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NEXUS BETWEEN PSYCHOSOCIAL NETWORKS AND OPERATIONAL FACTORS IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF BLIND OR DEAF GRADUATES FROM TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTES IN KENYA

BY

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ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

This PhD thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution of learning for examination and/or certification.

Sign:…… Date:…….

Wangui Lydia Chege

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Supervisor's Declaration

This is to confirm that the PhD thesis submitted for examination was done under our supervision.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Charles, Sylvester, and Mercie Kimani Chege.
Dream it, walk it and live it.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AKU	Aga Khan University
APHRC	Africa Population and Health Research Centre
CAPI	Computer Aided Personal Interview
CBET	Competency-Based Education and Training
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DPO	Disabled Persons Organization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
HELB	Higher Education Loans Board
KAM	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
KISE	Kenya Institute of Special Education
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KNSPWD	Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities
KSL	Kenyan Sign Language
MMR	Mixed Methods Research
NCPWD	National Council for Persons with Disabilities
NEA	National Employment Authority
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, and Training
NITA	National Industrial Training Authority
NP	National Polytechnic
ODK	Open Data Kit
PSC	Public Service Commission

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PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SNTVET	Special Needs Technical Vocational Education & Training
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRC	Salaries and Renumeration Commission
TTI	Technical Training Institute
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WYD	Whole Youth Development
YWDs	Youth with Disability

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ABSTRACT

Persons with disabilities, who account for at least 15% of the world's population, face elevated challenges and vulnerabilities especially in gaining employment compared to typical persons in society. This study sought to examine the nexus between employment and psychosocial factors, social networks and operational factors for youth who are blind or deaf in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to (i) examine the relationship between self-competencies and employment of youth who are blind or deaf, (ii) establish the extent to which the self-determination of a youth who is blind or deaf influences their employment, (iii) determine the role of individual characteristics in employment of youth who are blind or deaf, (iv) assess the relationship between social networks and employment of youth who are blind or deaf and (v) evaluate the impact of employers' attitude on employment of youth who are blind or deaf. The study used a cross-sectional survey design to trace the progression of graduates from technical training institutes from graduation to employment status. The target population was 239 youth who graduated from Technical and Vocational Education and Tr aining (TVET) between 2014 and 2018 (112 blind, 127 deaf). The sample size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan technique. Quantitative data was collected from a sample of 146 graduates using a structured questionnaire while four TVET administrators and 22 employers provided qualitative data through interview schedules that used semi-structured discussions guides. Cronbach alpha test was used to test the reliability of the scales generated and all of them met the minimum threshold of $\alpha = 0.7$. The main analysis procedures for quantitative data were cross-tabulation with chi-square test and binary logistic regression analysis. Qualitative data was analysed using six-stage thematic analysis model by Braun and Clarke . The study findings showed that youth who are deaf were almost twice as likely to be employed compared with those who were blind regardless of their sex and age. Employment is highly correlated with individual technical and soft skills while a combination of technical and soft skills increased employment by up to three times. Most employers indicated employing the youth out of a need to do good to society, but offered long term engagement after competencies were confirmed. 95% of the employers preferred in-person meeting of the youth before any job offer. This study recommends an improvement within training in the building of sof t skills and self-efficacy for youth who are either blind or deaf and organised internship to introduce and retain employer confidence in youth who are blind or deaf. There could be college-orchestrated training of the industry on disability mainstreaming. This study recommends further research to establish why over 80% of the youth choose to stick to their initial employment without considering a change of employer and whether it is related to self-competencies.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the background and motivation of the study. It explores the contexts of access or lack of it in the employment of young people with disabilities. This chapter gives the statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, and the significance of the study in academia an d policy for development practise. The chapter also presents the scope, delimitations and limitations experienced during the study. Therein also is the operationalization and definitions of terms and concepts used.

1.2 Background of the Study

Globally, Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) institutions serve as crucial educational establishments that provide practical training and education, equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills for different career paths and occupations (Jagannathan et al., 2019). TVET institutions contribute significantly to economic growth and development by supplying a skilled workforce to meet industry demands (Makgato, 2019). In recent years, there has been a growing focus on expanding access to TVET education and training, particularly for youth and persons with disabilities (PWDs) (Muzite, 2022). This emphasizes the need to equip TVET graduates with the skills needed for decent employment opportunities, and aligning with Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which centres on promoting decent work and economic growth. Decent employment is characterized by fair, secure and consistent pay, and safe working conditions (Lynch et al., 2023) making it a crucial target within the SDGs.

In the context of enhancing the TVET sector to train for the 21st-century workplace, recent studies show that the ability to access employment is influenced by a multitude of factors, including individual attributes, community dynamics, institutional structures, and policy frameworks (Sense International, 2021). According to the Global Employment Trend for Youth, Technology, and the Future of Jobs report by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020), there has been a universal decline in youth participation in the labour force from 1999 to 2019. According to this report, in 1999, out of one billion young people aged 15 to 24, 53.1% were part of the labour

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market. In 2019, with the youth population rising to 1.3 billion, only 41.2% were actively engaged in the labour market. Factors contributing to this decline include sickness, disability, family responsibilities and personal discouragement (Powell, 2022).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) has driven increased levels of inclusion globally. With the introduction of the SDGs in 2015, issues such as disability were brought to the forefront, fostering greater participation of people with disabilities in the labour market (Agyei-Okyere et al., 2019; Fedulova et al., 2019; Usman & Projo, 2021). Human rights principles, as articulated in various United Nations (UN) conventions since 1948, emphasize the right of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) to live a dignified life (UN, 2016). This aspiration toward autonomy and independent living characterizes a dignified life. However, many individuals with disabilities struggle to attain this dignity due to limited access to enabling factors such as quality education and training (Fedulova et al., 2019), gainful employment, and livelihood opportunities (Agyei-Okyere et al., 2019), all of which significantly contribute to achieving a decent livelihood.

In Africa, unemployment remains a significant challenge, despite the region's relatively strong economic growth over the past decade (Kett, 2017). Over the past decade, disability has gained recognition as a critical factor in poverty reduction and alleviation efforts, extending to broader development initiatives. The International Disability Alliance (IDA) estimated that unemployment rates for people with disabilities ranged from 80% to 90% in developing countries and 50% to 70% in developed economies (IDA, 2016). These figures provide a general overview, with minor variations existing across different geographical scales. The association between disability and poverty has long been acknowledged, with disability exacerbating poverty by increasing isolation and economic strain, not only for individuals but also for their families. Development practitioners and scholars have noted the significant challenges faced by young people with disabilities in accessing long-term, sustainable employment opportunities, even when they possess educational and training qualifications (Grech & Soldatic, 2016; Naami, 2015). In many cases, youth with disabilities are either unemployed or underemployed, receiving lower pay or engaging in undefined jobs, regardless of whether they are in developed or developing countries (Bezyak et al., 2021).

As Kenya aligns with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and seeks to

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implement the African Union's 2063 Agenda for Reduced Poverty and Equitable Development, the nation aspires to provide equal opportunities in education, employment, and development to all youth. Legislative frameworks and policies, as well as performance targets, are in place to encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour force (Ebuenyi et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the employment process remains challenging for youth with disabilities (YWDs), with barriers ranging from lack of reasonable accommodation at work and inaccessible transportation to discrimination and negative attitudes about people's potential in the workplace (Jahan & Holloway, 2020). Available evidence in Kenya reflects a notably high unemployment rate among youth with disabilities (YWDs). For instance, the country's overall employment rate of persons with disabilities falls short of the 5% employment quota (Ebuenyi et al., 2019) stipulated in the Constitution Article 54. In practice, only one in five people with disabilities engaged in livelihood activities are employed, with the majority being self-employed in the informal sector. This lack of access to employment significantly contributes to higher poverty rates among persons with disabilities (Jahan & Holloway, 2021).

Kenya's demographic landscape, characterized by a youthful population, underscores the importance of addressing the employment challenges faced by young people, including those with disabilities. Young people represent a substantial portion of the population and possess inherent qualities such as energy, curiosity, creativity, and innovation. However, when a large percentage of youth, including those with disabilities, face barriers to securing employment, it has a detrimental impact on the nation's economic and social well-being. In Kenya, many individuals with disabilities are inactive in the labour force, contributing to this discrepancy (Oino et al., 2015). Young people with disabilities often face marginalization and stark social, economic, and civic disparities compared to their peers without disabilities (Bredgaard & Salado-Rasmussen, 2021). This inequality stems from various factors, including stigma, inaccessible environments, and discriminatory human resource practices (WHO, 2011).

Enablers to facilitate the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the workforce exist in many countries including Kenya. These enablers include policy measures, legislative frameworks, and cultural shifts designed to create a more inclusive and equitable employment environment for all. Despite these impressive efforts, PWDs presence is extremely insignificant. It is against this background that this study posits that there are additional drivers influencing the employment of

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youth with disabilities beyond favourable legal and policy provisions at the global, national and local levels.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The global perspective underscores the importance of disability mainstreaming across various sectors, including the public and private domains in Kenya. In a world with effective inclusive policies in education, training and employment, persons with disabilities (PWDs) would have unhindered access to employment opportunities. However, the Kenyan landscape reveals continued barriers for PWDs in attaining employment, this is despite favourable legal provisions. This study aims to address a critical gap in existing research, which predominantly focuses on external enabling factors, such as legal frameworks and advocacy efforts, while neglecting the nexus of employability traits intrinsic to a PWD, including technical and social skills within the context of capitalistic employability environments. Left unexamined, this problem may increasingly make PWDs more vulnerable to being left behind and less participation in the economy.

Employment rates for PWDs remain substantially lower than those for their non-disabled counterparts, a phenomenon consistent across countries, irrespective of overall employment rates (Beatty et al., 2019). While government attitudes, perspectives, and policy provisions aimed to encourage employers to hire youth with disabilities, statistics reveal that most PWDs are not integrated into the workforce (NCPWD, 2022). Employers' hiring practices may be discriminatory, despite reports of their positive attitudes toward disability (Burke et al., 2013). Employer attitudes play a significant role in the employment equation, this encompass behavioural, affective, and cognitive components that influence decisions regarding hiring individuals with disabilities (Yan et al., 2014). Therefore, this study focused on employer attitudes as operational factors that influence access to employment for graduates who are either blind or deaf. While individuals are responsible for developing and presenting their employment skills to prospective employers, some employment variables are beyond their control (Trani & Loeb, 2012). Employer preconceptions

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about the capabilities of disabled individuals can significantly impact their employability (Kocman et al., 2018). Many employers hold misconceptions, such as assuming that young people with disabilities are slower learners or require extensive job accommodations. These misconceptions can hinder the employment prospects of youth with disabilities.

The presentation of skills to employers is essential, but employer attitudes often weigh heavily in hiring decisions. Despite progress toward diversification and inclusivity in the workplace, entry, and career progression for PWDs remain challenging (Mugo et al., 2010). Mitra and Kruse (2016) note that employers rarely encounter people with impairments in their portfolios, despite the prevalence of disabilities. Stereotypical beliefs held by many employers further complicate the matter. Thus, this study elucidates these attitudes and perceptions and their implications for employment. Social networks play a pivotal role in accessing employment opportunities for PWDs, a facet often overlooked in disability research. Medina and Gamero (2017) demonstrated how individuals with disabilities leveraged their connections and networks to secure employment. This suggests that interpersonal relationships may be just as crucial as or perhaps more so for individuals with disabilities in accessing work. However, the influence of social networks on the employment of deaf or blind youth in Kenya remains unexplored.

Despite various mechanisms to promote the development of young people with disabilities and foster inclusive societies, employment statistics reveal that no employer in Kenya, whether in the public or private sector, has met the minimum threshold of 5% employment of PWDs on their payroll. This study thus sought to examine the nexus of intrapersonal characteristics hereby presented as psychosocial and interpersonal characteristics viewed from social network perspectives and operational factors in the employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya. This study provides a holistic view and a more comprehensive assessment of employment of persons with disabilities by both intrinsic and extrinsic enablers of employment.

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1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General objective

The purpose of this study was to examine the nexus between psychosocial networks and operational

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factors in the employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Examine the relationship between self-competencies and employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national Special Needs Technical Vocational Education & Training (SNTVETs) in Kenya.
2. Establish the extent to which self-determination of a youth who is blind or deaf influences their employment.
3. Determine the role of individual characteristics in employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya.
4. Demonstrate the relationship between social networks and employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya.
5. Assess the impact of employers' attitude on employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How does self-competency affect employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya?
2. To what extent does self-determination of youth who are either blind or deaf influence their employment in Kenya?
3. What role does individual characteristics play in employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya?
4. How does social networks influence employment for youth who are blind or deaf in Kenya from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya?
5. Does employers' attitude impact on employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study holds importance for various stakeholders including the youth with disability, government entities, practitioners, policymakers, local communities and the academic

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community.

a) **Youth with disability**

These are the primary target of this study. This research work is significant to the PWDs. It is a personal clarion call and awareness that individually they have a very personal role to play in ensuring their visibility and advocating for themselves as valuable, able and willing to participate in work. They need to harness an innate drive to pursue with earnest what they believe in. If it may be deemed worthwhile to invest in personal development courses since doing so elevates oneself above the others.

b) Government and policy markers

This research study aligns with the aspirations in Kenya's Vision 2030, addressing the pressing need for equitable access to opportunities, particularly in employment, for historically marginalized groups like youths with disabilities. The findings of this study have the potential to be instrumental in guiding the government towards the improvement of curricular for training and strengthening the career office, and guidance and counselling in the personal development of the trainees. By shedding light on the psychosocial and operational factors that influence the employment prospects of youth graduates with disabilities, this study can play a pivotal role in having greater attention into the personal development of soft skills and interpersonal competences for TVET trainees.

c) Practitioners

Professionals and trainers within TVET institutions stand to gain a lot from the insights of this study. It offers a detailed understanding of the significance of personal attributes in enhancing employability. Furthermore, this research underscores the nature of infusing essential soft skills, including but not limited to resilience, communication, adaptability, teamwork, interpersonal skills, leadership, and market awareness, into the training curriculum for youths with disabilities. These valuable insights provide a comprehensive framework for practitioners to craft and fine-tune training programs, ultimately ensuring that graduates possess the job-seeking acumen essential to thrive in a fiercely competitive job market.

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d) Community

This study recognizes the profound impact of familial networks but extends its purview to encompass social networks beyond the family circle. By acknowledging the instrumental role of social networking that leverage on technology. This transformative potential of digital connections in facilitating access to broader peer networks is articulated. By doing so ;this study hopes to fosters an environment where family and friends as well as youths with disabilities become aware of their alienable role in the employment journey for youth with disability. This inclusive approach thus resonates with the broader community, emphasizing the interconnectedness of society and its ability to foster positive change.

e) Employers and industry

The participation in industrial visits emerge as critical aspects clarified by this study. This proactive engagement not only bridges the gap between formal training and practical industry requirements but also serves as a conduit for addressing and dispelling misconceptions, apathy, and biases that may exist within the employer community. By promoting greater inclusivity in the workforce, this study aids in challenging and reshaping employer attitudes and perspectives, ultimately fostering a more diverse and dynamic working environment.

f) Scholars and research community

This study makes a substantive contribution to existing scholarly research and literature. It delves deeper into the intricate web of psychosocial, social network and operational factors that exert influence over the employment outcomes of youth graduates who are blind or deaf. In doing so, it extends the boundaries of existing knowledge and elevates our collective understanding of disability inclusion in the workforce, moving beyond a mere focus on legal provisions and advocacy efforts.

1.7 Scope, Delimitation and Limitations of the Study

1.7.1 Scope of the Study

This is a tracer study; it had the geographical scope of Kenya. It traced the trajectory of youth who

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are either blind or deaf and had undergone training in any of the four Special Needs Technical Training Institutions. The institutes are Sikri Technical Training Institute for the Blind and Deaf (H oma Bay County), St. Joseph's Technical Institute for the Deaf, Nyang'oma (Siaya County), Karen Technical Training Institute for the Deaf (Nairobi County) and Machakos Technical Institute for t he Blind (Machakos County).

The study was confined to the graduates of 2014 to 2018 only. It did not matter that the graduates were in or out of employment. The period 2014-2018 is an era after the TVET Act of 2013 and five years into vision 2030. In 2014, Kenya had gained momentum in the importance of TVET training. One administrative Officer from each institute was interviewed to provide a critical link to the youth graduates and their category of disability.

1.7.3 Limitations

The most pronounced limitation in this study was the tracing of graduate youth primarily due to lack of prompt responses. For instance, emails took long before being read and replied to by officials from the target TVET institutions. Secondly, some of the target youths were not active users of social media such as WhatsApp making communication difficult and tedious to trace them. To mitigate this challenge of delay in communication, third parties were involved such as sending people to visit the relevant officers in person to access contact information of graduates. Regarding connecting with youth who used social media less frequently, snowballing was used to trace them through friends.

One of the methodological limitations experienced in this study was non-response bias. It was observed that youth who were employed were more willing to participate in the study compared to those who were not employed, thus introducing an oversampling of the employed youth. This non-response bias limits the extent to which the study results could be generalized. To mitigate this limitation, caution has been taken on interpretation of results not to suggest national representation of some metrics such as proportion of youth with disabilities in employment.

1.7.3 Delimitations

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This study delimits its scope to a specific subset of the population, namely, youth who are either blind or deaf and have been certified as having completed skills training at any of the four Special Needs Technical and Vocational Education and Training (SNTVET) institutions within the time frame of 2014 to 2018. The study focuses on two disabilities only; blind or deaf and hence, other disability categories were excluded from the study.

Within this delimited context, the research focuses on key psychosocial factors, specifically self-efficacy, self-determination, self-advocacy and self-presentation, as exhibited by individual youths who are either blind or deaf. Additionally, the study considers the role that social networks and employer attitude play in the employment of these youths. As a result, other enablers, and barriers/constraints to employment of PWDs were excluded from the study. In exploring the employers' perspective, the study narrows its focus to three distinct factors: disability mainstreaming parameters, as outlined by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) in 2022. These parameters encompass the employer's views and potential biases regarding disabilities, the level of knowledge possessed by employers pertaining to disabilities, and the extent to which employers provide accommodations for individuals with disabilities in the workplace. This delimited approach ensures a more concentrated investigation into the factors influencing access to employment for youth graduates who are either totally blind or totally deaf.

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1.8 Assumptions of the Study

In conducting this study, some assumptions were made regarding the study's objectives, scope and research design.

Regarding the study objective, it was assumed that there exists a nexus between psychosocial factors such as self-competencies and self-determination, social network, and operational factors such as employer attitude in the employment of youth with disabilities. This assumption was premised on observations that despite favourable legal provisions, employment rates of PWDs remained low.

In terms of scope and timeframe, the study is specifically targeted at youth graduates who were either blind or deaf and had completed their skills training at the identified TVET institutions

between the years 2014 and 2018. This assumption was based on the understanding that deafness and blindness are among the disabilities which have least to do with individual's motor or physique. The selection of 2014 to 2018 was informed by changes in legal provisions in Kenya such as affirmative action on employment of PWDs and focus on TVET funding and upgrading to promote inclusion of PWDs which become prominent in 2013.

Regarding the research design, it was assumed that because of complex and multifaceted nature of the research questions, a mix of quantitative and qualitative data from different players would be necessary. In this regard, a cross-sectional descriptive survey design was used to allow for the collection of data at a single point in time from trainers, trainees, and employers

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1.9 Operationalization of Terms

Blind According to Britannica Dictionary This means one who is not able to see. An impairment that refers to a total loss of sight.

Deaf Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online Defines deaf as not able to hear anything. An impairment that refers to a total loss of hearing.

Employment According to the Oxford Dictionary, employment is having a state of paid work. Further, International Labour organization (ILO) defines it as a state of using skills, abilities, knowledge and time for pay for any one beyond the age of 15.

Nexus A connection or series of connections linking two or more things or a central or focal point or convergence. This is according to the Oxford dictionary language.

Psychosocial According to oxford Dictionary ,this refers to the interrelation of social factors and individual thought and behaviour. It looks at individuals in the context of psychological factors and the surrounding social environment d their ability to function

Youth According to the constitution of Kenya, it refers to persons who is aged between the ages of 18and 35- years of age

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CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A synthesis of the available research was offered in this chapter pertinent to the nexus between psychosocial factors, social networks, employment/human resource factors and employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya. The theoreframework and the conceptual framework provided in this section of this study, The chapter concluded with a summary of the main issues presented and the research gap.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study sought to determine the nexus between psychosocial factors, social networks and operational factors in the employment of graduates from TVET institutions who are blind or deaf. The theories that were found to apply to this study are the self-determination theory, the capability theory of human development and the resource-based theory.

2.2.1 Self-Determination Theory

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) was developed by Deci and Ryan in 1985 by synthesis of h uman cognition and behaviour mini theories (Deci & Ryan, 2011). The initial one of them, a cognitive assessment principle, discusses how social settings affect the drive of individuals. The SDT posits an amalgamation of individual competency, autonomy and readiness and pillars of effective performance. This theory complements the Resource Based Theory (RBT) by introducing individual aspects, these individual aspects have been put together herein to form the psychosocial factors that are enablers of employment. SDT contends that the main problems impacting internal drive mechanisms are self-government and personal competency.

The implications of both extrinsic and intrinsic incentives on incentives are the foundation of the subsequent SDT sub-concept. According to the theory, receiving only outside advantages including money for an activity can decrease internal motivation. On the other hand, receiving positive and relevant feedback on an activity could enhance internal motivation. The effects of these external rewards on internal motivation are best explained by one's autonomy, basic psychosocial needs or perceived locus of personal causality. Furthermore, the theory suggests that

the social environment is informed by three basic psychosocial needs: the need for relatedness, autonomy and competence.

Environments that meet these intrinsic and extrinsic needs result in positive development and growth while those that don't arness feelings of alienation, passiveness and ill-being in an individual become a source of demotivation to any engagement. The satisfaction of these needs is considered vital for developing and maintaining internal motivation and self-regulating towards pursuing personal goals such as getting an employment (Sheldonb & Prentice, 2019).

