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Early experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace

by

Kgothatso Mahlatse Malatji

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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(Educational Psychology)

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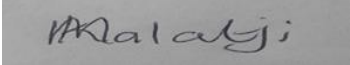
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AUGUST 2021

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

Kgothatso Mahlatse Malatji

31 August 2021

Ethical Clearance Certificate

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CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**CLEARANCE NUMBER:** EP 19/06/01
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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
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Dedication

I dedicate this research to my loving mother, my husband and our four wonderful children.

Acknowledgements

To have achieved this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people:

- My Heavenly Father, who provided me with the strength, knowledge and perseverance to complete this study. *"And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you"* – 1 Peter 5:10.

- My dearest mother, Mapudi Malatji: Mme, you have been a pillar of strength to me. I love you.

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- To my supervisors, Prof Omidire Funke and Mr Ubisi: Thank you for your invaluable advice, guidance and inspiring motivation during difficult times during the research;

- Last, but not least, this research is dedicated to the late Moore Dorcas Malatji (my grandmother).

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and understand the early lived experiences of young women with visual impairments (YWWVI) as they transitioned into the workplace. These included exploring the progress and difficulties YWWVI faced in the process of transitioning into the workplace and adjusting to the work environment. This information would assist employers, educational institutions, and the government in understanding and accommodating the needs of young women living with visual impairments entering the work environment.

The person-environment correspondence theory (PEC) was used as a theoretical framework for this study. An interpretivist approach was used to gain in-depth understanding of participants 'experiences through case study design by purposefully sampling five participants from the South African National Council for the Blind [SANCB]. Data was generated using semi-structured interviews and documented using field notes and an audio recorder, and then analysed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that negotiating entry into the workplace is a challenging process for YWWVI. Factors such as a lack of education and work experience, attitudes of employers and employees, lack of reasonable accommodation, and the workplace environment not being fit contribute to their challenges in the workplace. It is recommended that the policy on the recruitment and accommodation of YWWVI be revised to address the concerns identified in the study. In addition, further research with a larger sample of participants, including males, is required to understand if there are gender related differences in the findings.

Keywords: Experiences, Young women, Visual impairment, Transitioning, Workplace

Letter from Language Editor

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15 August 2021.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The dissertation titled "Early experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace" by Kgothatso Mahlatse Malatji has been proofread and edited for language by me.

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Acronyms

AD	Assistive Devices
AT	Assistive Technology
DISA	Disability Information South Africa
DoL	Department of Labour
ICD 11	International Classification of Diseases 11
PEC	Person-Environment-Correspondence
SA	South Africa
SABPP	South AFRICAN Board for South Africa
SABWA	South African Blind Women in Action
SANCB	South African National Council for the Blind
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
VI	Visual Impairment
WAFTB	World Access for the Blind
WCBA	Western Cape Blind Association
WHO	World Health Organisation
YWWVI	Young Women with Visual Impairment

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CHAPTER 1
OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

Transitioning is a period of transition in a person's life that can bring either changes or challenges (Pandey & Agarwal, 2013). Transitioning from education and training to the workplace is influenced by a wide range of internal and external factors such as adjusting to new environments, change in cultural settings, as well as lifestyles, which can affect professional development (Orellana, 2018). Women in general are faced with a lot of challenges in the workplace such as; gender discrimination, workplace harassments and conflict of work-life balance (Arthi, 2020). These challenges hamper women's ability to contribute to the economy (Abbasi et al., 2019). Given the challenges experienced by women in general, being a young woman with visual impairments, transitioning into the workplace can be one of the factors that can bring more challenges in an individual's life (Lindsay et al., 2017). Young women with disabilities in education and training are often excluded from accessing vocational programmes that can enable a smoother transition to enhance support and coping skills (Lindsay et al., 2017). This is because they have physical limitations and live in a technology-driven and competitive environment (Shreuder & Coetzee, 2015). Having a support system can help ease the process of transitioning into the workplace for young women with visual impairments (YWWVI). As the theory of person-environment correspondence asserts, a person needs to correspond with their environment to see if they are fit for certain work environments and can also be satisfied and find tenure in the type of job they are doing (Dawis et al., 1968). This study will explore the lived experiences of YWWVI as they transition into the workplace. According to the African Union Commission (AUC, 2006), a young woman is a female human being between the ages of 18 and 35 who is distinguished by her gender.

Challenges that come with college-to-work transition can be understood through a model of understanding the experience of workplace entry for new graduates (Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). The three-stage model can assist graduates in the following ways: i) anticipate what the workplace environment is like ii) adjust or be able to adapt to the new environment, and iii) achieve their goals through the transition process into the workplace

(Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). With the help of career counsellors, graduates can address challenges before college graduation and negotiating entry to the workplace (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2015; Wedlandt & Rochlen, 2008). This counselling will help them understand the realities of the workplace and resources that can help them cope (Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008). However, the limitation of this model is that, at times, it might not be as effective in achieving desired outcomes due to a lack of resources that could aid in completing the three stages (Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008).

According to Engelbrecht et al. (2017), the occupational segregation of women and especially YWWVI continues to create stagnation and prejudice in their career trajectory. For one, the employment of young women with any form of disabilities requires more resources to meet their needs (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Furthermore, barriers such as widespread ignorance, fear and stereotypes have led to unfair discrimination against women and persons with disabilities to transition into the workplace successfully (Hakeem, 2015). Experiences of YWWVI transitioning into the workplace remain invaluable to understanding this phenomenon (South African Board for People Practice, [SABPP], 2017). By understanding their lived experiences, researchers and practitioners can make the necessary changes in policy and interventions to alleviate stigma and create preventative strategies to get these women to smoothly transition into the workplace (Wendlandt & Rochlen, 2008).

1.2   Problem Statement

South Africa (SA) is rife with youth unemployment (Sellevoll, 2016). According to Statistics South Africa (StatsSA, 2019), employment for youth (ages 18-35 years) was estimated at 58.20% in the third quarter. Previous research suggests the career transition of young people with disabilities in the workplace has largely been neglected (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). South African employment statistics reflect 1,2% of persons with disabilities in the workforce, with no indication of the proportion of young persons with disabilities (Department of Labour, [DoL], 2018). However, the available statistics on employment are for black and white women with disabilities (12,3% and 16,3%, respectively), but not primarily focusing on YWWVI (DoL, 2011). Others stressed that youth with disabilities had not been given opportunities in developmental endeavours such as participation in

workforce campaigns, which could improve transition from higher learning into the workplace (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). This lack of opportunities may result from unavailable educational and basic support structures caused by the absence of career guidance services and inclusive policies for persons with disabilities (Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Sefotho 2013).

Based on a study conducted by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (2018), it showed that although efforts were made to help improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, research still suggests that young people with disabilities are less likely to graduate from high school than young people without disabilities. The study also showed that youth with disabilities fail to attend and complete four-year college and university programmes and ultimately enter the workplace. This may be because persons with disabilities experience exclusion from the education and employment sector (Pratt, 2017).

Winn and Hay (2007) show that students with disabilities are more likely to be excluded from the workforce due to a lack of comprehensive career development and transition planning approaches in schools. Hewett et al. (2017) conducted a study among 80 young visually impaired students to see how many had access to higher education and successfully transitioned to the workplace. The results indicated that only 32 students were able to go through to higher education. This failure of the majority of the young people to progress indicates how a barrier to accessing enabling structures can hinder the process of transitioning to the workplace. Thus, the problem is that even when YWWVI do attain secondary or higher educations, these YWWVI struggle to access employment structures to help them develop their careers (Ubisi, 2017). They continue being excluded from contributing to the workforce. There is also an absence of career guidance services and inclusion policies that can enable these young women to access educational and work support structures (Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Sefotho 2013).

1.3   Rationale

Although there have been several local studies on the transition from higher education to the workplace for people with disabilities (Naidoo et al., 2015; Ubisi, 2017), there has been little research specifically on people with visual impairments, especially women

(Naidoo et al., 2015). This lack of research is concerning, given that visual impairment (that is partial to complete blindness) is more common among women, particularly among poor women and children (WHO, 2018). South Africa has a high prevalence of visual impairment of 32% compared to other disabilities (Life healthcare, 2018). It is also stated that 80% of people who are visually impaired in South Africa live in rural areas (SANCB, 2019), and difficulty in seeing is more prevalent among women than men (Naidoo et al., 2015). It is further estimated that in South Africa 97% of people with visual impairment are unemployed (SANCB, 2019). This indicated a need for further research in the South African context.

Studies have indicated that visual impairment is a leading cause of disability, and one of the key barriers to accessing education and employment for most people with the disability, therefore subjecting them to poverty (Naidoo et al., 2015; WHO, 2018). These barriers include environmental challenges and how they struggle to navigate and walk freely around (World Access for the Blind, [WAFTB], 2016). Secondly, social challenges, where blind people cannot easily participate in social activities or job functions, limit their career options (WHO, 2019). Thirdly, they also experience technological challenges where it becomes difficult for individuals to use the internet for research, recreation, social media and job searching (Otyola et al., 2017). These barriers contribute to other barriers experienced by persons with disabilities, such as lack of employment, poor health, lack of skills and social attitudes (Lorenzo, 2012). These barriers are caused by the existing gap between the good policy for persons with disabilities, and the practical implementation of these policies (Swartz, 2012)

As few studies have been conducted on YWWVI between ages 15-49 years (Naidoo et al., 2015; Malhorta et al., 2018; WHO, 2018), I felt it was of utmost importance to conduct this study. The study aimed at assisting employers and educational institutions in accommodating the needs (such as ramps, assistive technology, et cetera) of the affected persons and also offering support for YWWVI transitioning into the workplace. It further aimed to promote awareness and workplace support, and interventions for women with visual impairments in the workplace by changing policies. The study also aimed at contributing to theory and literature to alleviate the stigma and unfair treatment of women

with visual impairments, especially at the place of work, as well as assisting with the transition into the workplace. This contribution will enable a better understanding and educate people about the challenges these women go through, thus, leading to proper intervention through the transition process.

1.4   Purpose of the Study

This qualitative study of limited scope aimed to explore the experiences of YWWVI transitioning into the workplace. The experiences of these young women (ages 18 to 35) who have been in the workplace for at least one to five years were explored to understand what changes and challenges they have experienced or were experiencing as they transitioned into the workplace from school or home. This exploration included how the environment was different from what they were used to and the types of support they received through transitioning and adapting to the new environment. The study further looked at how these young women dealt with and overcame challenges they experienced in the workplace environment.

1.5   Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1.5.1   Primary research question

What are the lived experiences of YWWVI transitioning from education and training to the workplace?

1.5.2   Secondary research questions

1) How do YWWVI negotiate entry into the workplace?
2) What are the views of YWWVI regarding the workplace meeting their needs for a smoother transition?[1]

1.6   Study aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the study were as follows:

- To contribute to theory and literature in order to reduce the stigma and unfair treatment of women with visual impairments, particularly at

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[1] Smooth transition: For this study a smooth transition refers to a transition process without any difficulties

work, as well as to aid in the transition into the workplace.

- To enable a better understanding about the challenges these YWWVI go through, thus, leading to proper intervention through the transition process.
- To assist employers and educational institutions in identifying the accommodation requirement of YWWVI (i.e. ramps, assistive technology) and highlighting how they could be further supported.

1.7   Working Assumptions

The working assumptions for the study were as follows:

1) YWWVI are still discriminated against in entering, transitioning, and further developing in the workplace.
2) Youth unemployment continues to be a barrier in entering and successfully transitioning to the workplace. This might be due to poor secondary and tertiary education outcomes, especially amongst youth with visual impairments.
3) Employers still feel that accommodating women with visual impairments in the workplace is costly.
4) Women with different visual impairments experience similar and different challenges in the workplace, for example, differences in access and level of impairment.

1.8   Definition of key Concepts

1.8.1   Experiences

The psychology dictionary defines experiences as events of present contents of consciousness resulting in learning (Pam, 2013). Experiences allow people to gain knowledge or master events through involvement or exposure to it. In this study, experiences where regarded as those events that YWWVI were or are still exposed to during the transition process.

1.8.2   Young women

Women have been defined differently over time, and the term can mean different things to different people (Mashile, 2018). The AUC (2006) further defined young women as female human beings between 18 to 35 years of age as distinguished by the sex of male

or female. Therefore, in this study, I focused on young women between ages 18 to 35 because I found them as an appropriate working age group for this study.

1.8.3 Visual impairment

Visual impairment in this study is defined as an impairment in vision, both partial sight and blindness, that cannot be corrected or remedied (International Classification of Diseases [ICD] 11, 2018; WHO, 2018). This impairment adversely affects the individual's performance on many things, such as easily accessing education, work, participate in economic ventures, and independently do things on their own (ICIDH, 1993). For this study, visual impairment implies persons with low vision and blindness because they are vulnerable to physical limitations.

1.8.4 Transitioning

According to Anderson et al. (2012), a transition is a process of change in relationships, roles, and routines in a person's life that may or may not be caused by an event. Transition is a time of change, and this process can bring either changes or challenges into a person's life (Pandey & Agarwal, 2013). In this study, transitioning was defined as the process or a period of changing from one state or condition (for example, higher education and training) to another (workplace).

1.8.5 Workplace

According to the National Joint Council (2003), a workplace is a place where an employee performs their duties of employment as directed by the employer. These include report writing, submissions of reports, and other administrative duties for the employee et cetera. In this context, a workplace is regarded as an environment where YWWVI performance labour in exchange for compensation.

1.9 Research Paradigm

1.9.1 Epistemological paradigm

The study utilised an interpretivism paradigm. According to Creswell (2013), interpretivism is an approach in which individuals attribute meaning to things to make sense of the world. The basic assumption of interpretivism is that individuals' and groups' lived experiences consist of multiple and constructed realities (Pham, 2018). Individuals

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create meaning and understanding through socialising with other people. Interpretivists ask participants open-ended questions in their natural settings to allow participants to express who they are (Sandberg, 2005). In interpretivism, the researcher's personal background also influences the interpretation of the information gathered from participants (Yen, 2011). As such, the researcher becomes part and parcel of the research (Creswell, 2013).

Through this paradigm, I could explain how YWWVI attributes meaning to things to make sense of their world and situations. In this context, I understood how they made sense of their transition process to the workplace. I was further able to gather information about YWWVI based on individuals' perceptions of their world and situations (Yen, 2011). Through this, I understood the historical and cultural backgrounds of each individual.

1.9.2 Theoretical framework

This study utilised the person-environment correspondence theory (PEC), originally known as *the theory of work adjustment*. The theory of work adjustment focuses on an individual's adjustment to work (Dawis et al., 1964). The PEC asserts that individuals seek to achieve and maintain correspondence with their environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1993). The theory focuses on analysing individuals' variables such as their work attitudes, job satisfaction, education and training experiences, needs, interests, job performance ratings, work histories, aptitudes, and personality traits (Dawis, 2005). The theory further argues that when there is optimal correspondence between the individual and their environment, the ongoing process of achieving and maintaining correspondence indicates work adjustment. This adjustment leads to success and satisfaction in the workplace (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2015). The theory in this study was used to understand the experiences of YWWVI transitioning to the workplace - the process of adapting and adjusting to the work environment. However, this theory's limitation is that sometimes not all the needs of a person in the workplace can be met; thus, the environment may not correspond well with the individual (Dawis, 2005).

1.9.3 Methodological approach

This study used a qualitative approach. Creswell (2013) defines qualitative research as assumptions and the use of theoretical frameworks to find the meaning of social or human

challenges that individuals and groups faced. The researcher collects data in a natural setting and analyses it using various strategies that improve the quality of the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Finally, the researcher writes a report that includes contributions to literature, recommendations, the concerns of participants, and the researcher's interpretation of the problems (Creswell, 2013).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) also define qualitative research as a process that locates the observer in the world. The research process becomes the main focus of the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). It consists of sets of interpretive, materialistic practices that allow the world to be seen. The researcher uses field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs and recordings to collect data, allowing the researcher to "hear" the participant's voice. Qualitative research uses mostly an interpretive, epistemological framework to understand meaning from problems (Creswell, 2014). However, the limitations of a qualitative approach are that it can be used to obtain data from a small number of people, and the data analysed cannot be generalised (Creswell, 2014).

1.10 Overview of Methodological Choices

1.10.1 Research design

For this study, I have used a single case study research design consisting of five YWWVI. A single case study is the study of a single case with only one or few participants; in this case, few participants were used for this study (Ongena, 2005). Babbie and Mouton (2001) defined a case study as a design of inquiry used by a researcher to get an in-depth understanding of a case from a small number of individuals. In a case study, current real-life situations are explored and investigated through detailed contextual analysis (Zainal, 2007). It focuses on answering exploratory, explanatory and descriptive questions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This can be achieved by using multiple data sources, such as interviews, observations, and document reviews (Yin, 2014).

In this study, I was able to look closely at specific factors in data through using a case study research design (Creswell, 2014). Yin (2003) states that there are different case studies, such as single and multiple case studies. In a multiple case study design, the researcher explores multiple cases, such as persons with different disabilities, in one study to understand similarities and differences in their lived experiences (Gustafsson,

2017). Through a single case study, I could explore the lived experiences of YWWVI to uncover how they have dealt with challenges and changes as they transitioned into the workplace. The limitations of using the case study design for this research are that the and lack of scientific rigour (Creswell, 2014).

1.10.2 Sampling of participants

The purposive sampling method was utilised in selecting the participants. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposive sampling or judgment sampling is defined as non-probability sampling technique where the researcher selects participants based on the researcher's judgment. It is a widely used sampling technique in qualitative research (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Participants are selected based on the characteristics and objectives of the study (Etikan et al., 2016). In this study, five YWWVI from the South African National Council for the Blind [SANCB] were purposefully selected based on their age (18-35 years of age), type of disability, and sex to explore their lived experiences of transitioning into the workplace. The inclusion criteria for this study was any young woman with visual impairments between the ages of 18 to 35 years who had studied with the SANCB, and is in their early years of working (1 -5 years).

The abovementioned criteria seemed applicable in selecting the participants as it would enable them to share their early experiences as YWWVI transitioning to the workplace. Researchers suggest that sound judgement should be used when selecting participants, which will result in saving time and money (Palinkas et al., 2015). This selection will also help produce credible results (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Purposive sampling was found to be effective when only a limited number of people serve as a primary source given the nature of the research design, aims, and objectives (Etikan et al., 2016).

1.10.3 Data generation and documentation

This section discusses data generation methods, as well as the documentation tools used. In this study, I chose semi-structured interviews with an interview schedule as a data generation method. Data was collected in a mutually agreed place that was quiet, private and easy for a person with visual impairments to explore the experiences of YWWVI transitioning into the workplace. The data was then captured using an audio

recorder and field notes during the interviews. Furthermore, the researcher used a reflective journal to reflect on their thoughts and feelings after the interviews to help minimise bias.

1.10.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher asks open-ended questions to enable flexibility for participants to clarify their responses (Creswell, 2013). The researcher asks a set of questions without a specific sequence of asking and is allowed to probe to get more information (Guion et al., 2006). This procedure allows for a discussion during the interview as opposed to just asking questions and getting straightforward answers. I chose to hold two to four interview sessions per informant if needed. This also depended on whether the informant still had more information to share. This allowed my participants to reflect on the previous sessions and also enabled me to gather more information or clarity on certain answers.

1.10.3.2 Audio recording

In qualitative research, interviews can be documented by using an audio recorder or any recording device (Opdenakker, 2006). It is a method in which, during the interviews, the researcher records the conversations taking place (Tessier, 2012). This method allows the researcher to accurately capture and document the information, which can then be transcribed into written transcripts (Opdenakker, 2006). Using a cell phone device to record interview conversations in this research has helped me record all useful information during the data collection process. This collection process assisted me in analysing the data more easily as all the information was recorded and transcribed into written transcripts.

1.10.3.3 Field notes

Field notes are notes taken by a researcher during field research, during and after observing a specific phenomenon under study (Tessier, 2012). Field notes are widely recommended in qualitative research as they can be very useful in data sharing (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2017). Although field notes are biased and the information recorded cannot be replayed, by using field notes in this study, I was able to record my initial thoughts,

and it was fast and the cheapest tool to use. These field notes were used when discussing the research findings to make the discussion richer.

1.10.3.4 Reflective journal/diary

A reflective journal is a written record of all the researcher's activities during the data collection process, such as their thoughts and feelings (Nadin, 2006). A reflective journal is a valuable tool in qualitative research that the researcher can use to help minimise bias during the data collection process. This tool was helpful to the researcher as it allowed continuous reflection throughout the data collection process.

1.10.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Thematic analysis was used in analysing data in this research. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as "a method used for identifying, analysing, and describing themes within data" (Braun & Clark, p. 76). By first familiarising myself with the data collected, through re-reading, themes in the data which seemed important or interesting were coded, identified as themes and then used to answer my research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This analysis was accomplished through Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of using thematic analysis, which are further elaborated on in chapter three.

1.11 Rigour

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of establishing scientific rigour in qualitative study were used to guide me in maintaining rigour for this study. The criteria are briefly explained in this chapter; more details are included in chapter three. The criteria include *credibility,* which refers to the ability to produce confidence in true, credible and believable results (Feroro et al., 2018). *Dependability* refers to the ability to produce consistent results when repeated under similar conditions in a similar context (Moon et al., 2016). *Confirmability* refers to the degree of confidence so that other researchers can confirm the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and "transferability is the degree to which the results of a research can be transferred to other contexts or settings" (Feroro et al., 2018)*.*

1.12 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted on a vulnerable population due to the young women having visual impairment. The participants were from the disability category as YWWVI. Therefore, ethics clearance was obtained at the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education Research Committee (EP 19/06/01) before commencing with data generation. Maree (2016) states that it is of utmost importance for researchers to familiarise themselves with research ethics policy to guide them through their research study. This will help the researcher maintain professional research conduct when carrying out the research. This study was conducted according to the approved research agreement. Where human participants were involved, I adhered to the following ethical considerations: informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy, voluntary participation, beneficence and non-maleficence concerning participants, referral to counsellors when appropriate, and limitations. All those considerations, as mentioned above, were adhered to according to the research ethics guidelines. However, this will be further elaborated on in chapter three.

1.13 Outline of Chapters

Chapter one provides an overview of the study. In this section, I have explained the purpose of the study, the rationale of the study, the research questions, concept clarification, research methodology, rigour of the study, and the ethical considerations adhered to in the study.

Chapter two examines the theoretical framework used in the study and the existing relevant literature within the context of the study. The literature review looked at the transition process of YWWVI to the workplace. Challenges and factors contributing to the process of transitioning to the workplace were further examined. Possible solutions for the transitions of these young women were also considered.

