & Peluso, N. L. (2003). A theory of access. *Rural sociology*, 68(2), 153-181.
- Riddell, S. (1998). Chipping away at the mountain: Disabled students' experience of higher education. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 8(2), 203-222.
- Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2014). Disabled students in higher education: Discourses of disability and the negotiation of identity. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 63, 38-46.
- Riddell, S., Tinklin, T., & Wilson, A. (2005). *Disabled students in higher education: perspectives on widening access and changing policy*: Routledge.
- S. K., & Given Lisa M. (2008). *Convenience Sample*. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sackett, P. R., & Wanek, J. E. J. P. (1996). *New developments in the use of measures of honesty integrity, conscientiousness, dependability trustworthiness, and reliability for personnel selection*. 49(4), 787-829.
- Seale, J., Draffan, E.A., & Wald, M. (2008). *Lexdis Project report*.
- Sefotho, M. M. (2015). A Researcher's Dilemma: Philosophy in Crafting Dissertations and Theses. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 42(1,2): 23-36.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. Teachers College press.
- Shevlin*, M., Kenny, M., & McNeela, E. (2004). Participation in higher education for students with disabilities: An Irish perspective. *Disability & Society*, 19(1), 15-30.
- Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: Sage.

- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*, London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Smith, J. A. (2015). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*: Sage.
- South African National Plan for Higher Education. (2001). Department of Education. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Statistics S A. (2014). Statistics South Africa, Census 2011. Pretoria: Stats SA.
- Subrayen, R. (2011). *Social Exclusion Among Students with Visual Impairments at UKZN Edgewood and Howard College Campuses*. Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Subrayen, R. (2018). The promise of equity, access and participation revisited: A gendered perspective from students with visual disabilities and physical disabilities in relation to practice learning and student financial aid at an institution of higher learning. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
- Swain, J. Finklestein, V. French, S. and Oliver, M. (1993). *Disabling Barriers-Enabling Environments*, London: Sage Publications.
- Swart, E. & Greyling, E., (2011). 'Participation in higher education: Experiences of students with disabilities', *Acta Academica* 43(4), 80–110.
- Teferra, D., & Altbachl, P. G. (2004). African higher education: Challenges for the 21st century. *Higher education*, 47(1), 21-50.
- Tellis, W. M. (1997). Introduction to case study. *The qualitative report*, 3(2), 1-14.
- Thanh, N. C., & Thanh, T. J. A. J. o. E. S. (2015). *The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education*. 1(2), 24-27.
- The Global Status Report on Disability and Development (2015). *Department of Economic and Social Affairs*. Unedited Version. New York: United Nations.
- The Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education and Training System. (2018). Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training.
- The Union of the Physically Challenged Against Segregation. (1976). *The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation and the Disability Alliance Discuss Fundamental Principles of Disability: Being a Summary of the Discussion Held on 22nd November, 1975 and Containing Commentaries from Each Organisation*. Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation.
- Thompson, L. (1992). Feminist methodology for family studies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 3-18.
- Tsai, I.-I., & Ho, M.-s. J. J. o. C. C. A. (2010). *An institutionalist explanation of the evolution of Taiwan's disability movement: From the charity model to the social model*. 39(3), 87-123.

Tuli, F. (2010). The basis of distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research in social science: Reflection on ontological, epistemological and methodological perspective. *Ethiopia Journal of education & Science* 6(1), 97-108.

UKZN, (2004), *Policy on students and staff with disabilities*, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. Retrieved 10 March 2019, from <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/dhr/StaffStud%20with%20Disabilities.pdf>

UNESCO. (1994). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for action on special needs education: Adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education; Access and Quality. Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994. UNESCO Publishing, Paris.

UNESCO. (1998). *The world conference on higher education in the twenty-first century: Vision and action*, UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 05–09 October.