Humans often desire to gain control over their environment, and to experience competence and effectiveness over it. Vasconcellos et al. (2020) applied self-determination theory in physical education and found that external regulation and motivation have connections that are detrimental to adaptive results and beneficial to dysfunctional results. The study also reported that self-determination, independence, skill, and relationship satisfactions and independent motivation among learners are closely linked (Vasconcellos et al., 2020). Autonomy is developed when humans can choose which experiences to partake in. Often, these autonomous actions reflect the va lues and interests they have. Relatedness is associated with the need to belong. This need is satisfied when humans experience the "to be wanted", appreciation and care from others, thus eliciting a feeling of connectedness. SDT also focuses on internalized experiences which contribute to motivational development (Sheldonb & Prentice, 2019). This would explain why a youth who had experienced a job interview that did not result into a job had internalized rejection and hence ceased from submitting further applications for consideration for employment, even when vacancies arose.

The literature presented by Vasconcellos et al. (2020) highlights the application of self-determination theory (SDT) in the context of physical education. One notable strength of this literature is its focus on investigating the relationships between various motivational factors and adaptive or maladaptive outcomes, shedding light on the complexities of motivation within the educational setting. The study's identification of the positive correlations between self-determination, autonomy, competence, relatedness satisfactions, and autonomous student

motivation aligns with the core principles of SDT, providing empirical support for the theory's constructs. However, a potential limitation lies in the generalizability of these findings, as they are specific to the context of physical education. It would be valuable to explore how these relationships may differ or remain consistent across various educational domains. Additionally, while the literature underscores the importance of autonomy and relatedness in fostering motivation, it does not delve into potential moderating factors or practical implications for educators seeking to enhance student motivation. A more comprehensive examination of the practical applications of SDT in educational settings and its potential implications for instructional strategies could enhance the literature's utility for educators and researchers alike.

Within SDT, causality orientations address individual variations in a person's propensity for autonomous behavior. SDT also incorporates concepts from the fundamental necessities theory, goal content theory, and relationships motivation theory (Howard et al., 2021). These amalgamated SDT mini theories describe how self-determination works within humans. The concept of examining individual competencies for employment based on a combination of soft and technical skills adopted in this study was informed by the assumptions of SDT (Sheldonb & Prentice, 2019). This approach resonates with contemporary issues of competency-based education and training (CBC and CBET) as the core in education reform in Kenya and more so, with industry-responsive technical education whose graduates are so much needed in the economy of Kenya today.

Cognitive evaluation theory suggests that social environments may boost autonomy and often enhance internal motivation, while feedback suggests that any form of incompetence alleviates motivation, a concept often described as imposter phenomena (Vaughn et al., 2020). Proponents on causality orientations theory argue that people gravitate to different behavioural patterns and regulations based on varied personality orientations, whether controlled, autonomous or impersonal. Individuals with autonomous orientations gravitate toward internal motivations that support their autonomy or justifies their actions, whereas those with controlled orientations are often guided by external motivations based on their surroundings. Individuals with impersonal orientations are prone to indications of incompetence to guide their motivations and are highly susceptible to a motivation (Salman et al., 2020). The third theory: the theory of organismic

integration suggests that human behaviour is not always internally motivated by the myriad of actions in their daily lives that are beyond their control, thus limiting some activities to autonomy. The literature discussed by Vaughn et al. (2020) and Salman et al. (2020) integrates cognitive evaluation theory and causality orientations theory to explore the multifaceted nature of motivation. It highlights the influence of social environments on autonomy and internal motivation, emphasizing the positive impact of autonomy-enhancing contexts. The concept of imposter phenomena is introduced as a potential barrier to motivation when individuals perceive incompetence. Additionally, the literature distinguishes between autonomous and controlled orientations, suggesting that personality orientations play a pivotal role in shaping an individual's motivational patterns. While this theoretical framework provides valuable insights into motivation, it could benefit from empirical evidence and practical examples to enhance its applicability in real-world contexts and educational settings.

Further, the basic psychosocial needs theory suggests that in environments where psychosocial needs are met, feelings of better well-being are elicited with multiple positive impacts on multiple scopes of human behaviour (Salman et al., 2020). Goals content theory posits that humans experience well-being when they pursue their autonomous aspirations, which may have an external origin. These goals may include financial success or fame. However, researchers argue that while these goals elicit feelings of well-being, they are not likely to help an individual achieve basic psychosocial needs. Conversely, they may result in less well-being due to their external nature (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020).

The literature referenced, drawing from the basic psychosocial needs theory and goals content theory as presented by Vansteenkiste et al. (2020), provides valuable insights into the relationship between psychosocial needs, well-being, and goal pursuit. One of its strengths lies in the emphasis on the importance of meeting psychosocial needs, which aligns with research highlighting the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering well-being and motivation. The introduction of goals content theory adds depth to the discussion by recognizing that well-being can be derived from pursuing autonomous aspirations, even if these aspirations have external origins (Vasconcellos et al., 2020). However, a potential limitation is the relatively abstract presentation of these theories without specific examples or empirical evidence to illustrate their

applicability in real-life contexts. To enhance its practical utility, future research could explore how these theories manifest in various settings and provide guidance for educators and practitioners seeking to promote well-being and motivation.

Finally, the relationship motivation theory states that individuals require sustained relationships to create a support system around them for intimacy and warmth (Howard et al., 2021). This theory suggests that genuine relationships depend on internal and external motivations, thereby eliciting the idea of personal attachments to others as a source of security and support. This theory argues that unhealthy attachments from a spouse, friend, or parent can hinder personal motivation and well-being (Brownell et al., 2020). SDT is directly related to the goal of student-led Individualized Education Programmes (IEPs) because it increases students' motivation to talk about their impairments, advantages, and requirements with their instructors and other important people in their everyday lives in order to become better at that defines them. This would lead to a surge in their capacity of self-determination. As individuals get more understanding about the IEP process, they are inspired to stay involved and gain more self-awareness, which propels them to take greater action (Vasconcellos et al., 2020).

Eide and Ingstad (2013) describe SDT as a characteristic of human drive and character that manifests and operates in social circumstances. The idea emphasizes the impact of introspection and free will on human behavior. "The theory is based on the assumption that people have inborn tendencies to grow and develop psychosocially, to strive to master challenges in their environment, and to integrate the new experience into their self-concepts". Self-government is the ability to make decisions and let those decisions determine one's activities instead of depending on outside encouragement or pressure to motivate one. When enhancing extraordinary adolescent self-government and advocating for oneself SDT is a crucial factor to take into account (Brownell et al., 2020). All young people could benefit from practicing advocacy for oneself and self-determination techniques, but those who have disabilities need these techniques even more, those who are marginalized and in other vulnerabilities.

The study concurs with the propagators of the SDT in that youth have to exert control over their env ironment and pursue outcomes without giving up. Training has a role to play as trainers would coach the youth and give a setting that encourages self-reliance among their students. Developing

ways for young people concerned Learning of their limitations, assets, and requirements enables them to speak up for themselves and grow in self-determination. Young individuals with impairments must make a lot of challenging decisions about their destiny. Someone who is young may choose to go to higher education, enrol in a vocational training program, or find permanent employment, amongst other options, according to the severity of their handicap. Youth who have impairments must be conscious of their handicap, and advantages and opportunities for improvement in order to succeed to their greatest ability.

The Self-Determination Theory is highly relevant to the study examining the employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya. According to this idea, people have fundamental mental requirements for connection, independence and competency. When these requirements are met, people are more inclined to feel a sense of self-determination and engage in adaptive behaviors. In the context of this study, understanding the relationship between self-competencies and the employment of youth who are blind or deaf aligns with the theory by exploring how these individuals' sense of competence and self-efficacy, social networks as well as other individual characteristics might influence their job-seeking behaviors and outcomes. Additionally, investigating the extent to which self-determination influences their employment prospects directly corresponds to the theory's emphasis on autonomy and self-regulation. By considering these factors within the framework of the SDT, the study can provide valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms that impact the employment outcomes of this specific population, which can inform policies and interventions aimed at improving their employment opportunities and overall wellbeing.

2.2.2 Capability Theory of Human Development

The capability theory is a strong proponent of the acknowledgement of human diversity. It brings to the fore the need to recognise differences in people. This theory is the underpinning for many feminists and advocates of disability issues, the argument being that able-bodied, nondependent, c are-free individuals who belong to most of the population do not share the same opportunity and c hallenges with marginalised people, the disabled and many women (Brown & Moloney, 2019). The proponents of this theory raise the need to go beyond the assessment of utility and income earned but consider entitlements, capabilities and functioning and adopt a broad view of preferences while considering prospective employees.

Sen (1996) pioneered the idea of appreciating human capabilities and philosopher Nussbaum brought in the idea of diversity, including marginalisation and feminism as essential parameters while valuing a person's potential. This is more leaning toward the humanities and the social sciences that have significantly developed in the 1990s. As put forward by Merhej (2020), this is a theoretical framework composed of two fundamentals; first: the freedom to achieve well-being is basic to every person and second: an understanding of people's capabilities. This theory has been developed in various more specific theories such as social justice and development ethics. The capability theory considers a flexible and multi-purpose context of valuing the person (Sen et al, 19 97; Kuhumba, 2018). Sen's (1996) approach is a moral framework that proposes that social participation should be assessed primarily based on the degree of freedom to perform the functions they value. He bases his approach on two core normative claims. These claims include the assumption that achieving well-being is of significant moral importance. The freedom to achieve well-being must be understood according to the capabilities of people: the opportunity to do what they value. This approach has since been developed into different normative theories such as social justice and development ethics. Sen (1996) argues that the wealth people possess is often an inappropriate metric to measure how well life is progressing because it provides limited or indirect information.

The literature discussed, primarily focusing on the capability theory pioneered by Sen (1996) and expanded upon by Nussbaum, offers a significant theoretical framework for understanding human well-being and potential. One of its key strengths lies in its holistic approach, emphasizing that the freedom to achieve well-being is a fundamental right for all individuals and acknowledging the importance of diversity, including marginalized groups and feminism, in valuing a person's capabilities. This framework has indeed been influential, particularly in the fields of humanities and social sciences, contributing to the development of theories related to social justice and development ethics. However, a potential limitation of the literature is its somewhat abstract nature, which may make it challenging for practical application without specific guidance or empirical examples. Additionally, while the capability theory is laudable in its recognition of human diversity, implementing it effectively in real-world contexts may pose challenges related to

operationalization and measurement. Nonetheless, its emphasis on individual capabilities and well-being remains a valuable perspective that has enriched discussions in various academic disciplines and policy areas.

Nussbaum (2011) has described the general capability approach as consisting of two bands, quality of life, and capabilities of achieving through capacity of collaboration and working with others. Fr om the capability theory the youth with disabilities need to present themselves as of having competences and determined to put out their capabilities for the employers to appreciate and offer opportunity. Capability approach focusses on the quality of life that humans can attain. This quality can be investigated in two ways: its functioning, that is, its ability to achieve its required nee d and enhance the states of 'being and doing', and its capability, which refers to the set of valuable functions that a person can efficiently access. Therefore, an individual's capability refers to the freedom to choose between various functionalities on which he has placed value. For example, resources such as a bicycle can be considered a valuable input to transportation, but their real value depends on the individual's ability to make it function for them. These capacities may be their health, perspectives on society or the physical environment they intend to ride on. According to his approach, utility is both an output and a functioning because an individual may opt to do something informed by their feelings of well-being, which may be subjective.

The literature presented, drawing from Nussbaum's (2011) description of the general capability approach, emphasizes the importance of two key elements: the quality of life and the capabilities of achieving through collaboration and working with others. This approach aligns with the broader capability theory, which underscores the significance of individuals presenting their competences and determination to employers, particularly for youth with disabilities. One of the strengths of this literature lies in its recognition of the multifaceted nature of human well-being, encompassing not only personal capabilities but also the capacity for collaboration and engagement with others. However, it could benefit from providing concrete examples or case studies to illustrate how these principles can be applied effectively in real-world contexts, especially concerning the employment of youth with disabilities. Additionally, while the emphasis on competences and determination is valuable, there may be nuances and challenges specific to individuals with disabilities that require

further exploration to ensure that they can effectively present their capabilities to potential employers.

Sen (1996) suggests that the rightful focus for establishing how satisfied people are with their lives is to lead a life they have a reason to value, not only with their wealth or subjective well-being. To determine this, the theory suggests that individuals should determine which functions take the centre stage in their lives and find a way to value them. He acknowledges that people have different functions and that each one has their reason for it, proposing that people should determine for themselves what functions in their lives through a democratic and public reasoning approach. He argues that crucially, essential capabilities that interrelate to basic needs should be easily identifiable and decided upon as necessary political and moral priorities. These capabilities should include health, education, shelter and nutrition.

According to Sen (1996), persons with disabilities may have special functioning for their well-being, such as prosthetics or aids which are entirely different from persons without disabilities. Thus, the capability approach can be applied to investigate the relationship between people and commodities on the basis of their physiology, environmental diversity, social context variations, changes in family structure, and interpersonal perspectives such as shifting social norms regarding behavior and consumption. He argues that this approach would be more effective in determining t he functioning needed for capability.

On the other hand, Nussbaum (2011) has developed another approach to the capability theory, which aims to promote partial justice based on a list of fundamental capabilities, dignity and threshold. Her list of Central Human Capabilities includes living a full life by avoiding premature death, having good health and nourishment, maintaining bodily integrity free from assault or harm, having the freedom to use one's senses, thoughts and imaginations and being free to experience an y emotion without fear. Additionally, these capabilities include the freedom to exercise practical r eason, freedom to associate or affiliate with other humans, freedom to interact with other species, freedom to play and enjoy leisure times and freedom to have control over one's environment by engaging in free speech and having the right to own material things. Her account is motivated by the concept of human dignity as opposed to Sen's, which is based on freedom. Both theories form the foundation for equal treatment and antidiscrimination against people with disabilities in

society by emphasising that they still hold fundamental freedoms to enjoy and live life just like the other members of society (Seino, 2022).

According to Yamamoto et al. (2019), by providing equal access to good and constructive job and livelihood possibilities for men and women, a life cycle and rights-based perspective is encouraged. When a girl child with a disability experiences prejudice early in life, she is more likely to collect economic barriers that could eventually result in decreased employment and increased poverty (Otobe, 2011). Young women who have disabilities may have better career prospects if comprehensive human resource development is ensured through equitable access to educational and skill-development events for younger individuals. It is possible to increase the employment of both men and women in maturity by providing equal opportunity for resources for lifelong study and work, which will increase both groups' chances of finding gainful job and income possibilities. As a result, they may have greater financial stability as they age (Yamamoto et al., 2019). It is possible to establish an atmosphere more favorable to increased employment of women and improved income security, particularly among older employees and individuals with impairments through the establishment of inclusive marketplaces for labour that cope with shifting economic factors while maintaining equity as well as a minimum level of job growth and financial security.

The Capability Theory of Human Development is highly relevant to the study examining the employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya. This theory stresses the value of enhancing people's capacities and freedoms to lead lives they value. In this context, the study's focus on self-competencies aligns with the capability theory by addressing the development of essential capabilities in youth who are blind or deaf, enabling them to access meaningful employment opportunities. By assessing the role of individual characteristics and self-determination, the study acknowledges the nuanced and diverse capabilities of this population, which can be instrumental in enhancing their human development. Additionally, exploring interpersonal networks' effects on job results resonates with the capability theory's emphasis on societal factors that can either facilitate or hinder individuals' capabilities. Through this lens, the study can shed light on how societal attitudes and norms may be affecting the capabilities and

freedoms of blind or deaf youth, thereby informing strategies to enhance their human development and employment prospects.

2.2.3 Resource-Based View Theory

Since tacit understanding and social variation are challenging to replicate, resource-based research proponents contend that people's resources may serve as an aspect of long-term advantage. These appealing qualities, however, might lead to conundrums that may impede businesses from developing an edge (Collins & Clark, 2003). The reasoning, development, organizational tastes, and effectiveness of strategic partnerships are the four main topics covered by the theory of resources. In this study, psychosocial, social network and operational factors to employment were informed by these four major aspects of resource-based theory. According to the resource-based view, the ability of a company's shared assets to create wealth is the justification for partnerships. Some resource features, such restricted mobility, imitation, and interchangeability, guarantee enhanced production of value, which makes it easier to establish alliances.

A resource-based view is a managerial approach used to determine strategic resources. These resources are assets, capabilities and competencies that can provide a competitive advantage to a f irm. The company can exploit these resources to achieve its purpose. Youth with disabilities have therefore to present themselves in a convincing way to a likely employer of his or her value. They have to self-advocate, work on their self-presentation and their self-representation. The application of Resource-Based View Theory (RBT) has appeared extensively in marketing (Kozlenkova et al., 2014), entrepreneurship (Alvarez & Barney, 2017) and operational management research (Hitt et al., 2016).

The current study introduces a paradigm shift on the RBT as one that underpins the relationship between the competency of the youth with disabilities and access to waged employment. Different public organisations emphasise different competencies; therefore, employees who present themselves as possessing both innate competencies and at the same time possessing explicit competencies needed by an organisation are the precious and uncommon resources that engage (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019). Using the resource-based view theory, we can determine the

value, rarity, and reasons for the imitability of organizations hiring persons with disabilities to attain competitive advantage. This hypothesis contends that firms with comparable resources frequently exhibit equal levels of efficiency, making it unable to gain an edge over its rivals.

The identification and useful application of unique resources for companies are essential for gaining competitive advantage and higher profitability. This advantage could be achieved through effective differentiation strategies, superior customer service, enhanced product innovations and a unique reputation (Tsatsou, 2020). These resources can be classified as physical capital resources, such as technology, geographical location of the premises and the real estate held by the organization, organizational capital resources like the processing and controlling structures and human capital resources in the form of knowledge, intelligence, experience and diversity (Tsatsou, 2020). Particularly, human capital resources are vital to gaining a competitive advantage because they do not wear out and more importantly, they are responsible for synergistic combination of all other resources to bring out desired outcomes. To identify human capital resources that are factors in generating competitive advantages, resources must be valuable in that they exploit opportunities or eliminate threats within the organisation's operating environment (Roumpi et al., 2020). Additionally, they must be rare among the organization's industry and within its immediate competition. They must also be imperfectly imitable, meaning that competitors cannot have similar resources or easy substitutes.

The acknowledgement and assurance about resources available to an organization is imperative in management strategy to take stock of what is missing to improve their competitive advantage. Therefore, administration should concentrate on qualities that its rivals cannot easily copy by utilising remarkable prowess or talent, specific knowledge of processes, or a strong brand that highlights its strengths. Although an organisation can recruit employees whose profiles mirror a competitor, human resource departments may gain a substantial competitive advantage over their peers by including important criteria such as enhancing interpersonal relationships in workplaces, encouraging a vibrant corporate culture, and improving the company image by incorporating a diverse workforce that mirrors society, hence inducing relatability among its stakeholders (Das, 2000). Ultimately, committed employees with a cohesive workspace often utilize organizational re

sources better.

Studies have revealed that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) leads to a competitive advantage according to the resource-based view. Managers have established that a socially responsible outlook from the immediate external environment has a positive impact on the success of an organisation. CSR offers an opportunity to achieve superiority over its competitors when it focuses on different sustainability practices and adopts all-inclusive strategies in its operations. Such practises generate a unique value proposition among stakeholders. Hiring persons with disabilities as an integral part in the CSR practices of an organization hence works to make an organization's work environment energizing to internal and external customers; and in Kenya it improves the brand on the platform of inclusivity (Zhao et al., 2019).

To the workers, the employer is seen as empathetic and generally fair. Furthermore, employment of persons with disabilities could offer a complementary set of skills and resources to an organisation, contributing to its success. By adopting a resource-based view, the employment of persons with disabilities has been established to positively impact turnover rates, preservation, dependability, devotion, inspiration, and the company's reputation. These effects further improve innovation, productivity, customer loyalty, work ethic, work safety, organisational culture and disability awareness. When such achievements are made at institutional level, achievement of inclusive society becomes closer to being achieved.

Employees with disabilities can help the company develop and promote products or services for other persons with disabilities, thus opening market frontiers for the organisation. In this way, the organization may gain knowledge of the requirements of people with impairments, enabling them to draw in and keep consumers who have impairments. In addition, such organisations can develop vocational rehabilitation facilities for employees to promote their well-being. These facilities could become an added value to the organisation by minimising the health, professional and social costs resulting from illnesses or temporary disabilities. Eventually, such programmes could evolve into a shared value within the organisation by extending them to other employees, such as those with chronic illnesses and ageing employees, thereby creating a cushion for

vulnerable employees, and eliciting more loyalty and fewer work interruptions (Das, 2000).

Employing Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) as relates to the resource-based view theory increases value of an organization, improving the workplace environment, promotes social inclusion, and aids in optimizing innovation and productivity in the workplace. Additionally, the ra rity of proactively employing people with disabilities can improve customer retention and loyalty, increase the market share of the company, and improve cost effectiveness by establishing vocational rehabilitation facilities that can also benefit other employees. These features help the company acquire a competitive edge over its rivals. Overall, it has been observed that businesses are more focused on enhancing their external reputation than upon their dedication to their own personnel. This aspect of accessibility and improved businesses prospects makes the management take greater action in support of PWD (Segovia-San Juan et al 2017).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory is relevant to the study examining the employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya as it offers a valuable perspective on how organizations can leverage their resources to gain a competitive advantage. The study can analyze the blind or deaf graduates as valuable human resources possessed by organizations. By assessing the graduates' skills, competencies and educational background, the study can explore how these human resources contribute to an organization's competitive advantage in terms of diversity and inclusive employment practices. The RBV theory emphasizes the strategic importance of relationships and networks. By examining the role of social networks in the employment of blind or deaf graduates, the study can demonstrate how these networks can be considered valuable resources for organizations seeking diverse talent pools and connections with disability support organizations or communities. The study can also consider the attitudes and culture within organizations as intangible resources. By exploring the impact of employers' attitudes on the employment of blind or deaf graduates, it can highlight the significance of a positive, inclusive organizational culture as a valuable resource for attracting and retaining diverse talent.