Chapter three provides an in-depth description of the research process. This chapter explains the methodological paradigm, the research design, data generation and documentations methods and analysis techniques. Ethical considerations, as well as the criteria to conduct quality research, are also explained.

Chapter four describes the results which were gathered from the data collection. The themes that have emerged and the findings are presented with respect to relevant existing literature.

Chapter five presents limitations, recommendations for practise and training, further research issues, and a conclusion for the study.

1.14 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter aimed to provide an overview of the study. Firstly, I introduced the research topic and further described the purpose and rationale of the study. I then further outlined the research questions and defined key concepts within the study. The methodology was also outlined by giving brief explanations of the research design used and the sampling method and criteria used to sample the participants. Data generation and documentation tools were also briefly explained, and I further described the analysis method used to analyse the data. I also elaborated on how the study maintained rigour and the ethics considerations I adhered to in conducting this study. Detailed discussions on the research methodology as a whole are provided in chapter three.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises a thorough background literature review of relevant studies of the transition of young women with visual impairments (YWWVI) into the workplace. The literature reviews demonstrate how women who are persons with disabilities still face challenges and changes of transition to the workplace worldwide. The review shows how the different methodologies of various studies were implemented to uncover the challenges that come with transitioning into the workplace.

Firstly, visual impairment is defined, including the prevalence of women with visual impairment globally and locally. Secondly, the transition of YWWVI is then thoroughly discussed to explain how education, employment, gender, and various factors in the workplace contribute to challenges of transitioning into the workplace. In addition, it was necessary to look at the resources or support structures available to assist with the transition to the workplace. The theoretical framework is then discussed to indicate how the theory guides the understanding of the study.

2.2 Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is defined as both partial sight and blindness (WHO, 2018). Partial sight refers to low vision or moderate impairment while blindness is characterised by a level of visual perception below 1/100 after correction or total loss of sight (ICD 11, 2018; Maurel et al., 2012, WHO, 2018).

2.2.1 Global prevalence of YWWVI

It is estimated that 1.3 billion people globally live with some form of vision impairment (WHO, 2018). With regards to distance vision 36 million are blind and 217 million have moderate to severe vision impairment (Life healthcare, 2018; WHO, 2018). Regarding near vision, 862 million people live with near vision impairment (WHO, 2018). There are three main causes of blindness worldwide, cataracts with 39.1%, uncorrected refractive errors with 18.2%, and glaucoma which counts for 10.1% of all of these for global blindness (WHO, 2018).

It is also stated that Africa has the highest prevalence of blindness compared to other continents, with approximately 4.8 million blind people and 11.6 million living with visual impairments (Tswanya, 2017). An estimated 75% suffer from treatable, curable or preventable conditions (Tswanya, 2017). According to WHO (2019), 80% of vision impairment globally is considered unavoidable.

2.2.2 Prevalence of visual impairment among young women in South Africa

The prevalence of visual impairment is the highest of all disabilities in South Africa with a rate of 32% (Life healthcare, 2018). Visual impairment, resulting in difficulty in seeing, among South Africans is more prevalent among women than men (Naidoo et al., 2015). It is stated that approximately 80% of people who are visually impaired in South Africa live in rural areas (SANCB, 2019).

According to the SANCB, "it is estimated that 97% of all those blind and partially sighted people are unemployed, and for every one blind person there are three to four people with low vision" (SANCB, 2019,). The incidence of self-reported vision difficulty across the South African provinces is: Eastern Cape 6,5%, Free State 17,8, Gauteng 10.8%, KwaZulu Natal 8,5%, Limpopo 4,9%, North West 14,2%, Northern Cape 0%, and Western Cape 13,3% (Naidoo et al., 2015).

2.3 The Transition Process to the Workplace

During the transition process, people have different experiences; some will quickly embrace the new situation, while others will find it difficult to accept the changes and adapt (Andersen & Ankerstjerne, 2010a). Good facilitation for a successful transition process can improve job productivity and satisfaction (Andersen & Ankerstjerne, 2010b). Schlossberg (as cited in Evans et al., 1998) defined transition as any or no event that causes a change in a person's relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles. Schlossberg (as cited in Evans et al., 1998) also states that adults continuously experience transitions. The adults' reactions to transitions depend on the type of transition, their perceptions of the transition, the context in which it occurs, and its impact on their lives. A transition has no end point; instead, a transition is a process over time that includes phases of assimilation and continuous appraisal as people move in, move through, and out of it (Anderson et al., 2012).

Schlossberg (as cited in Evans et al., 1998) further state that transition can be understood through explaining the transition process, the integrative transition model, and the 4 S system that helps to cope with the transition process (Anderson et al., 2012). Transitions are categorised into one of three areas: individual, relationship, and work. The meaning of transition for each individual can be understood through three aspects, the type, context and the impact of the transition. The transition theory further identifies four factors that influence a person's ability to cope with a transition: situation, self, support, and strategies, also referred to as the 4 S system (Schlossberg, 1981).

The first stage in any transition is either moving in or moving out. When moving into a new situation, people must become familiar with new roles, relationships, and routines. The theory points out that institutions need to implement orientation programmes to help individuals know what is expected (Anderson et al., 2012). Once people understand what is expected, they experience the moving through period. During this period, "adults confront issues such as how to balance their activities with other parts of their lives and how to feel supported and challenged during their new journey" (Anderson et al., 2012, p. 57). Moving out, Schlossberg (1981) explains, is "when people end one series of transitions and start to look forward to the next thing" (Schlossberg, 1981, as cited in Papay, 2019, p.4).

For this study, the transition process is in the context of transitioning from education and training into the workplace, which is regarded as an anticipated transition (Evans et al., 1998). "Every individual reacts differently to the same type of transition, and the same person reacts differently at different times. The individual's perception of what is happening affects their account of their assets and liabilities which are determinants for evaluating how well they will cope with the transition" (Papay, 2019, p. 5).

2.4 Challenges that YWWVI are faced with during the transition process and in the workplace.

In the workplace, there are challenges that many people, especially those with impairments, face in their lives. Moreover, the workplace is where most people spend most of their time. People with different personalities, backgrounds and communication styles contribute to change in the economy (SABPP, 2017). YWWVI still face challenges

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when transitioning to the workplace due to the special resources, tools, and equipment required for these individuals to have a smooth transition process and work optimally in the workplace (SABPP 2017). Coffey (2014) states that the challenges that YWWVI face include negative employer attitudes, the need for reasonable accommodation and adjustments by the employer in the workplace, restricted mobility, and their confidence being negatively affected by the barriers experienced.

2.4.1.1 Negative employer attitudes

Inadequate support in the workplace

Entry into the workplace is a stressful time for everyone, but even more so for YWWVI. This process is impacted by various factors, such as difficulty participating in work activities due to limited visual ability (Salminen & Karhula, 2014). Papakonstantinou and Papadopoulos (2009) show that support is an important factor for YWWVI in the workplace. There are different types of support, including personal interaction, material aid, physical assistance, guidance, feedback, and social participation (Papakonstantinou & Papadopoulos, 2010). The amount of assistance or support that YWWVI receive from their employers, supervisors and colleagues influences their effective performance in the workplace. A study by Donaldson (2017) of visually impaired individuals' perspectives on obtaining and maintaining employment indicates that employers were close-minded, and there was a lack of support and accommodation for YWWVI. Providing the necessary support, especially to YWWVI, enables and fosters adjustment, effective working, and development in the workplace environment (Papakonstantinou & Papadopoulos, 2009). Papakonstantinou and Papadopoulos' (2010) study on forms of social support such as sharing information and providing advice to individuals with visual impairments indicated that lack of provision of suitable support equipment and overprotection in practical areas, were major concerns for YWWVI.

Due to the various factors associated with a lack of support for YWWVI in the workplace, employers must know how to remedy this challenge (Garcia et al., 2016). Employers must have knowledge about visual impairment and the challenges faced by YWWVI to provide the right support to YWWVI (McDonall, 2014). This support includes sensitising

employers and the work environment to the reality of visually impaired persons to encourage their development in an optimal manner (Garcia et al., 2016).

Discrimination

Discrimination against YWWVI is still an ongoing issue, despite policies and legislation implemented to overcome barriers that persons with disabilities face within the workplace (Maja et al., 2011). SABPP (2017) estimated 4.3% of the population as persons with disabilities, with people who are visually impaired individuals constituting 1 091 022 of the population in South Africa in 2017. This has escalated over the years, and YWWVI are still faced with countless challenges in the workplace that result in being discriminated against when participating in various work-related activities (McNeil, 2015).

In countries such as South Africa, where poverty affects most of the population, it hinders many from acquiring education (SABPP, 2017). Lack of education is both the cause and effect of poverty, wherein individuals with visual impairments who come from poor backgrounds struggle to access proper health care and struggle to access educational opportunities (Hickman, 2015). These opportunities include educational opportunities that can cater to their needs and which may open many doors to employment opportunities (Hickman, 2015). Thus, poverty can contribute to discrimination against YWWVI when attempting to access opportunities (Hickman, 2015).

A study by Chan et al. (2005) was conducted to determine what drives workplace discrimination against people with disabilities. Allegations of workplace discrimination against YWWVI centred mainly around hiring, discharge, harassment, and reasonable accommodation issues. These issues indicate how discrimination against YWWVI results in these young persons not accessing educational opportunities (Hickman, 2015). These opportunities should enable them to easily access and participate in various work-related activities (McNeil, 2015).

2.4.1.2 The provision of reasonable accommodation and adjustments in the workplace

Assistive technology

Incorporating Assistive Technology (AT) in the workplace is not as prevalent as in the academic environment due to the cost involved in providing assistive devices to YWWVI

in the workplace (Christopherson, 2015). These additional costs include budgets that must be expanded to provide AD and re-designing the work environment to be disability-friendly (Wilkinson-Meyers et al., 2010 as cited in Ubisi, 2017). YWWVI often struggle to gain access to assistive devices, but they are required to perform even though appropriate equipment has not been provided (Donaldson, 2017). This lack of AD creates challenges that result in inadequate performance as such barriers are preventing these young women from performing effectively. These barriers include the inability to read computer screens, printed work, or type on computers (Donaldson, 2017). Due to the challenges associated with the lack of assistive technology for YWWVI, it has become challenging for them to have a smooth transition and develop further in the workplace (Donaldson, 2017).

Thus, AT makes working life easier for employees with VI by providing them with opportunities for personal and professional growth (Ampratwum et al., 2016). This benefit can be achieved by employers providing these employees with assistive devices to use (Christopherson, 2015). By accommodating reasonable requirements, which includes supplying assistive devices, employers can remove barriers for YWWVI. Thus, companies could hire the best and most qualified and suitable candidates for the job by eliminating such barriers (Ampratwum et al., 2016).

2.4.1.3 Restricted mobility

Environment not fit for YWWVI

The mobility of YWWVI is paramount in the infrastructure of the workplace environments as these individuals could experience injuries when the environment is not user friendly for them (WHO, 2017). Koutsoklenis and Papadopoulos (2011) researched auditory cues used by YWWVI to navigate the environment. A sampling of 155 YWWVI was done. The results indicated that institutions needed to provide information to YWWVI about the workplace's safety, location, wayfinding, and orientation. This implies the need to construct the infrastructure in a user-friendly way for YWWVI, which includes supplying ramps, elevators, and navigation aids (WHO, 2017). Thus, accommodating these individuals' requirements in the professional environment ensures easy adjustment, mobility, and effective performance in the workplace.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2017), standards for accessibility can create an enabling environment. It further stipulates the policies that each country has to enforce when accommodating YWWVI. Chapter 6 of the World Report on Disability (WHO, 2017) also stipulates all the necessary measures and policies to be considered when creating enabling environments for persons with disabilities. It was, however, evident that in most companies' persons with disabilities are still not catered for by making buildings more accessible (Koutsoklenis & Papadopoulos, 2011). Furthermore, policies such as environmental and reasonable accommodations in the workplace are not entirely implemented to assist these persons; thus, it becomes a challenge to transition smoothly (WHO, 2017).

2.4.1.4 *Confidence being affected by barriers experienced.*

Challenges of YWWVI in the workplace show that it can discourage them in the workplace or when seeking employment (Donaldson, 2017). Another challenge is low motivation and job satisfaction due to various factors, including feeling undervalued and a lack of developmental opportunities (Disability info South Africa [DISA], 2021b). YWWVI are still treated differently in our communities, where they are mostly seen as disabled rather than abled (Maja et al., 2011). Hence, many people do not value their work and contributions, and they are discriminated against regarding obtaining job opportunities due to their barriers (Maja et al., 2011). Many employers are reluctant to accommodate the needs of those with visual impairments as they enter the workplace due to the costs and lack of understanding of YWWVI. These needs include adequate support, reasonable accommodation, and understanding of their impairments (Donaldson, 2017; Garcia et al., 2016). Thus, due to the needs mentioned above not being met, these young women lack motivation and satisfaction in the workplace (Donaldson, 2017).

2.5 Possible Solutions for Transitioning to the Workplace

2.5.1 Education structures

Transitioning from any educational environment and into the workplace is when an individual or graduate must adjust to learning about life from school to learning in the workplace (Olson, 2014). Most people transitioning assume that school has prepared them enough to deal with anything they will face in the workplace (Olson, 2014). However,

the types of learning and evaluation in school settings are rarely central to workplace learning. At the workplace, individuals must master their responsibilities which require a much less structured route in gaining the necessary knowledge (Olson, 2014). Research shows that universities in some countries in the African continent have shown commitment towards inclusion and prioritising education for YWWVI (Odame et al., 2019).

Odame et al. (2019) conducted a study in Ghana to determine how effective universities prepared graduates with visual impairment for the workplace. It was found that visually impaired graduates did acquire the necessary work-related skills such as time management, interpersonal and teamwork skills from the universities. However, they encountered many challenges during their transition period and faced barriers, such as a lack of assistive technologies and communication equipment at work (Odame et al., 2019). This finding indicates that the education sector tries to accommodate the needs of YWWVI as they transition to the workplace; however, employers are not willing to provide support (Odame et al., 2019). Another study on the challenges and resilience emerging from the employment experiences of graduates with disabilities in South Africa found that despite experiencing challenges, young people with disabilities in the workplace were resilient (Ubisi, 2017).

Transitions from school to achieving a productive livelihood forms part of an important point in learners' lives as they are moving from more known, predictable environments and more clearly outlined pathways into a less clear, certain, and predictable territory (Pavlova et al., 2017). Students with disabilities are more likely to be excluded from the workforce due to a lack of comprehensive career development and transition planning approaches in schools (Winn & Hay, 2007). A study by Hewett et al. (2017) among 80 young visually impaired students to see how many had access to higher education and successfully transitioned to the workplace indicated that only 32 students could progress to higher education. The researchers recommended that inclusive higher education should recognise the importance of the needs of broader social structures, which will enable YWWVI to successfully transition to the workplace (Hewett et al., 2017).

Thus, the above literature indicates the importance of education among young people as it enables them to enter the workplace. Moreover, education remains an important factor in securing a good job and allowing development in the workplace.

2.5.2 Internship and learnership programmes

Experiential learning programmes can offer students the opportunity to develop these skills and practise discipline in acquiring knowledge, however for programme sustainability; higher education must meet the needs of its key stakeholders (LoGiudice, 2016). According to LoGiudice (2016), accommodations and services in higher education are fundamentally different; therefore, it is important to analyse the differences and bridge the gap between these two settings. However, it is pointed out that these accommodations do not exist for persons with disabilities, which also disadvantages the visually impaired, especially women (LoGuidice, 2016).

Englander et al. (2000) conducted a study at St John's University where they ran an internship programme to help students transition better into the workplace. The programme consists of approximately 50 to 100 students every year. The programme found that putting undergraduates through internship programmes eases the process of transitioning from the classroom to the job market. They state that internships offer many benefits for students, employers, colleges, and universities that serve as intermediaries (Englander et al., 2000).

LoGiudice (2016) states that it is also important to identify the expectations of the workplace and the environment for the students and then engage in conversation with employers on how to provide access to employees who are persons with disabilities. Mentoring and leadership programmes can assist educators and employers to equip young people with advocacy skills, self-confidence, and opportunities for employment training (Linsay et al., 2017). Labour market programme participation should serve as an intermediary for young people with visual impairments transitioning to the workplace; however, they are found to be negatively associated with employment outcomes (Legard et al., 2012).

2.5.3 Employment sector

As human beings, work forms an important part of our identity, as we can find sense of meaning (Andersen & Ankerstjerne, 2010a; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2015). Work forms a major part in our lives, and any changes to our working environment can therefore change our self-understanding. Through work, people can fulfil their most fundamental needs, such as the needs for income, socialisation, recognition and more. These changes impact the lives of many people (Andersen & Ankerstjerne, 2010a). Thus, both the government and public sectors are crucial in making this possible for YWWVI to successfully enter the workplace and adapt to find a sense of meaning.

The industry is increasingly demanding graduates who are well skilled for the workplace, effectively perform work tasks and are ready to work (Cord & Clement, 2010). However, preparing these students to be technically competent and, at the same time, have the necessary soft skills presents a challenge for higher education (Cord & Clement, 2010). LoGiudice (2016) states that employers are not taking the initiative to develop relationships with university career and disability offices to help prepare persons with disabilities to make the necessary alterations before transitioning into the workplace. As such, it could be seen as moving toward a universal design in the workplace setting.

A study was conducted by Papakonstantinou and Papadopoulos (2020) on 196 private sector employers' attitudes and the impact the employers' attitudes have on YWWVI, and their entry into the workplace. The majority of the participants in the study provided negative and neutral answers for most of the questions and showed the same attitudes towards the employment of YWWVI. It was indicated that the frequency of social contact and suitable attitudes towards YWWVI seemed to be the biggest challenge for most employers. This finding indicates the unwillingness and unpreparedness of employers in accommodating the needs of YWWVI. This resistance to accommodation is often attributed to the cost that comes with accommodating YWWVI. Thus, employers' willingness to facilitate the entry of YWWVI into the workplace is crucial to allow a smooth transition process (Papakonstantinou & Papadopoulos, 2020).

Another study was conducted by Lindsay et al. (2017) amongst youths with disabilities (11 females and six males) between the ages of 15-34 to find out when and how these

young people disclose their condition and request workplace accommodations. The results showed that the disclosure of their condition was dependent on the type of disability and severity, comfort level, type of job, and industry. Their reasons were based on their needs, workplace rights, and accommodation solutions (Lindsay et al., 2017). Facilitators for disclosure included job preparation, self-confidence, self-advocacy skills, and an inclusive work environment (Lindsay et al., 2017). Both Papakonstantinou and Papadopoulos' (2020) and Lindsay et al.'s (2017) studies indicated that youth and persons with disabilities still face challenges in the workplace environment. However, these studies have not focused on YWWVI going through the abovementioned challenges. Australian research from Winn and Hay (2007) suggests that the role of persons with disabilities should be considered in the workplace. This study indicates that people who are visually impaired and all persons with disabilities as a whole are still faced with challenges when entering the workplace (Winn & Hay, 2007).

A study by Garcia et al. (2016) was conducted on 52 adults with visual impairments to determine the importance that visually impaired people assign to their work to define the obstacles and facilitators related to their integration into the workforce. The study looked at the influence of social and physical factors on their work environments. The results showed that it was important to sensitise employers and the work environment to the reality of visually impaired people to encourage their integration in the best manner (Garcia et al., 2016). The abovementioned study points out the inadequate social support and lack of environmental accommodation needed to allow mobility and easy access for YWWVI. Thus, it is imperative for employers first to understand VI to provide the proper support in the workplace environment.

2.5.4   Organisations for YWWVI

In SA, there are various institutions for the blind that provide support and education to YWWVI. These include Blind S.A, the SANCB, the Western Cape Blind Association (WCBA) and the South African Blind Women in Action (SABWA), to name just a few (DISA, 2021a). These organisations mentioned above serve as support structures for YWWVI. They further facilitate collaborative partnerships to serve the interests of visually impaired South Africans. They also promote the education, training and rehabilitation

relevant for the employment of YWWVI. In addition, they supply assistive devices and related technologies to YWWVI and create awareness of visually impaired people's skills, capabilities, and abilities (DISA, 2021a). The collaboration of organisations with employers can therefore serve as an enabler in facilitating a smoother transition for YWWVI into the workplace.

2.5.5 Support from family

Instrumental and emotional support are critical for YWWVI (Bambara et. al., 2009). Bambara et al. (2009) have demonstrated the influential roles of both family members and friends on the well-being of YWWVI throughout their lifespan. However, the family has a more intimate role than friends because they live with the YWWVI. They have firsthand knowledge of the person's medical history. They have observed how the person coped with the challenges of being VI and other stressors in life, and they also serve as communicators and liaisons on behalf of the VI individual. Thus the family has remained the primary unit for providing physical, emotional, and social support to YWWVI (Bambara et al., 2009).

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study utilised the person-environment correspondence theory (PEC), originally known as *the theory of work adjustment*. The theory of work adjustment focuses on an individual's adjustment to work (Dawis et al., 1968). The PEC enables us to see if a person is fit for certain work environments and can be satisfied and obtain tenure in the type of job they are doing (Bretz, 1994). The PEC asserts that individuals seek to achieve and maintain correspondence with their environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1993). The theory analyses individuals' variables such as their work attitudes, job satisfaction, education and training experiences, needs, interests, job performance ratings, work histories, aptitudes, and personality traits (Dawis, 2005). The theory further argues that when there is optimal correspondence between the individual and their environment, the ongoing process of achieving and maintaining correspondence indicates work adjustment. Therefore, this correspondence leads to success and satisfaction in the workplace (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2015). The theory in this study could successfully track the transition to the workplace, thereby adapting and adjusting to the work environment.

According to Dawis (1996), a person's adjustment behaviour includes individual flexibility, action, activeness, reactiveness, and perseverance. People measure work adjustment through overall job satisfaction, the various aspects of the environment, satisfaction of needs and the fulfilment of aspirations and expectations.

The work adjustment/person-environment correspondence theory centres on the following points

i)   *"Work involves the interaction between the individual and the environment. The environment has requirements concerning work performance, and the individual has requirements of the environment"* (Dawis, 1996, p. 75) concerning compensations for work done.

ii)   *"If the requirements of both are met, the individual and the environment achieve correspondence. Work adjustment involved the ongoing process of achieving and maintaining correspondence."* (Dawis, 1996, p. 76)

Dawis continue by stating:

iii)   *"There are two criteria for work adjustment—t*he satisfaction of the individual with the environment and the satisfaction of the environment with the individual", and.

iv)   "*If the individual is to remain in the work environment, both satisfaction and satisfactoriness are necessary*". (Dawis, 1996, p. 77). The result of both is then achieved in the form of tenure.

v)   Correspondence between the individual and the environment can help predicted work adjustment.

vi)   Structure and style, the individual's skills and needs, and how the individual communicates with the environment are needed for correspondence (Dawis, 1996, p. 78-120).