UNESCO. (2001). *Including the Excluded: Meeting diversity in education. Example from Romania*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2015). *The right to education for persons with disabilities: Overview of the measures supporting the right to education for persons with disabilities reported on by member states, Monitoring of the Implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (8th Consultation)* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, Paris.

Union, A. (2010). *Continental Plan of action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

United Nations Convention on Human Rights (1948). Retrieved 02 February 2019 from <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.html>

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). (2006).. Retrieved 11 April 2019, from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

Universal declaration of human rights. (1948). UN General Assembly, 302(2).

UPIAS. (1976). *Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation*. Fundamental Principles of Disability, London.

Van Jaarsveldt, D.E., & Ndeya-Ndereya, C.N., (2015). “*It’s not my problem*”: *Exploring lecturers’ distancing behaviour towards students with disabilities*, *Disability and Society* 30(2), 199–212. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2014.994701>.

Vehovar, V., Toepoel, V., & Steinmetz, S. (2016). Non-probability sampling. *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology*, London: Sage Publications, 329-345.

Walker, A. and Walker, C. (eds) (1997). *Britain Divided*. London: CPAG.

Wamundila, S. (2019). *Bridging the gap to include students with disabilities in higher education population and maximise retention*. Unpublished report. In Bloemfontein.

Warnke, G. (2008). *After identity: Rethinking race, sex, and gender*. University of California. Cambridge University Press.

Watson, N. (2002). Well, I know this is going to sound very strange to you, but I don't see myself as a disabled person: Identity and disability. *Disability & Society*, 17(5), 509-527.

weHandicap & Society, 1(2), 173-178.

White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy. (1997). Office of the Deputy President. ODP, Pretoria, Government Printers, Retrieved 24 March 2019, from http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/white_papers/disability1.html

White, C. (2005). *Research: A practical guide*. Pretoria. Ithuthuko Investment (Publishing).

Willing, C. (2001). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Winberg, C. (1997). *Learning how to research and evaluate*. Cape Town: Uswe.Wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn., 153-160.

World Health Organization. (2011). *World report on disability 2011*. World Health Organization. Matla.

World Health Organization. (2011). *World report on disability 2011*. World Health Organization.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research design and methods*. (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: design and methods*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

APPENDIX 1: LETTER SEEKING PERMISSION FROM THE PRINCIPAL OF THE COLLEGE



Date: 20 /02 /2019

Dear Principal

SEEKING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A MASTER'S RESEARCH AT YOUR TVET COLLEGE

I, **Ntombela Bongani Praisegod (student number: 208525412)**, studying towards a Master's in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu- Natal, Edgewood campus. The purpose of my research is to explore the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College.

I hereby request permission to conduct interviews with 4 students at the [REDACTED] TVET College premises (CPD and OLU Campus). The study will involve one face-to-face structured interviews and estimated to take about an hour.

All information the students will contribute will be treated with absolute confidentiality and only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to review the research records. Also, please note that no information given by any student will be used against the student or the College. Data generated will be stored in a secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.

For further information about this research, please contact the following:

Mr BP Ntombela (Researcher): 083 556 8714; lukhwazibp@gmail.com

Dr Thoko Mnisi (Supervisor): 0312603972; Mnisi@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the Research Office through Mr Prem Mohun. Below are the contact details:

Mr Prem Mohun

University of KwaZulu-Natal

HSSREC Research Office

Govan Mbeki Centre

Contact details: Tel: 031 260 4557

E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

If you are willing to grant such permission, please sign below:

I, Mlotshwa S, the principal of [REDACTED] College, grant permission for Ntombela Bongani Praisegod to conduct interviews with the among students.

Signature of the Principal



Date: ____ / ____ / 2019.

APPENDIX 2: A LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Date: 20 /02 /2019

Dear Principal

SEEKING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A MASTER'S RESEARCH AT YOUR TVET COLLEGE

I, **Ntombela Bongani Praisegod (student number: 208525412)**, studying towards a Master's in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu- Natal, Edgewood campus. The purpose of my research is to explore the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College.