2.3 Self-competency and Employment of Youth with Disabilities

In the United States, Lindstrom and Benz (2022) explored the relationship between self-competency and employment among youth with disabilities. Sampling 450 youth from San Francisco, the study employed the explanatory research design and found that self-determination skills, a component of self-competency had a favorable impact on disabled youth's post-school employment outcomes. While the study generally found that higher levels of self-competency are associated with improved employment outcomes, the study did not particularly target youth graduating from particular institutions of tertiary or higher learning. Additionally, the findings were not limited to specific disability groups youth such as the blind or deaf, but was focused on general physical disabilities. The findings may therefore not capture the unique employment challenges faced by blind or deaf youth graduating from tertiary institutions.

In Canada, the work of Smith et al. (2023) delved into self-competency and employment for youth with amputation disabilities. Sampling 330 youth from Toronto Canada, the descriptive study revealed that self-efficacy, a key aspect of self-competency, was positively associated with successful employment outcomes for young adults with disabilities. While the study demonstrates that self-competency is positively correlated with job readiness and employment success. The study's focus on amputation disabilities, may not be generalizable to the blind or deaf disabilities that are the focus of the present study. Furthermore, the Canadian study focuses on urban populations, potentially neglecting the experiences of youth with disabilities in rural or remote areas.

In the United Kingdom, a qualitative study by Stuart and Burchardt (2023) sought to highlight the role of self-competency in shaping employment prospects for youth with disabilities. Sampling 10 youth in England and Wales, the study emphasized the significance of self-competency for young people with disabilities. However, it had a limited sample size and did not extensively consider such employer-side attributes as attitudes. Further, while the study used qualitative methods to uncover nuanced experiences, it was limited by small sample sizes and did not fully consider youth graduating from tertiary institutions. Additionally, the study was not specific to the blind or deaf, but disabilities in general, which may not capture the particular employability challenges faced by the blind or deaf.

In Guangzhou China, another qualitative study by Li and Ma (2020) explored the relationship between self-competency and employment among youth with disabilities. While the study provided valuable insights by exploring self-competency and employment for youth with disabilities and highlighting the importance of self-competency, it predominantly concentrated on urban areas and would benefit from a more comprehensive exploration of rural contexts. There is a need for such research as the present that explores the unique cultural and societal factors affecting self-competency development and employment in rural regions, as embodied in SNTVETs in the country. Methodologically, more mixed-methods approaches could provide a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics.

In the Philippines, research by Santos and Torres (2021) highlighted the role of family support in nurturing self-competency among youth with disabilities. While the descriptive study sampling 240 youth with disabilities makes an important contribution to the body of knowledge by exploring the role of family support in fostering self-competency among youth with disabilities, it narrowly focused on the role of family support in nurturing self-competency, overlooking such individual characteristics as self-determination and actual competencies, as well as broader structural barriers as employers' attitudes. The study did not also focus on graduating youth and was not specific to the blind or deaf. There is thus a need for more research that considers individual characteristics as self-determination and actual competencies, as well as broader structural barriers as employers' attitudes and their impact on employment prospects.

In Nigeria, Oyefeso and Ajuwon (2021) examined the employment challenges faced by young people with disabilities. While it offered important insights by exploring self-competency and employment among youth with disabilities, revealing the challenges posed by the lack of inclusive educational opportunities, it was limited by its uni-dimensional approach, making it difficult to establish causal relationships. The study only conducted descriptive statistics on employment challenges, failing to link the same to employment outcomes. This limited the ability of the study to establish causal relationships between self-competency development and employment outcomes.

Research in South Africa by Watermeyer et al. (2020) explored the intersectionality of self-competency and employment outcomes, considering factors like race and gender. While the quantitative study sampling 300 youth in Johannesburg makes an important contribution to

literature by demonstrating the linkage between self-competency and employment for youth with disabilities as characterized by a focus on intersectionality, considering factors such as race and gender, the purely quantitative study did not factor the nuanced individual experiences from both the job seekers and employers' sides. There is thus a need for more qualitative studies that offer a broader perspective on how individuals with different levels of self-competency experience employment opportunities.

In Kenya, Ong'ango (2019) observed that individual characteristics or personal attributes are crucial indicators of a staff member's capacity to do tasks successfully. Other than traditionally established and well-known requisites for employment such as education and training, self-efficacy for employment go beyond technical skills in the contemporary society. Given the changing employment landscape today, emotional intelligence is an equally sought-after attribute just like deep knowledge in the subject matter is. This pattern has been noted all around the world, irrespective of a nation's structure of growth. This comprehensive approach to self-efficacy for employment, which takes into account both technical and soft abilities, is being adopted by both developed and developing nations.

2.4 Self- Determination and Employment of Youth with Disabilities

In the United States, Watson (2019) extensively explored the connection between self-determination skills and employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. The study findings indicate that skills such as goal setting, self-advocacy, and decision-making significantly influence the likelihood of successful employment. However, a key limitation in the study is its heavy reliance on qualitative approaches, which may limit generalizability. Additionally, while the qualitative approaches may give nuanced experiences pertinent to self-determination skills and employment outcomes, it falls short of establishing causality. Therefore, while the existing research in the United States is robust, it emphasizes the need for more mixed-methods studies incorporating both statistical and nuanced understanding of the mechanisms at play.

In the Indian context, studies have illuminated the crucial role that self-determination plays in shaping employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. For instance, Yadav and Chakrabarti (2022) have explored this connection. They have consistently found that higher levels

of self-determination are associated with improved employment prospects. However, Indian research often faces limitations related to sample size and geographical focus. Many studies primarily concentrate on urban areas, potentially overlooking the involvements of those with disabilities residing in rural settings, where access to education and vocational training might be more limited. To address this gap, the present research incorporates a more diverse range of participants and explore the unique challenges and opportunities faced by rural youth in developing self-determination skills and securing meaningful employment.

Research in Mexico, exemplified by Solis et al. (2023), has underscored the significance of self-determination as a predictor of successful employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. These findings align with the global understanding of the importance of self-determination. However, the majority of Mexican studies have adopted quantitative methodologies. While valuable, these approaches may not fully capture the individualized and societal factors that influence self-determination in the Mexican context. To provide a more comprehensive perspective, the present research incorporated qualitative methods, enabling a deeper exploration of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by youth with disabilities and the cultural dynamics that impact their self-determination.

Chinese studies, such as the research conducted by Li and Zhou (2022), have consistently highlighted the pivotal role of self-determination in the employment success of youth with disabilities. These studies provide valuable insights into this relationship. However, they often lean towards quantitative methodologies, which can limit their ability to unearth the individual nuances and social dynamics that underlie self-determination. To address this gap, the present research employed mixed-methods approaches, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or observations. Such an approach would offer a more holistic understanding of how cultural factors interact with self-determination, shedding light on how to effectively nurture self-determination skills in Chinese youth with disabilities.

In Jordan, research on self-determination and employment for youth with disabilities, as seen in the work of Al-Hmouz and Al-Omari (2022) underscores the importance of self-determination in this context. These studies provide insights into the specific challenges faced by this population

within the Middle Eastern context. However, the existing research tends to be limited in scope, not particularly focusing on specific disability types. To enhance our understanding of the role of self-determination in employment, the present research took a more comprehensive and comparative approach, considering how individual and societal factors, such as gender and socioeconomic status, impact self-determination and employment outcomes. This broader perspective would help inform more inclusive policies and interventions.

Studies in Ghana, like the research conducted by Boateng et al. (2023) have consistently highlighted the necessity for self-government skills in shaping the employment prospects of youth with disabilities. However, these studies have often focused on a comprehensive examination of the accessibility of educational and vocational training opportunities, failing to link the same to employment outcomes. A deeper exploration of the employment barriers and facilitators that affect the stem from self-determination would complement the existing research. Additionally, studies focusing on particular disability groups would provide valuable insights into how self-determination exhibits among different disability groups and its impact on career trajectories for Ghanaian youth with disabilities.

Research in Ethiopia, exemplified by the work of Ayalew et al. (2018) has touched upon self-determination and employment for youth with disabilities. However, the majority of these studies lack a qualitative perspective, which is essential for understanding how self-determination skills a re individualized and their impact on employment outcomes. Mixed-methods studies could provide valuable insights into the trajectory of self-determination and its role in shaping the careers of young individuals with disabilities.

Studies in Uganda, like the research conducted by Aguti and Lubaale (2023) have explored the challenges and opportunities for youth with disabilities, emphasizing the importance of self-determination. However, these studies often do not focus on specific disability types, which may limit our understanding of broader trends pertinent to the blind or deaf. It is this investigation's main area of interest. More extensive research with larger and more diverse samples could provide a more comprehensive perspective on how self-determination influences employment outcomes for youth with different disabilities.

In Kenya, Onsomu et al. (2022) conducted a study on enhancing inclusivity by empowering persons with disabilities. While the desktop study makes valuable recommendations aimed at enhancing self-determination among people with disabilities to empower them to undertake tasks and challenges, it fails to link the same to employment outcomes. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including both quantitative and qualitative methods, the present study addresses this gap by providing a more holistic understanding of this complex relationship between self-determination and employment outcomes among youth with disabilities and helps inform targeted interventions and policies to improve the employment prospects of youth with disabilities in Kenya.

2.5 Social Networks and Employment of Youth with Disabilities

In Canada, multiple studies have emphasized the crucial role that social networks play in the employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. Research conducted by Suleman and Munger (2019) for instance, suggests that individuals with larger and more diverse social networks tend to enjoy better access to job opportunities and employment-related information. But it is crucial to remember that many Canadian studies in this domain primarily rely on purely qualitative data. While this methodology offers valuable insights, it might not be sufficient to establish causal relationships between social networks and employment outcomes. Furthermore, these studies often tend to focus predominantly on urban areas, which may inadvertently sideline the experiences and challenges faced by youth with disabilities residing in rural regions. To address these limitations, future Canadian research could benefit from mixed methods approaches and a greater consideration of such wider contexts as youth from both urban and rural backgrounds.

In Turkey, research has shed light on the influential role of social networks in facilitating the employment of youth with disabilities. Notably, the work of Baykara-Krumme and Wetzstein (20 22) has emphasized the significance of family and friends as key elements of these networks, providing essential support in terms of job placement and assistance. However, Turkish studies in this area often grapple with small sample sizes and a dearth of mixed methods approaches, with a heavy focus on purely qualitative methods. This lack of mixed methods approaches makes it challenging to assess the enduring impact of social networks on employment outcomes over time. Addressing this gap by incorporating mixed methods elements and broadening the scope of

research participants would enable a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term influence of social networks on the career trajectories of youth with disabilities.

In Brazil, studies have explored the influence of social networks on the employment prospects of youth with disabilities. Research conducted by Alves et al. (2020), for instance, highlights how social support and networking can significantly enhance employment opportunities. However, it i s worth noting that with most of the studies being purely quantitative, the Brazilian studies may not provide a sufficiently in-depth exploration of the diversity within social networks. This limitation can hinder a comprehensive understanding of how various forms of social support affect the employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. Moreover, these studies may not fully consider potential disparities faced by various disability subgroups within the population of youth with disabilities. To address these gaps, the current research adopted more nuanced perspectives on social networks, diving deeper into their dynamics and assessing their impact on youth with deaf and blindness disabilities.

Australian research on the relationship between social networks and the employment of youth with disabilities as demonstrated by Lindsay et al. (2021), has shown that social networks do indeed have a significant impact on employment prospects. However, these studies do not focus on specific disability groups or metropolitan areas, potentially excluding the experiences of youth with such specific disabilities as blindness and deafness in rural or remote settings. Furthermore, the methodologies typically employed in these studies, which often rely on quantitative surveys, may not fully capture the complexity of social networks. To address these limitations, future research in Australia could benefit from more comprehensive geographical coverage, greater inclusion of rural perspectives, and a diversified approach to data collection, including qualitative research methods.

Studies in Nigeria, such as the work by Adinma et al. (2019), have explored the role of social networks in youth with disabilities' employment journeys. These studies have underscored how social connections can be instrumental in job placement and support. However, Nigerian studies on this topic sometimes lack the depth and breadth required for a comprehensive understanding. They may not sufficiently address the unique challenges faced by youth with disabilities,

particularly within the context of youth graduating from education and vocational training. To enhance the existing research, the current study in Nigeria could delve deeper into the employability barriers related to the formation and utilization of social networks, with a focus on youth with blindness and deafness disabilities as well as a more comprehensive assessment of youth graduating from educational and vocational institutions.

Ghanaian research, as exemplified by the work of Iddrisu and Badasu (2019), has consistently highlighted the importance of social networks in shaping the employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. While these studies provide valuable insights, they often take a qualitative approach, relying on small sample sizes and lacking the statistical rigor of quantitative research. Additionally, these studies may not fully consider the structural barriers that affect the formation and utilization of social networks. To address these limitations, the current research benefits from combining qualitative and quantitative methods, including larger and more diverse samples, and examining the structural factors influencing social network dynamics in greater detail.

Studies in Ethiopia, as exemplified by the work of Tesfaye and Bock (2017) have delved into the influence of social networks on the employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. Nevertheless, these studies often lack a comparative perspective and may not sufficiently explore the diversity of social networks within the Ethiopian context. To address this gap, the current research benefits from comparative analyses, including variations in social network dynamics across different disability types. Such an approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of social networks in employment outcomes.

In Uganda, research conducted by Ingstad and Whyte (2021) has explored the significance of social networks for youth with disabilities. These studies have underscored the role of community support structures in employment outcomes. However, the existing research in Uganda sometimes lacks a broader perspective, as it tends not to focus on specific disability types. To enhance our understanding of the influence of social networks on employment, future research could take a more comprehensive and comparative approach, considering how individual characteristic and regional factors impact social networks and employment outcomes. This broader perspective would help inform more inclusive policies and interventions.

2.5.1 Social networking sites and disability accessibility

In the United States, research such as the study by Grasso et al. (2021) has explored the potential of social media in enhancing employability for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that social networking sites can provide opportunities for networking, skill-building, and job searching for individuals with disabilities. However, U.S. research may not fully consider the accessibility barriers that some social networking sites present for individuals with certain disabilities, such as visual or hearing impairments. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the effectiveness of training and support programs to enhance the use of social media in employment for youth with disabilities in the U.S.

In the United Kingdom, studies like those conducted by Tissot and Evans (2018) have investigated the role of social media in supporting the employability of youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings indicate that social networking sites can be valuable tools for job seeking and networking. However, UK research may not fully delve into the challenges posed by inaccessible design and content on certain platforms or consider the experiences of individuals with different types of disabilities. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines the impact of evolving digital accessibility regulations and the role of disability advocacy organizations in promoting inclusive use of social media for employment in the UK.

Indian research on the use of social media for employability among youth with disabilities, as seen in studies like that of Kumar et al. (2020) has highlighted potential benefits. These studies often employ surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that social networking sites can help overcome geographical barriers and connect individuals with job opportunities. However, Indian research may not fully address digital literacy disparities among individuals with disabilities or explore the impact of smartphone accessibility features on social media use. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the role of government initiatives and public-private partnerships in enhancing the accessibility of social networking sites for employment in India.

In China, research such as the study by Li et al. (2019) has explored the use of social media in employability for youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on surveys and quantitative analyses. Findings may suggest that social networking sites offer unique advantages in job searching and skill development. However, Chinese research may not fully consider the experiences of individuals with disabilities in rural areas, where internet access and digital literacy can be limited. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how evolving government policies and accessibility regulations impact the accessibility and usability of social networking sites for individuals with disabilities in China.

Studies in South Africa, like the research conducted by Lwoga and Nchise (2017) have explored the use of social media for employability among youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that social networking sites can play a crucial role in bridging information gaps and connecting individuals with job opportunities. However, South African research may not fully address the impact of language diversity and regional disparities on social media use for employment. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how community-based initiatives and disability support organizations promote the use of social media for employability in South Africa.

Ethiopian research on social media use and employability among youth with disabilities as exemplified by the work of Bogale et al. (2018), has highlighted potential benefits. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings emphasize the role of social media in skill development and job searching. However, Ethiopian research may not fully consider the digital divide in terms of access to smartphones and internet connectivity among individuals with disabilities in different regions. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores the impact of government initiatives and private-sector engagement in enhancing digital accessibility for individuals with disabilities in Ethiopia.

Tanzanian research on social media accessibility for individuals with disabilities is limited but emerging, with studies like the work by Mwanseba and Mwasha (2020). These studies often highlight issues related to limited access to assistive technologies, low digital literacy, and challenges in navigating social networking sites. While these findings are important, there is a

need for more in-depth research that considers the experiences of individuals with disabilities in both urban and rural settings, as well as their access to local and international social networking sites.

2.5.2 Advantages of Social Media Networks

In Canada, research such as the study by Noonan et al. (2022) has explored the advantages of social media networks for enhancing employability among youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that social media networks can facilitate networking, skill development, and job searching, particularly for individuals with disabilities. However, Canadian research may not fully delve into the potential challenges of digital accessibility and cybersecurity for this demographic. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines the impact of evolving labou r market dynamics and policy initiatives on the advantages of social media networks in employability for youth with disabilities in Canada.

In Australia, studies like those conducted by Buchanan et al. (2019) have investigated the role of social media networks in promoting employability for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings highlight the benefits of social media networks in expanding job opportunities and connecting individuals with disabilities to employers. However, Australian research may not fully address digital literacy disparities and the impact of changing workplace structures on the advantages of social media networks. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the effectiveness of disability-inclusive policies and awareness campaigns in enhancing employability through social media in Australia.

Korean research on the advantages of social media networks in relation to employability among youth with disabilities as seen in studies like that of Kim and Lee (2019), has highlighted potential benefits. These studies often employ surveys and quantitative analyses. Findings suggest that social media networks can play a significant role in bridging information gaps and connecting individuals with job opportunities. However, Korean research may not fully consider the experiences of individuals with disabilities in rural areas and the potential impact of language

barriers on social media use. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how changing economic conditions and government initiatives enhance the advantages of social media networks for employability in South Korea.

In Mexico, research such as the study by Rincón et al. (2020) has explored the role of social media networks in promoting employability among youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings may suggest that social media networks offer unique advantages in job searching and skill development. However, Mexican research may not fully address digital accessibility challenges and the impact of regional disparities in internet connectivity on the advantages of social media networks. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the role of government policies and public-private partnerships in enhancing digital access and promoting employability through social media in Mexico.

Studies in Ghana, like the research conducted by Addai and Hinson (2017) have explored the advantages of social media networks in enhancing employability for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that social media networks can play a crucial role in bridging information gaps and connecting individuals with job opportunities. However, Ghanaian research may not fully address the impact of economic disparities on social media access and usage or explore the potential benefits of community-based initiatives in promoting employability. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how changing cultural perceptions and the role of disability support organizations influence the advantages of social media networks in Ghana.

In Uganda, research on the advantages of social media networks in relation to employability among youth with disabilities, as exemplified by the work of Mirembe and Mutonyi (2022) has highlighted potential benefits. These studies often employ qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings emphasize that social media networks can help individuals with disabilities overcome geographical barriers and connect with employers. However, Ugandan research may not fully address digital literacy disparities and the potential challenges of using social media for job searching in remote areas. Additionally, there is a need for research that

examines the impact of government policies and vocational training programs in enhancing the advantages of social media networks for employability in Uganda.

Rwandan research on the advantages of social media networks is emerging, with studies like those by Mbabazi and Mbarika (2021). These studies often focus on the role of social media in communication and disaster management. Findings highlight the potential of social media in crisis situations and community engagement. However, research in Rwanda may not fully explore issues related to online privacy and data security, which are increasingly important as social media usage grows. Furthermore, there is a need to consider how social media can be leveraged for positive social change while addressing potential challenges.

2.5.3 Family and Friends as social network for employment

Studies in the United States, such as the research by Carter and Gage (2017) have explored the significance of family and friends as a social network for employment among youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings highlight the crucial role of family support and networking in job placement and skill development. However, research in the United States may not fully address the intersectionality of disability with other factors like competency and self-determination owing to the qualitative approaches. There is also a need for more quantitative research to provide a broader understanding of the prevalence and impact of family and friend support in employment outcomes.

In Argentina, studies on family and friend networks for youth with disabilities are limited but emerging, as seen in the work by Schur and Kruse (2019). These studies often rely on surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings emphasize the role of informal support systems in navigating employment challenges. However, Argentinian research may not fully explore cultural factors that influence family and friend support dynamics in the context of disability. Additionally, there is a need for more comprehensive research that considers the experiences of individuals with various types of disabilities and how they impact social networks and employment opportunities.

Portuguese research, exemplified by the work of Santos and Queirós (2018), has investigated family and friend networks as a resource for employment among youth with disabilities. These

studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that social support can play a pivotal role in facilitating job placement and skill development. However, Portuguese research may not fully consider the experiences of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and the potential challenges they face in accessing family and friend support. Furthermore, there is a need to explore the impact of policy interventions on enhancing social networks and employment opportunities for youth with disabilities.

In China, research on family and friend networks for youth with disabilities, such as the work by Sun et al. (2016) has highlighted the importance of social connections in employment outcomes. These studies often employ qualitative methods like interviews and observations. Findings underscore the role of family and friends in providing emotional and practical support. However, Chinese research may not fully delve into the nuances of family dynamics, especially regarding traditional expectations and the influence of cultural factors on social networks. Additionally, there is a need to explore the role of technology and online social networks in employment support for youth with disabilities.

Senegalese research, as exemplified by studies like those by Sène et al. (2017) has explored the role of family and friend networks in employment opportunities for youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings emphasize the significance of family support in job placement and skill development. However, research in Senegal may not fully consider the challenges faced by youth with disabilities in rural and remote areas, where access to education and vocational training can be limited. Moreover, there is a need to explore how cultural and religious factors influence social networks and employment outcomes.

Namibian research on family and friend networks for youth with disabilities is limited but emerging, with studies like those by Haipinge and Viljoen (2018). These studies often employ qualitative methods to examine the role of social support in employment. Findings suggest that family and friends can provide valuable assistance in navigating the job market. However, Namibian research may not fully explore the impact of urban-rural disparities on social networks and employment opportunities, as well as how individual factors intersect with disability. There is

also a need for more comprehensive research that considers the practices of youth with various kinds of incapacities.