Dawis and Lofquist (1993) formulated the points mentioned above that will help predict work adjustment in the workplace. Through this theory, I was able to see how people adjusted well to the work environment and enjoyed their jobs. I was also able to assess an individual's education and training experiences to see if they were fit and well trained

to perform the job types they were assigned to do. By also assessing an individual's needs, interests, attitudes, and work history, I was able to determine whether the person was transitioning and adjusting well and advancing in the workplace. By applying the PEC model, I was then able to use these variables to explore the participants' lived experiences during the transition process into the workplace environment. Shtivelband (2014) studied individuals from Latin America using the theory of work adjustment (PEC) to understand their work experiences and investigate how they think about and respond to issues at work compared to North American workers. The results indicated that they responded as well as the Americans to the environment they were working in as they could find flexibility and persevere in the workplace (Shtivelband, 2014). Figure 2.1 depicts the model.

Figure 2.1

Person Environment Correspondence
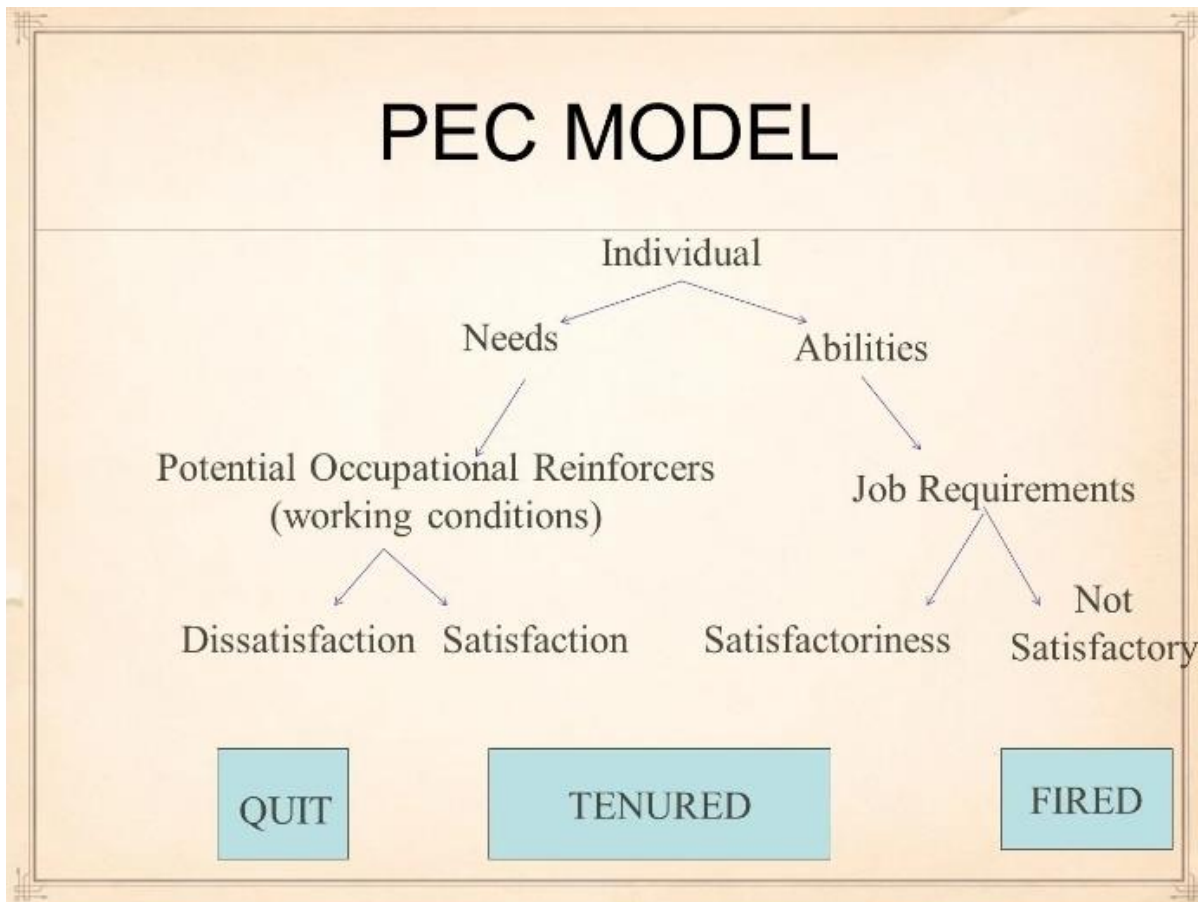
Dawis and Lofquist (1993). Adapted from https://slideplayer.com/amp/9701950/

Based on the above theoretical framework, an individual must meet the needs of the workplace environment, and the workplace environment must meet the needs of the individual for correspondence to take place (Dawis, 2005). The literature indicates the workplace environment's challenges, which hinders the process of a smooth transition (Hickman, 2015; Papakonstantinou & Papadopoulos, 2020). YWWVI experience difficulties accessing job opportunities because poverty affects their ability to afford the cost of assistive devices, and the workplace environment does not provide sufficient support or make reasonable accommodations (Hickman, 2015; Papakonstantinou & Papadopoulos, 2020). Thus, the process of entering and adjusting to the workplace environment remains a challenging one, making it difficult for these individuals to correspond with their environment and develop satisfactorily.

2.7   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter looked at existing literature within the context of the study. It is indicated that YWWVI continue to experience challenges as they transition into the workplace. Various factors such as lack of support, lack of understanding, lack of assistive devices and reasonable accommodation in the workplace are among the factors that contribute to challenges for YWWVI in the workplace. The PEC theory explains how the challenges mentioned above can hinder development and adjustment in the workplace for these YWWVI. Possible solutions such as the utilisation of organisations, internship/learnerships, certain employment structures, and support from family and friends are seen as helpful but not sufficient enough to help these young women to have smooth transitions. Thus, more policy changes need to be implemented, and employers need to understand the needs of these young women to provide the assistance they need during the transition process and in the workplace.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter looks at the research methodology which was employed for the study. A more detailed overview of the research process is provided, where the sampling methods, data collection, and documentation techniques are explained. A thorough explanation of the thematic data analysis and interpretation is also provided. The ethics that guided this study are also explained in detail.

3.2   Research Paradigms

A paradigm is a set of beliefs and agreements about basic aspects of reality that assist us in addressing and understanding problems (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Kuhn). Lincoln and Guba (1985) define paradigms as representations of what we think about the world, although they cannot be proven. Nieuwenhuis (2016) further explains that paradigms address basic assumptions taken on faith, such as ontology, epistemology, and assumptions about methodologies. In research, philosophy forms the basis for proving what is valid through ontology and epistemology (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Epistemology is a philosophy that focuses on explaining how people acquire knowledge (Creswell, 2013). Ontology, on the other hand, is a philosophy that focuses on the existence of things, that is, reality (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Paradigms are a frame of reference for our actions throughout the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The study utilised an interpretivist paradigm. Through this paradigm, I was able to explain how young women with visual impairments (YWWVI) attribute meaning to things to make sense of their world and situations. According to Creswell (2013), interpretivism is an approach in which individuals attribute meaning to things to make sense of the world. The basic assumption of interpretivism is that individuals' and groups' lived experiences consist of multiple and constructed realities (Pham, 2018). Individuals create meaning and understanding through socialising with other people. Interpretivists ask participants open-ended questions in their natural settings to allow participants to express who they are (Sandberg, 2005). In this study, I gathered information about YWWVI based on individuals' perceptions of their world and situations (Yen, 2011). Through this, I was able

to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds of each individual. In Interpretivism, the researcher's background also influences the interpretation of the information gathered from participants (Yen, 2011). As such, the researcher becomes part of the research (Creswell, 2013).

3.3   Research Methodology

The research methodology in this study utilised a single case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of YWWVI in the workplace. Furthermore, a purposive sampling method was also used in selecting participants in this study based on the criteria within this study. During the data collection process, various methods were used to generate and document data from the participants. These methods included the use of interviews, an audio recorder, field notes, and a reflective journal.

3.3.1   Research design

This study utilised a case study research design, and the type of case study was exploratory. Yin (2008) refers to a case study as an empirical enquiry about a contemporary circumstance, for example, a case, or situation, taking place within its real-world context, particularly when there are no clearly evident boundaries between the circumstance and the context. Therefore, a case is regarded as a generally bounded entity, such as a person, organisation, event or any social phenomenon, however, the boundary between the case and its contextual conditions may not be clearly visible.

Research suggests that having boundaries in case study research can help prevent the researcher from becoming unfocused and going too broad. Creswell (2003), Miles and Huberman (1994) and Stake (1995) mention ways in which a researcher can bind a case study, namely, by time and place, time and activity, and by definition and context. Yin (1994) further states that case studies are most useful when used to answer questions of "how" and "why". This type of research design enables the researcher to collaborate closely with the participants, enabling them to share their stories. However, when using case studies, one of the major concerns is rigour.

A single case study design was used for this study as it allowed me to understand this particular case of YWWVI transitioning to the workplace. The advantages of a case study

are that it is useful in research if a big sample of the population is difficult to obtain (Zainal, 2007). It is also inexpensive if small cases are used compared to other designs. Case studies use multiple data collection tools (Yin, 2003).

However, Babbie and Mouton (2001) also identified the limitations and challenges of case studies. Creswell (2013) states that deciding which type of study to use is very difficult for the researcher. In case studies, because samples are chosen in small numbers, the results obtained cannot be transferred to other contexts or used to generalise the whole population (Ongena, 2005). Case study measurements are not standardised, and they are also found to lack rigour when analysing the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The researchers further state that analysing data from a case study is time-consuming. The researcher can be biased when using a case study (Yin, 2014). Given all the limitations and challenges of a case study, I ensured that I maintained the quality criteria of the research by producing credible, dependable, conformable results that could be transferable to the context of YWWVI.

3.3.2 Sampling of participants

In this study, a purposive sampling method was used in selecting the participants. "Purposive sampling is a non-probability sample method that selects participants based on the characteristics of a population and the study's objectives" (Clarke-Mcleod, 2020, p. 25). Robinson (2014) further defines purposive sampling as intentionally selecting participants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon. In purposive sampling, the selection process involves identifying themes, concepts, and indicators through observation and reflection. Most researchers use purposive sampling techniques to select participants based on knowledge of, and experience with, the focus of empirical inquiry. However, purposive sampling is a sampling design that is not intended to offer a representative sample (Robinson, 2014).

This study's sampling criteria included looking at the type of disability, gender and age of the participants, who must have studied at the SANCB, and the number of years in the workplace environment. The participants were VI young women between the ages 18-35 years of age in their first few years of employment. The SANCB was contacted and asked for a list of YWWVI between the ages of 18 and 35 who had studied there, so that data

could be collected from them. The following table presents the demographics of each participant.

Table 3.1
Demographics of participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Type of employment	Employment duration	Severity of VI
P1	25	Female	Generic Management	Two years	Blind
P2	27	Female	Generic Management	One year	Blind
P3	34	Female	Data Collector	One year six months	Blind
P4	31	Female	End User Computing	One year	Blind
P5	31	Female	Early Childhood Development Teacher	Three years	Blind

The participants met the following criteria in terms of the study

- The participants are visually impaired young women who have accessed the South African National Council for the Blind to obtain education support.
- The participants are between the ages of 18 and 35.
- They have been employed for at least 1 to 5 years.

After identifying the participants, individual interviews were planned, and each session ran between 45 to 60 minutes.

According to Creswell and Clarke, Purposive sampling is a technique mainly used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases for the most effective use

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of limited resources. This technique involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced regarding a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Moreover, another important factor is availability and willingness to participate and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate way. Palinkas et al. (2015) state that there are numerous types of purposeful sampling designs; these include selecting extreme or outlier cases to learn from unusual manifestations or phenomena of interest.

According to Etikan et al. (2016), purposive sampling has many advantages in that it is cost-effective and time-effective. It was a useful method in this research as it was appropriate for a limited amount of primary data, as this study used a single case study design. There are different primary types of purposive sampling, which allows the researcher to sample in various ways (Palinkas et al., 2015). The researcher can reach a targeted sample quickly (Palinkas et al., 2015). Because potential challenges in this research are that purposive sampling has high levels of bias (Etikan et al., 2016), the researcher may be vulnerable to error in judgement. Research data cannot be used to generalise the findings to the rest of the population (Etikan et al., 2016). Therefore, the research aimed to understand this specific topic of interest with the findings only to be transferred to a similar socio-cultural context. I tracked any biases made in consultation with my supervisor, by recording my thoughts and assumptions in my reflective diary.

3.3.3 Data collection and documentation

In collecting data for this study, I used methods such as the interview to communicate with my participants face to face (Niewenhuise, 2016). An audio recorder was used to record all interview conversations to ensure that accurate information was captured (Al-Yateem, 2012). I further used field notes as another form of capturing the interview conversations to note down any crucial gestures and information I may have noticed and heard from the participants and show interest in their stories (Yin, 2011). I finally used a reflective journal at the end of each interview session, to note all my reflections on the interviews with my participants (Bashan & Holsbalt, 2017).

3.3.3.1 Interviews

According to Niewenhuise (2016), an interview is a conversation between two people where the interviewer asks the participant a set of questions. The participant then responds to the questions being asked, allowing the interviewer to collect data or information about the specific participant's views, beliefs, opinions, and behaviour. Qualitative interviews in research enable the researchers to collect crucial information from their participants in a descriptive manner that will allow them to understand and see the world through the eyes of the participant. It is a very useful form of data collection, especially if it is used correctly.

There are different ways of conducting interviews, such as unstructured or open-ended, semi-structured, and structured interviews. In unstructured interviews, the researcher asks questions that are not pre-arranged or non-directive (Bryman, 2012). Structured interviews in qualitative research are standardised questions that sometimes use both close-ended and open-ended questions (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). For this study, I used the semi-structured interview as it allowed me to include both close-ended and open-ended questions while exploring themes (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are a data collection strategy in which the research asks the participant open-ended questions, and new ideas are allowed to be brought up based on what the participant has said (Edwards & Holland, 2013). The duration of the individual interviews was between 45 to 60 minutes.

3.3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are open where new ideas are allowed to be brought up during the interview based on what the participant has said (Edwards & Holland, 2013). In this type of interview, the researcher usually has a framework of themes to explore, which is why they are widely used in qualitative research (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Moreover, the researchers think about the topic that needs to be explored well in advance to guide them to focus on the topic at hand without restricting them to a particular format. The researchers then have the freedom to tailor their questions according to context or situation and the participants they are interviewing (Bjornholt & Farstad, 2012).

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In preparing for the interview, I ensured that all equipment was functioning well to avoid interruptions during the recording, as this would have affected the quality of data being collected. Moreover, I remembered to focus during the interviews on the data collected from the participant. . Through this approach, I was able to probe for more information from the participant where there was a need for clarity and explore themes of this study in-depth. Furthermore, this data collection method enabled me as a researcher to be flexible in respect of the format, therefore allowing me to tailor questions according to my participant's context and situation.

3.3.3.3 Audio recorder

Recording in qualitative research can be the best data collection method to increase descriptive validity (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Through recording, the researcher can record accurate information and be able to refer back to the data collected from the interview. This flexibility can be very beneficial as during interviews, if the researcher is using field notes or observation, they might miss some crucial information during note taking. Thus, recording the conversation can allow very reliable and accurate information recording (Rutakumwa, 2019). Recording interviews can be an easy way to collect data, however, this is dependent on whether the researcher has accurately recorded a high quality and audible audio, which will be easy to transcribe. Moreover, the researcher should make sure to implement appropriate strategies when recording an interview conversation to reduce any disturbing effects (Al-Yateem, 2012).

Al-Yateem (2012) states that when recording group interviews, some participants tend to be reluctant to consent to the recording, while others tend to be distracted by the recording, which affects the validity of the data being collected. Therefore, the researcher must ensure that the participant has consented to be audio recorded and is comfortable with it. Furthermore, other factors also need to be considered during the recording, such as choosing the right location, the right equipment, and always remembering that the main focus is on the participant.

In choosing the correct location or atmosphere, I could record accurate, audible recording in a noise-free area, making it easier to transcribe the data.

3.3.3.4 Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes are a form of collecting data in qualitative research which enables the researcher to record notes during interviews or observations unobtrusively (Canfield, 2011). This form of data collection may require more than just writing down what you hear or see. The researchers are required to remember what they are hearing and observing, which is why it is of the utmost importance to record everything during the interview sessions or observations or immediately after the observations to ensure accurate data has been recorded (Yin, 2011). Fieldnotes are not only limited to writing notes but can also include sketches, diagrams, and even drawings. Moreover, using the field notes approach requires the researchers to pay close attention to everything during data collection to avoid overlooking anything (Yin, 2011). However, with field notes, the researchers rely heavily on their memory and could also be susceptible to their own unconscious bias. There are two types of field notes, namely; descriptive and reflective information (Labaree, 2019).

Descriptive notes are factual notes; this is information recorded during the interview process and setting (Labaree, 2019). These notes may include verbatim notes of all the conversations taking place in an interview or notes on observations, as well as information about the environment, time, and date. On the other hand, reflective notes are the researcher's reflections about the data collection process (Labaree, 2019). These can be ideas, questions, concerns, and other thoughts the researcher may have. For this research, field notes were used as another way of recording data, such as gestures, which could not be captured through audio recording. These notes assisted me during the data interpretation, and they acted as a backup method in collecting data.

3.3.3.5 Reflective journal

A reflective journal in qualitative research helps the researchers create transparency in the research process by recording their thoughts, feelings and experiences to minimise bias (Ortlipp, 2008). Moreover, they are a great tool to use in qualitative research as the researchers can record their feelings, which in most cases influence the data being collected, therefore causing bias (Ortlipp, 2008). These thoughts and feelings are often recorded right after the researcher has finished an interview or an observation of a

participant (Bashan & Holsbalt, 2017). However, reflective journals are never used during the interview or observation process as this could affect the quality of data collection. Hence, it is often used as an additional data collection tool that is meant to assist the researcher in creating transparency during the data collection process.

In this study, I kept a reflective journal to assist in minimising bias and creating transparency throughout the research process. I had one interview with each of the five participants. The interviews took 45 minutes to 1 hour each. The interviews were scheduled via a phone call and took place at a location chosen by each participant. I had to travel to the respective locations of the participants to conduct the interviews. After every individual interview with the participant, I recorded their experience of the interview, their feeling about the interview, as well as their thoughts regarding the interview.

3.4   Data analysis and interpretation

Thematic analysis was used in analysing data in this research, as mentioned before in the first chapter. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) defined thematic analysis as "a method used for identifying, analysing, and describing themes within data". The main goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes in the data that are important or interesting and then use these themes to answer your research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis is the basic data analysis technique, which, when mastered, will equip researchers with the skills to use any other form of qualitative analysis.

Maguire and Delahunt (2017) state that thematic analysis can be approached in many ways. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain two levels of themes, namely, semantic and latent. The semantic level is analysing themes on the surface while accepting answers as they are (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). On the other hand, the latent level is analysing data beyond the surface; you want to know more than the answers given (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). They further identify six phases of thematic analysis that can guide researchers in analysing data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The phases are as follows:

Phase 1: Familiarise yourself with the data *(re-reading and noting down important information)*

Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that this is a very crucial step in thematic analysis in a qualitative study. They state that before a researcher starts coding the data, the

researcher should first familiarise themselves with the data. This means that they should be familiar with the depth and breadth of the data content, which can be done by repeatedly reading through the data. Being familiar with the data involves repeated reading in an active way where the researcher looks for meaning and patterns within the data set. Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that as much as it is a time-consuming process, the researcher should not selectively read through the data but should be familiar with all aspects of the data as this provides the base for the rest of the analysis. At this phase note taking and marking ideas for coding is very important as this will be beneficial when the researcher goes through the other phases; they will then be able to revisit the coded data and work through it.

Transcribing of verbal data

When using Thematic Analysis, it is recommended that when a researcher has worked with verbal data such as in interviews, speeches and so forth, the data will need to be transcribed into written form to conduct a thematic analysis. In this study, data was collected through interviews and was also recorded through audio recording and field notes. After the data generation, the verbal data within this study was transcribed into written form to ensure the thematic analysis was conducted. Bird (2005) asserts that this is a crucial face for the research because the researcher can also make meaning from the data through the data transcription, which then assists them in familiarising themselves with the data. According to Bird (2005), this is further regarded as a key phase within the qualitative interpretative methodology).

Phase 2: Generating initial codes *(coding interesting information in a systematic manner)*

The second phase in thematic analysis occurs after the researchers have familiarised themselves with the data set, made a list of ideas, and found what was interesting from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher now starts producing codes to organise the data into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005). Codes in the thematic analysis are used to identify interesting features to the researcher; however, they are different from themes. Themes are an interpretative analysis of the data and are often broader than codes. Furthermore, coding can be performed either manually or through computer software. How the researcher codes the data will depend on whether the themes are driven by data

or theory (Kelle, 2004). When themes are theory-driven, they depend on data; however, when they are data-driven they depend on specific questions that the researcher wants to code around (Kelle, 2004).

In this study, the coding was data-driven, and coding was done manually and not through software (Kelle, 2004). Codes were generated by working systematically through the whole data set by noting down and highlighting interesting aspects that formed a basis of repeated patterns or themes. The coding process was mainly influenced by the research questions. Repeated patterns were generated by coding as many individual extracts as possible to see which one would be of interest in the end.

Phase 3: Searching for themes *(gathering codes for potential themes)*

The third phase takes place after all data has been coded and gathered. In this phase, the researcher sorts different codes into potential themes and combines all the relevant coded data sections within the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Visual representations may be very useful in this phase to assist the researcher to sort the different codes into themes. To form a comprehensive theme, the researcher then analyses the codes and looks at how different codes can be combined (Braun & Wilkinson, 2003). After completing this, the researcher can start thinking about the relationship between codes, themes, and different levels of themes (Braun & Wilkinson, 2003). This is the part where main themes and sub-themes may be categorised while other themes may be discarded.