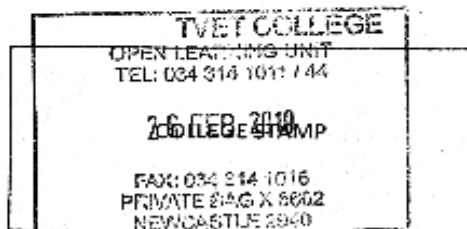
I hereby request permission to conduct interviews with four students at the [REDACTED] TVET College premises (CPD and OLU Campus). The study will involve one face-to-face structured interviews and estimated to take about an hour.

All information the students will contribute will be treated with absolute confidentiality and only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to review the research records. Also, please note that no information given by any student will be used against the student or the College. Data generated will be stored in a secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.

If you are willing to grant such permission, please sign below:

I, [REDACTED] the principal of [REDACTED] TVET College, grant permission for Ntombela Bongani Praisegod to conduct interviews with the among students.

Signature of the Principal



Date: 28 / 02 / 2019.

21



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Informed Consent Form

Date: ____ / ____ /2019

Dear Student,

My name is **Ntombela Bongani Praisegod (student number: 208525412)** studying towards a Master's in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

You are invited to consider participating in a study that explores the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal. The aim of the study to explore the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments on the TVET College as a learning environment. The study is expected to enrol (how many voluntary participants?? in total, how many other sites, and where). The study will involve one face-to-face structured interviews and estimated to take about an hour. Please note that this is not a funded study.

Your participation

As part of data collection, you are requested to take part in in-depth interviews that will be approximately an hour in duration and will be audio recorded so that the researcher can accurately capture your responses.

Please understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you are not being forced to take part in this research. Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop participating in the research at any time. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will not be prejudiced in any way.

Confidentiality

Kindly note that everything you will say in the interviews will be treated in a strictly confidential manner. Any research records (e.g., notes and interview transcripts) that identify you will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, your identity and all information obtained will remain confidential and will be seen only by the researcher and the researcher's supervisor unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Risks/discomforts and Benefits

At the present time, there are no anticipated risks in your participation. The risks associated with participation in this research are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this research. However, this research will be extremely helpful in developing a research report on this topic that we hope will contribute to promote understanding experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal.

If you would like to receive feedback on our research, we will record your email address on a separate sheet of paper and can send you the final report from the research when it is completed sometime after December 2019.

Further questions regarding the study may be directed to:

Mr BP Ntombela (Researcher): 083 556 8714; lukhwazibp@gmail.com

Dr Thoko Mnisi (Supervisor): 0312603972; Mnisi@ukzn.ac.za

You may also contact the Research Office through Mr Prem Mohun. Below are the contact details:

Mr Prem Mohun

University of KwaZulu-Natal

HSSREC Research Office

Govan Mbeki Centre

Contact details: Tel: 031 260 4557

E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I _____ (name and surname) have been informed about the study entitled Exploring the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal by Bongani Praisegod Ntombela.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher and the supervisor.

APPENDIX 4: UKZN ETHICAL APPROVAL



10 June 2019

Mr Bongani PraiseGod Ntombela (208525412)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Ntombela,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0239/019M

Project title: Exploring the experiences and attitudes of students with physical impairments studying at a TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 27 March 2019, 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 1 year 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 Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Thoko Mnisi
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Ansurie Pillay
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenaarain

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snvmanmi@ukzn.ac.za / mchunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

 1910 - 2010 
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

X 5: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

All the information will be confidential; no data will be published without participant consent.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

<18		19-25		26-30		31>	
-----	--	-------	--	-------	--	-----	--

2. Which campus you enrolled with?

CPD		OLU	
-----	--	-----	--

3. What programme are you doing? And what level are you doing?

Nated	Level	NC(V)	Level
-------	-------	-------	-------

4. If you registered at CPD, did you received the NSFAS bursary?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

5. If you enrolled at OLU, how are you paying for your studies?

Parent		Other (Please Specify)	
--------	--	------------------------	--

6. Did you receive bursary grant?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

7. Are you a Newcastle resident? If No where are you coming from and how did you find the off-campus residence that you are living in?