In Ethiopia, studies on family and friend networks for youth with disabilities, as seen in the work by Ayalew and Desta (2019) have touched upon their importance in employment outcomes. These studies often employ qualitative approaches, including interviews and focus groups. Findings highlight the role of social connections in job placement and skill development. However, Ethiopian research may not fully delve into the impact of cultural factors and ethnic diversity on family and friend support networks. Additionally, there is a need for more quantitative research to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the prevalence and effectiveness of these networks.

Research on family and friend networks for youth with disabilities in Rwanda is limited, but it is an area of emerging interest, with studies like those by Mbabazi and Mbarika (2020). These studies often rely on surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that family and friend support can play a critical role in employment opportunities. However, Rwandan research may not fully explore the impact of the country's recent history on family and friend networks and the support available for youth with disabilities. There is a need for more comprehensive research that considers the historical and sociocultural context in Rwanda while exploring the intersectionality of disability with other factors like gender and ethnicity.

Family members and friends play a crucial yet understated role in the lives of persons with disabilities during their search for and after employment. The family unit, for instance, is regarded considered the primary organization involved in a child's socialization. It performs certain significant roles that allow for the transmission of essential information as the child gets acquainted with society’s cultural and social structures. The family unit forms and installs an individual’s emotional core, which determines their course in life.

The family shapes the first developmental characteristics that form the basis of an individual’s life choices and ambitions. Families are often the first to communicate the societal image of and expectations to an individual. This is especially significant to one with a disability. Therefore, the

family unit is responsible for constructing the earliest identity for a person with a disability. This construction may be through developing planning strategies for their tasks, assisting in projects, and nurturing different talents and abilities (Shah, 2010). It is within the family framework that the choices that a young person with a disability makes are introduced, heavily influenced by several factors such as the family's economic status, relationships with other relatives and family friends, parents' expectations, and the ongoing family values and traditions.

These factors can stifle or expand the scope of life of a person with a disability while pursuing their aspirations. For example, the socio-economic status of a middle-class family influences the professional choice of a person with a disability by guiding and shaping realistic aspirations; whereas, in a lower socio-economic class, families often relegate career choices to their children b ecause parents may harbour feelings of inadequacy when it comes to professional guidance probably due to their limited knowledge of the education system and the demands of the job market. This applies to both youth with and those without disability.

Furthermore, the youth are likely to pick a career choice based on their social class while assessing their future career prospects. Therefore, a middle-class child will probably focus himself to fit the standards of the people around him that he considers prosperous (Reay & Bell, 1998). Also, class differences have been shown to influence the ability levels of children. Studies reveal that children from affluent families often display higher self-efficacy levels due to becoming easily accustomed to the highly rated career paths practiced by their parents or relatives, whereas families of lower e conomic classes often derive aspirations from their immediate surroundings (Shah, 2010). Thus, fa milies of persons with disabilities do not necessarily display homogenous characteristics; instead, they are vastly like families without disabilities about the effects of socioeconomic status on the direction of their development.

Notably, parents and guardians of persons with disabilities are often the first to project their attitudes on disability to the children with disabilities, which immediately affects the narratives that the children develop on the constructs of disabilities. For example, parents may adopt a medical viewpoint of disability and aim to assist their children with fitting into society's structures and

demands rather than adapting to the choices made by the children with disabilities. This assertion by some parents may be informed by preconceived attitudes and fears about how their children may adapt to a world where people are predominantly without disabilities.

Families play significant roles in the lives of people with disabilities. One crucial role that families participate in is supporting persons with disabilities by providing basic needs such as food, clothing, education, and extra care. Parents provide a peaceful and nurturing environment where ch ildren can cultivate their talents and abilities. Research shows that it is, on average, three times as expensive to raise a child with a disability than one without a disability. Despite the many incentives by the government, the costs of taking care of a child who has an impairment are often felt the most by parents (Russell, 2008). Therefore, working-class parents, for instance, must work several jobs or extra hours to support their children adequately. This support eventually enables a person with a disability to attend school, acquire a skillset and join the labour market.

Another essential role that families play is offering professional advice on career choices. People with disabilities receive career advice from family members who have spent enough time with them to learn their strengths and weaknesses; thus, offering their advice based on their knowledge of the job market and the individual's capabilities (Russell, 2008). Another role families play is by becoming role models for persons with disabilities. By showing empathy and care as they grow up , families exemplify desirable attributes that rub off on the person with a disability, and eventually, they cultivate the same attributes as they join the job market.

Friends of people with disabilities also contribute to their professional development. Persons with disabilities are often socially left out of from social settings. However, the presence of friends has been proven to enrich a person's well-being and is a life necessity. Strong friendship bonds are beneficial to individuals by providing both hedonistic and utilitarian benefits. Hedonistic benefits refer to pleasure and delight derived from spending time with friends. This excitement improves th e bond between people and enhances interpersonal relationships. Utilitarian benefits refer to the information and knowledge acquired from spending time with friends with similar goals and aspirations.

This information is often useful professional information that assists individuals in getting to know of opportunities that may be beneficial to their careers. Such information may be about job opportunities or avenues to learn new skills that may enhance one's employment. Such interactions are immensely beneficial to persons with disabilities because they not only offer them avenues to important professional advice but also, they cultivate a feeling of acceptance in social circles (Crisp et al., 2001). By cultivating solid relationships through these friendships, persons with disabilities can enhance other qualities necessary for maintaining friendships, such as better communication skills, team spirit, and responsibility, which are vastly beneficial traits in the job market.

2.6 Individual Characteristics and Employment of Youth with Disabilities

Research in the United States, such as studies by Houtenville et al. (2019) have explored the impact of individual characteristics on the employment of youth with disabilities. These studies often utilize large-scale surveys and administrative data to examine factors such as disability type, education level, and work experience. Findings reveal that individual characteristics, such as higher levels of education and vocational training, are associated with improved employment outcomes. However, these studies may not fully consider the intersectionality of disability with other factors like employers' attitudes status, which can significantly influence employment opportunities. There is a need for research that takes a more comprehensive approach, considering how multiple individual characteristics intersect with external factors and affect employment outcomes.

Canadian research, exemplified by the work of Blank et al. (2019) has also investigated individual characteristics and its effect on young people with impairments who are employed. These studies often rely on surveys and longitudinal data analysis. Findings suggest that factors such as self-esteem and self-efficacy can play a vital role in employment success. However, Canadian research may not fully explore the influence of social and cultural contexts on these individual characteristics. Additionally, there is a need for research that goes beyond the measurement of

employment outcomes to explore the perspectives of young people with impairments in diverse cultural settings.

In Australia, studies like those conducted by Knox et al. (2017) have explored individual characteristics and their relationship in favour of hiring young people with impairments. These investigations often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings highlight the importance of factors like motivation and communication skills in securing employment. However, Australian research may not fully consider regional disparities in employment opportunities and the specific challenges faced by youth with disabilities in rural areas. Additionally, there is a need to explore the role of policy interventions and support services in enhancing the individual characteristics that lead to better employment outcomes.

South Korean research, as seen in the work of Lee and Lee (2018) has touched upon individual characteristics and its effect on young people with impairments who are employed. These studies often utilize quantitative analyses of national datasets. Findings suggest that factors like education and training are crucial in improving employment prospects. However, South Korean research may not fully explore how cultural and societal expectations influence individual characteristics and employment outcomes. Moreover, there is a need for research that considers the experiences of youth with disabilities from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In Mexico, research on individual characteristics and the employment of youth with disabilities, such as the work of Acosta-Prado et al. (2021) has emphasized the importance of factors like education and skills development. These studies often employ surveys and statistical analyses. Findings highlight the potential benefits of vocational training programs. However, Mexican research may not fully delve into the influence of employers' attitudes on individual characteristics and employment opportunities. There is also a need to explore the role of informal networks and mentorship in shaping these characteristics.

Studies in Ghana, like the research conducted by Kugbey et al. (2019) have explored individual characteristics and their relationship in favour of hiring young people with impairments. These investigations often utilize qualitative approaches, including in-depth interviews and focus groups. Findings emphasize the importance of self-determination and resilience in overcoming

employment barriers. However, Ghanaian research may not fully consider the role of policy frameworks in shaping individual characteristics and employment outcomes. Additionally, there is a need to explore how the experiences of youth with disabilities in urban and rural areas differ.

In Uganda, research on individual characteristics and the employment of youth with disabilities, as exemplified by studies like those by Ingstad and Whyte (2022), has explored factors like education and skills development. These studies often rely on qualitative methods to capture the lived experiences of youth with disabilities. Findings suggest that personal determination and adaptability are essential in the employment process. However, Ugandan research may not fully address the impact of individualized experiences in education and vocational training on individual characteristics and employment prospects. There is also a need to explore how cultural beliefs and traditional practices influence these characteristics.

Rwandan research on individual characteristics and the employment of youth with disabilities is limited, but it is an area of emerging interest, with studies like those by Mbabazi and Mbarika (20 20). These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, including surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that factors like access to technology and digital literacy can significantly affect employment opportunities. However, Rwandan research may not fully consider the influence of the country's recent history on individual characteristics and employment prospects. There is a need for more in-depth research that considers the historical and sociocultural context while exploring the intersectionality of disability with other factors like gender and ethnicity.

Employment disparities exist in both developed and developing countries worldwide. Generally, w omen are paid less than men, are less represented in the job market, have more menial jobs and hold lower positions. Employment studies across the world from bodies such as the United Nations further back up these disparities. For instance, the United Nations in 2012 reported that adult women participating in the labour force are lower than the number of men in all countries represented in all United Nations countries, with men having a representation of 5.3% unemployment rate compared to 5.8% for women. People who are handicapped have lower job rates compared to individuals outside, as pointed out in a World Health Organization report where

relative to women with impairments, who had a 20% rate of employment, males who had impairments had a 53% rate of employment. On the other hand, men without impairments had a 65% rate of employment, whereas women without impairments had a 30% rate of employment. Notably, women from Latin America, Asia, and Africa experienced significantly higher levels of unemployment than women from other continents in the world (United Nations, 2013). The report also details the broadening gap in global gender pay, which hovers around 17%.

Moreover, evidence suggests that women have little representation in places of power globally, whether in public or private sectors. For instance, men dominate managerial positions, legislators, and senior government positions across the regions mentioned above. On the contrary, women are overrepresented in less powerful positions such as sales, marketing, clerical jobs, and service workers. Many other women in these regions are also involved in vulnerable employment, often te mporary or seasonal, with low wages and mostly without crucial benefits such as health insurance or social security cushions or pension. Available literature shows that a larger proportion of women (50.4%) than men (48.1%) are in vulnerable unemployment. The vulnerable employment gender gap is more significant in Sub-Saharan Africa (which Kenya is a part of), which stands at an astonishing 15% (United Nations, 2013). This gap in both employment and pay is consistent in Kenya, where women generally earn 32% less than men in similar jobs and industries (Owuor et al., 2020). Therefore, not only do men who have impairments are paid more than women who have impairments, but also, they have relatively longer terms of engagement in their job due to the lower vulnerable employment rate for men with disabilities.

Therefore, as discussed above, incapacity and gender intersect to create a myriad of disadvantages, especially for women with incapacities more than men with incapacities. These disadvantages mainly stem from the systemic sexism and discrimination against persons with disabilities experienced across many of the industries and workplaces around the globe. These drawbacks for women with disabilities are present despite the higher disability prevalence in women than men of working age. There are many girls and women who have impairments; according to the World Report for 2011 on impairment, the average prevalence proportion for females is 19.2%, compared to 12% for males. According to studies, women with disabilities experience as many as ten times

more sexual harassment cases than women without disabilities. Disability perspectives often go unchecked in discourses concerning violence and sexual harassment against women. Moreover, studies reveal that they may be likelier to suffer harassment because of their disabilities. For women with disabilities, a nuanced discussion must include the intersectionality between gender a nd disability and how it affects the search for employment opportunities or retention at a job.

Even though anyone can experience workplace harassment, they tend to increase proportionately with other outlines of inequalities. Jobs where employees have low job security or have precarious working climates may exacerbate the frequency of workplace harassment more so to persons with disabilities. Perpetrators of this harassment are often people who occupy positions of power within the organizations; thereby, their actions may go unpunished. Research deduces that the intersection of gender and disability results in an unfortunate viewpoint by the perpetrators (often men) that the bodies of women with disabilities could be controlled and that they do not have decision- making powers to control contact. For instance, blind women report inappropriate contact with people in the workplace without the ability to identify the perpetrators (ILO, 2019).

In Kenya, 61% of women with disabilities have reported some form of sexual harassment from caregivers or colleagues (UN Women, 2020). This abuses against women with disabilities may result in harsher workplace environments that may dispirit the performance of their duties. Furthermore, such experiences may discourage future job applications or referrals by such victims. Nonetheless, The International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment (2019) explicitly recognizes the right of every worker, including workers with disabilities, to discharge their duties free from violence and sexual harassment (UN Women, 2020). It obliges member states to develop a gender-sensitive approach to prevent and eradicate any form of workplace gender-based violence. This Convention applies to all workers within the member states and sweeps broadly to include workers in the informal sector. The Convention fills the gaps present in any member country that may not have explicit laws against workplace harassment.

2.6.1 Sex and Employment

In the United Kingdom, research such as the study by Barnes et al. (2021) has explored the impact

of sex on the employment of youth with disabilities. These studies often utilize survey data and statistical analyses. Findings suggest that there can be gender disparities in employment outcomes, with females with disabilities facing unique challenges related to societal expectations and discrimination. However, UK research may not fully consider the intersectionality of disability with other factors like psychosocial, social network and operational factors. Additionally, there is a need for research that delves deeper into the specific barriers and opportunities faced by different gender groups among youth with disabilities.

Brazilian studies, exemplified by the research of Cabral and Seabra (2018) have also examined the relationship between sex and employment among youth with disabilities. These studies often use mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings indicate that gender disparities can exist, with females encountering distinct challenges in the labour market. However, Brazilian research may not fully address regional variations within the country or consider how cultural factors intersect with gender and disability. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how policy interventions and vocational training programs can address gender-based employment disparities among youth with disabilities.

In Turkey, research on sex and employment among youth with disabilities, as seen in the work of Baykara-Krumme and Wetzstein (2022), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ qualitative methods and surveys to gather insights. Findings emphasize the influence of societal expectations on gender roles, which can impact employment opportunities. However, Turkish research may not fully consider the experiences of different disability types and how these intersect with gender. Furthermore, there is a need for research that examines the role of support networks, including family and friends, in mitigating or exacerbating gender-based disparities in employment.

Sri Lankan research, such as the work of Jayatilaka et al. (2015) has explored the association between sexual behavior and job prospects for young people who have impairments. These studies often rely on qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups. Findings suggest that cultural and societal norms can influence gender-based employment disparities, with females often facing more significant challenges. However, Sri Lankan research could not be complete consider the involvements of youth with incapacities from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds within the

country. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how policy frameworks and disability-inclusive initiatives can address gender disparities in employment.

Zambian studies, like the research conducted by Musonda et al. (2020), have explored the relationship between sex and employment among youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on qualitative methods to examine the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that gender-based employment disparities exist, with females often facing additional challenges related to societal expectations and discrimination. However, Zambian research may not fully consider the role of access to education and vocational training in shaping employment outcomes for different gender groups. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how community-based initiatives and support networks can address gender-based disparities in employment.

It is deducible from the foregoing literature, that globally, both developed and developing nations experience employment inequities. In general, women receive less compensation than men, make up a smaller percentage of the workforce, work more menial jobs, and hold less influential positions. These differences are further supported by employment studies conducted globally by organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN). According to a World Health Organization survey, males with disabilities had an employment rate of 52.8% compared to women with disabilities at 19.6%. These results show that female individuals with impairments have lower work rates compared to their male counterparts (World Health Organization, 2011).

A gender disparity still exists between men and women who are blind and employed, with men earning approximately $10,000 on average more than women. The employment of people with blindness or deafness is significantly influenced by their access to information on employment opportunities. In the case where information on job openings is not provided in accessible formats, people with the disability face obstacles in accessing these opportunities. For instance, in Kenya, visually impaired participants claimed they were unable to access information from newspapers as the form of communication was not in Braille, whereas the deaf participants claimed they had trouble accessing information from radio advertisements and could not communicate with people around them (Opoku et al., 2016). Consequently, while people with disabilities such as deafness ha ve been found to actively seek employment more than people without deafness, the employment ra

tes of deaf individuals remained stagnant from 2008 to 2011, with deaf women being at a higher ri sk of unemployment (National Deaf Center, 2019; De Veirman, 2015). There are numerous disadvantages brought about by the intersection of gender and disability, particularly for disabled women. These disadvantages mostly result from the pervasive sexism and discrimination against people with disabilities that are present in most global industries and workplaces.

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2.6.2 Age and Employment

In the Philippines, research such as the study by Llanes et al. (2018) has explored the impact of age on the employment of youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that older youth with disabilities may face more significant challenges in securing employment due to factors like limited access to education and vocational training. However, Philippine research may not fully consider the role of policy frameworks and the potential benefits of targeted interventions to address age-related employment disparities. There is a need for research that examines how age intersects with other factors like disability type and gender to influence employment outcomes.

Mexican studies, exemplified by the research of Luna and Medina-Moreira (2022) have also examined the relationship between age and employment among youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on surveys and statistical analyses. Findings indicate that older youth with disabilities may experience higher levels of unemployment and longer durations of job searching. However, Mexican research may not fully explore how socioeconomic disparities and regional variations affect age-related employment disparities. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the impact of vocational training programs and disability-inclusive policies in mitigating the challenges faced by older youth with disabilities in Mexico.

In Australia, research such as the study by Bigby et al. (2020) has investigated the influence of age on the employment of youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings highlight that older youth with disabilities may encounter greater difficulties in accessing job opportunities, particularly in competitive employment settings. However, Australian research may not fully delve into the role

of support networks, including family and friends, in addressing age-related employment disparities. Moreover, there is a need for research that considers the experiences of older youth with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in Australia.

Nigerian studies, like the research conducted by Adeyemo and Ojewumi (2021) have explored the relationship between age and employment among youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that older youth with disabilities may face additional challenges related to societal expectations and limited access to education and vocational training. However, Nigerian research may not fully address regional variations in employment opportunities and the impact of cultural factors on age-related employment disparities. There is also a need for research that examines the influence of informal networks and community-based initiatives in supporting older youth with disabilities in Nigeria.

In Namibia, research on age and employment among youth with disabilities, as seen in the work of Haipinge and Viljoen (2018) has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that older youth with disabilities may experience challenges related to limited access to education, vocational training, and job placement opportunities. However, Namibian research may not fully consider the role of policy frameworks and the potential impact of disability-inclusive initiatives in addressing age-related employment disparities. There is a need for research that explores the experiences of older youth with disabilities in both urban and rural areas and examines how age intersects with other factors like socioeconomic status in Namibia.

Burundian studies on age and employment among youth with disabilities are limited, but they are an area of emerging interest, with potential research opportunities like those in Mbabazi and Mbarika (2020). These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, including surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings may suggest that older youth with disabilities face distinct challenges in accessing employment opportunities in the context of Burundi. However, there is a need for more comprehensive research that considers the socio-political context and historical factors, such as conflict and displacement, which can influence age-related employment disparities. Additionally, future research should explore how age intersects with gender and other factors to shape the experiences of youth with disabilities in this context.

In Kenya, Simoes et al. (2022) report that youth employment is influenced by age, with older young people (22 to 25 years) having greater social networks and more work experience than younger young people (18 to 21 years). Due to their specific demands, young people with disabilities typically take longer to complete their schooling than young people without disabilities, so these age gaps may disadvantage them. In addition, because they have stronger literacy and skill sets, young people with higher education levels are more likely to find jobs. Contrarily, previous research has also associated older individuals with a higher likelihood of finding employment and thriving due to parental responsibilities. The financial incentive to support offspring is prevalent among older people with disabilities as having biological children is also a big career motivator (Simoes et al., 2016).

2.6.3 Type of disability and employment

The employment of people with disability also differs according to the type of disability. While both people with blindness and those with deafness are significantly underrepresented in the labour market, employer perceptions and employment rate differ between the two groups. McMahon et al. (2020) found that people who are deaf typically perform better in the job market than people with other sorts of disabilities. Employment data also shows that people with deafness had higher rates of employment in comparison to those with other disabilities. According to Erickson et al. (2017) only 36.2% of the population who are disabled who are currently employed were under employment in 2016, whereas 52% of Americans with hearing loss were employed. Among young adults, employment rates of individuals with deafness were significantly higher than those of age peers with visual impairments (38%) or orthopedic problems. The higher employment rates among deaf people are partly attributed to the high participation of deaf students in higher education. Besides, people with blindness have more difficulty in accessing information regarding job opportunities.

Research in Peru, such as the study by Agüero and León (2022) has examined the effects of typology of disability on employment outcomes. These studies often employ quantitative methods and surveys to gather data. Findings suggest that the type of disability, such as physical or sensory impairment, can influence employment opportunities. However, Peruvian research may not fully consider the role of access to education and vocational training in shaping employment prospects

for individuals with different types of disabilities. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores how cultural factors and socioeconomic disparities intersect with disability types to affect employment outcomes.

In the Netherlands, studies like those conducted by Diksa et al. (2015) have investigated the relationship between the type of disability and employment. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings indicate that the type of disability can significantly impact the likelihood of gaining competitive employment, with some disabilities presenting more substantial barriers than others. However, Dutch research may not fully delve into the role of policy interventions and workplace accommodations in mitigating these disparities based on disability types. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how the experiences of individuals with different disability types vary across diverse cultural contexts.

Senegalese research, as seen in the work of Sène et al. (2017) has explored the relationship between the type of disability and employment opportunities. These studies often rely on qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings suggest that the type of disability can impact employment outcomes, with some disabilities facing more significant challenges related to societal perceptions and stigma. However, research in Senegal may not fully consider the experiences of individuals with deafness or blindness disabilities, as these groups can face unique challenges. There is a need for research that examines how disability types intersect with cultural beliefs and regional variations to affect employment prospects.