In this study, different themes that were found useful and interesting in the data set were categorised into main themes and sub-themes, and other themes were put aside but not discarded as they could be found useful in the later phase (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These themes that constituted main themes were found to be useful in answering the questions in this research study, which enabled me to understand the importance of individual themes.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes *(checking if data relates with both levels, semantic and latent)*

During this phase, the researcher has identified all potential themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this stage, the researcher will now be able to see if some potential themes are not as important, realising that some of them are not supported by data or are diverse,

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while other themes can be combined into one. The researcher also makes sure that the data within themes have to be coherent and meaningful together, be clear, and there should also be an identifiable distinction between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase cannot be done just once, but it requires the researcher to review and refine the themes (Patton, 1990). There are two levels of doing this; the first level requires the researcher to read all the combined extracts for each theme and decide whether it forms a coherent pattern. If it does, then the researcher moves to the next level; however, if it doesn't, the researcher has to find out if the themes are problematic or something else may be involved, which may cause the researcher to decide whether to exclude them from the analysis. The next level involves a similar process but with the whole data set and not just with certain extracts.

For this study, this phase was regarded as the most important stage where decisions on whether themes were valid and showed accurate representation were made. Through reviewing the themes, I was able to decide whether some themes were important and meaningful for this study, and through this process themes that seemed unimportant were also found. However, after repeatedly reviewing the themes, and based on my approach, I was able to find meaningful themes, and I was also willing to re-code as the process continued.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes (continuous analysis, and generating clear names for the themes)

After the researcher has successfully completed the four phases and the researcher is satisfied with the map of the data, they then define and further refine the themes they will present for their analysis and analyse the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through defining and refining, the researcher can identify what the intrinsic nature of each theme is about and decide what feature of the data each theme captures (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, this process allows the researcher to identify which themes are interesting and why. Here the researcher also looks for themes within themes, also referred to as sub-themes. Moreover, during this stage, the researcher is also able to look if the themes can explain the data in relation to the research questions.

The themes which were identified in this study were able to tell a story of the data in relation to the research questions. This was accomplished by closely looking at each

theme and identifying where it contained sub-themes or not and whether it had an intrinsic meaning for this study.

Phase 6: Producing the report *(producing a scholarly report of the overall analysis).*

This is the last phase after all the phases have been completed. In this phase, the research has final full worked-out themes, where the researcher now starts analysing and writing up the report. At this stage in thematic analysis, the researcher starts to explain the complicated story of the data in a manner that will prove the merit and validity of their analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, the researcher provides evidence of the themes within the data and creates an argument in the write-up concerning the research question. This is also achieved by using examples without any complexities so that the write-up provides a coherent, concise, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting story of the data.

The advantages of thematic analysis are that it is flexible and can be used for any data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is not based on any theoretical framework like other data analysis techniques (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). It provides an easily interpretable and concise description of themes and patterns within a dataset (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The challenge may be that the researcher needs to familiarise themselves with the data before the interpretation. Therefore, I made sure I invested more time in getting to know and understand the data. This approach enabled me to understand and analyse the data on a latent level in order to gain more meaning from participants' answers, and then interpret, and report the data that I had collected better.

3.5   Role of the Researcher

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001, as cited in Maree, 2016), in research, the role of the researcher is not only to collect and analyse data, but their aim is to be involved in the process of data collection to create an understanding. This understanding is accomplished through questioning and probing while at the same time being a sensitive observer. According to Joubert (2005, as cited in Maree, 2016), there are various functions for a researcher's role, including analysing data, administering questionnaires, preparing and structuring interviews, and conducting interviews.

In this research, my role as a researcher involved preparing and structuring interviews. This was done to guide me on the set of questions I was going to use and the type of interviews I was going to conduct. Another function involved conducting the interview with the participants, which were YWWVI. Before the interview commenced, I had to make sure that all the relevant equipment and stationary were readily available, which took 60 minutes per participant. Finally, another function was analysing the data which I had collected. This function was done by using thematic analysis to draw on themes used in answering my research questions.

3.6   Quality Criteria

Credibility implies the ability to produce confidence in the results which are true, credible and believable (Feroro et al., 2018). Strategies used for this criteria include prolonged engagement in each setting, interviewing processes and techniques and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility relates to all aspects of the research design, which influence how accurately the research questions can be answered (Moon et al., 2016).

Dependability refers to the ability to produce consistent results when repeated under similar conditions in a similar context (Moon et al., 2016). The researcher can achieve dependability by accurately and clearly conceptualising the study, collecting data, interpreting the findings and reporting the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability can be assessed by a technique referred to as dependability audit, a process in which an auditor reviews the researcher's activities to see how well the researcher has used techniques to meet the credibility and dependability standards.

Confirmability refers to the degree of confidence so that the results can be confirmed by other researchers (Lincoln & Guba). Confirmability can be achieved by using triangulation techniques and reflective journals during data generation (Feroro et al., 2018). For this study, I have implemented a reflective journal throughout the study, including during data generation and data analysis.

Transferability implies extending the degree to which the results can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings (Feroro et al., 2018). Transferability was achieved by purposefully sampling the participants and by data saturation (Hadi, 2016). The

participants in this study were purposefully selected according to age and sex to form a nominated sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I further selected participants according to the type of disability, which was visual impairment.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Participants in this study were from a vulnerable population. These participants were from the disability category as YWWVI. Smith (2003) identified several basic principles from the American Psychological Association (APA) for research ethics which include: ethics approval, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, beneficence and non-maleficence, as well as limitations. According to the APA (2017), researchers can only conduct research if an ethics approval has been obtained after presenting a proposal. Therefore ethics approval was applied for and approved at the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education Research Committee before commencing with data generation. As human participants were involved, the study adhered to the following ethics:

Informed consent

Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) explain that written informed consent is a process whereby a researcher thoroughly explains the study's parameters being conducted to the participants. Informed consent letters were issued to the participants informing them of the purpose of the study, therefore asking for consent from the participants to take part in it. This was done to ensure that no informant was participating in this study unknowingly or under duress, but rather out of their own free will.

Confidentiality

In this study, all data was kept in confidence, which complied with the promise of keeping all data safe, without any other person except the researcher accessing it (Smith, 2003). All the data generated from all the participants in this study was safely kept in a locked cupboard at the Department of Education at the University of Pretoria, with access only given to the researcher and supervisors.

Anonymity and privacy

All identities of participant/s in this study were kept anonymous and not linked with the data collected (APA, 2017). This was done to protect their identities and keeping them from any harm.

Voluntary participation

For this research, I explained to the participants what the research was about, why the study was undertaken and how it was to be undertaken, so that the participants voluntarily and clearly understood what they were getting involved with (Fouka & Matzorou, 2011).

Beneficence and non-maleficence

Beneficence refers to conducting research with kindness and the intention of doing good for the people (Fouka & Matzorou, 2011). My intentions for the study were for a good cause and not to harm any persons with a disability involved. In asking the participants to share their lived experiences as young women in the workplace, the study was making the world aware of what YWWVI were experiencing in the workplace and allowing the participants to reflect on those experiences.

Referral to counsellors

I was aware that during data generation, some of the questions asked to the participants would be sensitive and may possibly trigger some traumatic memories. Therefore, I made the contact details of councillors who were readily available to assist those in need of counselling services available to the participants.

Limitations

According to the APA (2017), the researcher should be familiar with the limitations of conducting research, which is what they can and cannot do (APA, 2017). Therefore, all the necessary steps were taken to familiarise myself with the limitations to ensure that I did not overstep any boundaries and that rigour was maintained.

All the precautions mentioned above were adhered to according to the research ethics guidelines to protect all the participants and ensure the study's rigour.

3.8   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter aimed to provide a detailed explanation of the research methodology which was undertaken in this study. Firstly I started by providing a detailed explanation of my paradigmatic choices. Then I explained the research methodology, including the research design, sampling method, and data collection method. I provided a thorough explanation of the data analysis and interpretation used in this research and covered my role as a researcher in this study. Finally, I explained the quality criteria used in this study in detail to ensure that rigour was maintained.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the analysed data using thematic analysis, which represents the participants' views on their experiences of transitioning into the workplace. The chapter discusses the participants' current lived experiences and challenges in the workplace in the form of themes. The chapter further explores enablers that these young women with visual impairments (YWWVI) utilised in transitioning, entering, adapting and developing in the workplace.

The demographics of the participants are first presented in Table 4.1. A synopsis of each participants' characteristics is then provided in detail, where the researcher's reflective notes are also added to make the data richer. The themes and sub-themes that emerged from the analysed data are then presented in a table, followed by a discussion. Lastly, theory and relevant literature is then linked to the themes and sub-themes to discuss how it's related to the findings.

4.2 Demographics of Participants

This table provides the characteristics of all the participants in this study.

Table 4.1
Demographics of Participants

Participant and pseudonym	Age	Gender	Type of employment	Employment duration	Home language	Severity of VI
Participant 1: Lerato	25	Female	Generic Management	Two years	Sesotho	Blind
Participant 2: Portia	27	Female	Generic Management	One year	Sepedi	Blind
Participant 3: Kedibone	34	Female	Data Collector	One year six months	Sepedi	Blind
Participant 4: Amogelang	31	Female	End-User Computing	One year	Setswana	Blind
Participant 5: Abigail	31	Female	Early Childhood	Three years	Setswana	Blind

4.3   Synopsis

The study included five black females working in different positions. All the participants have been employed for at least 1 to 5 years in their respective workplaces. The participants were selected from SANCB. All the participants resided in different parts of Pretoria. Two of the females resided in Soshanguve. One female was from Rustenburg, another from Mabopane, the fourth from Lotus Gardens, and the fifth female was from Rustenburg. The following section provides a background profile of each participant while discussing the prominent aspects of the women's constructed lived experiences.

Participant 1: Lerato

Lerato was a 25-year-old Sesotho black female working at a company. She had been working in the Generic Management field (a position that is involved with leadership, managing the environment, managing relations, managing knowledge, and practice of management) for two years. Lerato commented:

> *I was [born] in Limpopo and I had friends. We used to talk and when I completed my studies, they told me that I should come to Gauteng because there are a lot of opportunities. So, I applied for internships and learner ships, but so far, I've been getting learner ships.* (Lines 74-78)

She added: *"Yes, and this is my second job actually (Line 81).*

She indicated that she currently lives in Soshanguve, which is located in the north of Pretoria in Gauteng.

Lerato's concerns, as indicated in my reflective journal, is that of reasonable accommodation in the workplace. She indicated:

> *But what I can tell you is that just like being a person with blindness in a workplace, you find the environment not being friendly, the way it is situated. Maybe like, where I'm doing my learnership they use elevators. So these elevators don't have voice, like there is no system that uses voice. Meaning, you cannot go alone, you*

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see. Like from office number…the floors, if you want to move from one office and go to another one, you can't go. Even the stairs, like the way they are you can't…it's difficult for you to be independent. And even the equipment that is used like assistive devices like laptops, they don't have the ones that you can use which uses voice, so you always fall behind with work. (Lines 3-14)

Lack of support and development in the workplace demotivates her, and she feels that she should have gone to further her studies instead of applying for learnerships:

Uhm…what can I say…I sometimes feel like I should not have gone for learner ships because the more you go for learn ships sometimes you relax. I just tell myself that learnerships are many and they are there and will always be there for people with disabilities. So, sometimes I feel like I should not have gone for them, maybe I would have now done registered for an Honours degree or applied for another degree. (Lines 106-112)

Participant 2: Portia

Portia was a 27-year-old Sepedi black female working at a company. She had been working in the Generic Management field (a position that is involved with leadership, managing the environment, managing relations, managing knowledge, and practice of management) for one year. Her highest level of qualification was within the field she is currently working in "*Okay, I have Call centre L2, Business Admin L2, and then I have Computer L3, uhm they call it IT….currently I'm doing Generic Management" (Lines 22-24).* She also stated that her home town was in Limpopo, Ga-Sekororo, but she currently lived in Soshanguve, north of Pretoria in Gauteng, due to work.

As noted in my reflective journal, during the interview with Portia, I sensed that she was smart; however, she answered the questions as though she was in a hurry, therefore providing brief answers even when I was probing for more clarity. Portia's main concerns at her workplace firstly were that it is costly to enter the workplace as a young woman with visual impairments:

Mhm [pause] so the first experience neh, [pause] is that assistive devices are a challenge. So in order to get in this work, not just at this workplace, in order to get

accepted with a learnership in order to get in you must have your own laptop to work with and your own screen. (Lines 4-8)

She further explains that a lack of her own device will result in a lack of privacy. "*Because otherwise you will have to have someone to write for you and that will mean you won't be free because sometimes you'll want to express your mind in your own handwriting, yeah (Lines 8-13)."*

Another concern is that blind employees are paid stipends which cannot cover their travel expenses, "*Then the second one is that most learnerships that are catering for blind people, are giving them less stipends and while transport is expensive (line 13-15).*" Furthermore, the employees are exposed to do more theoretical work and practical work while employees are paid a fixed stipend, "*And they are not exposed to workplace situation whereby they go do practical Work and get experience, they are in class the whole year (Line 17-19)."* My overall impression of Portia's was that she is confident about her work and abilities.

Participant 3: Kedibone

Kedibone was a 34-year-old Sepedi black female working as a data collector in different schools. She had been working as a data collector for one year and six months. Kedibone commented:

> *I am a data collector for schools. It is focusing on infrastructure of schools. So what I mostly do is to talk and record all data that is collected" (Line 85-88). "I do but I have someone assisting me with the moving around. (Lines 90-91)*

Kedibone's highest qualification was an Honours degree, and she only became visually impaired after she had obtained her degree*.* Kedibone said:

> *Uhm I did a Bachelor's Degree in Science and I also did an Honours Degree for the same qualification. But at that time I was not yet visually impaired. It became challenging for me when I had to look for a job because it was the case of saying, how would I get hired when science is a profession that requires vision, it is more microscopic than any other career field.* (Line 23-28)

She stated that she is originally from the Sekhukhune District in Limpopo, but she currently stays in Lotus Gardens, west of Pretoria.

Kedibone's main concerns were that she was not born blind and only became blind after obtaining her degree:

> *Uhm, I can start by saying it is not easy, my problem is that all my life I was able to see because I was born without visual impairments. So when I started being visually impaired people started wondering about what had happened. What is the problem, who has bewitched you? That's one thing that I never had answers to, so I ended up asking myself what the problem was and what I was supposed to do.* (Line 3-9)

This has left her with the responsibility to educate people around her and in the workplace about her blindness:

> *So I ended up being forced to educate people and explaining myself on how my world had changed and how things were no longer the same for me. I had to explain how my sight was no longer the same and how I was also no longer the same because now I was doing things differently.* (Line 9-13)

Another factor during her challenges with VI was her inability to access support structures such as organisations due to staying in a rural area:

> *Or maybe I could say that the SANCB should make themselves more known because I had to look for them because I did not know they existed. So they should avail themselves to people and say "use us" because it took me time to find them, so yeah if they had availed themselves a lot quicker maybe…I don't know how to put it. I mean for someone like me who comes from a rural area if it wasn't for the support I got I would have ended up there clueless due to lack of information.* (Line 154-162)

However, her overall impression was that despite her challenges, she was still optimistic about her future, as noted in the reflective journal.

Participant 4: Amogelang

Amogelang was a 31-year-old black Setswana female who worked at a private company. She had been working for a year. Her highest qualification was End User Computing. *"I did not complete matric, so I have Grade 11. I also have a call centre certificate, and a computer certificate (End User Computing)" (Line 38-40).* Amogelang lives in Mabopane, which is located north of Pretoria.

Amogelang was a bubbly person and very welcoming during the interview. Her main concerns when asked about her challenges during her transition process, was a lack of qualifications during the job application process, "*The challenges that I came across is, firstly you'll find that most jobs require Grade 12 certificate, so if you don't have it then it becomes a problem (Line 62-66).*" In terms of the age restriction in job advertisements she indicated: "*You'll also find that the jobs also have age restriction, so if you are beyond that age then it is a problem.*" She further recommended that:

> I think what should have been done differently is that when they post adverts, they should specify for which disability they are catering for. Even the age limit should be a little bit higher than 35 because you'll find that you want a certain career *but because of age you are then unable to succeed in that career.* (Line 128-133)

Participant 5: Abigail

Abigail was a 31-year-old black Setswana female who worked as an Early Childhood Development teacher at a school for three years. Her highest qualification was in Early Childhood Development. Abigail said:

> *I have a qualification in Early Childhood Development. I did it because I grew up in a rural area and I was not given enough attention, and people could not understand, they treated me as a normal kid and I wasn't. So that's what I wanted to give other kids, something so that they can see that there are people out there that can understand them.* (Lines 24-30)

She lives in Rustenburg, North West, west of Pretoria.

The highlight of the interview with Abigail was that she was raised by her grandparents:
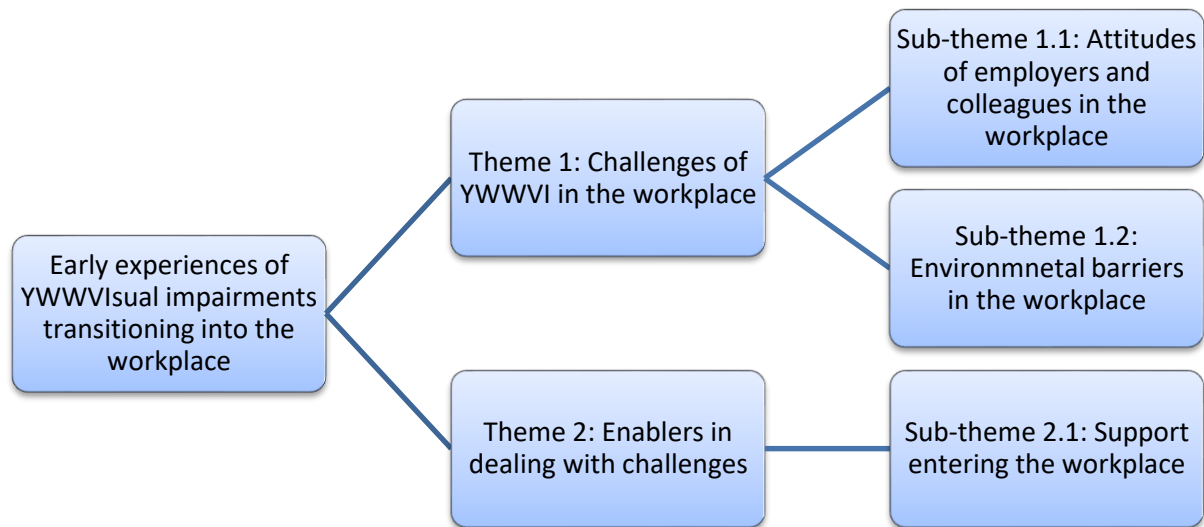
*It was hard. That one I can say that. Uhm being raised by a grandmother like, for them it is just a normal thing, like I wasn't provided with the tools for me to be able to perform on the same level with the other kids. (*Lines 32-36)

As noted in my reflective journal, I empathised with her during that moment as she shared her lived experiences of growing up as an individual with VI without parents.

4.4   Overview of Findings

Figure 4.1
Schematic representation of research findings

Early experiences of YWWVIsual impairments transitioning into the workplace

Theme 1: Challenges of YWWVI in the workplace

Sub-theme 1.1: Attitudes of employers and colleagues in the workplace

Sub-theme 1.2: Environmnetal barriers in the workplace

Theme 2: Enablers in dealing with challenges

Sub-theme 2.1: Support entering the workplace

4.4.1 Theme 1: Challenges of YWWVI in the workplace

Theme 1 explores the challenges that YWWVI are faced with as they enter the workplace. The black females in this study indicated how the process of transitioning into the workplace had affected their ability to have a smooth experience, entering, adapting, and developing in the workplace. These young women identified the factors that contributed to their challenges, where they indicated that the attitudes of employers and employees towards them hindered their ability to perform and develop. These challenges include the amount of prejudice that people in workplaces still hold. As indicated by these young women, they are still discriminated against due to their type of disability.

Furthermore, lack of reasonable accommodation also contributed to their challenges and the employers do not provide them with assistive devices to cater for their impairment, while the work environment was also not appropriate for YWWVI. Thus, according to these YWWVI, they are then expected to have their own assistive devices to enter the workplace, perform, and adapt. This results in demotivation and a lack of support and understanding in the workplace. Two sub-themes emerged within Theme 1: Attitudes of employers and colleagues in the workplace; and environmental barriers in the workplace.

Table 4.2

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

Theme 1: Challenges of YWWVI in the workplace

Sub-themes	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub-theme 1.1 Attitudes of colleagues and employers in the workplace	Any data that does not include attitudes of employers Data that does not include the attitudes of colleagues	Data that includes employers' attitudes towards YWWVI Data that includes colleagues' attitudes towards YWWVI in the workplace
Sub-theme 1.2 Environmental barriers in the workplace	Data that does not focus on mobility in the workplace Any data that does not include environmental factors in the workplace environment	Data that includes mobility of YWWVI in the workplace Data that includes any environmental factors in the workplace

4.4.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Attitudes of colleagues and employers in the workplace

Sub-theme 1.1 explores the employers' and colleagues' attitudes towards YWWVI in the workplace. The findings suggest that employers discriminate against YWWVI based on their type of disability because of their perception of that type of disability. Furthermore, this discrimination is perpetuated by the unwillingness of employers to provide assistive devices to employees with VI, which then results in the lack of development of these young women and the unsupportiveness of employers and colleagues.

Entering the workplace environment

According to the YWWVI in this study, during the transition period, employers hire people based on qualifications and work experience. For example, Amolegang said:

> *The challenges that I came across is, firstly you'll find that most jobs require Grade 12 certificate, so if you don't have it then it becomes a problem. You'll also find that the jobs also have age restriction, so if you are beyond that age then it is a problem.* (Lines 62-66)

Practical work experience is important for YWWVI to be recommended for employment, and Portia had this to say:

> *Yes. Uhm [pause] firstly, if you are not exposed to a practical workplace then it means you cannot be recommended for employment because you don't have that experience. And again, a qualification is nothing without your practical experience, so that alone could bound you to only one or two positions at work.* (Lines 137-141)

Amogelang further added that, "*No in terms of experience I do. You'll find that you'll apply for a job and then everything is fine but when it comes to having experience then it becomes a challenge*" *(Lines 69-71).* For Kedibone, the type of disability is another factor that determines the suitability of these young women for employment:

> *You'll find that if you have applied they will call people who have applied after you or maybe they call you to confirm your details and then after they realise that you*

are visually impaired they then say, 'Sorry, we don't cater for YWWVI'. Yes things like that. (Lines 69-75)

This results in these young black women feeling discriminated against. Kedibone's experience is that lack of skill to operate technological devices, and access information may also hinder successfull entry into the workplace:

So during that time I was not yet able to use braille, and job advertisements were very challenging for me because some would be in newspapers and that was difficult for me to be able to see what was written there. Even with soft copies, I had a challenge reading them. I only found out afterwards that there was a screen reader for such things. So I was clueless, my problem was that I did not have access to information. I also experienced challenges accessing the internet as well. (Lines 67-75)

Discussion of entering the workplace environment

The transition phase is an important ongoing process in a person's life (Anderson et al., 2012). It is thus imperative that during the transition into the workplace environment, institutions implement orientation programmes to help individuals know what is expected of them (Anderson et al., 2012). Odame et al.'s (2019) study on how effectively prepared graduates transitioned into the workplace indicates that although YWWVI are skilled for workplace, employers are not willing to provide support during the transition process. Findings in this study indicated that some of the factors that determine employability is hiring based on qualifications and work experience, as well as the type of disability a person has. Thus the lack of support hinders the ability of these young women to enter, adjust and correspond with their environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1993). Chang et al. (2005) aimed to determine what drives workplace discrimination against people with disabilities. The study indicated that allegations of workplace discrimination are found to centre mainly on hiring, discharge, harassment, and reasonable accommodation issues. Support is an important factor for YWWVI to find tenure in the workplace, as it allows them to perform effectively (Dawis, 2005). It is indicated by these young women that using the 4S system has enabled them to cope with their transition process by using different coping strategies such as self-support (Anderson et al., 2012). However, Englander et

al.'s (2000) study at St John's University on internship programmes that assist students in transitioning into the workplace indicates that putting undergraduates and graduates through internship programmes eases transitioning from higher education into the workplace.