YES		NO (Please Specify)	
-----	--	---------------------	--

8. How did you travel to the college? Bus or taxi, special transport?

Bus		Taxi		Special Transport		Other (Please Specify)
-----	--	------	--	-------------------	--	------------------------

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

1. How do students with physical impairments experience studying at a TVET College in KZN?

- a) How did you know/ hear about [REDACTED] TVET College?
- b) How did you apply at [REDACTED] TVET College?
- c) Why [REDACTED] was your best choice learning institution?
- d) During the admission and enrolments, did the college have the special arrangement for students with disabilities?

2. What are the perceptions of students with physical impairments about this TVET College as a learning environment?

- a) Does the College infrastructure provide easy access such as ramps, elevators, wider doors ways, automatic door openers).to students with physical disabilities? Yes, or no, elaborate how.
- b) Are the learning facilities such as the classrooms, lecture theatres, libraries, computer rooms accessible to students with disabilities? Yes, or no, elaborate how.)
- c) Does the College offer assistive devices such as hearing aids, computer technology support etc to students with disabilities any help during learning process? Yes, or no, elaborate how.)
- d) Does the teaching and administrative staff give enough support to students with disabilities? Yes, or no, elaborate how.
- e) Do you think the College is supportive of people living with physical disability?

3. What support does the institution offer for students with physical impairment studying at this TVET College?

- a) Does the College have a Disability Unit?
- b) Does the College set special centres during the assessment or examination for student with disabilities?
- c) Does the college offer support such as wheelchairs, crushes?
- d) What other kind of support do you receive from the college as a student with disabilities?

APPENDIX 6: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

All students were observed at different times.

(only specific features of the institutional settings were observed).

1. The situation and physical accessibility of the buildings- time schedules from one venue to another
2. Movements within lecture rooms, computer rooms, entrances, gates
3. Socialising within the institution – interacting with friends

APPENDIX 7: TABLE OF THEMES AND CATEGORIES EMERGING FROM THE DATA

THEMES	CATEGORIES
Theme 1: accessibility to higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility, service quality, and inclusivity • Personal development
Theme 2: Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture venues (Classrooms and computer rooms venues) • Infrastructure accessibility
Theme 3: Learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal support • Learner support levels • Financial support
Theme 4: Institutional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner support services • Customisation of services • Institutional support

APPENDIX 8: LETTER FROM EDITOR



DOC.pdf

The Revd Mabel Jean Dalby (B.Th.) 77 Carey Road
Pelham
Pietermaritzburg 3201

mjmccd@gmail.com 082487 2627

5 June 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TITLE OF PAPER: EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL
IMPAIRMENTS STUDYING AT A TVET COLLEGE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

STUDENT/AUTHOR: BONGANI PRAISEGOD NTOMBELA (208525412)

The above-mentioned research project submitted in partial fulfilment for the Degree of Masters in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was proofread by me for English language, grammar, spelling, punctuation and formatting errors. I endeavoured throughout the process to retain the writing style of the student/author and to remain true to his research content and intentions.

Please note that the Contents list, Table and References were not checked for accuracy although obvious errors, for example in headings or punctuation, were corrected.

My suggested changes may be accepted or not at the student's and your discretion.

M J Dalby

APPENDIX 9: TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS STUDYING AT A TVET COLLEGE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%	17%	6%	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	3%
2	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	2%
3	scholar.sun.ac.za Internet Source	2%
4	www.targetwebsites.co.za Internet Source	1%
5	www.making-prsp-inclusive.org Internet Source	1%
6	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1%
7	www.dpsa.gov.za Internet Source	<1%
8	jyx.jyu.fi Internet Source	<1%