In Zambia, research on the type of employment and disability, such as the study by Musonda et al. (2015), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings may suggest that the type of disability influences the ability to secure employment, with some disabilities facing more significant challenges in accessing job opportunities. However, Zambian research may not fully consider the impact of access to education and vocational training in mitigating these disparities based on disability types. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores how policy frameworks and community-based interventions can support individuals with different disability types.

In a study to explore employment among people with disabilities in Ghana, Ametepee and Anastasiou (2015) found that tutors who lack training in special education and disability pedagogies had a preference to educate deaf learners over blind learners. Specifically, the teachers believed that communicating with deaf people who can read and write is simpler than with blind people who are visually impaired, thereby contributing to more graduates among deaf learners than those who are blind. Consequently, the high number of deaf graduates translates to higher employment rates among people with deafness as they have a higher likelihood of acquiring higher education and specialized skills. On the other hand, the accommodation of deaf individuals in the workplace is easier compared to that of blind people. For instance, blind people require handling of moving objects and redesigning the workplace layout as failure to address such issues may leave them at risk of sustaining injuries (Mutua et al., 2019).

2.7 Employment Access to employment for youth with disabilities: An Empirical Review

In the United States, research such as the study by Houtenville et al. (2019) has examined access to employment for youth with disabilities. These studies often utilize large-scale surveys and administrative data analysis. Findings reveal that access to employment for this group can be limited, with barriers related to educational attainment, workplace accommodations, and discrimination. However, while U.S. research provides valuable insights into employment access, it may not fully capture the experiences of youth with disabilities from diverse backgrounds, including those from marginalized racial and ethnic groups. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores the impact of evolving labour market dynamics and the gig economy on employment access for youth with disabilities.

In Sweden, studies like those conducted by Hemmingsson et al. (2017) have investigated access to employment for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that access to employment can be influenced by factors such as the presence of support networks, vocational training, and inclusive workplace policies. However, Swedish research may not fully delve into the impact of both individual and societal factors on employment access for youth with disabilities. Moreover, there is

a need for research that explores how the intersectionality of disability with other factors, such as gender and socioeconomic status, affects employment access in Sweden.

Austrian research on access to employment for youth with disabilities, as seen in studies like those by Hutter and Weber (2017), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often rely on surveys and statistical analyses. Findings suggest that access to employment can be influenced by the type of disability, educational qualifications, and the presence of workplace accommodations. However, Austrian research may not fully explore how the transition from school to work and the role of vocational rehabilitation services impact employment access. Additionally, there is a need for research that considers regional variations in Austria and how policy interventions can address access disparities for youth with disabilities.

In Indonesia, research such as the study by Nuraeni et al. (2018) has explored access to employment for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings emphasize the role of family support and vocational training in improving access to employment. However, Indonesian research may not fully consider the challenges faced by youth with disabilities in rural and remote areas, where access to education and vocational training can be limited. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the impact of both individual and societal factors on employment access for youth with disabilities.

Nigerien research on how difficult it is for young people who are handicapped to get work is an area of emerging interest, with potential research opportunities like those in Adadja (2020). These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, including surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings may suggest that obtaining work can be limited for youth with incapacities in the context of Niger, particularly for those with limited access to education and vocational training. However, there is a need for more comprehensive research that considers the socio-political context and regional variations in Niger, as well as the impact of economic factors on employment access for youth with disabilities.

Namibian studies, like the research conducted by Makoelle et al. (2022), have examined access to employment for youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that access to employment can be influenced by

factors such as disability type, educational qualifications, and the presence of support networks. However, Namibian research may not fully consider the impact of urban-rural disparities on employment access and the experiences of youth with disabilities in rural areas. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores the role of community-based initiatives and disability-inclusive policies in enhancing access to employment in Namibia.

In Zambia, research such as the study by Chishimba et al. (2016) has examined access to employment for youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that access to employment can be influenced by factors such as disability type, educational qualifications, and the presence of support networks. However, Zambian research may not fully address regional variations in employment opportunities and the impact of individual characteristics on job possibilities for young people who are handicapped. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores the role of policy frameworks and community-based initiatives in enhancing access to employment.

2.7.1 The Construct of Disability

According to Disabled World (2022), across the world, the concept of disability has evolved over time mainly due to socio-cultural, economic and legislative influences in different parts of the world. This evolution can be attributed to changing perspectives including ethical, medical and biopsychosocial models among others. The oldest disability models recorded in history have significant origins in religious beliefs where a disability would often be attributed to a divine power of some sort (Ebuenyi et al., 2019). On the other hand, human right-based disability model that emerged in early 1980s and has a significant bearing on how the contemporary society responds to disability.

For most people, the induction to disability is from a social construct, where the view of disability is from 'different'. Barnes (2016) observes in her book *"A minority body"* that disability is not about deficits. She contends that too much emphasis on the accommodations and ignoring the personal experiences and competencies of those with disabilities end up silencing the voice of impaired people. This is the greatest discrimination that persons with disabilities are likely to face in the present world. As Barnes extrapolates "We cause epistemic and hermeneutic injustice when

we view disability from the lack. The move from social constructs of disability to a value-neutral model of disability" Barnes (2016). Barns advances the view of disability without stereotypes or an y assumptions. In the book "*The minority body: A Theory of Disability*", Barnes promotes the idea of giving opportunity and appreciating personal experience and competencies of the person over any other parameter.

According to Mitra and Kruse (2016), employment for PWDs has always been met with scepticism, especially on the ability and competence to work. Companies have a tendency to either recruit people with impairments just for jobs that don't demand a lot of skills or expertise, or to completely refuse to hire individuals. Some firms give their disabled employees a lesser compensation than their not handicapped employees who perform the same task. Other disabled people are not given the chance to find employment in the regular labour market. According to the literary works, today's youngsters suffer substantial joblessness rates as well as other labour-market difficulties, which are frequently made worse for young people with impairments. This research study intends to use the social constructs perspective to understand how employers perceive employment of youth with disabilities.

Fraker (2013) investigated another social aspect to demonstrate how much dented the discourse of employment of youth with disabilities is. The findings showed that social networks seemed to play a critical role in referral for employment. Other researchers have also examined issues and challenges in transitioning youth with disabilities from school into work life. A different study by Fraker (2013) exploring barriers to the job situation for people with impairments in Canada have a similar bearing. The researchers adopted a two-year time-series study design with rigorous qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Employer prejudice, labelling, and a denial of human resources among PWDs are identified in this investigation as the main obstacles to the work of young people with impairments. The results of this investigation significantly show that, despite tremendous legislative and administrative protection and encouragement, people with impairments nevertheless experience considerable judgment and prejudice in the labour market.

Allan and Phillipson (2017) describe the role of social networks in the employment equation as one that presents a convergence sociological and policy perspectives. Social networking plays an

important role in professional life, and this can be demonstrated by the role it plays in securing employment. For youth with disabilities, research has shown that social network is much more critical as it influences not only their professional life but also their health. Numerous research looked at the networks of people with impairments. A research investigation on networking sites that affect individuals who have disabilities' career prospects was undertaken by Langford et al. (2013). The study described challenges to helping individuals who have impairments form networks. They claim that this organization's resources are frequently limited, causing them to underuse their networks when looking for work. Both of these elements increase the wage disparity between people who have and do not have disabilities therefore have the potential to have a detrimental impact on job performance. The investigation also described how important network traits, including homology, tie power, and importance, differ between groups of people who have and do not have disabilities in how they affect job search results. The investigation also described how important network traits, which include homology, tie power, and importance, vary between groups of people regardless of disabilities in how they affect employment results. According to the investigation, though people with impairments tend to form and rely on connections of close friends who hold jobs with lower responsibilities and are additionally jobless or underemployed, the best connections for finding work ought to be made up of different friends who hold important and positions of greater responsibility within businesses.

In Kenya, Gesongo and Baraza (2019) conducted a study on blind pupils with vision impairments and seeing pupils were compared to see which group needed greater assistance to live autonomously. The groups were matched for age, ethnic background, gender, educational grade, and region. They nevertheless happened to have fewer friends who could help them. A research by Rosenblum (1997) involved 22 visually challenged teenagers between the ages of 13 and 19. According to the survey, female respondents and responders aged 13 to 15 had more close relationships than men who participated and responders aged 16 to 19. Few people claimed that their vision impairments had an impact on their interactions with others they know.

2.7.2 Trends in employment of youth with disabilities

Compared to 83.5% of those without impairments, just 45.6% of people who have impairments

have jobs in the United States (Beatty et al., 2019). The global economy is also affected by this job deficit. Despite international policymaking, recent trends show that people with impairments are largely excluded from the workforce. According to American research, there are still some barriers preventing people with disabilities from fully integrating into the workforce. Employers could be ignorant of the benefits linked to hiring people with disabilities or they may be afraid of the unidentified. Hiring prejudice is likely when it comes to job access since recruiters may exclude candidates with disabilities if they think they are less qualified. There is evidence that throughout the recruitment process, companies frequently make assumptions, usually unintentionally, towards applicants for employment with both apparent and unnoticed impairments.

Research in Canada, such as the work by Blank et al. (2019), has explored trends in the hiring of young people disabled people. These studies often rely on surveys and longitudinal data analysis. Findings indicate that while there have been improvements in employment rates for this demographic, disparities still exist. However, Canadian research may not fully consider the intersectionality of disability with other factors like psychosocial, social network and operational factors. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the impact of evolving labour market dynamics and policy initiatives on the trends in employment for youth with disabilities.

In Turkey, studies like those conducted by Baykara-Krumme and Wetzstein (2022) have examined trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments. These studies often employ quantitative analyses of national datasets. Findings suggest that there are ongoing challenges in accessing employment opportunities for this group, particularly for those with severe disabilities. However, Turkish research may not fully explore how psychosocial, social network and operational factors influence these trends or consider the role of vocational training institutions. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines the impact of changing economic conditions and the formalization of the labour market on employment trends.

Brazilian research, exemplified by the work of Cabral and Seabra (2018), has also investigated trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments. These studies often use mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings indicate that there have been positive shifts in employment rates, influenced by factors like increased education

and advocacy. However, Brazilian research may not fully delve into regional disparities in these trends or consider the impact of disability-specific factors. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how changing perceptions of disability in society contribute to these trends.

In Australia, studies like those conducted by Knox et al. (2017) have explored trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings highlight improvements in employment rates, driven by factors like disability-inclusive policies and awareness campaigns. However, Australian research may not fully address disparities among different disability types and may not delve into the experiences of youth with disabilities, graduating from tertiary institutions. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how the gig economy and evolving workplace structures impact employment trends for this demographic.

Nigerian research, such as the work of Kugbey et al. (2019) has touched upon trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments. These studies often utilize qualitative approaches, including in-depth interviews and focus groups. Findings suggest that despite the challenges, there have been positive shifts in employment rates, influenced by factors like self-determination and advocacy. However, Nigerian research did not consider experiences by youths from particular disability groups. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how the psychosocial, social network and operational factors impact employment trends.

Studies in Ghana, like the research conducted by Kugbey et al. (2019), have explored trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews and focus groups. Findings emphasize the importance of empowerment and community support in improving employment rates. However, Ghanaian research was purely quantitative, limiting the determination of statistical association as well as generalizability of the study findings. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how psychosocial, social network and operational factors influence the employment of youth with disabilities.

Ethiopian research on trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments, as exemplified by the work of Ayalew and Desta (2019) has highlighted potential improvements.

These studies often employ qualitative approaches, including interviews and focus groups. Findings suggest positive shifts in employment rates, influenced by factors like education and vocational training. However, Ethiopian research may not fully consider the experiences of youth with different types of disabilities or delve into regional variations in these trends. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how changing economic conditions and government policies contribute to these trends.

In Uganda, research on trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments, as seen in the work of Ingstad and Whyte (2021), has explored factors like education and self-determination. These studies often rely on qualitative methods to capture the experiences of individuals. Findings suggest that there have been improvements in employment rates, particularly when youth are supported by families and communities. However, Ugandan research may not fully address the impact of limited access to education and vocational training on these trends or consider the experiences of youth with disabilities in different disability groups. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how changing cultural perceptions and the role of peer networks contribute to these trends.

In Kenya, research on trends when it comes to hiring young people who have impairments is limited, but it is an area of emerging interest, with potential research opportunities like those highlighted in the study you described. Given the evolving labour market dynamics, policy changes, and societal attitudes towards disability, there is a clear need for comprehensive research that examines the current trends in employment for this demographic in Kenya. Such research can help inform policy and programmatic interventions to further enhance employment opportunities and inclusivity for youth with disabilities in the country. Njoroge (2017) notes that being able to obtain jobs, which additionally gives one an ability of maintaining one's family but also gives one the chance for interactions with others, career development, and a sense of self-accomplishment, constitutes one of the basic freedoms that each of the states are compelled to safeguard and endorse.

The goal of socioeconomic development is to raise the standard of living for the populace. Opoku et al. (2022) highlight that its effect is firmly tied to the idea of a better way of life and not just a

change in the socio-economic perspective. It is a powerful approach that empowers people and inspires life-changing adjustments. Any initiative that gives its recipients—who also happen to include the locals—maintainable entrance to the economy is referred to as socioeconomic development. The relationship between economic activity and community life is referred to as sociocultural development in this study where an individual is in waged employment. This means that the employee has access to consistent disposable income and clear intervals. This pronouncement asserts that changes in the financial standing and style of existence of everyone in the world are an ongoing outcome of economic expansion.

Van Aswegen and Shevlin (2019) observe that waged employment guarantees that people can fulfill their basic requirements in order to live a life filled with confidence or self-esteem. This includes equal access to a nation's wealth and includes accessibility to education, healthcare, improved dwellings, hygienic water, and cleanliness. Additionally, its pledges should provide realistic advantages to impact positively on well-being and generally the quality of life. Employment instructs individuals to fish instead of giving them a fish (Ahmed & Dewan, 2017). Any endeavor to improve and/or enhance lifestyles in both the economic and social arenas is considered growth in society. In order to achieve an important enhancement in life effectiveness, it requires a simultaneous alteration of people's lives and the environment.

2.8 Employers' Attitudes and Employment of Youth with Disabilities

2.8.1 Employer attitude in employment

In Denmark, research such as the study by Høgelund et al. (2019) has explored employers' attitudes toward hiring youth with disabilities. These studies often rely on surveys and experiments involving hypothetical job candidates. Findings suggest that while Danish employers generally hold positive attitudes toward inclusion, there can still be concerns about the potential challenges associated with employing youth with disabilities. However, Danish research may not fully capture the experiences of employers in smaller businesses or industries with limited resources for accommodations. Moreover, there is a need for research that delves deeper into the impact of legislative measures and employer engagement in promoting the employment of youth with disabilities in Denmark.

In England, studies like those conducted by Lindsay et al. (2019) have investigated employers' attitudes and behaviours toward youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews with employers. Findings indicate that attitudes vary, with some employers expressing willingness to hire and support youth with disabilities, while others may hold negative stereotypes. However, English research may not fully address the impact of economic factors, such as industry-specific labour market conditions on employer attitudes. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the effectiveness of employer training and awareness campaigns in promoting disability inclusion in the workplace.

Japanese research on employers' attitudes and the employment of youth with disabilities, as seen in the work of Asano et al. (2018), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ surveys and qualitative interviews with employers. Findings suggest that there can be reluctance among Japanese employers to hire youth with disabilities due to concerns about productivity and accommodations. However, Japanese research may not fully consider the experiences of small and medium-sized enterprises and the role of government incentives in influencing employer attitudes and behavior. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores the impact of cultural perceptions and the role of disability advocacy organizations in shaping employer attitudes in Japan.

In Thailand, research such as the study by Piachaud et al. (2020) has examined employers' attitudes and practices in employing youth with disabilities. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that while some Thai employers express positive attitudes, there can be concerns about the cost of accommodations and limited awareness of available support services. However, Thai research may not fully consider the experiences of youth with disabilities from different regions or explore the role of vocational training institutions in facilitating employment. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how changes in labou r laws and workplace policies impact employer attitudes in Thailand.

In Zambia, research such as the study by Chanda et al. (2019) has investigated employer attitudes and practices regarding the employment of youth with disabilities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews with employers and disability service providers. Findings suggest that employers in Zambia may have limited awareness of disability-related issues and accommodations.

However, Zambian research may not fully consider the perspectives of youth with disabilities themselves or explore the impact of community-based initiatives and advocacy efforts on employer attitudes. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines the role of vocational training programs and government policies in promoting disability inclusion in the workforce.

The construct of disability likely influences the transition of youth with disability from training to the labour market. For most people, the induction to disability is from a social construct, where the view of disability is from 'different.' Barnes (2016) observes in her book *"A minority body"* disability is not about deficits. She contends that too much emphasis on the accommodations and ignoring the personal experiences and competencies of those with disabilities end up silencing the voice of impaired people. This is the greatest discrimination that disabled persons are likely to face in the present world. Barnes (2016, p. 13) notes that, "We cause epistemic and hermeneutic injustice when we view disability from the lack" As Barnes extrapolates, we should move from social constructs of disability to what she refers to as a value-neutral model of disability in which she advances seeks to view disability without prior stereotypes or any assumptions. Barnes (2016) promotes the idea of giving space and appreciating personal experience and competencies.

According to Mitra and Kruse (2016), employment for PWDs has always been met with scepticism, especially when viewed from the perspectives of the ability and competence to work. According to Mitra, "employers have tended to either deny persons with disabilities employment altogether or have hired them only for work which does not require much knowledge or skills. Some pay their workers with disability a comparatively lower salary than their non-disabled counterparts who do the same work. Still, other persons with disability are denied opportunities to work in the mainstream job market". From the perspective of the firms, obstacles to employing people with disabilities include a lack of relevant expertise, a shortage of necessary skills, a lack of control panel, and writing skills being perceived to be a significant obstacle. A few businesses found this kind of impairment to be a major concern. Blindness was considered a hurdle. In all probability, poor material quality and maneuverability were not thought to be major barriers.

The foregoing can be ascribed to the fact companies' unwillingness to hire people with impairments who are perceived to have a poor quality of education. There are also a few PWDs

available in the job market as most opt to take a pension instead of working. Applied in Kenya, this is more of the social protection services provided for by the directorate of social assistance and social protection. They further argue that unemployment can lead to dependence on others It leads to preconceptions, idleness, a low ranking in the community, lack of interpersonal relationships, loneliness, a lack of self-worth, and despair against persons with disabilities, thus perpetuating a vi cious cycle.

Of relevance to this study is the experience and process that the youth with disabilities go through while seeking employment. Often employers fail to establish a good working environment for Youth with disability right from the entry-level. The job application tools in many organizations do not encourage disability disclosure, nor are accommodations declared in the job advertisement. Often the phrase "persons with disability are especially encouraged to apply" is seen to be just a means of meeting the requirement of the employment law as it just remains there unsubstantiated and often not referred to when preparing for shortlisting and subsequent interviews panels.

2.8.2 Disability Stereotypes and employment

In Austria, research such as the study by Höhne and Dikau (2022) has explored disability stereotypes and their influence on employment. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings indicate that stereotypes about the capabilities of individuals with disabilities can affect hiring decisions and workplace interactions. However, Austrian research may not fully delve into the intersectionality of stereotypes with other factors like gender and disability types. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the impact of awareness campaigns and disability rights movements in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusive employment practices.

In Sri Lanka, studies like those conducted by De Alwis and Banda (2019) have investigated disability stereotypes and their consequences for employment. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups. Findings suggest that negative stereotypes can limit employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. However, Sri Lankan research may not fully consider

variations in stereotypes based on the disability types or explore the role of government policies and vocational training programs in challenging these stereotypes. Moreover, there is a need for research that examines how disability advocacy and awareness initiatives impact employment outcomes.

Turkish research on disability stereotypes and employment, as seen in the work of Eker and Sunar (2018), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ surveys and experimental designs to assess attitudes and stereotypes. Findings indicate that negative stereotypes can influence employer perceptions and hiring decisions. However, Turkish research may not fully address the experiences of individuals with different types of disabilities or consider the impact of educational interventions and workplace accommodations in challenging stereotypes. Additionally, there is a need for research that explores how cultural beliefs and societal attitudes toward disability intersect with stereotypes.

In the Philippines, research such as the study by Garcia et al. (2020) has explored disability stereotypes and their impact on employment opportunities. These studies often rely on mixed-methods approaches, including surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that stereotypes can lead to limited employment options and discriminatory practices. However, Philippine research may not fully consider the experiences of youth with disabilities, who face unique challenges in the job market. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines how policy frameworks and community-based initiatives challenge stereotypes and promote inclusive employment practices in the Philippines.

Indian research on disability stereotypes and employment, as exemplified by the work of Rao et al. (2018), has highlighted potential disparities. These studies often employ qualitative methods, including interviews with individuals with disabilities and employers. Findings emphasize that stereotypes can lead to misconceptions about the abilities of individuals with disabilities, affecting hiring decisions. However, Indian research may not fully delve into the role of vocational rehabilitation services and government initiatives in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusive employment. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores the impact of changing cultural perceptions and the role of disability advocacy organizations in challenging stereotypes.

In Nigeria, studies like the research conducted by Mbanisi et al. (2020) have explored disability stereotypes and employment outcomes. These studies often employ mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with qualitative interviews. Findings suggest that stereotypes can lead to discrimination in the workplace and limited opportunities for individuals with disabilities. However, Nigerian research may not fully address variations in stereotypes based on the types of disabilities or explore the impact of community-based initiatives and vocational training programs in challenging these stereotypes. Additionally, there is a need for research that examines the role of intersectionality, considering how stereotypes affect individuals with disabilities from diverse backgrounds.

Namibian studies, like the research conducted by Venter and Nel (2021) have examined disability stereotypes and their impact on employment. These studies often rely on mixed-methods approaches, including surveys and qualitative interviews. Findings may suggest that stereotypes affect employer perceptions and hiring decisions. However, Namibian research may not fully consider the role of policy frameworks and the potential benefits of awareness campaigns in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusive employment practices. Moreover, there is a need for research that explores the experiences of individuals with disabilities in both urban and rural areas and considers the impact of regional variations in stereotypes.