Lack of support in the workplace

Lack of support from employers and colleagues in the workplace due to their lack of understanding and knowledge of VI results in these YWWVI feeling helpless and unrecognised. They are left to rely on themselves to effectively do their work. Lerato, for example, stated:

> *Okay, at school you are independent but not so much because there are people to report to, people to ask help from. However, when you are in the workplace you rely solely on yourself to do everything required. So, you have the whole responsibility to do everything, therefore, you must put in more effort.* (Lines 63-68)

These young women are expected to voice out their concerns to be heard due to influences of social and physical factors *"So I would tell them that since my vision was limited I would now ask them to read things for me" (Kedibone: Lines 13-15).* While the employers and colleagues are reluctant to reach out to these YWWVI due to lack of understanding and knowledge of VI, "*So in explaining to them I was telling them what my expectations were and what kind of support I would need" (Kedibone: 19-20).* These women feel that employers and colleagues are unwilling to cater to their needs and provide support. For example, Portia indicated, "*The fact that they* [*employers and colleagues*] *don't even bother to ask and we have to keep on suggesting makes it to be partly* [*helpful support]" (Lines 43-44).* Regarding being unsatisfied with the support from employers, Amogelang also added that*:*

> *The challenges that I still experience in a workplace are that when you arrive at a workplace, some people take into consideration the fact that you are visually impaired and can assist you, however some people will not assist you. So people will act like your disability is a joke, they don't recognize you.* (Lines 149-153)

To guide other future employers, Lerato further suggested that:

> *Okay, I think the employers should be more aware and educated and learn that we also can do the work. Even if they can't give us real jobs but they should at least give us internships and also let us volunteer. They should also come to us and not wait for us to come to them.* (Lines 174-178)

Discussion of the lack of support in the workplace

The workplace environment has a lot of expectations (Anderson et al., 2012). During this period, adults confront issues such as balancing their activities with other parts of their lives and how to feel supported and challenged during their new journey (Anderson et al., 2012). A study by Garcia et al. (2016) looked at the influence of social and physical factors on the work environments of YWWVI. The results showed that it was important to sensitise employers and the work environment to the reality of visually impaired people to encourage their integration in the best manner. As indicated by the 4S system, these young women struggle to cope due to lack of support (situation) in the workplace, and cannot effectively perform on their own (self) due to their impairment (Anderson et al., 2012). It is essential for employers first to understand VI to provide the proper support in the workplace environment (Garcia et al., 2016). The support provided will allow these young women to find correspondence with their environment, be satisfied, and adjust (Dawis, 2005). The support provided will also enable these young women's roles to be valued in the workplace (Winn & Hay, 2007).

Development in the workplace

The women in this study suggest that when an employee is too dependent on other co-workers to do their job in the workplace effectively, it could disadvantage them in holding higher positions which hinders their ability to develop in the workplace. For example, one of the participants indicated, "*Yes it can, because for higher positions you'll find that if you're unable to do things on your own then it will not be easy for you to perform the job duties*" (Lerato: 162-164).

Portia suggests that education and experience play a role in determining a person's suitability for employment and promotions. These factors influence her ability to develop in the workplace:

> *Yes. Uhm…firstly, if you are not exposed to a practical workplace then it means you cannot be recommended for employment because you don't have that experience. And again, a qualification is nothing without your practical experience, so that alone could bound you to only one or two positions at work.* (Lines 137-141)

Kedibone further adds that the attitudes of the employers towards YWWVI influence their decision making in promoting people, thus development in the workplace becomes a challenge:

> *Uhm, I can say yes. Because people feel that we are incapable. They will feel like "no we can't be led by this person". What is this person going to tell us? They undermine our strengths sometimes. You can be more capable but they will make you feel less capable.* (Lines 209-213)

On another occasion, Kedibone stated, "Yeah. I feel like people associate visual impairment with mental illness in a way. That maybe something is wrong with the brain. And you'll find that there is absolutely nothing wrong" (Lines 215-217).

Discussion of the development in the workplace

Employers' attitudes play a role in facilitating the development of YWWVI in the workplace (Garcia et al., 2016). This role will enable these young women to achieve and maintain correspondence with their environment (Dawis, 2005). Employers need to provide the necessary support and reasonable accommodations in the workplace to enable and foster adjustment and development (Dawis, 2005; Papakonstantinou & Papadopolous, 2010). Furthermore, a study by Odame et al. (2019) on finding out how universities were effectively preparing graduates with VI for the workplace indicated that the education sector tried to provide accommodation and the skills necessary for employment. However, during the transition period, these graduates were confronted with barriers that could hinder their use of their skills due to a lack of support and AT (Odame et al., 2019).

This is indicated by the 4S system that lack of support may hinder the ability of these young women to cope with challenges and develop in the workplace (Anderson et al., 2012). This results in challenges that hinder these young women from tenure in the workplace (Dawis & Lofquist, 1993).

Cost of assistive devices

The study findings indicate that during the employment of YWWVI, assistive devices should be provided by the employers.

Lerato commented:

> *Just like with assistive devices, if you don't have them then it means you will have to buy for yourself. Like with my laptop, it gives me problems, so I can't report that to anyone. It's my own responsibility. And you know, our equipment is expensive, so if it breaks…that voice alone is expensive.* (Lerato: Lines 68-72)

The financial cost of assistive devices is a major concern for these YWWVI, as indicated by Kedibone: *The devices that people with visual impairments use are very expensive. For example if you need to use a computer and want a screen reader, it doesn't come cheap (Kedibone: Lines 185-187).* Abigail indicated how the challenge of assistive devices affects her ability to work and results in her calling for assistance, resulting in an invasion of privacy:

> *Honestly, equipment is always a challenge because it is expensive. For example I prefer working on the laptop most of the time, and if I don't have a braille laptop and a screen reader then it becomes hard to do my work because it then means that I would have to call for assistance which then becomes a challenge for me because sometimes I want to type a private message which then interferes with my privacy.* (Lines 161-168)

Discussion of the cost of assistive devices

A lack of assistive devices in the workplace remains a pressing issue as it hinders the YWWVI from working effectively or engaging in work-related activities (Christopherson, 2015; Donaldson, 2017). Based on the 4S system this results in lack of support for these young women due to the unavailability of assistive devices to aid in effectively doing their

work (Anderson et al., 2012). Employers are concerned with the cost involved in re-designing the workplace environment to accommodate YWWVI (Wilkinson-Meyers et al., 2010 as cited by Ubisi, 2017). YWWVI need AT so that there are no barriers to using their skills effectively in the workplace (Christopherson, 2015). Employers can assist by first understanding the needs of these YWWVI (McDonall, 2014). Thus, the lack of catering to these young women's needs affects their effective performance in the workplace and corresponding with their environment (Dawis, 2005).

4.4.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Environmental barriers in the workplace

Sub-theme 1.2 looks at the environmental factors that contribute to YWWVI's challenges. The findings indicate that the infrastructure of the workplace has not been designed for YWWVI. Thus movement within the building and around the environment becomes challenging. There is also inadequate reasonable accommodation for employees with VI. These challenges result in difficulties adapting to the workplace environment.

Mobility

Movement in the workplace environment is an essential safety measure and one of the enablers for these YWWVI to navigate the workplace environment effectively and work successfully. Lerato said:

> *But what I can tell you is that just like being a person with blindness in a workplace, you find the environment not being friendly, the way it is situated. Even the stairs, like the way they are you can't…it's difficult for you to be independent.* (Lerato: Lines 3-7).

Reasonable accommodation regarding the environment is required before employing YWWVI to make it easier for them to move around in the workplace. Kedibone stated that:

> *Mmm first of all to get there is a challenge because I'm no longer able to see billboards the way I used to see them. You'll find that people will give you directions to a place but you still find it hard to navigate to that place because you need assistance to be able to get there. And the problem is that people do not understand, they think everything is normal for people with visual impairments.*

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They don't prioritise us because we always have to explain before we start and ask before we start. And my expectations are that things should be readily available for us so that we may be able to adapt and do things. (Line 52-62)

Amogelang further stated that mobility in the workplace environment is quite often the main challenge:

Yes, I do struggle with that. For example when you get to a new environment for the first two months, just getting in and out of there is a challenge, even with transportation and going to another environment also becomes challenging. But you end up getting used to it and adapting. (Lines 54-58)

Lerato added that her lived experiences of challenges of the workplace environment included renovations taking place and the environment being busy with cars and a lot of people, making it difficult for her to move around with ease:

You know the challenges most of the time, they are based on the environment. The environment is mostly the problem. I mean if you are visually impaired you will rely mostly on other people. For example now at work they are renovating, so even if you already know the environment, but since now they are renovating and there is construction equipment lying around, so you are now required to use alternative routes. Again the environment that I work in is very busy, there are cars. So even during lunch, you need someone to accompany you there. And another challenge is that there are a lot of people, so it becomes difficult to recognize all their voices. So you'll find that you are given information but then you don't know who it is from. (Lines 132-143)

For Kedibone, the mobility challenge is exacerbated by attitudes of colleagues in the workplace:

Well, I could say the movement. And they have to orientate you before, mobility, on where to turn and navigate, yeah. For example if you want to go to the bathroom you turn here and go there…yeah things like that. And you'll find that sometimes people don't know, and therefore, they are impatient because they feel you are

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creating an extra job for them. Yeah, so people don't want to be annoyed. (Lines 189-195)

Thus, assistance is needed to move around the workplace environment:

And then the workplace environment is not user friendly, you'll find that you want to go from one place to the other but you're unable to. You'll find that there are a lot of cars and in that case you'll need assistance to move around. So if you don't have assistance, it becomes difficult for you. (Lines 149-158)

Discussion of mobility

An environment that is well accessible for YWWVI can create an enabling environment (WHO, 2017). Employers need to construct the infrastructure in a user-friendly way for YWWVI, such as including ramps, elevators, and navigation aids (WHO, 2017). As indicated by the 4S system, the situation of lack of infrastructure affected these young women's ability to cope with environmental challenges in the workplace (Anderson et al., 2012). Furthermore, a study by Koutsoklenis and Papadopoulos (2011) on auditory cues used by YWWVI to navigate through the workplace environment indicated that it is important for institutions to provide information about safety, location, wayfinding, and orientation (WHO, 2017). This requirement is because most companies do not cater to the needs of young YWWVI to make buildings more accessible (Koutsoklenis & Papadopoulos, 2011). This lack of access has resulted in these young women not being satisfied with their work environments, which hinders their ability to adjust to the workplace (Dawis, 2005).

General discussion of Theme 1: Challenges of YWWVI in the workplace

The transition phase is an important ongoing process in a person's life (Anderson et al., 2012). It is thus imperative that during the transition into the work environment, institutions implement orientation programmes to help individuals know what is expected of them (Anderson et al., 2012). It is also important for employers to first understand VI to provide the proper support in the workplace environment as this was one of these participant's concerns (Garcia et al., 2016). The support provided will enable these young women's roles to be valued, thus facilitating development in the work environment (Winn & Hay

(2007). Employers' attitudes play a role in facilitating the development of YWWVI in the workplace (Garcia et al., 2016). Through the 4S system, it is evident that these young women's situations, support, self, and strategies influenced their ability to effectively cope with workplace challenges (Anderson et al., 2012). Employers need to provide the necessary support and reasonable accommodations in the workplace to enable and foster adjustment and development (Papakonstantinou & Papadopolous, 2010). The lack of assistive devices in the workplace remains a pressing issue as it hinders the YWWVI from working or engaging effectively in work-related activities (Christopherson, 2015; Donaldson, 2017). This becomes a barrier for these young women to effectively work and develop in the workplace (Garcia et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the lack of reasonable accommodation hinders their adjustment and corresponding with the workplace environment, leading to the workplace being unsatisfactory for these young women (Dawis, 2005). This omission leads to employers' need to construct infrastructure in a user-friendly way for YWWVI, such as including ramps, elevators, and navigation aids (WHO, 2017). Furthermore, it is essential for employers to provide information about safety, wayfinding, orientation, appropriate support and reasonable accommodation in the workplace for YWWVI (Papakonstantinou & Papadopolous, 2010; WHO, 2017).

4.4.2 Theme 2: Enablers in dealing with challenges entering the workplace

This theme explored the means used and the support available for YWWVI in dealing with challenges during the transition process and in the workplace. The following sub-theme emerged under this theme: Support entering the workplace.

Table 4.3

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2

Theme 2: Enablers in dealing with challenges entering the workplace		
Sub-themes	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub-theme 2.1 Support entering the workplace	Data that deals with support structures available for YWWVI entering the workplace	Data not related to organisations as a support structure
	Data related to any form of support in dealing with challenges transitioning, entering, developing, and adapting to the workplace.	Any data not focusing on available support resources for YWWVI transitioning, entering, adapting, and developing in the workplace.
	Data that explores how YWWVI thrive amid adversities and overcome challenges	Any data that is not related to thriving amid adversities and overcoming challenges

4.4.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Support entering the workplace

The researcher explored how YWWVI successfully transitioned into the workplace in the face of challenges. The findings from these young women indicate that they have utilised different types of resources as support for them to deal with and overcome challenges. These included support from organisations, family, teachers, and friends, which enabled them to be resilient and assertive. They also suggested that a sense of belief in self or self-confidence has aided them in dealing with and overcoming workplace challenges. However, it was also indicated that more support from organisations such as Blind SA, SANCB, WEBA and South African blind women in action was still required to enhance a smoother transition process. These could provide support with accessing information, education and training to equip these young women with the required skills for the workplace.

Organisations

The participants indicated support structures such as organisations for the blind as important resources in preparing for the workplace.

Kedibone indicated that, "*Yes, the South African National Council for the Blind, yeah that's where I got all the information and education I needed as a visually impaired person*" *(Lines 120-123).*

When Amogelang mentioned a person (Joe[2]) from an organisation, she indicated that:

> *Oh yes, he has supported me because the organisation (National Council for the Blind) used to take us to expos, and then we would choose our careers, receive advice and also get answers to relevant questions. In all honesty the organisation is very supportive.* (Lines 121-125)

Abigail further added:

> *and as I got older I got to discover the South African National Council for the Blind and I received a lot of support from them. They are the ones who actually made me understand that my disability was not a barrier to achieving my goals.* (Lines 97-101)

The young women indicated that organisations for the blind are important support structures for them. When asked what other resources can support and enhance the transition process, Portia had this to say, *"The National Council for the Blind, the South African Blind Youth Organisation, and the South African Bind Workers Organisation"* *(Lines 163-165).*

Kedibone further indicated that these organisations should also reach out to people in disadvantaged areas*, "Or maybe I could say that the SANCB should make themselves more known because I had to look for them because I did not know they existed" (Lines 154-157).*

Discussion of Organisations

There are various support structures that YWWVI can access. These include Blind SA, SANCB, WEBA and South African blind women in action (DISA, 2021a). These structures facilitate collaborative partnerships, and also promote the education, training and employment relevant for employment of YWWVI. These structures provide support,

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[2] Not the person's real name

create awareness and skills for YWWVI (DISA, 2021a). The aforementioned support structures can serve as an enabler in making the transition process smoother for YWWVI by providing structure and skills (Dawis & Lofquist, 1993). This is beneficial for these young women as the 4S system indicates that the strategies used in challenging situations have an influence on how people cope with challenges (Anderson et al., 2012).

Support from family, teachers and friends

Support for YWWVI in the workplace, when faced with challenges, is an enabling factor in overcoming challenges. Lerato had this to say:

> *I had support from teachers and my family, they were really supportive. My teachers were very helpful in giving me application forms and helping me with filling them in. And my family was encouraging and always complimented me. So I could see that they were encouraging and motivating me to go far in life. Even when I was experiencing challenges, they used to support me through those challenges.* (Lines 92-98)

Kedibone further added:*"My family, and then at work it is the person assisting me with moving around, yeah" (Lines 115-117).* Amogelang indicated that her support was from teachers: "*Uhm most of the time I used to get support from my teachers, they used to comfort and encourage me (Lines 105-106). No, even my family, my mother, and sister used to support me" (Lines 116-117)*. Abigail also indicated that "*Uhm, grandparents, sisters and brothers. My teachers as well" (Lines 96-97).*

Other participants indicated that the support they received from their families and other people was very helpful for them. Lerato indicated that support from family only is not sufficient to help deal with challenges. "*Not really, because I have self-support. So I was able to overcome challenges that I was faced with on my own when looking for a job" (Lines 101-103).*

Discussion of Support from family, teachers and friends

Support for YWWVI is crucial in dealing with challenges during the transition process and in the workplace (Bambara et al., 2009). The roles of family members, teachers and friends influence the well-being of YWWVI. Thus, during times when they are faced with

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stressors, the family, teachers and friends provide emotional and social support to these individuals to deal with challenges during the transition process and in the workplace (Bambara et al., 2009). This support is an important factor for YWWVI to facilitate effective workplace performance (Papakonstantinou & Papadopolous, 2010). The amount of support these young women received influenced how they coped with challenges as they transitioned into the workplace as indicated by the 4S system (Anderson et al., 2012).

Resilience and assertiveness

Having certain levels of confidence and support allows one to be assertive, an important aspect in enabling these young women to continue performing effectively in the workplace. Lerato explained how support enables her to be assertive, "*yes I think so because the support that I'm getting is the one that boosts my confidence and I always want to try new things and learn new things which help me develop*" *(Lines 168-170)*.

Portia further states her confidence in her ability to work: "*Maybe. Firstly it might be that I can because uh…at work they are impressed with my work and they normally use me as an example when they speak to everyone*" *(Lines 154-157)*.

For Amogelang, self-support is required for one to be assertive:

> *I've just told myself that whatever challenge that I might come across I will overcome it. I try to handle it by myself until I conquer. So I've learned not to depend entirely on other people but to face it on my own.* (Lines 161-164)

At the same time, for Kedibone being resilient allows you to reach greater heights, stating:

> *I personally believe that uhm, what can I say? I am destined for much more bigger and greater things. And I also feel like whatever that I want to do I can still do it, regardless of the situation.* (Lines 221-224)

Discussion of Resilience and Assertiveness

Being assertive requires an individual to have confidence, self-support, and internal locus of control, enabling resilience. However, challenges faced in the workplace by YWWVI results in discouragement, which leads to a lack of confidence in the workplace or employment (Donaldson, 2017). The amount of support received by these young women

from their families, teachers, friends, and the organisations has enabled them to be resilient and assertive in the workplace. The employers' accommodation of needs and support for YWWVI facilitates adjustment and development in the workplace (DISA, 2021b). Furthermore, work adjustment should be indicated by the ongoing process of achieving and maintaining correspondence (Dawis, 2005). Thus, the lack of provision of the aforementioned leads to a lack of motivation and satisfaction in the workplace (Donaldson, 2017). This indicates that more support from organisations is still required to provide relevant information, education and training to equip these young women with the necessary skills to successfully transition into the workplace. However, despite experiencing challenges in the workplace and their social environments, these young women continued showing resilience (Ubisi, 2017). As indicated by the 4S system the ability of a person to effectively cope with challenges is dependent on the self and strategies used (Anderson et al., 2012).

General discussion of Theme 2: Enablers in dealing with challenges entering the workplace

Specialised organisations for the VI are important in facilitating collaborative partnerships and promoting the education, training and employment relevant for YWWVI (DISA, 2021a). They provide support, create awareness and skills for YWWVI transitioning into the workplace (DISA, 2021a), while the roles of family members and friends influence the well-being of YWWVI. Thus, families and friends provide emotional and social support to these individuals to deal with challenges during the transition process and in the workplace (Bambara et al., 2009). These serve as different enablers for these young women to cope with workplace challenges. However, challenges faced in the workplace by YWWVI result in discouragement, which leads to a lack of confidence in the workplace or employment (Donaldson, 2017). This lack of confidence results in the environment not being in correspondence with these young women as the challenges hinder their ability to adjust, develop, and work effectively (Dawis, 2005). The situation these young women are found to be in, and the amount of support provided in the workplace as indicated through the 4S system influenced their ability to cope differently with the transition process into the workplace (Anderson et al., 2012). Therefore, employers'

accommodation of the needs and support for YWWWI will facilitate adjustment and development in the workplace (DISA, 2021b).

4.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the findings and discussion of the thematically analyzed data. These findings reflected the participants' perspectives on their lived experiences transitioning into the workplace. A table was first presented with the demographics of the participants. A detailed synopsis of each participant's characteristics was then provided, along with the researcher's reflective notes. The themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis were presented in a table and discussed. Finally, theory and relevant literature were linked to the themes and sub-themes to discuss how it relates to the findings.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

The concluding chapter of this study of limited scope begins with a summary of the previous chapters. The research questions are answered, and the theoretical framework is also revisited and contextualised. Furthermore, the study's limitations are discussed, and recommendations for practice, training, and future research are made.

5.2   Summary of Chapters one to Four

Chapter one

The introduction of the study provided an overview of the background and the rationale of the study. The significance of the study was then discussed. The research questions that directed the study and key concepts were also outlined. Furthermore, the research methods used in this study, the rigour, and ethical issues were also discussed.

Chapter two

The relevant literature of young women with visual impairments (YWWVI) transitioning into the workplace was reviewed. Various contributing factors and different options on available or possible support structures for YWWVI in South Africa were discussed. Furthermore, an in-depth discussion of the theoretical framework for the study was also presented.