It can be deduced from the forgoing findings, that stereotyping directly affects the social status and psychosocial well-being of persons with disabilities by restraining their access to essential life domains, such as education, employment, healthcare, and housing. At times, even in the absence of intentional discrimination, the stereotypes may affect the functioning of general institutions among people with disabilities through, for instance, inadequate funding towards education or a lack of access to credit facilities. Stereotypes and stigma also elicit negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviours among the stigmatized groups leading them to erroneous actions due to distorted self-perceptions, which may make the perceivers confirm their biases. Stereotypes also affects the activation behaviour of the stigmatized by raising paranoia and suspicion within them even in the absence of discrimination. This behaviour may occur from the development of associative linkages in their memory that may assimilate the stigmatized to the stereotypes, leading them to perform actions that may be consistent with these stereotypes. Studies have indicated that stereotypes also

affect how persons with disabilities view themselves.

As such, it affects their interpretation of social settings, motivations, and aspirations. It also affects their belief systems, shapes their emotions, and behaviour, and is, therefore, a significant factor affecting the person's self-identity. Stereotypes threaten the self-esteem of persons with disabilities which may elicit ambiguity in their lives as to whether outcomes result from their social or personal perceptions and identities. As mentioned earlier, those who are disabled are the subject of discrimination in all spheres of society. In a professional context, particularly, those who are disabled face different stereotypes that create barriers in their employment or during their workplace duties. Often, organizations do not include those who are disabled in their diversity policies, leaving prospective employees out in the cold. Studies have revealed that organizations are likelier to hire non-disabled persons with modest qualifications over highly qualified those who are disabled. This bias persists despite the numerous pieces of legislation put in place to cushion those who are disabled from workplace discrimination.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptualization of the investigation's researched variables is covered in this part. A conceptual structure, as defined by Howell (2008), is a technique that aims to link all elements of an academic investigation, including the problem description to the investigation's justification, reviews of literature, procedure, evaluation of data, and presenting. A conceptual structure, according to Mugenda (2011), is a brief explanation of the occurrence being studied that is then represented visually to highlight the investigation's characteristics.

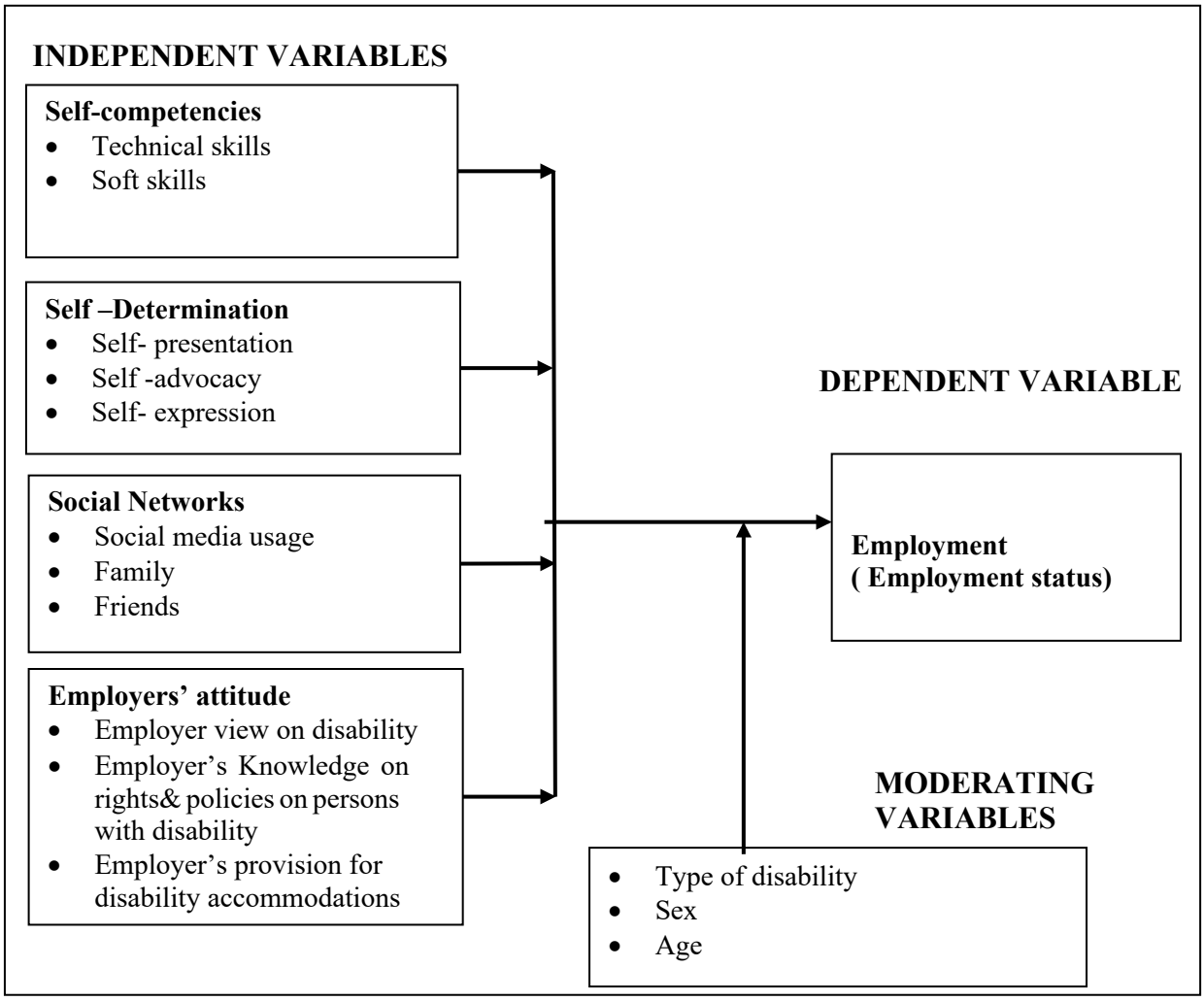


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The variables are in three key categories; in this case, the dependent variable is employment of youth who are either blind or deaf, and the independent variables are self-competences, self-determination, social networking, and employers' attitude. The third category of variables are the individual characteristics that could moderate /intervene in the probability of employment. They ar e age, sex, and type of disability of the youth graduate.

According to this framework, the study postulates that employment of graduate youth who are blind or deaf is influenced by their self-competencies acquired especially through training, self- de termination, social networks maintained by the youth and employer attitude. However, this relationship may be moderated by individual factors such as type of disability, age, and gender

which exists and is not changeable in the youth. Self-competences and self-determination and conceptualized as psychosocial factors while employer attitude is conceptualized as an operational factor. The focus of this study is to examine the nexus of psychosocial, social network and operational factors in employment of blind or deaf graduates from technical training institutes in Kenya.

2.10 Summary and Gaps

2.10.1 Summary

Existing literature provided evidence that stability and growth of an economy is a function of gainful employment opportunities for all. Employment is an important component of any country's socio-economic, political and environmental development process and procedure and more significantly for developing countries such as Kenya. Having a job gives one financial independence and authority to make choices. Employment opportunities for youth in Kenya can he lp to reduce corruption and mitigate chances of youth radicalization into terrorism and engagement in illegal affairs such as thuggery and prostitution.

Even though rising youth unemployment is a global issue in contemporary society, the literature re viewed in this study presents overwhelming theoretical and empirical evidence of the double marginalization of youth with disabilities in employment matters. Youth with disabilities face profound challenges in employment compared to their non-disabled counterparts. When those who are with disability are not empowered by providing quality education and support to access gainful employment, they face a high risk of dependency in society, which becomes a burden to society to support them hence they continue to fall deeper and deeper into poverty.

In Kenya, the government and civil society organizations have created a legal and advocacy environment to promote quality education and training; as well as an environment to work for people with disabilities. Despite these efforts, a negligible number of youths with disabilities are f ound in employment. This study sought to fill the gap in the unemployment equation of youth with who are wither blind or deaf by ascertaining the youth play a role in their employment or lack of it. This study shifts the focus of unemployment from legal and advocacy perspectives to individual ch

aracteristics which are requisite in the modern employment landscape. These include basic social skills, an individual's competences, eagerness for employment, a good perspective on work, self-accountability, personal abilities, decisions, self-confidence, and assurance; autonomous action; skills and qualifications, vocational qualifications; and job seeking skills. Knowledge of the location and nature of employment opportunities; capacity to fill out CVs as well as application forms; competence in interviews and presentation; knowledge of deficiencies and strengths are also considered. Nature and extent of disability and demographics such as age and gender. All these parameters were evident in the reviewed literature. The study hence sought to identify the interplay in psychosocial, social networks and operational barriers in the employment of youth who are either blind or deaf in Kenya.

2.10.2 Research Gaps

The review of studies related to self-competency and employment of youth with disabilities in the United States (Lindstrom & Benz, 2022), Canada (Smith et al., 2023), United Kingdom (Stuart & Burchardt, 2023), China (Li & Ma, 2020), Philippines (Santos & Torres, 2021), Nigeria (Oyefeso & Ajuwon, 2021), South Africa (Watermeyer et al., 2020), and Kenya (Ong'ango, 2019) have knowledge gaps. While these studies examined the relationship between self-competency and employment outcomes, there was need for more in-depth research that considers the nuanced experiences of youth who are blind or deaf; and how self-competency and systemic factors such as family, friends and employers interact with self-competency in influencing employment.

The critical review of studies on self-determination and employment of youth with disabilities across geographies; United States (Watson, 2019), India (Yadav & Chakrabarti, 2022), Mexico (So lis et al., 2023), China (Li & Zhou, 2022), Jordan (Al-Hmouz & Al-Omari, 2022), Ghana (Boateng et al., 2023), Ethiopia (Ayalew et al., 2018), Uganda (Aguti & Lubaale, 2023), and Kenya (Onsomu et al., 2022) revealed significant research gaps. While these studies explored the role of self-determination in employment outcomes, they did not delve into the intersections of self-determination with other factors to determine the significance of self-determination.

The review of studies examining social networks and its effect on young people with impairments who are employed in Canada (Suleman & Munger, 2019), Turkey (Baykara-Krumme & Wetzstein , 2022), Brazil (Alves et al., 2020), Australia (Lindsay et al., 2021), Nigeria (Adinma et al., 2019) , Ghana (Iddrisu & Badasu, 2019), Ethiopia (Tesfaye & Bock, 2017) and Uganda (Ingstad & Whyte, 2021) uncovered notable research gaps. While these studies explored the relationship between social networks and employment outcomes, they left out examination of how the specific nature of social networks, such as family, friends, peers, and disability networks , influences employment opportunities. Furthermore, there's a gap in understanding the impact of evolving technology and digital platforms on the formation and utilization of social networks among youth who are blind or deaf and how these can contribute to enhanced employment prospects.

The examination of studies exploring employers' attitudes and their influence on the employment of youth with disabilities in Denmark (Høgelund et al., 2019), England (Lindsay et al., 2019), Japan (Asano et al., 2018), Thailand (Piachaud et al., 2020) and Zambia (Chanda et al., 2019) highlighted significant research gaps. While these studies shed light on the role of employer perceptions in hiring decisions, they did not indicate how these attitudes are shaped by cultural and societal factors and how they may differ for youth with varying types of disabilities. For instance, the study conducted in Denmark by Høgelund et al. (2019) underscores the significance of employers' attitudes but did not fully delve into how these attitudes are influenced by Denmark's specific cultural context and legal framework. Furthermore, there's a need for research that examines the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives and employer training programs in fostering positive attitudes and promoting the hiring of youth with disabilities, emphasizing the need for further context-specific investigations to bridge these research gaps.

Many studies have explored various aspects of employment access, such as workplace accommodations and discrimination, they did not address the role played by the person with disability in making disability accommodations viable in the workplace. Further, while studies have explored various individual factors such as self-competency, self-determination, gender, and age, t here was need for more research that explores how individual characteristics affect employment prospects for youth who are either blind or deaf.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section provides an explanation and discussion of research methodology that was used in conducting this study. The section begins with a characterization of researcher's philosophy and the overall research design. The chapter proceeds to describe the target population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, pilot study, explanation of research variables, data collection procedure, data analysis and presentation. The chapter ends by detailing the ethical considerations and compliance adhered to in the study.

3.2 Researcher's Philosophical Underpinnings

The philosophical underpinnings of the study are grounded in ontology and epistemology, with a significant leaning toward pragmatic epistemology. The study adopted an approach, which recognizes that knowledge is socially constructed and depends on the context in which it is produced. According to one explanation, epistemological is the method by which the researcher is able to come up with true reflection and reality of matters (situations) as they are in operation. According to Crotty (1998), epistemology is an approach of understanding what is happening and how one should look at it. It is informed by expertise and reflects a particular perception of what that understanding entails. Metaphysics is a philosophical investigation of the essence of existing or reality that is existence or developing, in addition to the basic groups of objects that existing and their relationships, in the words of Kivunja and Kiyini (2017). Ontology refers to the beliefs that the study's author has regarding the reality of and connections among people, their communities, and society at large. Truth remains relative according to the constructivist framework, as stated in the ontologies. The many worldviews are "constructed and not discovered" (Gray, 2014) by the investigators and respondents working together. Crotty (1998) went on to say that social contact among individuals creates the significance of the external environment that one perceives. There are various things that could have an impact on how meanings are created including prior experience, knowledge, policy and its implementation, gender, immediate environment, personal attributes and cultural values. According to Crotty (1998), the desire of illumination and the a self-proclaimed are captured by positivity. Positivism guarantees clear-cut information that is genuine that exists possibly unmediated and simply reflects what is practiced out there on a daily basis.

In the context of this study, ontology is relevant in understanding the nature of disability (Vehmas & Riddle, 2019), particularly deafness and blindness, and their impact on the employment of TVET youth graduates. The ontological assumption underlying this study is that disability is a construct that is created by society, rather than an inherent characteristic of an individual, and hence individuality ought to be devoid of societal perceptions. TVET graduates regardless of their profile (disabled or otherwise) should receive employment opportunities on merit. The capability theory used in this study supports the ontological assumptions of this study to the extent that since employment is based on merit, it should transcend any societal profiling based on perceptions and stereotypes.

The epistemological assumption underlying this study is that knowledge about disability is socially constructed and is dependent on the context in which it is produced. Therefore, the study adopted a constructivist approach, which recognizes that knowledge is produced through social interaction and that meaning is derived from the interpretation of social phenomena. The relevance of pragmatic epistemology lies in understanding the practical implications of the findings and how they can be used to improve the employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf. The study focuses on identifying practical solutions that can be implemented to address the psychosocial factors that create barriers to the employment of young graduates who are blind or deaf. (Hernández & Cannon, 2019).The constructivist paradigm was applied in this study to contextualize employment of TVET graduate youth who are blind or deaf as one that is highly determined more by self-centred attributes (*self-competency, self-determination, social networks e tcetera*) than external factors such as legislation and affirmative actions. Though the government sets the minimum threshold, it is the employers who determine the actual presence of PWDs in their workplace. Their perceptions and belief in the persons' productivity is the main dictate of employment or not. Counter side to this is the reality of life that it is what one pursues in earnest they are likely to attain. Further from a constructivism perspective, jobs are especially hard to get in Kenya, but people are still being employed. Today, one must stay in the quickest "know" and must 'show up'; networks and technology becomes the fastest route to stay connected to emerging opportunities.

3.3 Research Design

This is a tracer study that adopted the cross-sectional descriptive survey design and Mixed-Methods Research (MMR) to synthesis quantitative and qualitative datasets. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Graduate tracer investigations are one type of empirical research that can effectively give important data for assessing the outcomes of the academic and vocational programs of a particular educational institution (Schomburg, 2003). This learning approach enables the researcher to 'follow' a target respondent from the point they last existed (learning institution) to where they presently are (usually workplace or general life). Albina and Sumagaysay (2020) used a tracer study design to evaluate employment of technology graduates in Philippines a nd found this approach to be an effective way of following through the link between training and employment.

Based on the experiences and success reported by Albina and Sumagaysay (2020) using tracer study design, it was taken as an ideal study design in examining employment of TVET graduate youth who are either blind or deaf. Further, Nardi (2018) noted that a prerequisite reservoir for any relevant and fruitful graduate tracer research is a precise and full contact information bank of graduates. A reliable information source was required for this investigation through acquiring information from the specific institutions. Names were compiled, mobile phone numbers taken down and where applicable email addresses and any other relevant contact details of the graduates was enlisted. Finally, the methodological search involved calling and emailing potential participants to establish their location and employment status. A concurrent triangulation model as a method of MMR research strategy was used where a single study was conducted to collect the qu alitative and quantitative data simultaneously (Headley & Plano, 2019).

The choice of a tracer study approach in the investigation into youth who have disabilities who are working is justified because it allows for tracking the career paths and outcomes of specific cohorts of individuals over time. This enabled the researcher to understand how factors like self-competency, self-determination, social networks, and individual characteristics influence employment trajectories. This approach provided valuable insights into the long-term impact of

pre-work readiness for youth with disabilities. Additionally, the tracer approach facilitated the collection of real-world data from participants as they navigate their careers, offering a dynamic and authentic perspective on the challenges and successes they encounter in the labor market. A cross-sectional descriptive survey design is also justified, as it allowed for the collection of data at a single point in time from a diverse sample of participants. This design is suitable for capturing a broad snapshot of the employment landscape for youth with disabilities, which is essential for understanding the current state of affairs and identifying potential areas of concern. Survey instruments were designed to cover a wide range of variables, including self-competency, self-determination, social network characteristics, individual attributes, and employer attitudes, providing a comprehensive overview of the factors influencing employment outcomes.

The use of mixed-methods research was further justified, as it complemented the survey design by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Quantitative surveys provided numerical data that allowed for statistical analyses to identify patterns, correlations, and associations among variables. This was particularly valuable for examining relationships between variables like self-competency and employment outcomes. On the other hand, qualitative interviews offered in-depth insights into the lived experiences of youth with disabilities and the employers, helping to contextualize quantitative findings and uncover nuanced aspects of self-determination, social network dynamics, and employer attitudes.

The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods enables triangulation, where findings from one method can be validated or complemented by findings from the other. This enhances the robustness and credibility of the study's results. For instance, if survey data indicate a significant association between social networks and employment outcomes, qualitative interviews can further explore how these networks are formed and utilized in the job search process, providing a deeper understanding of the mechanisms at play. The study's focus on multiple factors influencing employment outcomes for youth with disabilities required a holistic approach to data collection and analysis. By employing both survey and mixed-methods research, the study considered the interplay between self-competency, self-determination, social networks, individual characteristics, and employer attitudes, acknowledging the complex and multifaceted nature of the topic.

3.4 The Study Site

The four (4) National Special Technical Institutions in Kenya are: Karen Technical Training for the deaf in Nairobi, Sikri Technical and Vocational Training Institute for the deaf and blind, Homabay; Machakos Technical Training Institute for the blind and St. Joseph Technical Institute for the deaf, Nyang'oma, Siaya. Being a tracer study, all youth who graduated between 2014 and 2018 and were either blind or deaf, were 'followed' right from the TVET institution they graduated from to their current known location. This study was based on primary data collected from the yo uth, regardless of where they were at the time of data collection. The contacts the researcher obtained from the institutions determined the rest of the coverage areas across the country. It is worth noting that the said Institutes offer training to other categories of disability other than the ones alluded to by the Institute's name. For instance, Karen Technical Training for the deaf in Nairobi offers training to youth with intellectual disabilities and autism yet the name suggests that it is only for the deaf.

The selection of the four institutions is justified based on their national significance, geographical diversity of graduates therein.Their national status underscores their pivotal role in shaping the educational and vocational pathways of youth with disabilities in Kenya, making them central to understanding the impact of specialized training programs and national policies on employment prospects. Geographical diversity encompassing both urban and rural settings ensures that regional and cultural factors are considered, given their significant influence on employment opportunities and social dynamics. Lastly, these institutions are likely to facilitate research access to their graduates, given their commitment to disability education, making them valuable partners in the study on the employment of youth with disabilities in Kenya.

3.5 Target Population

The target population for this study was youth who had trained in the four institutions. The youth had to be either blind or deaf and had exited college by 2018. There were 239 youth who graduated between 2014 and 2018 who were either blind or deaf; also, another target included 4 administrative officers; one from each institution and employers of the youth.

This study purposed to target graduates who were below 35 years in compliance with definition of the term youth in Kenyan legal framework. Table 1 summarizes the number of study participants

targeted in the study. The number of youths employed was used as proxy or indicator of the number of employers to participate in the study. This is because, for each of the youth who reported to be in employment, their corresponding employers were included in the study. It was later established that most employers had more than one graduate youth who was either blind or deaf.

Table 1: Target population

Institution (For Cross-Sectional Survey/Quantitative)	Blind	Deaf	Sub-Total
Sikri	40	22	62
Nyang'oma	0	49	49
Karen	0	56	56
Machakos	72	0	72
Sub-Total	**112**	**127**	**239**
Key Informants (For Narrative Design/Qualitative)			
Administrative officers (one per institution)			4
Employers			22
Sub-Total			**26**
Total Target Population			**265**

By focusing on recent graduates, the study captures a cohort that has gone through the transition from education to employment within a relevant timeframe. Additionally, narrowing the population to those who are blind or deaf ensures creates homogeneity within the sample, allowing for more meaningful analyses and also crosstabulation.. Furthermore, the inclusion of administrative officers and employers provides critical perspectives and insights into the operational aspects and employer attitudes, which are key elements of the research inquiry. Altogether, this targeted population choice facilitates the study's ability to comprehensively investigate the factors impacting the employment of youth with disabilities in acontextually relevant manner.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Technique

In this study, the primary unit of analysis for quantitative data was a graduate youth who is either blind or deaf. Qualitative data were obtained from TVET administrative officers and employers. Sa mpling and sampling procedures for quantitative and qualitative components of the study are described in sub-sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 respectively.

3.6.1 Sample size and sampling procedures for quantitative component

The graduation lists from the four target TVETs were used as the sampling frame. The names in th e graduation lists were separated into two independent lists according to disability type such that those who are blind were separated from those who are deaf. The first list was made up of 112 graduates who are blind, while the second list was 127 graduates who are deaf. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) technique (*See Appendix 6*). According to this approach, the first list with a population of 112 required a sample of 86 while the list with a population of 127 required a sample of 97. All key informants in the target population were participants in the study. Table 2 summarises sample distribution of the youth. A total of 146 TVE T graduates were reached out of a target of 183 giving a response rate of 79.8%.

Table 2: Sampling distribution of graduate youth

Institution	Blind	Deaf	Total
Sikri	34	14	51
Nyang'oma	0	39	37
Karen	0	44	47
Machakos	52	0	48
Total	86	97	183

3.6.2 Sample size and sampling procedures for qualitative component

Complete enumeration sampling method was used in sampling of TVET administrative officers. U sing this method, all possible subjects are recruited into the study. Since there were 4 TVETs, all the 4 officials; one from each of the institutions were study participants. The sampling of employers was done by proxy of TVET graduates who were in employment. For each youth who said they were employed, the employer was purposively identified as a study participant. During data collection, 54 out of 146 TVET graduate youth indicated that they were in employment. This follows that 54 employers were targeted, however, only 22 employers gave consent to participate the study as presented in Table 3.It is however worthy to note that most of the employers had more than one youth who was either deaf or blind in their employ.

Table 3: Sampling distribution of key informants

Type of respondent	Sub-Total
Administrative officers	4
Employers	22
Sub-Total	**26**

The use of complete enumeration aligns with the study's objectives, ensuring the most accurate and comprehensive findings within the constraints of the manageable population size.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Interview schedule for TVET administrative officers were used to gather information on different courses available in target TVET institutions before collecting graduation data and contact information of the target study population. The interview schedule was in two sections as presented in appendix 2. The questionnaire for TVET graduates was designed in four sections: (i) Section A consisted of demographic information of youth such as age, sex, type of disability, year of graduation and employment status: (ii) Section B consisted of a Likert Scale bearing questions on self-competence; (iii) Section C consisted of a Likert Scale questions on self- determination; (iv) Section D consisted of Likert Scale questions on social networks. Finally, interview schedule for employers was made up of two sections where the first section was on the profile of the employing entity while the second section was on different aspects of employer's attitude including policy documents.

3.8 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted with graduates who were either blind or deaf from Kitui School for the Deaf, St. Kizito Vocational and Kericho Rehabilitation Vocational Centre both in Kericho, St. Oda Vocational Centre (Kisumu), and Mumias Complex Vocational (Kakamega). Data was collected using Kobo Collect as the preferred Open Data Kit (ODK) platform. The pilot study was conducted with a sample size of 26 participants - 13 blind and 13 deaf who were reached through

a tracer method. The pilot study was conducted for three main reasons; (i) test feasibility of the rese arch design, (ii) identify potential fieldwork constraints and limitations and (iv) test reliability of t he data collection tools.

Experiences from the pilot resulted into deciding to apply a cross-sectional descriptive survey design as opposed to other possible designs such as case study design. This decision was made because the research established during the pilot that technical institutions offer significantly different craftsman courses, hence, focusing on any one case study excludes other youth trained in different skill sets. During the pilot, it was found that adaptation of research questionnaires into Braille for the blind and sign language videos for the deaf was more costly as compared to hiring interpreters and sighted guides. Hence, tool adaptation was avoided in this final study, and instead sign language interpreters and sighted guides were used.

The reliability of the study tools was ascertained using the Cronbach's alpha to help the investigator determine if the participant would provide the same rating on a particular measure if the parameter in question were again evaluated on similar respondents. Results (reliability tests) of the pilot are presented in section 3.9 as follows.

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (2014) define validity of an instrument as the accuracy and relevance of interpretations founded on research results. To guarantee validity of the study instrument, the st udy adapted measurement scales of psychosocial attributes such as self-efficacy from already vali dated and established scales such as the self-efficacy modules by Imperial College of London (Imperial College of London, 2017). In addition, all other items developed in the questionnaire were critiqued by peers and study supervisors and revised more than three times to ensure the highest content validity was attained.

George and Mallery (2018) define reliability of an instrument as the reliability that indicates a tool consistently produces specific anticipated outcomes when used on a similar sample. In this study, Cronbach's alpha test was used to test the internal consistency of Likert scale questions used to measure different study constructs such as self-competence, technical skills, soft skills, self-presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expression. As presented in Appendix 5, key constructs whose measures of reliability were examined include technical skills ($\alpha = 0.965$), soft skills ($\alpha = 0.885$), self-presentation ($\alpha = 0.884$), self-advocacy ($\alpha = 0.737$) and self-expression ($\alpha = 0.866$). The pilot report indicated that all the Likert scale questionnaire items used to measure specific constructs were found to have Cronbach's alpha of greater than 0.7. Due diligence was taken to ensure that each of the questionnaire items included contributed to the scale. In this regard, any tests item whose score was below 0.5 was dropped at the pilot stage. All the items presented in the reliability test table in the Appendix 5 were used in the study. This assured the researcher that the test items were reliable. Additionally, the pilot was used to evaluate the logistical and operational dynamics of the data collection process from the study's vulnerable population. Nonetheless, the questions that proved ambiguous or difficult for respondents during the pilot study were either paraphrased or dropped from the research tools.

3.10 Data collection procedures

The data collection process began at the institution level. An interview schedule for TVET administrators was used to gather basic qualitative data. In addition, graduation lists and contact information of graduates of 2014-2018 were obtained.

The second step was to trace the randomly selected TVET graduate youth based on the graduation lists provided by the administration. The sampled TVET graduates were contacted via telephone calls and/or text messages to schedule the meeting time. A structured questionnaire on an android tablet was used to collect the quantitative data (closed ended and Likert scale questions) and qualitative data (open ended questions). All data in this study were collected using a digital platform (Kobo Collect). Tools were loaded on the Kobo Collect to facilitate data collection using an android gadget. All entries were done by the researcher and transmitted in real-time for storage and data security to a designate laptop. Data was collected from youth who are deaf with the help of sign language interpreters and sighted guides from youth who were blind. This was necessary because the data collection tools were not transcribed into accessible modes such as Braille for the blind neither were they made into sign language video clips. The final stage of data collection was in-depth interviews with employers of graduate youth.

3.11 Study variables and their measurement

The dependent variable: Employment of graduates who are either blind or deaf is the dependent variable in this study. Operationally, this variable is defined as status of employment. Being a cross-sectional study where information was gathered at one-time point, individual's employment status was used to infer their employment. In this study, the dependent variable was drawn from capability theory by Amartya Sen as cited by Kuhumba (2018) in the literature review section of t his thesis. This variable was measured by using a binary response question where the respondent would state whether they were employed (Given code = 1) or not employed (code = 0).

Independent variables: This study has four independent variables and the individual characteristics are treated as the intervening variables.

(i) *Self-competences*: In this study, self -competencies refer to the general abilities and knowledge required for employment at least in the modern industrialised Kenyan job market. This variable was measured using by two sub-scales: technical skills, soft-skills which contributed to one's level of self-efficacy. Technical skills relate to ability to complete tasks on time, demonstration of expertise in training, skill level, ability to understand and apply new ideas, and ability to perform high-quality standards. *Soft* skills relate to social awareness intrapersonal and interpersonal skills such as ability to communicate effectively, taking instructions, getting along with others and time management. This sub-scale was measured using eight 5-point Likert scale questions.

(ii) *Self-determination*: This variable was used to describe youth's ability to showcase self through self-presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expression. Thus, self-determination was computed as a cumulative average of the three sub-scales. The sub-scale of self- p resentation was measured using nine (9) items on a Likert scale ($\alpha = 0.840$), self-advocacy was measured using eight (8) items on a Likert scale ($\alpha = 0.737$) while self-expression was measured using seven (7) items on a Likert scale ($\alpha = 0.866$).

(iii) *Social networks*: This variable looked at how much connected and alive to spread of information the youth was. The usage of technology in passing of information cannot be ignored. The social networking sites that the youth was using became an indicator of their connectivity. This variable also considered the family life of the youth. Family values not only build character, but also a network. Within this variable was the widespread of the friendship circle. Literature had indicated that friends played a role in referring, assisting in drafting letters of employment and even could come in handy in dropping off applications. Having friends all around from school, neighbourhood, those with disabilities and those without disability was a good indicator of developed soft skills and self -efficacy too.

(iv) *Employer attitude*: This variable was used to describe the mannerism and viewpoints of the employer towards those who are disabled in their workforce. Employer data considered the institutional policies and practices in place to create a welcoming environment for the YWD.

(v) *Individual Characteristics:* This constituted the intervening variables in this study. This

were especially personal characteristics that could not be changed by education. They include sex, age and category of disability. In this case whether one was a female or male and whether the youth was blind or deaf and their chronological years were considered and reported.

3.12 Data Analysis

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, hence, each dataset was analysed independently, and results triangulated to produce a final report. The unit of analysis in this study was an individual graduate youth who is either blind or deaf since the dependent variable (*employment status*) was captured at the individual level.

3.12.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was analysed using statistical methods including descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate techniques as described below. In this category, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to clean, code, and conduct analysis.

a) Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is justified as it allows for the summarization and presentation of key characteristics and variables within the dataset. In the context of this study, descriptive analysis can provide an overview of the demographic profiles of the youth with disabilities, including their age, gender, type of disability, and educational backgrounds. This information is fundamental for understanding the composition of the sample and for establishing a baseline understanding of the study population.

Descriptive statistical methods are used in initial exploration of each variable of the study. At this level, frequencies, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion were used to explore single variables depending on their nature. For continuous variables such as the number of close friends reported, measures of central tendency such as mean (averages) were used and measures of dispersion such as standard deviations were used. For categorical variables such as sex and age brackets, frequencies and percentages were used to report proportions in each category.

Whilst descriptive statistical methods are not used to make any inference beyond the sample, Mishra et al. (2019) contend that descriptive statistics are important in summarizing data to inform subsequent and high-level (*bivariate and multivariate*) analysis including inferences. As a result, descriptive statistical analysis methods applied in this study were used to summarize the demographic information of respondents and provide preliminary analysis of specific study objectives before delving into bivariate and multivariate analysis.

b) Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis is justified for examining relationships between two variables, which is essential in exploring the initial associations between key factors, such as self-competency, self-determination, social networks, and employment outcomes. By conducting bivariate analyses, the study identified preliminary patterns and correlations, such as whether self-competency levels were associated with employment success, or if certain types of social networks were linked to job placements. These initial insights guide further investigation and the drawing of conclusions.

Cross-tabulation or contingency tables, chi-square tests of independence and correlation analysis were the main bivariate methods used in this study. In this study, the dependent variable (*employment*) was tabulated in the column against other variables in the rows. The rows included demographic variables such as sex and type of disability, and independent variables such as self-competence and self-determination among others. The cross-tabulation documented the proportion of youth employed verses the unemployed across independent variables.

Chi-square tests are statistical techniques used to measure independence or nature of association be tween two variables presented in a cross-tabulation. The interpretation is based on the p-value of a stated (*either explicitly or implicitly*) null hypothesis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). In this study, both Pearson's p-value and Fisher's exact tests in the chi-square tables were interpreted in their contexts. For instance, in cases where there were no missing values, Pearson's p-value was used wh ile in cases where there were missing values, Fisher's exact tests were used. The p-values were

reported on the right side of the cross-tabulation rather than reporting on a separate table for ease for interpretation. Correlation analysis was used as a bivariate statistical technique to measure the strength of association between two continuous variables (self-expression, self-advocacy, self-efficacy, and self-determination).

Continuous variables were constructed by summing up individual scores on 5-point Likert scale used for individual question items in the questionnaires. The questionnaire items were positively s tated in the Likert scale; 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree. Following this structural design, a high score would imply a higher degree of say high se lf-efficacy, self-determination etcetera while lower scores would correspond to lower degrees of th e same constructs in an individual.

c) Multivariate Analysis

Multivariate analysis was particularly critical in this study, as it allowed for the examination of complex relationships between multiple variables simultaneously. Since the study aimed at exploring the nexus of psychosocial, social network, and operational factors in employment outcomes for youth who were either blind or deaf, multivariate techniques, such as regression analysis or structural equation modelling, enabled the researcher to assess how various factors interacted and influenced employment.

Logistic regression model was used to study the causative relationship between a binary dependent variable (*employment*) and a set of independent variable (selected demographics: self-competency, self-determination, social networks). Logistic regression analysis takes both categorical (demographic such as age, sex, disability type) and continuous independent variables as explanatory variables. In this study, all independent variables were converted into categorical variables using the quintile method. Using this method, the variable scores were classified into quintiles and labelled as “Very Low”, “Low”, “Average”, “High” and “Very High” from the lowest to the highest quintile respectively. Binary logistics regression was used in this study because the dependent variable had only two possible outcomes (binary). The interpretation of logistic regression results was based on odds ratio and Pearson’s p-value of each variable outcome relative to the reference category. The interpretation of significance level was based on 95% confidence le

vel while the lowest quintile was taken as the reference category.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to test the multicollinearity of the independent variables to be included in the logistic regression model. Only variables whose VIF was below 5 w ere included in the model since this suggest the least multicollinearity, while variables whose VIF was above 5 were excluded from the model due to evidence of high multicollinearity. For instance, self-presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expressions as sub-scales of self-determination exhibited high levels of multicollinearity, hence excluded from the model. On the other hand, technical skills, soft-skills, and self-efficacy as sub-scales of self-competence exhibited the least multicollinearity, and hence included in the model.

3.12.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data or aspects of the data collected from the open-ended questions. Content analysis was conducted using the six-phase model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2014); getting acquainted with your information and creating basic coding finding themes, evaluating them, determining and recognizing them, and generating the paper are the other steps. The first phase involved perusing through the 22 piecemeal responses from employers to understand the nature and scope of responses and emerging attitude-related issues. This cycle involved identification of initial groups were physically written into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet document, and as additional characters became available during the course of coding, these fundamental groups were expanded upon.

The second phase was conducted by grouping function in Excel through which key messages (codes) in each of the thematic areas identified in the first phase. In order to determine groupings, the first phase's codes were combined in this phase. Tracy (2013) asserts that the initial cycle involves describing the information, and the subsequent cycle involves classifying the coded information. In the first and second phase of thematic analysis model used in this study, inductive and deductive coding methods were used respectively in line with the study's theoretical propositions. In the third and fourth phases, specific themes were sought by paying attention to the use of specific words and expressions and syntactical symmetry in word phrase, tenses, and synonyms. Data triangulation was done when presenting the findings (Krippendorff, 2018;

Neuendorf, 2016).

3.12.3 Triangulation in Analytical Framework

The role of triangulation is widely acknowledged in literature. For instance, in discussing the triangulation-based framework and roadmap, Turner et al. (2017) stated that the core of triangulation in research design is to eliminate biases arising from overreliance on a single theory, methodology or proposition when addressing a research question. The biases, according to Turner et al. (2017) can be eliminated only by leveraging strengths from multiple theories, methodologies, and propositions.

This study applied triangulation both at its theoretical, conceptual, and methodological levels. At the theoretical level, the study was anchored on resource-based view theory as well as self-determination and capability theories of human development. At the conceptual level, the study variables span from individual (Self-efficacy), institutional (TVET training, assumed to be quality and relevant) and community level (structural and attitudinal ecosystems for employment of youth who are blind or deaf). At methodological level, the study adopted a mixed method research (MMR) approach in which both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed.

Theoretical triangulation was used to in this study to interrogate different perspectives on youth employment in the context of disability. At this level, perspectives and posits of resource-based view theory as well as self-determination and capability theories of human development were critiqued to form SMART research objectives and questions. Methodological triangulation on the other hand was used increase reliability of measurement of operationally defined study variables. At this level, statistical analysis and thematic results were interpreted concurrently as opposed to piecemeal interpretation, thus giving more reliable results. Additionally, the study results were discussed in the context of study's theoretical foundations, available literature, and legal framework of persons with disability and employment laws in Kenya.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in compliance with scientific and ethical best practices. The study

proposal was developed under the guidance of senior faculty staff of St. Paul's University in compliance with the University's standards and guidelines set for research and a senior special need education practitioner. All requirements having been met, the candidate obtained clearance fr om the School of Graduate Studies; a research permit was sought from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). NACOSTI is a public institution in Kenya Pe rmission was sought from principals in TVET institution before accessing graduation data.

During data collection, Participants were made aware that the data they provided would only be utilized for academic reasons. The investigator informed those who participated that participation was free of charge, there was no money paid. Further ,it was explained that there would be no negative effects from participating or declining to participate. Individuals were made aware that they had the option to opt out of the research at any stage. Before responding to concerns, those present had the opportunity to ask questions to the researcher. Data gathered was secured through encrypted codes and passwords on a digital data collection platform and accessible to the researcher only. Further, any primary identifiers were removed from the data and replaced by pseudocodes. Pseudocodes for graduated with disabilities were created by concatenating the index and the abbreviation GD. In this case, the first respondent was coded as GD001, the second was GD002, and the process continued up to the last respondent GD146. In a similar way, all other categories of respondents were pseudocode accordingly to maintain confidentiality and data anonymity.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research findings, interpretation, and discussion. It begins with presentation of the demographic characteristics of respondents and then proceeds to specific objectives of the study. Descriptive and chi-square results are presented for each objective followed by a logistic regression model for quantitative data. The chapter concludes by presenting qualitative data on the employer attitude. All the data is triangulated to examine the nexus between psychosocial and social network factors and employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya.

4.2 Demographics Characteristics of Respondents

For this study, data was collected on the background information or profile of TVET graduates who are either blind or deaf. This included on sex, age, education level, registration status with the National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPWDs) and tax exemption status with Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). The inclusion of demographic information in the analysis is justified for several critical reasons. Firstly, demographic variables such as sex , age, and education level provide essential context for understanding the characteristics of the study population. These variables can help identify potential disparities or trends within the sample, such as differences in employment outcomes based on sex or the influence of age on employment prospects. Additionally, data on registration status with the NCPWDs and tax exemption status with KRA are crucial as they reflect the legal recognition of disability and its associated benefits, which can significantly impact employment experiences. Analyzing these demographic variables can illuminate whether individuals with official disability recognition have distinct employment outcomes compared to those without such recognition. Overall, demographic information enriches the analysis by providing a comprehensive socio-economic and legal context that is fundamental for interpreting the study's findings and tailoring policy recommendations to the specific needs of this population. Table 4 presents the distribution of these demographic characteristics. Demographic information provides a contextual background of study participants and hence a basis of interpretation of subsequent results.

Table 4: Percent distribution of survey respondents by selected background characteristics (N=146)

Variable	Percent	Number
Sex		
Male	55.5	81
Female	44.5	65
Age bracket (years)		
Below 20	3.4	5
20 – 24	50.0	73
25 – 29	36.3	53
30 – 34	10.3	15
Type of Disability		
Blind	45.9	67
Deaf	54.1	79
Education Level at Enrolment to TVET		
Some primary level education	3.4	5
Completed primary	32.2	47
Some secondary level education	5.5	8
Completed secondary	58.9	86
Registration status with NCWPs		
Registered	82.2	120
Not registered	17.8	26
Tax exemption status		
Exempted	79.6	116
Not exempted	20.4	30

The results presented in Table 4 show that 55.5% of respondents were male and 44.5% were female. This indicates that more male trainees with disabilities were traced during the study compared to their female counterparts. Whilst the proportion traced may not necessarily correspond to TVET enrolment and graduation rates, a study by Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE, 2019) established that the male gender dominates in technical and vocational training institutions in Kenya; this is right from National polytechnics, technical training institutes, and vocational training centres. Similar results were established by Mumiukha et al. (2015) who found that there are more male students in colleges and universities in Kenya as compared to female. According to the Ministry of Education's (MOE) Basic Education Statistical Booklet (2019), there are 1% more male learners in comparison to female learners at the basic education lev

el. The gender parity seems to increase in post-secondary as reported by Ochieng and Ngware (2021) who reported that female trainees account for 41.5% while 58.5% were male trainees in TVET Institutions. Evidence showing significantly more males than females in TVETs suggests a potential problem regarding the transition of the girl-child into the technical training institution known for producing skilled and market ready workforce. These results suggesting dominance of the male child in TVET highlights potential transition gaps of female learners with disabilities into the tertiary levels of education.

The study findings showed that at least half (50%) of respondents were aged between 20 and 24 yea rs of age, 36.3% were aged between 25 and 29 years, 10.3% were aged between 30 and 34 years a nd only 3.4% were aged below 20 years. The plausible reason for this kind of observation is that such are trainees who may not have completed secondary school, dropped out at some point and op ted to join TVET institution, most likely at Vocational Training level as described by Rono et al. (2019). The 8-4-4 education system of in Kenya requires at least 12 years (8+4) years of education at the basic education level. Accounting for pre-primary ages of about 5 years, it is generally expected that one exits basic education at approximately 18 years of age. The current study focuses on a more realistic age bracket commensurate with the education system and in tandem with the prescription of the constitution in defining who is considered a youth in Kenya. Results presented in Table 4 shows that at least 3 quarters of the sample population are aged between 20 and 29 years of age. It can be deduced from the findings of this study that majority of youth with disabilities in TVETs may be a little older than expected. One of the probable reasons for this is that some learners with disabilities take longer in school due to the difficulties they experience and late entry into formal schooling.

The study found that by proportion, 45.9% of youth with disabilities interviewed were blind. The study shows that the number of male and female trainees who were blind was relatively equal (49% male and 51% female). It was also found that 54.1% were deaf out of which 61% were male and 39% female. It is worth to note that these proportions may not represent actual enrolment in TVET institutions in Kenya since this study adopted the tracer approach to identify respondents, out of which only 79% of the target was attained. However, previous studies such as the report by Kenya

Institute of Special Education (KISE, 2018) reported that there were more learners with visual impairments in school than those with hearing impairment. However, in that study, the visual impairments could have included those with low vision. Similarly, the hearing impaired could have included those who are hard of hearing.