Chapter three

Chapter three discussed the qualitative approach that guided this study. Furthermore, the interpretivist paradigm that underlined the study was also presented. The methodological aspects for this study, including the research design, data generation, documentation, and data analysis, were also explained.

Chapter four

This chapter provided a report on the results of the thematic data analysis. Five main themes were identified, and several sub-themes were also identified and linked to the

main themes. The findings were discussed in detail, and the results were also related to the literature reviewed in chapter two.

5.3 Addressing the Research Questions

This chapter addresses both the primary and secondary research questions. Firstly, the secondary research questions are answered and discussed, after which the primary question is answered and discussed.

5.3.1 Secondary Research Question 1

How do YWWVI negotiate entry into the workplace?

Based on the findings, negotiating entry into the workplace is a challenging process. Lack of support from employers and employees is one barrier to successfully entering the workplace (Anderson et al., 2012; Donaldson, 2017). This hindrance is caused by the attitudes held by these employers and employees towards YWWVI, which results in discrimination against these young women in successfully entering the workplace (Chang et al., 2005). A lack of qualifications and work experience also contribute to these young women being discriminated against entering the workplace. However, organisations for blind people, support from families, friends, and teachers, and being resilient have served as enablers in accessing job opportunities and entering the workplace as the study and literature suggests.

5.3.2 Secondary Research Question 2

What are the views of YWWVI regarding the workplace meeting their needs for a smoother transition?

The results from the analysed data indicate that the workplace environment is still challenged in meeting the needs of YWWVI. This outcome is influenced by the attitudes of employers and employees, which result in a lack of support for these YWWVI. Furthermore, the data also indicate the lack of AT as one of the factors that make it difficult for the young women to work effectively, which then results in them being dependent on their colleagues to do their work. This outcome negatively affects the possibility of the YWWVI holding higher positions and developing their careers due to a lack of independence. Moreover, the lack of reasonable accommodation and the workplace

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environment not being fit for their impairment negatively affect the ability of the YWWVI to work effectively and adjust in the workplace environment (Garcia et al., 2016; SABPP 2017). This finding means that the provision of AT is crucial, and the restructuring of the workplace environment to be user-friendly is recommended for effective work, development, and adjustment as also indicated by literature (Christopherson, 2015; Donaldson, 2017; Wilkinson-Meyers et al. as cited in Ubisi, 2017).

5.3.3 Primary research question

What are the lived experiences of YWWVI transitioning from education and training to the workplace?

Being a young woman with visual impairment in the work environment has proven to be challenging compared to having no disabilities. The research findings indicated that YWWVI were faced with many challenges in the workplace, which hindered their ability to get employment, develop, adjust and effectively work in the workplace. These barriers include factors such as a lack of education and work experience, attitudes of employers and employees, lack of reasonable accommodation, and the workplace environment not being fit contribute to their challenges in the workplace (Garcia et al., 2016; Donaldson, 2017). These are their lived experiences for which they somehow have to find alternative ways, such as seeking support from families and friends and being resilient to deal with their everyday challenges in the workplace (Bambara et al., 2009). These challenges are presented in both the findings of this study and literature. Thus, these challenges indicate that although there are various ways of dealing with the challenges, the challenges remain a hindrance in having a smooth transition from education into the workplace (DISA, 2021b).

5.4 Addressing the Theoretical Framework

In chapter two, a theoretical framework by Dawis and Lofquist (1993) was used to guide this study. The theory focused on analysing the participants' variables such as education and training experiences, needs, interests, work attitudes, and job satisfaction which influence their correspondence with their workplace environment. The study found that this theory was reliable and applicable in the South African context. These variables were then used to understand the participants' lived experiences during the transition process

into the workplace environment. The study found that the participants had to adapt and develop in their workplace. However, what stood out from this research was that the participants indicated that although organisations and colleagues have been supportive, the support was still insufficient. Employers do not seem keen to make reasonable accommodation in the workplace for the VI; thus, the participants rely on support from families and themselves to be assertive and resilient. Therefore, the lack of optimal correspondence between the individuals and their work environment affects the ongoing process of achieving and maintaining correspondence (Papay, 2019). This makes it difficult for these YWWVI to adjust and develop in the workplace (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2015).

5.5   Addressing the Working Assumptions

This section comprises an evaluation of the study to see if the research assumptions correlate with the research findings.

- YWWVI are still discriminated against in entering, transitioning, and further developing in the workplace.
- Youth unemployment continues to be a barrier in entering and successfully transitioning to the workplace. This barrier might be due to poor secondary and tertiary education outcomes, especially amongst youth with visual impairments.
- Employers still feel that accommodating women with visual impairments into the workplace is costly.
- Women with various types of visual impairments experience some similar and also some different challenges in the workplace, for example, differences in access and level of impairment.

The participants' experiences are due to visual impairment as a young woman transitioning into the workplace. The participants confirmed that they are faced with challenges in entering and adjusting to the workplace despite working in different environments. However, they still find ways to be resilient and overcome the challenges. Moreover, the participants were able to identify the different factors that contributed to the challenging experiences. They further identified factors that also fostered assertiveness and resilience when faced with adversities, as discussed in chapter four. Credibility,

transferability, dependability, and conformability were used to enhance the validity of the results. Credibility is evident as the findings are consistent with reality; therefore trustworthiness was also established. The findings were also dependable based on the method used in generating the data from the particular participants in this specific context. As this was a qualitative study, I acknowledge that my own beliefs, values, and biases affected the research process somehow, which is why my supervisors and fellow colleagues gave an objective perspective of the study through peer examination to establish conformability.

5.6   Possible Contributions

The findings of this study contribute to the literature on YWWVI in workplaces. Although the study cannot be generalised, it indicates the factors that contribute to the challenges and the lived experiences of visually impaired young women transitioning to the workplace. This research report can be accessed on UP space by University of Pretoria students for future studies. Participants can also receive findings of the study by requesting the researcher.

5.7   Limitations

As this is a qualitative study, the findings of this research study can only represent the specific group on which the study was conducted. This limitation is because the sample of this study was a small number of participants; thus, the findings cannot be transferred to a larger context, limiting the applicability of the research findings.

5.8   Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that more research should be done on YWWVI in the workplace. This additional research will help identify factors that can represent a larger population within this context in South Africa. A need for policy change on accommodations and hiring of YWWVI are also needed in the place of work. Furthermore, education of employers and employees about the needs and challenges of YWWVI in the workplace is required for people to know how to best support these YWWVI. It is also recommended that more research should be done on males to compare with their female counterparts, and how much of their experience relates to their gender, and how much it is linked specifically to the disability.

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- **Practice**–The results of this study indicate a need for more research within this context, to increase the knowledge in this field.

- **Policy–**The results indicate a need for assistance from policymakers in accommodating the needs of YWWVI transitioning into the workplace.

- **Theory–**The study indicates a need for theoretical lenses in understanding the challenges of YWWVI in the workplace.

- **Training of WVI in secondary and higher education**-The results also indicates that more education and support structures should be made available to assist with the transition of YWWVI into the workplace.

- **Strategic interventions in the work environment**–More interventions are needed in the workplace to enable YWWVI to adapt and develop in the workplace.

5.9   Research Reflections

I have realised that my lived experiences of transitioning into the workplace differ from those of YWWVI in many ways. Anderson et al. (2012) identified four factors (the 4 S system) that help individuals cope with the transition process: situation, self, support, and strategies. It is quite evident that the participants' challenges are centred on variables such as their education and training background, needs, work attitudes, job satisfaction and performance. These challenges have affected their ability to develop successfully in the workplace (Dawis, 2005). The participants have shown that analysing and understanding the situations in the workplace, their abilities, strengths and weaknesses, and receiving support from families, friends, and organisations, as well as using different strategies, have helped them deal with challenges in the workplace. It further enabled them to remain assertive and resilient to adapt to the workplace environment.

5.10 Future Research

More studies need to be done within this field of study to provide additional results that could provide quantitative representations. This research could also assist in providing data that could represent a larger population. This additional data can then support calls for policy changes and more support for YWWVI transitioning into the workplace.

5.11 Conclusion

YWWVI continue to struggle to gain entrance into the workplace. Various factors such as discrimination, lack of qualifications, support and work experience hinder their ability to enter, adapt, and develop in the workplace. Employers are seen as not willing to provide adequate support and reasonable accommodation for these young women. Thus, the young women are left to rely on their families, friends, and themselves for support to overcome these challenges.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX A: INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE PARTICIPANT

DEAR PARTICIPANT,

I am a student studying through the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for my MEd (Educational psychology) in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module and one of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work. I would like to ask you whether you will be willing to participate in this research. The topic of my research is: **Early experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.** Women with visual impairments across the world experience countless challenges when transitioning into the workplace. It is important that people are aware and educated about and how to offer support for women with visual impairments in the workplace. The research will assist higher learning institutions and employers in offering support and resources for young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

The interview will take place at a venue and time that will suit you, but it may not interfere with working time and will not take longer than an hour. The interview will be audio taped and transcribed for analytic purposes. There will also be an interpreter readily available if required. Only my supervisor, the interpreter and I will have access to this information. You do not have to participate in this research if you do not want to, and you will not be penalised in any way if you decide not to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time. Your identity will be protected. Some questions asked might trigger some traumatic events. Should you need counselling services the following are available: Referrals to: Families South Africa (FAMSA) (011 788 4784) or LifeLine on 0861322322. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the university's Educational Psychology, Education Department according to the policy requirements. We would also like to ask your permission to use your answers to help other students in their studies, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. The confidentiality and privacy

applicable to this study will be binding on future studies. If you agree to take part in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me via Email.

Signature of student   Signature of Supervisor

_____

NAME OF STUDENT: KGOTHATSO MALATJI   LINDOKUHLE UBISI (SUPERVISOR)

E-mail of student: 19086301@tuks.co.za   u13267818@up.ac.za

Faculty of Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

Title of the research: Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Name/s of principal researcher: Kgothatso Malatji

Departmental address: Department of Education, University of Pretoria

Telephone: 0124202765

Email: 19086301@tuks.co.za

I, _____(your name), agree / do not agree to take part in the research project titled**: Early experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.** I understand that I will be interviewed about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that will suit me, but that will not interfere with work. The interview will be audio taped.

I understand that my experiences of transitioning into the workplace as a young woman with a visual impairment will be recorded and analysed by the researcher, the role of the researcher will remain objective and noninvasive, and the interview will also be documented in the form of fieldnotes.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

☐ Voluntary participation in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.

☐ Informed consent, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.

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☐ Safety in participation; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.

☐ Privacy, meaning that the confidentiality and anonymity of human respondents should be protected at all times.

☐ Trust, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

We further would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

For more information on ethics at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Education Ethics Committee feel free to contact:

Marisa Leask (Ethics administrator)

marisa.leask@up.ac.za or edu.ethicsadmin@up.ac.za

Lindokhuhle Ubisi (Department of Educational Psychology representative)

lindoubisi@gmail.com

7.3 APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: _____   Duration: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____ Pseudonym: _____

Male / Female: _____ Age: _____

Type of employment and duration: _____

Women with visual impairments across the world experience countless challenges when transitioning into the workplace. It is important that people are aware and educated about and how to offer support for women with visual impairments in the workplace. The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of young women with visual impairments and assist employers in offering support and accommodating the needs of young women with visual impairments entering the workplace. The data collected in this study will serve in research purposes only and treated as confidential. Access to the data will be granted to the researcher and the supervisor only. Thank you for your participation.

Guiding questions:

1. Tell me about your transition experiences in the workplace thus far?
2. What educational background or training do you have?
3. How was your school environment for you?
4. How is it different from your workplace environment?
5. Have you ever struggled adapting to new environments?
6. What are the challenges you've experienced as a young woman with VI in transitioning from education and training into the workplace?
7. How did you negotiate entry into the workplace?
8. Have you ever played the disability card to gain entrance into the workplace?

9. How long do you plan to be an employee here?
10. What source of support did you receive when you transitioned into the workplace?
11. Was the support helpful to assist you in having a smoother transition?
12. What do you think could have been done differently during the process of transition?
13. Based on your experiences would you encourage any young woman with VI to use the disability card in order to gain a smoother transition into the workplace?
14. Do you think your current work environment is fit for a young woman with VI?
15. What other challenges are you currently experiencing as a young woman with VI in the workplace?
16. What source of support are you currently using to cope with the challenges you are faced with?
17. Do you think these challenges faced by women with VI are a hindrance from holding higher positions in the workplace?
18. Do you believe that with the support you have received thus far you will be able to hold a higher position someday?
19. What other sources of support do you suggest can be offered to enhance a smoother transition process for young women with visual impairments?
20. What are your views regarding the workplace meeting your needs for a smoother transition?

Signature of student   Signature of Supervisor

_____

Name of student: Kgothatso Malatji   Lindokuhle Ubisi (Supervisor)

E-mail of student: 19086301@tuks.co.za   u13267818@up.ac.za

7.4 APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPANT 1

Faculty of Education

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: ___13:00__   Duration: __1 hour___

Date: _2020/09/05__

Place: Soshanguve Extension 2, Pretoria_|

Interviewer: Kgothatso _

Interviewee: Alinah_____   Pseudonym: _Lerato__

Male / Female: _Female_____ __Age: 25

Type of employment and duration: Generic Management, 2 years

PARTICIPANT 2

Faculty of Education

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: ___16:00_   Duration: __1 hour___

Date: _2020/09/13__

Place: Soshanguve, Extension 2_

Interviewer: Kgothatso _

Interviewee: Sherley_____   Pseudonym: _Portia__

Male / Female: _Female_____ Age: 27

Type of employment and duration: Generic Management, 1 year

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PARTICIPANT 3

Faculty of Education

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: ___11:00_   Duration: __1 hour___

Date: _2020/11/05__

Place: Lotus Gardens_

Interviewer: Kgothatso _

Interviewee: Balebetsi_____   Pseudonym: _Kedibone__

Male / Female: _Female_____Age: 34

Type of employment and duration: Data collection, 1 year 6 months

PARTICIPANT 4

Faculty of Education

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: ___11:00_   Duration: __1 hour___

Date: _2020/11/06__

Place: Mabopane_

Interviewer: Kgothatso _

Interviewee: Annah_____   Pseudonym: _Amogelang__

Male / Female: _Female_____Age: 31

Type of employment and duration: End User Computing, 1 year

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PARTICIPANT 5

Faculty of Education

The interview protocol

Experiences of young women with visual impairments transitioning into the workplace.

Time of interview: ___16:00_   Duration: __1 hour___

Date: _2021/01/08__

Place: Rustenburg_

Interviewer: Kgothatso _

Interviewee: Tsholofelo_____   Pseudonym: _Abigail__

Male / Female: _Female_____ Age: 31

Type of employment and duration: Early Childhood Development Teacher, 3 years

98

PARTICIPANT 1: LERATO

1 Interviewer: Tell me about your transition experiences in the
2 workplace thus far?
3 Participant 1: Well okay. I'm not an…I'm doing a leanership. But
4 what I can tell you is that just like being a person with blindness in
5 a workplace, you find the environment not being friendly, the way
6 it is situated. Maybe like, where I'm doing my learnership
7 they use elevators. So these elevators don't have voice, like there
8 is no system that uses voice. Meaning, you cannot go alone, you
9 see. Like from office number…the floors, if you want to move
10 from one office and go to another one, you can't go. Even the
11 stairs, like the way they are you can't…it's difficult for you
12 to be independent. And even the equipment that is used like
13 assistive devices like laptops, they don't have the ones that you
14 can use which uses voice, so you always fall behind with work. But
15 there is a way to catch-up anyway.
16 Interviewer: Okay. So when you say there's a way to catch-up
17 uhm…what are you implying?
18 Participant 1: I'm implying that maybe if you have your own
19 personal assistive device, like I do have a laptop neh, but it's mine,
20 so I use it there.
21 Interviewer: Okay, so what educational background or training do
22 you have?
23 Respondent: I went to primary, high school, as well as tertiary. I
24 completed a degree in Public Administration for local
25 government.
26 Interviewer: And how was your school environment for you?
27 Respondent: Uhm, are you referring to the high school
28 environment or…?
29 Interviewer: All of those environments

30 Participant 1: Environment neh, well according to me it differs,
31 when you are young, when I was young neh I did not struggle with
32 the environment. I don't know why, but now that I am older I
33 struggle a bit with adaptation when I get to a new environment. I
34 think maybe it's because when you are older there are certain
35 things which happen such as stress and all of those things, but
36 when you are younger it's easier for you to adapt to an
37 environment quicker.
38 Interviewer: How is it different from your workplace
39 environment?
40 Participant 1: Uhm..when I was in high school, the environment
41 had persons who were differentially abled as well as those who
42 were abled. In that environment I was able to learn to live with
43 people who were not disabled. So when you get to the workplace
44 environment it becomes easier for you to engage with other
45 people and be open, reach out as well as adapt because I was
46 from an integrated school. So for me there was nothing new from
47 what I had already experienced.
48 Interviewer: Have you ever struggled adapting to new
49 environments?
50 Participant 1: Yes, I did. I struggled a lot with the environment
51 because when you arrive to a new place, you'll find that you don't
52 know where everything is, where you are going, and how. And
53 you'll find that you want to do a certain thing but everyone is
54 busy.
55 Interviewer: When you say people are busy, does that mean that
56 you often ask for help from them at some point? And they're not
57 assisting you the way you expect them to?

58 Participant 1: Yes. Because sometimes you'll have to wait. So at
59 that point there's time wasted and you fall behind with work.
60 Interviewer: What are the challenges you've experienced as a
61 young woman with VI in transitioning from education and training
62 into the workplace?
63 Participant 1: Okay, at school you are independent but not so
64 much because there are people to report to, people to ask help
65 from. However, when you are in the workplace you rely solely on
66 yourself to do everything required. So you have the whole
67 responsibility to do everything, therefore, you must put in more
68 effort. Just like with assistive devices, if you don't have them then
69 it means you will have to buy for yourself. Like with my laptop, it
70 gives me problems, so I can't report that to anyone. It's my own
71 responsibility. And you know, our equipment is expensive, so if it
72 breaks…that voice alone is expensive.
73 Interviewer: How did you negotiate entry into the workplace?
74 Participant 1: I was in Limpopo and I had friends. We used to talk
75 and when I completed my studies, they told me that I should
76 come to Gauteng because there are a lot of opportunities. So I
77 applied for internships and learner ships, but so far I've been
78 getting learner ships.
79 Interviewer: So your friends informed you of job opportunities
80 and then you started applying?
81 Participant 1: Yes, and this is my second job actually.
82 Interviewer: Have you ever played the disability card to gain
83 entrance into the workplace?
84 Participant 1: So both these jobs that I've had were specifically for
85 people with disabilities.
86 Interviewer: How long do you plan to be an employee here?

87 Respondent: Uhm…until the contract expires but if another
88 opportunity comes I will leave, because I am busy applying to
89 other places.
90 Interviewer: What source of support did you receive when you
91 transitioned into the workplace?
92 Participant 1: I had support from teachers and my family, they
93 were really supportive. My teachers were very helpful in giving
94 me application forms and helping me with filling them in. And my
95 family was encouraging and always complimented me. So I could
96 see that they were encouraging and motivating me to go far in
97 life. Even when I was experiencing challenges, they used to
98 support me through those challenges.
99 Interviewer: Was the support helpful to assist you in having a
100 smoother transition?
101 Participant 1: Not really, because I have self-support. So I was able
102 to overcome challenges that I faced with on my own when
103 looking for a job.
104 Interviewer: What do you think could have been done differently
105 during the process of transition?
106 Participant 1: Uhm…what can I say…I sometimes feel like I should
107 not have gone for learner ships because the more you go for learn
108 ships sometimes you relax. I just tell myself that learner ships are
109 many and they are there and will always be there for people with
110 disabilities. So sometimes I feel like I should not have gone for
111 them, maybe I would have now done registered for an Honours
112 degree or applied for another degree.
113 Interviewer: Based on your experiences would you encourage any
114 young woman with VI to use the disability card in order to gain a
115 smoother transition into the workplace?

99

116 Participant 1: Uhm no, because you see when you use your
117 disability in order to get things, you'll find that you do get things
118 but you are unable to do the work because they are not meant for
119 you and you will not be having anything to assist you. Therefore,
120 you will be proving people right, that people with disabilities are
121 unable to do the work. So you have to take up opportunities that
122 you know and they are sure that you'll be able to do.
123 Interviewer: Do you think your current work environment is fit for
124 a young woman with VI?
125 Participant 1: Yes, it is fit because you only use a computer to do
126 the work, there's no way you could do the work if you were
127 required to write it on paper, print and sign documents. And you
128 can print, but when you've printed the papers, there's nothing
129 you can do with those papers.
130 Interviewer: What other challenges are you currently
131 experiencing as a young woman with VI in the workplace?
132 Participant 1: You know the challenges most of the time, they are
133 based on the environment. The environment is mostly the
134 problem. I min if you are visually impaired you will rely mostly on
135 other people. For example now at work they are renovating, so
136 even if you already know the environment, but since now they are
137 renovating and there is construction equipment lying around, so
138 you are now required to use alternative routes. Again the
139 environment that I work in is very busy, there are cars. So even
140 during lunch, you need someone to accompany you there. And
141 another challenge is that there are a lot of people, so it becomes
142 difficult to recognize all their voices. So you'll find that you are
143 given information but then you don't know who it is from.

144 Interviewer: What source of support are you currently using to
145 cope with the challenges you are faced with?
146 Participant 1: So in terms of support since we are using walking
147 sticks and that environment has a lot of cars, I think the drivers
148 can see us so we've never had an accident there. Because when
149 there are a lot of cars you get easily distracted, but the drivers are
150 able to see us and wait for us to cross the roads. So when you are
151 using a cane/walking stick then you are a lot safer. And there are
152 people who sometimes help us. So with the environment it's just
153 a matter of having good communication with people. You just ask,
154 if there has been a change in things, they can then show you. Or if
155 you are trying to find your way but there are obstacles on your
156 way they can accompany you. And then in terms of papers, you
157 just ask for assistance so that they may help you with signing
158 papers.
159 Interviewer: Do you think these challenges faced by women with
160 VI are a hindrance from holding higher positions in the
161 workplace?
162 Participant 1: Yes it can, because for higher positions you'll find
163 that if you're unable to do things on your own then it will not be
164 easy for you to perform the job duties.
165 Interviewer: Do you believe that with the support you have
166 received thus far you will be able to hold a higher position
167 someday?
168 Participant 1: Yes I think so because the support that I'm getting is
169 the one that boosts my confidence and I always want to try new
170 things and learn new things which help me develop.

171 Interviewer: What other sources of support do you suggest can be
172 offered to enhance a smoother transition process for young
173 women with visual impairments?
174 Participant 1: Okay, I think the employers should be more aware
175 and educated and learn that we also can do the work. Even if they
176 can't give us real jobs but they should at least give us internships
177 and also let us volunteer. They should also come to us and not
178 wait for us to come to them
179 Interviewer: What are your views regarding the workplace
180 meeting your needs for a smoother transition?
181 Respondent: Okay, I think that when an employer employs a
182 person with visual impairments, there should be a mobility
183 instructor. Because those people are the ones who can show us
184 the way and show us all the routes at work. So if you are
185 familiarized and educated on the building and environment it
186 becomes easier for you to be independent and be able to
187 communicate with people and also be able to communicate with
188 people and improve your skills. Because when you interact with
189 them you also learn things. Because the biggest challenge at work
190 is the environment.
191 Interviewer: Okay. Is there anything else you would like to add?
192 Participant 1: No
193 Interviewer: Okay, thank you very much for your time.
194
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196
197
198

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PARTICIPANT 2: PORTIA

58 Interviewer: So for you to end up applying for this job and being
59 called to the interview, what did
60 you do?
61 Participant 2: I went to an agency and completed their form, work
62 form.
63 Interviewer: Okay. Have you ever played the disability card to gain
64 entrance into the workplace?
65 Participant 2: A disability what?
66 Interviewer: Card. Like have you ever used your disability in order
67 for you to gain...
68 Participant 2 No. But I do state that I'm disabled.
69 Interviewer: Oh okay. How long do you plan to be an employee
70 where you are currently employed?
71 Participant 2: It is a learnership so it's twelve months but my
72 intension is to extend to L4 and L5 so that I can be able to publish
73 my book.
74 Interviewer: Okay. What source of support did you receive when
75 you transitioned into the workplace?
76 Respondent 2: I, truly speaking there is support because even when
77 there are difficult things for us to
78 do there they try to show us, we count on them and they do it for
79 us. And escorting as well, and uhm the interest to want to know
80 personally about someone shows support. The problem is that
81 they don't ask work related questions that will help them to
82 improve their level of service.
83 Interviwer: Mhm Was the support helpful to assist you in having a
84 smoother transition?
85 Participant 2: Uhm yes, just getting used to the workplace and
86 feeling free in asking them.

87 Interviewer: What do you think could have been done differently
88 during the process of transition?
89 Participant 21: Uh I think since they are a newly introduced to
90 blind people as a company, they should have a one-on-one
91 session sometimes to ask favourable questions related to how to
92 do work or... so that by now they could have done something,
93 they have their own products, maybe they could have a laptop or
94 two for some students, or they could have a way to introduce us
95 to a practical workplace, oh ya.
96 Interviewer: Okay. Based on your experiences would you
97 encourage any young woman with VI to use the disability card in
98 order to gain a smoother transition into the workplace?
99 Participant 2: Mmmm, yoh. No. I think, whether you use it or not
100 what matters is how much you can do. So just place suggestions
101 on the table. What's important is your way of communication. If
102 you can teach them and help them to help you, then you can. But
103 if you cannot help them to help you, with or without your visual
104 impairment then you can't.
105 Interviewer: Do you think your current work environment is fit for
106 a young woman with VI?
107 Participant 2: Maybe.
108 Interviewer: Okay, do you mind elaborating further on that?
109 Participant 2 It is because uhm, firstly, truly speaking, they do
110 listen to us it's just that there are
111 no people to talk to them. I personally do, so they do have time to
112 listen and they try to do what we want them to do. So I think if we
113 could have visually impaired women who can be able to talk, then
114 we will teach them on how to deal with blind people, so ya.

115 Interviewer: Okay, what other challenges are you currently

116 experiencing as a young woman with

117 VI in the workplace? Apart from the ones that you've already

118 mentioned, what other challenges

119 are you currently experiencing at a young woman with VI?

120 Participant 2 No, nothing.

121 Interviewer: So basically what you've said so far is the

122 environment, the devices, and the fact

123 that they do not ask you what you need?

124 Participant 2: Yeah

125 Interviewer: What source of support are you currently using to

126 cope with the challenges you are

127 faced with?

128 Participant 2: Uh, I just confront the management, that's all.

129 Interviewer: Mhm. So it's all about negotiating whatever you feel

130 doesn't sit well with you?

131 Participant 2: Yes

132 Interviewer: Do you think these challenges faced by women with

133 VI are a hindrance from

134 holding higher positions in the workplace?

135 Participant 2: Yes

136 Interviewer: Okay, do you mind elaborating on that.

137 Participant 2: Uhm…firstly, if you are not exposed to a practical

138 workplace then it means you cannot be recommended for

139 employment because you don't have that experience. And again,

140 a qualification is nothing without your practical experience, so

141 that alone could bound you to only one or two positions at work.

142 Interviewer: So what you're saying is that you're mainly focusing

143 on working in theoretical work rather than practical

144 Participant 2 Yes

145 Interviewer: Do you think that they feel that you won't be able to

146 do the practical work?

147 Participant 2: It's the lack of working equipment

148 Interviewer: Oh the lack of working equipment, so you only use

149 whatever you have right now

150 Participant 2: Yes, and the lack of managers there

151 Interviewer: Okay. Do you believe that with the support you have

152 received thus far you will be

153 able to hold a higher position someday?

154 Participant 2: Maybe. Firstly it might be that I can because uh…at

155 work they are impression

156 with my work and they normally use me as an example when

157 they speak to everyone. And then I might not, because what if at

158 the end of every course that I do there might not be any working

159 equipment.

160 Interviewer: Okay. What other sources of support do you suggest

161 can be offered to enhance a smoother transition process for

162 young women with visual impairments?

163 Participant 2: The National Council for the Blind, the South African

164 Blind Youth Organisation,

165 and the South African Bind Workers Organisation

166 Interviewer: What are your views regarding the workplace

167 meeting your needs for a smoother

168 transition?

169 Participant 2: Okay, the first thing I think is that uhm for a certain

170 category of people to get a

171 smoother experience or learning, they need a person from that

172 category. So the first thing I think they should do is employ people

173 with different disabilities, so that they will be able to take people

174 with different disabilities.

175 Interviewer: Okay. That was all. Is there anything you would like

176 to add?

177 Participant 2: No

178 Interviewer: Okay, thank you very much for your time

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PARTICIPANT 3: KEDIBONE

1 Interviewer: Tell me about your transition experiences in the
2 workplace thus far?
3 Participant 3: Uhm, I can start by saying it is not easy, my problem
4 is that all my life I was able to see because I was born without
5 visual impairments. So when I started being visually impaired
6 people started wondering about what had happened. What is the
7 problem, who has bewitched you? That's one thing that I never
8 had answers to, so I ended up asking myself what the problem
9 was and what I was supposed to do. So I ended up being forced to
10 educate people and explaining myself on how my world had
11 changed and how things were no longer the same for me. I had to
12 explain how my sight was no longer the same and how I was also
13 no longer the same because now I was doing things differently. So
14 I would tell them that since my vision was limited I would now ask
15 them to read things for me. So I had to constantly explain to
16 people when I entered the workplace because the problem is that
17 they knew me without having any eyesight problem, so it was a
18 matter of explaining to them how things have changed. So in
19 explaining to them I was telling them what my expectations were
20 and what kind of support I would need.
21 Interviewer: What educational background or training do you
22 have?
23 Uhm I did a Bachelor's Degree in Science and I also did an
24 Honours Degree for the same qualification. But at that time I was
25 not yet visually impaired. It became challenging for me when I had
26 to look for a job because it was the case of saying, how would I
27 get hired when science is a profession that requires vision, it is
28 more microscopic than any other career field.
29 Interviewer: How was your school environment for you?

30 I never anticipated that I would one day have visually
31 impairments?
32 Interviewer: So you've never experienced any eyesight problems
33 prior to when
34 you initially had visually impairments?
35 Participant 3: So because with this degree I was required to spend
36 most of the time in
37 front of the screen, I once had an incident where one of my eyes
38 had some fluids coming out and then I went to an optometrist.
39 The optometrist then closed one of my eyes, the one that had
40 problems for a week. And then the eye recovered and I thought
41 that all was well. But after a while, this happened, I mean I always
42 knew these things could happen but I never thought it could
43 happen to me.
44 Interviewer: How is it different from your workplace
45 environment?
46 Participant 3: Uhm then I was able to see and all I needed was my
47 pen and paper. But
48 now I need devices in order to be able to work. So I need more
49 assistance so that I may be helped.
50 Interviewer: Have you ever struggled adapting to new
51 environments?
52 Participant 3: A lot. Mmm first of all to get there is a challenge
53 because I'm no longer
54 able to see billboards the way I used to see them. You'll find that
55 people will give you directions to a place but you still find it hard
56 to navigate to that place because you need assistance to be able
57 to get there. And the problem is that people do not understand,
58 they think everything is normal for people with visual

59 impairments. They don't prioritise us because we always have to
60 explain before we start and ask before we start. And my
61 expectations are that things should be readily available for us s
62 that we may be able to adapt and do things.
63 Interviewer: What are the challenges you've experienced as a
64 young woman with VI
65   In transitioning from education and training into the
66 workplace?
67 Participant 3: So during that time I was not yet able to use braille,
68 and job
69 advertisements were very challenging for me because some
70 would be in newspapers and that was difficult for me to be able
71 to see what was written there. Even with soft copies, I had a
72 challenge reading them. I only found out afterwards that there
73 was a screen reader for such things. So I was clueless, my problem
74 was that I did not have access to information. I also experienced
75 challenges accessing the internet as well.
76 Interviewer: How did you negotiate entry into the workplace?
77 Participant 3: No, that one I didn't do by myself, somebody
78 negotiated on my behalf.
79 The person went and explained everything about to the employer
80 what
81 kind of needs I had. So they spoke on my behalf and made things
82 easier
83 for me, I did not do much.
84 Interviewer: So what are your duties at the workplace?
85 Participant 3: I am a data collector for schools. It is focusing on
86 infrastructure of

87 schools. So what I mostly do is to talk and record all data that is
88 collected.
89 Interviewer: Do you have to move around?
90 Participant 3: Yes, I do but I have someone assisting me with the
91 moving around.
92 Interviewer: Have you ever played the disability card to gain
93 entrance into the
94   workplace?
95 Participant 3: No. I have always thought that it is not fair. I have
96 only realised now that
97 it is...what can I say? How can I put it? Eish I don't know how to
98 put it in a nice way. It is an advantage to play the disability card to
99 gain entrance, but then I used to say "no, let me not". I used to be
100 competitive like a normal person would, but now I've realised that
101 it is more of an advantage than a disadvantage (giggles)
102 Interviewer: So are you saying that you would use it?
103 Participant 3: Yes! Now I do because...for example before I used
104 to be shy to walk
105 with a cane and then you'd find that people would not consider
106 me in things but since I've started using a cane, you'll find that I
107 am a priority (giggles). Yeah now I take advantage of the situation,
108 even in banks...wherever I go, I take advantage. Even when I go to
109 interviews I do use it. So with cane I get helped so fast (giggles)
110 Interviewer: Okay. How long do you plan to be an employee here?
111 Well, this is a contract job for six months, so I plan to work here
112 until the contract   is terminated.
113 Interviewer: What source of support did you receive when you
114 transitioned into the workplace?

115 Participant 3: My family, and then at work it is the person
116 assisting me with moving around,
117 yeah.
118 Interviewer: Were there any other support structures such as
119 organisations that you used during your transition process?
120 Participant 3: Yes, the South African National Council for the
121 Blind, yeah that's where I got all
122 the information and education I needed as a visually
123 impaired person.
124 Interviewer: Was the support helpful to assist you in having a
125 smoother transition?
126 Participant 3: Yes, it was extremely helpful.
127 Interviewer: May you please elaborate on how extreme the help
128 was?
129 Participant 3: Okay, I didn't know about them. I found them on
130 Google, actually my cousin is
131 the one who told me about them. And I went there, when I
132 arrived there to my
133 surprise that place was full of people who could not see at
134 all. It was my first
135 time exposure to those kind of people. That's when I
136 realised that I was not the
137 only one with this problem. Because when I was still at
138 home I used to say to
139 myself "what am I going to do" because I thought my
140 life was done. And then I
141 got there and found all these people that had drive
142 in life. I remember I came

143 across this other boy who was born blind and he's doing
144 amazing things. And
145 then I told myself that, if he can do that then I can also do it.
146 I then learned how
147 to use the computer, I learned how to use a lot of things,
148 how to use a phone.
149 Because, for a long time I didn't know there was a talking
150 phone.
151 Interviewer: What do you think could have been done differently
152 during the process of transition?
153 Participant 3: (Giggles) Yoh, I don't know hey. Mmm what can I
154 say? No, let's skip this one because there's not really anything. Or
155 maybe I could say that the SANCB should make themselves more
156 known because I had to look for them because I did not know
157 they existed. So they should avail themselves to people and say
158 "use us" because it took me time to find them, so yeah if they had
159 availed themselves a lot quicker maybe...I don't know how to put
160 it. I mean for someone like me who comes from a rural area if it
161 wasn't for the support I got I would have ended up there clueless
162 due to lack of information.
163 Interviewer: Based on your experiences would you encourage any
164 young woman with VI to
165 use the disability card in order to gain a smoother transition
166 into the workplace?
167 Participant 3: Exactly! Yes, but they should not abuse it because
168 sometime people over use it, so they should not abuse it. I hope
169 I'm making sense. Am I making sense? (Giggles)
170 Interviewer: Yes, you are. (Giggles)
171 Participant 3: Okay (Giggles)

172 Interviewer: Do you think your current work environment is fit for
173 a young woman with VI?
174 Participant 3: No.
175 Interviewer: In what sense?
176 Participant 3: It doesn't have a lot of support. I was also...they
177 employed me just because it was negotiated for me but it was not
178 fit for a person with visual impairments. Because it was more of
179 field work than...and the schools were normal schools so you'll
180 find that there are stairs/steps, glass doors and what, what...so if
181 you're alone you'll struggle to walk on foot. I was there before I
182 became comfortable with the situation now. So, yeah...
183 Interviewer: What other challenges are you currently
184 experiencing as a young woman with VI in the workplace?
185 Participant 3: The devices that people with visual impairments use
186 are very expensive. For example if you need to use a computer
187 and want a screen reader, it doesn't come cheap.
188 Interviewer: And the environment?
189 Participant 3: Well, I could say the movement. And they have to
190 orientate you before, mobility, on where to turn and navigate,
191 yeah. For example if you want to go to the bathroom you turn
192 here and go there...yeah things like that. And you'll find that
193 sometimes people don't know, and therefore, they are impatient
194 because they feel you are creating an extra job for them. Yeah, so
195 people don't want to be annoyed.
196 Interviewer: Okay.
197 Participant 3: Yeah
198 Interviewer: What source of support are you currently using to
199 cope with the challenges you are faced with?
200 Participant 3: Mmm yoh eish...uhm I could say it's my family?

201 Interviewer: So since you mentioned the council earlier, have you
202 cut ties with them?
203 Partcipant 3: Yeah, the council is still supportive. If I need
204 something, I call them and tell them that I need this and they
205 always help.
206 Interviewer: Do you think these challenges faced by women with
207 VI are a hindrance from holding higher positions in the
208 workplace?
209 Participant 3: Uhm, I can say yes. Because people feel that we are
210 incapable. They will feel like "no we can't be led by this person".
211 What is this person going to tell us? They undermine our
212 strengths sometimes. You can be more capable but they will make
213 you feel less capable.
214 Interviewer: So, it is basically more of the stigma?
215 Participant 3: Yeah. I feel like people associate visual impairment
216 with mental illness in a way. That maybe something is wrong with
217 the brain. And you'll find that there is absolutely nothing wrong.
218 Interviewer: Okay. Do you believe that with the support you have
219 received thus far you will be able to hold a higher position
220 someday?
221 Participant 3: I believe so. I personally believe that uhm, what can
222 I say? I am destined for much more bigger and greater things. And
223 I also feel like whatever that I want to do I can still do it,
224 regardless of the situation.
225 Interviewer: What other sources of support do you suggest can be
226 offered to enhance a smoother transition process for young
227 women with visual impairments?
228 Participant 3: Mmm I don't know.

229 Interviewer: Is the SANCB the only organisation that people with

230 visual impairments can access for support or do you think there

231 are other organisation since you mentioned that lack of

232 information about these organisations is often a problem?

233 Participant 3: People need to be educated about visual

234 impairment. And information about organisations such as Blind

235 S.A because I always hear about it but I'm not familiar with it, has

236 to reach people in disadvantaged areas.

237 Interviewer: What are your views regarding the workplace

238 meeting your needs for a smoother transition?

239 Participant 3: I think some needs are met but some are not. For

240 example the current job is not meeting many of my needs

241 because the environment is not really fit for a person with visual

242 impairments.

243 Interviewer: Do you have anything you would like to add?

244 Participant 3: No

245 Interviewer: Thank you so much for your time.

246 Participant 3: It is a pleasure.

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PARTICIPANT 4: AMOGELANG

1 Interviewer: After everything I have just explained to you about
2 this study, do you agree to willingly take part in the study of "Early
3 experiences of young women with visual impairments
4 transitioning into the workplace?"
5 Participant 4: Yes
6 Interviewer: Tell me about your transition experiences in the
7 workplace thus far?
8 Participant 4: My challenges started when I started working after
9 highschool. I would get a learner ship and then be asked to sign a
10 contract but after signing the contract you find that the
11 employers don't give you a copy of your contract. When ask for it
12 they keep making promises but never fulfill the promise until the
13 end of your contract. And then the other thing is a challenge of
14 not being paid. You'll find that some months you are paid but
15 other months you are not paid. For example with the previous job
16 that I had, it was a 12 months contract but then there was a time
17 when they did not pay us so we went to small claims court but
18 when we reported the matter we found that the address our
19 employer gave us was incorrect and we can't trace him. But lucky
20 enough we were able to contact him telephonically and then in
21 the end the company ended up paying us but we had already
22 gone through so much trouble. And another challenge is that
23 when you find employment you ask the employers if they have all
24 the equipment required for us people with visual impairment to
25 be able to perform our work duties, because they had stated that
26 this job is also for persons who are differently abled. You'll find
27 that they tell you that "no, this job is not for people who are
28 differently abled". And then they would further say that they
29 were only employing with other disabilities and not people with

30 visual impairments. They don't give you valid reasons or
31 satisfactory treatment. Even with other jobs that you would apply
32 for, they would tell you that they don't cater for persons with
33 visual impairments. Do you see where are challenges are?
34 Interviewer: Yes. Okay.
35 Participant 4: Mhm
36 Interviewer: What educational background or training do you
37 have?
38 Participant 4: I did not complete matric, so I have Grade 11. I also
39 have a call centre certificate,
40   and a computer certificate (End User Computing).
41 Interviewer: How was your school environment for you?
42 Participant 4: Mhmmm my experience at school was
43 uhm...besides the fact that we would sometimes struggle with
44 getting material on time, it was fine.
45 Interviewer: How is it different from your workplace
46 environment?
47 Participant 4: My school environment was user friendly, you
48 would be able to walk and be free, however, the workplace
49 environment is not user friendly because the infrastructure has
50 small spaces and it is not meant for persons with visual
51 impairments,
52 Interviewer: Have you ever struggled adapting to new
53 environments?
54 Participant 4: Yes, I do struggle with that. For example when you
55 get to a new environment for the first two months, just get in and
56 out of there is a challenge, even with transportation and going to
57 another environment also becomes challenging. But you end up
58 getting used to it and adapting.

59 Interviewer: Okay. What are the challenges you've experienced as
60 a young woman with VI in transitioning from education and
61 training into the workplace?
62 Participant 4: The challenges that I came across is, firstly you'll
63 find that most jobs require Grade 12 certificate, so if you don't
64 have it then it becomes a problem. You'll also find that the jobs
65 also have age restriction, so if you are beyond that age then it is a
66 problem.
67 Interviewer: So as a visually impaired young woman you don't
68 experience challenges in finding jobs or apply for jobs?
69 Participant 4: No in terms of experience I do. You'll find that you'll
70 apply for a job and then everything is fine but when it comes to
71 having experience then it becomes a challenge. You'll find that if
72 you have applied they will call people who have applied after you
73 or maybe they call you to confirm your details and then after they
74 realise that you visually impaired they then say, "Sorry, we don't
75 cater for persons with visual impairments". Yes things like that.
76 Interviewer: But applying is not a problem, you are able to get the
77 advertisement posts?
78 Participant 4: Yes, I normally do struggle to get adverts to jobs
79 because technology has advanced so I'm able to get them via
80 Facebook, and people can also send me via whatsapp, and then I
81 try my luck.
82 Interviewer: So in the adverts do they explain if the adverts are
83 for people with visual impairments or not?
84 Participant 4: Uhm in some of them they do specify that they also
85 cater for people with disabilities but they don't specify what type
86 of disability they are catering for. You only find out when they call
87 you and then they realise the type of disability you're having, and

88 then they say "No, we don't cater for persons with visual
89 impairments"
90 Interviewer: Okay. How did you negotiate entry into the
91 workplace?
92 Participant 4: No, I just applied for the job by sending the required
93 documents, then they called me, and then interviews were done
94 and thereafter I got the job.
95 Interviewer: Have you ever played the disability card to gain
96 entrance into the workplace?
97 Participant 4: No, I've never done that
98 Interviewer: How long do you plan to be an employee here?
99 Participant 4: When I started I was planning on working here until
100 I get a job because for you to get another job, you first need to
101 have a job. Although, this is a contract so when it ends I will not
102 have a choice but to leave.
103 Interviewer: What source of support did you receive when you
104 transitioned into the workplace?
105 Participant 4: Uhm most of the time I used to get support from
106 my teachers, they used to comfort and encourage me
107 Interviewer: Was the support helpful to assist you in having a
108 smoother transition?
109 Participant 4: Yes, it was very helpful.
110 Interviewer: How so, can you elaborate on that?
111 Participant 4: It was helpful because when people gave me
112 advices it did not take those advices for granted, I embraced and
113 used those advices.
114 Interviewer: So the support that you were getting there was only
115 from teachers and no one else?

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116 Participant 4: No, even my family, my mother, and sister used to
117 support me.
118 Interviewer: Okay, since you've also mentioned Thomas, was he
119 one of the people who also supported you from school or the
120 organisation?
121 Participant 4: Oh yes, he has supported me because the
122 organisation (National Council for the Blind) used to take us to
123 expos, and then we would choose our careers, receive advice and
124 also get answers to relevant questions. In all honesty the
125 organisation is very supportive.
126 Interviewer: What do you think could have been done differently
127 during the process of transition?
128 Participant 4: I think what should have been done differently is
129 that when they post adverts, they should specify for which
130 disability they are catering for. Even the age limit should be a little
131 bit higher than 35 because you'll find that you want a certain
132 career but because of age you are then unable to succeed in that
133 career.
134 Interviewer: Based on your experiences would you encourage any
135 young woman with VI to use the disability card in order to gain a
136 smoother transition into the workplace?
137 Participant 4: Well I would advise them to not use it in a wrong
138 way. If they are to use it, they should use it only to make the
139 employer aware of the kind of disability they're having
140 Interviewer: Do you think your current work environment is fit for
141 a young woman with VI?
142 Participant 4: Yes, I think so because the last time I checked
143 people with visual impairments were only impaired on their eyes
144 and not their brains. We can also grasp things like everyone else,

145 if we are provided with the proper equipment then we can do the
146 work.
147 Interviewer: What other challenges are you currently
148 experiencing as a young woman with VI in the workplace?
149 Participant 4: The challenges that I still experience in a workplace
150 are that when you arrive at a workplace, some people take into
151 consideration the fact that you are visually impaired and can
152 assist you, however some people will not assist you. So people
153 will act like your disability is a joke, they don't recognize you. And
154 then the workplace environment is not user friendly, you'll find
155 that you want to go from one place to the other but you're unable
156 to. You'll find that there are a lot of cars and in that case you'll
157 need assistance to move around. So if you don't have assistance,
158 it becomes difficult for you.
159 Interviewer: What source of support are you currently using to
160 cope with the challenges you are faced with?
161 Participant 4: For now, I've just told myself that whatever
162 challenge that I might come across I will overcome it. I try to
163 handle it by myself until I conquer. So I've learned not to depend
164 entirely on other people but to face it on my own.
165 Interviewer: Do you think these challenges faced by women with
166 VI are a hindrance from holding higher positions in the
167 workplace?
168 Participant 4: No, I don't think so. If I have for example overcome
169 so many challenges in my career life then I shall overcome
170 challenges that are still to come. As a person I just need to tell
171 myself that I can do it, and then fight because God has a greater
172 purpose in my life. He did not create

173 Interviewer: Do you believe that with the support you have
174 received thus far you will be able to hold a higher position
175 someday?
176 Participant 4: Yes, I think that one day I could hold a higher
177 position that I want because I've learned something in life. If you
178 tell yourself something, it often becomes true. When you say it
179 with your mouth, it often happens more than when you say it in
180 your mind.
181 Interviewer: What other sources of support do you suggest can be
182 offered to enhance a smoother transition process for young
183 women with visual impairments?
184 Participant 4: I think the support system that can be made
185 available is that when there is an advertised post they should
186 explain the type of job in detail and also specify the type of
187 disability the job caters for, only then will we feel supported and
188 also have confidence to apply for those jobs. Even with the
189 advertisements, they always advertised types of jobs and specify
190 if the jobs are suitable for people with visual impairments, so that
191 we can also apply knowing that we are fit for the job. But for now
192 I don't see these things happening. Even with the career expose,
193 they should try and provide more information so that it may spark
194 more interest in people who are interested in that career.
195 Interviewer: What are your views regarding the workplace
196 meeting your needs for a smoother transition?
197 Participant 4: My views are that people who are visually impaired
198 should be supported, provided with materials such as devices so
199 that they can do their work more easily.
200 Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to add?
201 Participant 4: No

202 Interviewer: Okay, thank you very much for your time.
203 Participant 4: It was a pleasure
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PARTICIPANT 5: ABIGAIL

1 Interviewer: Tell me about your transition experiences in the
2 workplace thus far?
3 Participant 5: Mmm it wasn't that challenging because right now
4 I'm an Early Childhood Development (ECD) teacher. I'm helping
5 kids that are also blind to read and nurture the love of reading in
6 them, so yeah being around kids makes me happy. So I don't think
7 that it has been that difficult.
8 Interviewer: So when you say that it was not that difficult, do you
9 mean that uhm the
10 process of getting the job was not a challenge for you, it was easy
11 for you to apply and get the job or do you mean that it was not
12 difficult because you are doing something that you can relate to
13 because you are visually impaired and working with children who
14 are visually impaired?
15 Participant 5: Yeah, I think it's because I work with learners who
16 are also visually
17 impaired. Applying for the job I was doubting myself because
18 obviously it is not easy for people to hire a person who is visually
19 impaired, it's hard you'll find that they've never dealt with those
20 kinds of people before. So for me it was a little bit of a challenge
21 because I had to trust myself and my abilities, so yeah.
22 Interviewer: Okay, understood. What educational background or
23 training do you have?
24 Participant 5: I have a qualification in Early Childhood
25 Development. I did it because I grew up
26 in a rural area and I was not given enough attention, and people
27 could not understand, they treated me as a normal kid and I
28 wasn't. So that's what I wanted to give other kids, something so

29 that they can see that there are people out there that can
30 understand them.
31 Interviewer: How was your school environment for you?
32 Participant 5: It was hard. That one I can say that. Uhm being
33 raised by a grandmother like,
34 for them it is just a normal thing, like I wasn't provided with the
35 tools for me to be able to perform on the same level with the
36 other kids.
37 Interviewer: And the treatment from the teacher and other kids,
38 or the environment itself, was
39 it a challenge for you or not?
40 Participant 5: For me in the sense that I felt they were feeling
41 sorry for me more than they
42 were helping and caring for me, yeah. But I don't blame them
43 because well, most teacher were not trained to deal with learners
44 who are visually impaired.
45 Interviewer: Okay, so how is it different from your workplace
46 environment?
47 Participant 5: The workplace is amazing, uhm maybe it's because
48 I'm older now and people
49 no longer fuss over my blindness, yeah. And the kids can relate to
50 me because I'm also blind just like them, so yeah.
51 Interviewer: Have you ever struggled adapting to new
52 environments?
53 Participant 5: It happens all the time. When I was at home I was
54 used to the layout of the
55 house, I could move around without struggling. So when you
56 move to a new area you need assistance to move around because
57 I've never been to that place before, so yeah, it's hard.

58 Interviewer: Okay. What are the challenges you've experienced as
59 a young woman with VI in
60 transitioning from education and training into the workplace?
61 Participant 5: As I've said before that at the workplace the
62 challenge is applying for a job, and
63 with training, I was trained to be an ECD working with learners
64 who are blind. So for me it is applying for the job and asking
65 myself whether they will like me, or whether I will relate to the
66 people in the workplace. So basically not trusting my abilities and
67 my self was a challenge for me but once I started working then I
68 was fine.
69 Interviewer: Okay, great. So how did you negotiate entry into the
70 workplace?
71 Participant 5: Mhhm I think it was more of trusting myself and
72 convincing the people that I
73 could do the job. They gave me a chance and I proved them right
74 because they believed in me.
75 Interviewer: So the application process was not complicated for
76 you?
77 Participant 5: I think for that kind of thing you need supportive
78 friends and family. They were
79 very resourceful, they would get advertisements and also read
80 for me and help me apply. So for me I was lucky I was surrounded
81 by the kinds of people I was surrounded by.
82 Interviewer: Okay. Have you ever played the disability card to gain
83 entrance into the
84 workplace?
85 Participant 5: Never, because I hate it when people feel sorry for
86 me. So if I use the disability

87 card to gain favour, then I'm taking myself back to people feeling
88 sorry for me because I'm blind.
89 Interviewer: Mm. How long do you plan to be an employee here?
90 Participant 5: Uhm as long as I'm needed (giggles) because the
91 kids need somebody who
92 understands them, yeah.
93 Interviewer: Okay. And what source of support did you receive
94 when you transitioned into the
95 workplace?
96 Participant 5: Uhm, grandparents, sisters and brothers. My
97 teachers as well, and
98 as I got older I got to discover the South African National Council
99 for the Blind and I received a lot of support from them. They are
100 the ones who actually made me understand that my disability was
101 not a barrier to achieving my goals.
102 Interviewer: Was the support helpful to assist you in having a
103 smoother transition?
104 Participant 5: Yeah, I believe so because as I grew up my parents
105 never treated me as
106 someone who was different, I knew I was normal, it's just that I
107 couldn't see, so yeah. So, it helped me a lot because when I got
108 into training I was already tough. For me being blind is like a
109 person having a darker skin than the other or speaking a different
110 language than other people, really there's not much difference.
111 Interviewer: Alright. What do you think could have been done
112 differently during the process of
113 transition?
114 Participant 5: Mhm I wish that the education system would train
115 teachers better on how to

116 each blind kids. And I also wish that uhm parents that gave birth
117 to blind children should also get support as well, and also be given
118 equipment or assistive aids for those children because those
119 parents do not know how to support their children.
120 Interviewer: Based on your experiences would you encourage any
121 young woman with VI to
122 use the disability card in order to gain a smoother transition into
123 the workplace?
124 Participant 5: No, never. Just be yourself and if you are going to
125 apply for a job you shouldn't
126 mention that you are blind, just go as yourself and then they will
127 see you when you get there that you are blind. So yeah, just go
128 there and be yourself.
129 Interviewer: Do you think your current work environment is fit for
130 a young woman with VI?
131 Participant 5: Very much. Uhm I think any work environment is
132 conducive for any woman with
133 visual impairments, it just depends on the person's attitude. So if
134 you go there and you think people are going to treat you
135 somehow then that's exactly how they are going to treat you.
136 Interviewer: So what you're saying is that mobility is not a
137 problem for you in any environment?
138 Participant 5: Sometimes it is. So I would suggest that maybe
139 when employers employ people
140 with visual impairments they should also have people who will
141 orientate the visually impaired on the new environment. This will
142 help will help a lot in terms of moving around the place.
143 Interviewer: What other challenges are you currently
144 experiencing as a young woman with VI

145 in the workplace?
146 Participant 5: Honestly there's not much that I struggle with
147 because I often get help from my
148 colleagues who are not blind, so that's why I haven't
149 struggled that much.
150 Interviewer: What source of support are you currently using to
151 cope with the challenges you are faced with?
152 Participant 5: So now that I've lost my parents, I have my
153 grandmother, my aunts, my brother
154 and sister, as well as my friends. And as I've said, South African
155 National Council for the Blind has been very supportive.
156 Whenever I need something, I always reach out and they provide
157 me with the help that I need.
158 Interviewer: Mhm. So with what you've just said, have you ever
159 struggled to get equipment or
160 assistive devices so that you may be able to do your work?
161 Participant 5: Honestly, equipment is always a challenge because
162 it is expensive. For example
163 I prefer working on the laptop most of the time, and if I don't
164 have a braille laptop and a screen reader then it becomes hard to
165 do my work because it then means that I would have to call for
166 assistance which then becomes a challenge for me because
167 sometimes I want to type a private message which then interferes
168 with my privacy.
169 Interviewer: Do you think these challenges faced by women with
170 VI are a hindrance
171 From holding higher positions in the workplace?
172 Participant 5: Yes, I believe so. Remember, if there's an interview,
173 a normal person can easily

174 do research by using google reading books etc. But for a person
175 with VI if you do not have equipment to assist you, you then need
176 to get assistance from someone else. Another thing is that often
177 people don't trust that persons with VI can effectively do their
178 jobs, so you'll find that a less qualified person who is not visually
179 impaired has a higher position, and a VI person is an assistant to
180 that person, So it is quite hard.
181 Interviewer: Do you believe that with the support you have
182 received thus far you will be able
183 to hold a higher position someday?
184 Participant 5: Yeah I believe so. I think one of my biggest dreams
185 is to have a school for the
186 blinds.
187 Interviewer: What other sources of support do you suggest can be
188 offered to enhance a smoother transition process for young
189 women with visual impairments?
190 Participant 5: I think it could start as early as in pre-school. If a
191 child is given assistive devices
192 at a young age to use then it becomes easier for them as they
193 grow up to transition from one stage to the other. These assistive
194 devices should be available to everyone including poor people as
195 well so that they don't feel discriminated.
196 Interviewer: What are your views regarding the workplace
197 meeting your needs for a smoother transition?
198 Participant 5: I think for me it is that if I could be provided with all
199 the assistive devices required for me to do my job then it would
200 be better for me. And the movement, if there could maybe be a
201 guide dog or person to orientate me on the environment then it
202 would be very helpful.

203 Interviewer: Okay, is there anything else you would like to add?
204 Participant 5: No
205 Interviewer: Alright. Thank you very much for your time
206 Participant 5: It is a pleasure.
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7.6 APPENDIX F: RESEARCHER REFLECTIVE NOTES

Participant 1 — Date 05/09/2020 — Memo No.

Highlights of the partici- Part 1	My personal reflections
- Has a degree in Public Adminis-tration in Local government	I admired how she was so detailed in answering the questions.
- Feels she should not have gone for learnerships. Wants to improve her studies	From her responses I could gather that she is very concerned about the treatment she receives at the workplace, and that made me emphathise with her as I could see that she is eager to develop
- The current learner-ship is not her first employment	
- Lack of support demotivates her	Overall I felt welcomed by her and could thoroughly go through the questions.

Participant 2 — Date 13/09/2020 — Memo No.

Highlights of P2	Personal reflections
- They are paid less stipends	I felt like she was a smart person as we were engaging.
- Has a qualification in call centre L2, Business Admin L2, IT L2, and generic management L3	I also got the sense that she was rushing through giving the answers, as her responses were short/brief.
- Been exposed to more theoretical work, rather than practical	
- She's confident about her work	I also thought of her as a confident young woman. The environment was not comfortable but she was welcoming

Participant 3 — Date 9/11/2020 — Memo No.

Highlights of P3	Personal reflections
- She was not born blind. Became blind after her degree	I was taken by her explaining how she became blind - It was an emotional moment during the interview.
- Has a degree in BSc and a Honours degree in BSc	
- Had challenging accepting her blind-ness and educating people around her	Her inability to access information due to residing in the villages touched me as I could relate
- Lack of access to organisations has disadvantaged her to find or gain access to information on assistive devices	& I was also motivated by how optimistic she sounded about life (her life)

Participant 4 — Date 6/11/2020 — Memo No.

Highlights	Personal reflections
- Has no grade 12. Highest grade is 11, has call centre and computer certifi-cate	I was taken by the amount of energy she had and how welcoming she was. It made me enjoy our conversation
- Support from organisations is helpful (SANCB)	
- Employers should specify type of disability and age restriction in job adverts	I was even surprised by the amount of internal locus control she has
- Self-support is important in dealing with issues	

110

Participant 5

Memo No. _____
Date 8 /01/ 2021

Highlights

Personal reflections

- Has no parents, raised by grandparents

- Is or has Early Childhood Development Qualification

- Support from family helped deal with challenges.

I was so touched when she mentions that she had no parents, and was raised by her grandparents. I imagined how it must have been to be raised by elderly people who did not fully understand what VI was and what kind of support was needed

7.7 APPENDIX E: FIELD NOTES

Lerato
1. Well firstly, I'm doing a learnership being blind
- The environment is not friendly
- Elevators - don't have voices
- The steps / stairs
- The laptops or gadgets

Ways to catch up
- If you can use your own devices

2. Primary, Highschool, Degree in public admin in local government

3. Differes
- In primary, it was not hectic
- When I'm older it's hectic, difficult to adapt

4. Highschool — ppl without disabled you could work with them.

Workplace - Not much different

5. Yes, coz you're new but ppl are busy. You ask and then

6. At school you're not so independant. At work you are too independant, you've got more independance. Like the assistive devices. Expensive gadgets

7. I was in Limpopo but had friends who informed me about the

This is the send learnership

8. No, they were specifically for ppl with disabilities

9. If there comes an opportunity for my degree. I will leave.

- Attending once a week, still applying for other learnerships & internships

10. From teachers and family
How: The teachers assisted me with applying and complementing and advising me. And the family.

11. Not really. I have self support

12. I feel I shouldn't have gone to learnership coz they are many. They are always many for ppl with disabilities. feel I could have gone back to school

13. No, because if u use ur disability to get things you will get it but you will not be able to do the work.

14. Yes it is. Use only use a computer to do the work.

15. Challenges are based on the environment because you become dependant on other ppl. When reno-vations which make it hard. It is busy, cars, new routes, many ppl to difficult to recognise ppl

16. We use walking sticks which help us. Theres never an accident yet but they are
There are ppl who help us
Good communications with ppl help us navigate
We get help signing papers

17. Yes, bcs for higher positions if you can't do things for yourself it's going to be hard to be promoted

18. Yes I think so. cz the support I get boosts my confidence which help me with wanting to try new things which I believe will help me go for/up

19.

19. Employers should be more aware
- and be educated and understand that we can do the work
- Let us volunteer
- Should also come to us
-

20. Employees should have mobility instructers to assist with navigate the buildings & the environment

Even if the building is well built there should orientate me so that I can easily walk around.
- Buy own devices
- PPL should support ppl with VI coz ppl are not the same. They should not feel shame/sorry

Lack of support demotivates us. Even if you have self support if you don't get support from others it become difficult.

Portia

1. Assistive devices are a challenge in order to get your job

- They get paid less. They are in class for the whole

2. Call centre   L2
   Busines admin   L2
   IT   L2
   Generic Management L3

3. She went to school for the blind, it was accommodating. Educational, environmental, everything

4. Workplace is not for the blind

Partly. They don't bother to ask we keep suggesting

5. With this current one I do.

6. Unemployment

7. I went through an agency

8. No. But I do state that I'm disabled

9. My intension to work longer to gain mor knowledge

10. There is support

- Don't ask work related questions

11. Just getting used to the workplace and feeling free in asking them

12. One-on-One session to ask questions on how to do work. To cater for the individual with assistive devices

13. Whether you use it or not what matters is if you can do things

14. Maybe.
- They listen, they try doing accommodation
- There more people are the more they might be able to accommodate

5. Environment
   Devices
   Don't ask questions

16. Confront the management
- negotiating

17. Yes.
   If you can't be exposed to practical work. Theoretical work. Due to lack of knowledge and equipment

18. Maybe, because they are impressed with my work, but due to lack of equipments I might not.

19. NCB - National Council for
the blind
South african youth fo blind
organisation
South African blind worker
organisation

20. Employ people with different
types of disabilities So
that they can teach.
others with disability.

Kedibone

1. Okay, it was not easy bcs ppl thought
I could see
I had to educate ppl bcs they did not
understand. I had to explain.

2. I did a bachelor
BSc and Honours in BSc in
Limpopo
It was a challenge because the
profession requires vision

3. I had an incident because of screen
but
Not really

4. Now there are devices needed. I need
a lot of assistances.

5. Alot. To get to the place was a challe-
nge. I have to educate ppl to get
extra help And people are not
understanding, and they are not empathic
to information

6. I had difficulty in access. I had no
Idea of how to
I could not access vision

7. I did not do it myself. Some one just
negotiated on my behalf.

A data collector for schools
Was recording and had someone to
help me with moving around

8. No. I personally feel that its not
It's an advantage to play it. But
I've decided to
Now I like the advantage
I do

9 Contract for 6 but lasted 18 months

10. My family, mother, work there here
people / someone
SNCB

11. Very and extremely. I had no idea they
existed. I saw them on google.

12. Nothing The councils should provide
information. SNCB

13. Exactly Yes but not abuse it

14. No. It did not have a lot of support.
I was more field work cz we used
to go to different places, buildings
which was a challenges

15. The devices are expensive, screen
readers. Movement is also challenging,
mobility. People are not impatient.

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16. Family Members from the SNCB

17. Yes. Because people think that we
are incapable. Their associate VI with
Stigma - mental illness

18. I believe so. I destined by
much more bigger things and I
believe I can do anything to
matter the challenge

19. I don't know. Inform - Educating ppl
will help VI ppl to feel more supported

20. Some provide reseeable accommo-
dation but others don't.

Additional information
Nothing

Amogelang

① After grade 12 life became serious
Started learnerships and then I
experienced
Paid less & went to claims court

In learnerships you find that there
are no resources – Do not cater
When you apply for a job they
don't cater for blind people.

2. Grd 11, Call centre, Computer Certificate

3. We only struggled with materials
but nothing else

4 School environment was user
friendly

But the work environment has
challenges

5. Yes, for the first few months to
get to taxis and navigate, it's
a challenge bt u get used to
it.

6. Most jobs want matric
Age restriction
Most jobs don't cater for VI persons
Adverts are more accessible via social
media and friendly.

Some adverts do specify the type
of disability

7. I just sent my application & went
for interview and then got the job

8 No, I've never done that
9. Until I get another job bcs it contract
10. I received support from my family
my teachers, they encouraged m+.
family

11. Yes it was help Because I used
the advices they gave me
SNCB used to send us to expos

12 When they post adverts they should
specify the type of disability &
increase the age restrictions

13 Not to use it in a wrong way.
They should just inform them.

14 I think so bcs our brains are
still working and on par. it's only
the eyes which are impaired.

15. Be can assist, while other ppl dn't recogn
ise you. The movement is a challeng
and without assistance it is a
challenge.

16. For now I'm being resilient and
not dependant on other people

17. I don't think so. I ppl are resilient
and blv in themselves then they sho
uld tell themselves that they are
here to conquer.

18. Yes I do blv so. Cz in life
I've learned that whatever you tell
yourself can happen as long as
you blv it

19. If there are jobs vancies they
should be clear so that we
may have confidence in applying
Even with career expo they need
to be clear

20. They should support VI persons
Give materials
Accommodate VI person

Additional info.
Nothing

Abigail

1. Not that challenging
Applying for the job
2. Early Childhood Development (ECD)

3 Hard. Lack of family support and
assistive devices
Teachers felt sorry instead of
understanding

4. Workplace is different from school
environment. Workplace is okay

5. Always struggle with new environment
because the place is new so I will
need assistance moving around

6. Ik the workplace its applying for
a job

7. Friends and family help me
apply for jobs

8 No, don't like when people feel sorry
for me

9 For as long as I'm needed

10. Grandparents, siblings, and organisation
(SANCB)

11. Yes was never treated differently

12. Train teacher better to know how to teach learners with VI

13. No. Be yourself

14. Yes It depends on the persons attitude. But sometimes mobility is a challenge

15. Not much because I have supportive colleagues

16. Now lost my parents, have grand-mother, aunts, brother & sister. And the SANCB
Assistive devices are a challenge and results to lack of privacy

17. Yes & blv so Access to information is limited to ppl with VI compared to ppl without VI when preparing for interviews

18. Yes, I blv so

19. Reasonable accommodation should be available from as early as pre-school to make it easier for ppl with VI - Don't feel discriminated

20. If I could be provided with assistive devices to do my work will be fine.