The TVET education sub-sector in Kenya is a three-tier establishment. National polytechnics are at the highest level, followed by the Technical Training Institutes (TTI) and the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), which were previously described as village polytechnics at the lowest level. Since the TVET sector was established to develop a skilled workforce, the criteria for admission into TVET vary depending on many aspects. For instance, youth with disabilities may be admitted into vocational training centres for skill-based learning in cases where they lack basic education to tackle high-level technical skills. This study established that 3.4% of the TVET graduates with disabilities had some primary level education but did not get certification because they did not complete primary level education. Those who had completed primary level were 32.2%; 5.5% had some secondary education, and most of the youth, at 58.9%, had completed secondary level schooling. Only those who had completed secondary school could merit to pursue a diploma. The rest were admitted at grade test and artisan certificate level. Gendered analysis of educational attainment among male and female graduates with TVETs show that there is no significant difference between male and female trainees.

The government of Kenya has put in place many social protection mechanisms such as disability grants in the form of start-up capital or start-up kits for youth with disabilities to enhance self-reliance. There is a tax exemption for those in employment, whether in the government or private sector or self-employment. However, one can only benefit from this relief by the government if the National Council dully registers them as those who are disabled according to the Kenya disability Act(2003). This study shows that 82.2% of youth with disabilities in TVETs are registered by the NCPWDs, while 17.8% are not registered. This implies that such youth cannot benefit from the government's social protection and affirmative actions to safeguard those who are disabled and often includes employment. This is an indicator of not networking as this would create awareness of the need for registration by those who are disabled (PWD). For those in formal employment, it

was found that 79.6% are exempted from tax while 20.4% are not exempted. The proportion of those not registered by NCPWD is almost the same as those in employment but not exempted from taxation as required by the law. These results can be used to infer that failure to register as a person with a disability increases the level of vulnerability by excluding eligible persons from government social protection initiatives.

4.3 Self-competencies and Employment

The first goal of the investigation was to examine the relationship between self-competences and employment of youth who are either blind or deaf. Self-competences as used in this study include different sets of technical skills, soft skills, self-awareness as drivers to accessing a job by graduate youth who are either blind or deaf. The total sum of the competences made up what is referred hence forth as self-efficacy. This study sought to examine the influence of self-efficacy of youth who are either blind or deaf on their employment. Christensen and Allison (2017) conceptualised that self-efficacy is a key psychosocial factor in disability reconstruction. In this study, individual self-efficacy was measured using self-efficacy module developed by Imperial College of London. When asked to state their area of specialization, 25 different courses were mentioned; however, fi ve popular courses accounted for 57.5% of all TVET graduates. These popular courses included Food and beverage production (15.1%), Japanese massage (14.4%), Knitting (13%), Leatherwork (8.2%) and Practical agriculture (6.8%). Among the least mentioned areas of specialization included ICT and beauty-related disciplines. The study found that 88.4% of these courses were offered at craftsman levels, 8.7% at diploma level, and 2.9% at grade test levels. *Table 5* presents a summary of self-reported self-efficacy items.

Table 5: Self-reported technical skill application by TVET graduates who are either blind or deaf (N=146)

		Percent	Number
I can demonstrate technical expertise in my area of training.	Strongly agree	32.2	47
	Agree	47.9	70
	Not sure	5.5	8
	Disagree	6.2	9
	Strongly disagree	8.2	12
I can show exemplary skills in what I am trained in	Strongly agree	19.9	29
	Agree	56.8	83

	Not sure	8.2	12
	Disagree	8.9	13
	Strongly disagree	6.2	9
I can apply specialized and detailed technical expertise	Strongly agree	14.4	21
	Agree	50.7	74
	Not sure	19.9	29
	Disagree	6.8	10
	Strongly disagree	8.2	12
I can demonstrate an immediate understanding of new ideas in my area of training	Strongly agree	8.9	13
	Agree	61.0	89
	Not sure	15.8	23
	Disagree	7.5	11
	Strongly disagree	6.8	10
I can demonstrate high standards for quality of	Strongly agree	17.1	25
	Agree	58.9	86
	Not sure	9.6	14
	Disagree	10.3	15
	Strongly disagree	4.1	6
I complete tasks on time	Strongly agree	21.2	31
	Agree	58.9	86
	Not sure	6.2	9
	Disagree	6.8	10
	Strongly disagree	6.8	10

Results presented in Table 5 show that 47.9% and 32.2% of TVET graduates agree and agree strongly respectively that they can demonstrate technical expertise in their area of training. 76.7% can show exemplary skills in what they are trained in, 65.1% can apply specialized and detailed t echnical expertise, 69.9% can demonstrate immediate understanding of new ideas. 76% can demonstrate high standards for quality of work and 80.1% complete tasks on time. This translates into the graduates having competency in whatever field of specialization. Despite these results being based on self-reporting, it can be concluded that youth with disabilities acquire technical skills just like others without disabilities. This assertion was made earlier by Lyles that with appropriate training, mentorship and experience, those who are disabled can gain management skills as determined by schooling, experience in starting businesses, entrepreneurial expertise, and specific area of expertise (Lyles, 2004). This was further confirmed by one of the graduates who s aid,

"I believe that I am pretty good at my work. Since I started working in this hotel, I have developed a good working relationship with my colleagues, and we have gained more clients for the place than before." (GD22.G, 24 years old female.)

Table 6: Self-reported soft skill competencies by TVET graduates who are blind or deaf.

		Percent	Number
I can express my opinions clearly	Strongly agree	16.4	24
	Agree	61.6	90
	Not sure	7.5	11
	Disagree	8.9	13
	Strongly disagree	5.5	8
I may fail to communicate fluently	Strongly agree	10.3	15
	Agree	44.5	65
	Not sure	13	19
	Disagree	26	38
	Strongly disagree	6.2	9
I don't like to be given many instructions	Strongly agree	6.8	10
	Agree	40.4	59
	Not sure	10.3	15
	Disagree	26	38
	Strongly disagree	16.4	24
I get along well with others	Strongly agree	22.6	33
	Agree	59.6	87
	Not sure	4.1	6
	Disagree	8.9	13
	Strongly disagree	4.8	7
I come to work on time	Strongly agree	24	35
	Agree	54.8	80
	Not sure	7.5	11
	Disagree	8.2	12
	Strongly disagree	5.5	8
I am sometimes absent from work	Strongly agree	6.8	10
	Agree	58.2	85
	Not sure	15.8	23
	Disagree	14.4	21
	Strongly disagree	4.8	7

I can maintain high ethical standards	Strongly agree	23.3	34
	Agree	53.4	78
	Not sure	8.2	12
	Disagree	8.9	13
	Strongly disagree	6.2	9

The results show that 78% of TVET graduates who are blind or deaf can express their opinions cle arly, 54.8% may fail to communicate fluently, 47.2% do not like to be given many instructions. 82.2% get along well with others, 78.8% come to work on time, 65% are sometimes absent from work. In comparison, 76.7% said they could maintain high ethical standards.

Technical skills variable was computed by summing the scores of seven test items used in the question on a 5-point Likert scale (*1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree,3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*). Lower score across the seven test items corresponds to lower technical skills while higher scores correspond to higher technical skills. Arithmetic mean of the seven test items for technical skills was computed and results rounded up to the nearest whole number such that 1=Very Low, 2= Low, 3=Average, 4= High and 5=Very High.

Similarly, soft skill was computed in the same manner as technical skills based on seven test items. Self-efficacy was computed by combining technical skills and soft skills measured on a 3-point Likert scale coded to reflect frequency such that never=1, sometimes=2 and always=3. The interpretations of the self-efficacy scale are like technical and soft skills. Crosstabulation with chi-square test of association was used as bivariate methods to examine the relationship between technical skill, soft skill, Self-efficacy, and the employment status of TVET graduate youth, blind or deaf. The results are presented in *Table 7*.

Table 7: Association between Self-efficacy and employment status of TVET graduates who are blind or deaf (N=146)

Variable		Not employed	Employed	P-value
Technical skill	Very low	73%	27%	0.002
	Low	79%	21%	
	Average	100%	0%	
	High	37%	63%	
	Very high	19%	81%	
Soft skill	Very low	84%	16%	0.002
	Low	80%	20%	

	Average	72%	28%	
	High	45%	55%	
	Very high	3%	97%	
Self-efficacy	Very low	88%	12%	0.001
	Low	81%	19%	
	High	7%	93%	
	Very high	13%	87%	

As presented in Table 7, 63% and 81% of those with high and very high technical skills respectively are employed which is significantly higher compared to 21% and 27% of youth with low and very low technical skills respectively are unemployed. The p-value (*p=0.002*) shows that there is an association between self-competencies and employment status. Similarly, 55% and 97% of those with high and very high soft skills respectively are employed which is significantly higher compared to 20% and 16% of youth with low and very low soft skills respectively are un employed. The p-value (*p=0.002*) shows that there is an association between soft skills and employment status. This can be interpreted to mean that there is a positive association between soft skills and employment. These results confirm that both technical and soft skills play a critical role in employment. We could submit that perhaps a combination of both skills would increase employment of youth with disability significantly. These results concur with the findings of recent research evidence by Succi and Canovi (2020) who found that there is an increased emphasis on soft skills over the last 5–10 years and that companies consider soft skills more important than students/graduates *equivalent of technical skills*

Findings show that 93% and 87% of those with high and very high self-efficacy respectively are em ployed which is significantly higher compared to 19% and 12% of youth with low and very low self -efficacy respectively are unemployed. The p-value (*p=0.001*) shows that there is an association between self-efficacy and employment status. This trend suggests that those with high self-efficacy tend to be more employable compared to those with lower self-efficacy.

The study's findings on the relationship between self-competencies and the employment of youth who are either blind or deaf align with several anchoring theories, shedding light on the mechanisms at play. Notably, the results resonate with Self-Determination Theory, emphasizing the motivation and autonomy that come with a sense of self-competency, which can drive active

job seeking and better employment outcomes. Social Cognitive Theory's concept of self-efficacy is also reflected in the findings, as the youth's confidence in their competencies and skills can boost job search efforts and performance. Furthermore, the Capability Theory of Human Development is relevant, as the study underscores the importance of building the capabilities of individuals with disabilities to enhance their employability and overall life fulfillment. Together, these theoretical perspectives underscore the significance of empowering youth with disabilities by fostering a strong sense of self-competency to facilitate access to employment opportunities and maximize their potential.

The first study objective, which aimed to examine the relationship between self-competencies and the employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya, was achieved. The study successfully explored the connection between self-competencies and employment among these youth, providing valuable insights into the role of self-competencies in job-seeking endeavors.

4.4 Self-Determination and Employment

The subsequent goal of this study was to establish how the self-determination of a youth who is blin d or deaf influences their employment. Human drive and character is driven by need of autonomy. It has to do with individual's innate psychosocial demands and developing inclinations. This study constructs individual self-determination by examining the youth self- presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expression.

Table 8 shows that 84.2% of TVET graduate youth who are either blind or deaf know what they need and are looking for in a job, 78.8% claimed to know what they are good at and 71.2% said they have competencies for the job they seek. Slightly more than half, at 58.2%, had goals to get the job they wanted and only 52.1% choose to do what they must do to get employed. Results from the study indicate that about 48% of the youth who were either blind or deaf did work out their interest and 52.1% were ready to argue only for ideas they believed in. Some of the youth made efforts to seek for work as reported by one of them;

> “I am always searching for employment opportunities. I frequently look through newspapers, social networking sites and ask around for jobs through my friends and other

persons who are also deaf for employment opportunities." Respondent GD13.

Table 8: Self-reported self-presentation by TVET graduates who are blind or deaf.

		Percent	Number
I know what I need for a job	Always	84.2	123
	Sometimes	15.8	23
	Never	0	0
I know what I am good at	Always	78.8	115
	Sometimes	20.5	30
	Never	0.7	1
I have competencies for the job I want	Always	71.2	104
	Sometimes	28.1	41
	Never	0.7	1
I set goals to get what I want	Always	58.2	85
	Sometimes	39	57
	Never	2.7	4
I am guided on what job to look	Always	30.8	45
	Sometimes	62.3	91
	Never	6.8	10
I always feel like I choose the things I do	Always	47.3	69
	Sometimes	49.3	72
	Never	3.4	5
I choose to do what I have to do	Always	52.1	76
	Sometimes	46.6	68
	Never	1.4	2
I only do work out of interest/ I only do work those interests me	Always	48.6	71
	Sometimes	45.9	67
	Never	5.5	8
I only argue for ideas that I already believe	Always	52.1	76
	Sometimes	45.9	67
	Never	2.1	3

The study's findings regarding the self-determination of youth who are blind or deaf and its influence on employment resonate with existing literature on the importance of self-determination in achieving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The substantial percentage (84.2%) of participants who reported knowing what they need and are looking for in a job reflects a sense of clarity and self-awareness, a foundational aspect of self-determination that has been

recognized as pivotal in the transition to employment (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2019). Similarly, the high proportion (78.8%) claiming to know their strengths and competencies aligns with the notion that self-determination involves recognizing one's abilities and interests, which are key factors in career decision-making (Test et al., 2019). However, the study also highlights potential challenges, as slightly over half (58.2%) had specific employment goals and only 52.1% expressed a proactive approach to doing what is necessary to secure employment. This underscores the multifaceted nature of self-determination, where setting goals and taking action are essential components, emphasizing the need for interventions and support programs that foster goal setting, motivation, and self-regulation to enhance employment prospects for youth with disabilities.

Results presented in Table 9 shows self-reported advocacy levels for TVET graduates who are blind or deaf. The results show that 64.4% like speaking for themselves, and 61.6% usually share information about their disability during a job application. Interestingly, none of the graduates interviewed said they like to let people know their competency in their area of training; in fact, at 63.7%, most of them said they never attempt to let people know their competency. However, 56.2% said they show people their ability, and 63% said they make others appreciate their abilities despite their disabilities. Only about half (50%) of the TVET graduate youth who are deaf or blind are confident enough to seek for reasonable accommodation at work and 56.2% share information about their disability during interviews. A much smaller number of graduates, at 44%, reported tha t they know and ask for their rights and privileges.

Table 9: Self-reported self-advocacy by TVET graduates who are blind or deaf

		Percent	Number
I like speaking for myself	Always	64.4	94
	Sometimes	34.9	51
	Never	0.7	1
I usually share needed information about my disability during a job application	Always	61.6	90
	Sometimes	38.4	56
	Never	0	0
I like to let people know that I am competent in my area of training	Always	0	0
	Sometimes	36.3	53
	Never	63.7	93
I show people my ability	Always	56.2	82

	Sometimes	43.2	63
	Never	0.7	1
I make others appreciate my abilities despite my disability	Always	63	92
	Sometimes	35.6	52
	Never	1.4	2
I can independently request reasonable adjustments at place of work	Always	50	73
	Sometimes	45.9	67
	Never	4.1	6
I usually share needed information about my disability during interviews	Always	56.2	82
	Sometimes	41.8	61
	Never	2.1	3
I know and ask for my rights and privileges	Always	44.5	65
	Sometimes	53.4	78
	Never	2.1	3

The findings regarding self-reported advocacy levels among TVET graduates who are blind or deaf shed light on their communication and self-presentation strategies during the employment-seeking process. Notably, a substantial proportion of participants express a preference for self-advocacy, with 64.4% indicating that they like speaking for themselves, aligning with the principles of self-advocacy often emphasized in the literature on disability empowerment (Jaswal & Akram, 2017). Additionally, the high percentage (61.6%) of individuals who usually share information about their disability during job applications reflects a level of transparency that can be seen as a form of self-advocacy, as it serves to inform potential employers about their unique needs and accommodations (Siperstein et al., 2023). However, the intriguing finding that none of the graduates interviewed actively seek to let people know about their competency in their area of training (63.7%) may point to a potential barrier or challenge related to self-presentation and self-advocacy. This contrasts with the proactive efforts (56.2%) to demonstrate their abilities and the high percentage (63%) working to make others appreciate their skills despite their disabilities, suggesting that individuals may be more inclined to rely on action rather than explicitly asserting their competencies, which merits further exploration. In sum, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of self-advocacy among individuals with disabilities and emphasize the need for tailored support and training programs to enhance their self-presentation and self-advocacy skills in the employment context.

The results presented in Table 10 shows self-reported and self-expression competencies of TVET

graduate youth who are blind or deaf. The results show that 49.3% can always ask for reasonable accommodation during a job application process, 35.6% can send job applications even when not requested to, 51.4% can speak in public without fear, 52.7% can express their needs in a social s etting. In comparison, only 37% can ask an attendant or a stranger for something. A much higher number of TVET graduate youth at 61% reported that they could apologize when they realize they are wrong, while a much lesser number at 47% can express their displeasure in a situation.

Table 10: Self-Reported Self-Expression by TVET Graduates who are Blind or deaf.

		Percent	Number
I ask for reasonable accommodation during a job application	Always	49.3	72
	Sometimes	47.9	70
	Never	2.7	4
I send job applications/CVs even when not requested	Always	35.6	52
	Sometimes	46.6	68
	Never	17.8	26
I can speak in public without fear	Always	51.4	75
	Sometimes	45.9	67
	Never	2.7	4
I can express my needs in a social setting	Always	52.7	77
	Sometimes	46.6	68
	Never	0.7	1
I can ask for an attendant or a stranger for something	Always	37	54
	Sometimes	47.3	69
	Never	15.8	23
I can express my displeasure on a situation	Always	47.3	69
	Sometimes	52.7	77
	Never	0	0
I can apologize when I realize being on the wrong	Always	61	89
	Sometimes	39	57
	Never	0	0

The findings regarding self-reported self-expression and self-advocacy competencies among TVET graduate youth who are blind or deaf align with the existing literature on disability and employment. It is notable that a considerable percentage of the participants feel confident in asking for reasonable accommodations during the job application process, which is a critical self-advocacy skill recognized in the literature (Jaswal & Akram, 2017) as essential for ensuring equal access to employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. However, the lower

percentages who can send job applications even when not explicitly requested to and who can ask an attendant or a stranger for something suggest potential areas where self-expression and assertiveness could be further developed. These findings underscore the importance of self-advocacy training and assertiveness skills in enhancing the employability of youth with disabilities, aligning with Lindsay et al. (2019) who emphasize the role of self-advocacy in navigating employment challenges. Moreover, the relatively higher percentages indicating confidence in speaking in public and expressing their needs in social settings demonstrate the diverse communication skills possessed by these individuals, which can be assets in employment contexts. Overall, the findings emphasize the need for tailored support programs that promote self-advocacy and assertiveness among youth with disabilities, ultimately empowering them to better access and succeed in the job market.

Bivariate analysis using the Pearson Chi-Square test of association was used to examine the relationship among self-presentation, self-advocacy, self-expression and employment of TVET graduate youth who are blind or deaf and results presented in Table 11. The variables self- presentation, self-advocacy and self-expression were computed by first summing up individual scores of the test items based on the 3-point Likert scale measuring frequency. The items were positively stated such that higher values correspond to higher frequency and lower values corresponds to lower frequency; Never=1, sometime=2 and always=3. Self-presentation was based on nine tests items, eight items for self-advocacy and seven test items for self-expression. Arithmetic mean of each score was obtained and rounded off to the nearest whole number such that 1=poor, 2=fair and 3=Good. Self-determination on the other hand was computed as a function o f self-presentation, self-advocacy and self-expression.

Table 11: Association Between Self-Determination and Employment status of TVET graduates who are blind or deaf (N=146)

Variable		Not employed	Employed	P-value
Self-presentation	Poor	89%	11%	0.054
	Fair	71%	29%	
	Good	57%	43%	
Self-advocacy	Poor	71%	29%	0.488
	Fair	61%	39%	
	Good	60%	40%	
Self-expression	Poor	72%	28%	0.001
	Fair	81%	19%	

	Good	45%	55%	
Self-determination	Low	73%	27%	0.002
	Average	74%	26%	
	High	46%	54%	

The results presented in Table 11 show that only 11% of TVET graduates with poor self-presentations skills are in employment, 29% who have fair (average) self-presentation are in employment while 43% with good self-presentation are in employment. This variation between employment rates and levels of self-presentation are statistically significant based on the Pearson's Chi-square (*p=0.054*) meaning that employment increases with increase in self-presentation of TVET graduates who are either blind or deaf. Similarly, employment increases with increased levels of self-expression as shown by the corresponding Pearson's Chi-square (*p=0.001*). the findings show that only 28% of TVET graduates with poor self-expression skills were in employment which is significantly lower compared to 55% of those with high self- expression skill in employment.

Results also indicate that there is a significant association between self-determination and employment of TVET graduate (*p=0.002*). This is shown by evidence that only 27% of TVET graduate with low self-determination which is significantly lower compared to 54% with high self-determination in employment. On the other hand, self-advocacy is positively associated with employment where 29% of TVET youth with poor self-advocacy skill are employed compared to 40% of TVET graduates with good self-advocacy skills. However, the p-value (*p=0.488*) shows that these variations in employment rate does not vary significantly with different levels of self-advocacy.

The study's findings regarding the influence of self-determination on the access to employment for youth who are blind or deaf can be interpreted through the lens of Self-Determination Theory. According to this theory, individuals are driven by their intrinsic motivation to make choices, set goals, and exhibit self-regulation in their pursuits. In this context, the study's findings that a substantial proportion of youth with disabilities know what they need, recognize their strengths, and have competencies for the job they seek suggest a sense of autonomy and self-motivation. These attributes align with the core principles of Self-Determination Theory, where individuals

who possess a clear sense of self-determination are more likely to actively seek and secure employment opportunities. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of goal-setting and proactive behaviour in employment access, which are key components of self-determination. Therefore, the findings resonate with the theory by highlighting the pivotal role of self-determination in shaping the pathways to employment for youth who are blind or deaf.

The subsequent goal of the investigation, which sought to establish the extent to which self-determination of youth who are blind or deaf influences their employment, was achieved. The study's findings shed light on the influence of self-determination on employment outcomes, contributing to our understanding of the role of self-determination in the employment process for this specific group.

4.5 Individual Characteristics and Employment

This section aims to present the distribution of employment among graduate youth who are blind or deaf with respect to sex, age, type of disability and schooling characteristics. In a typical population, humans can be described using a set of demographic attributes. In this study, employment status was a key attribute. Access to employment was measured based on the attributes mentioned above. However, it is worth noting that these are selected demographic information that may not account for all employment attributes of youth with disabilities. Figure *2* shows the percentage of youth TVET graduates who are either blind or deaf who were either employed or not employed.

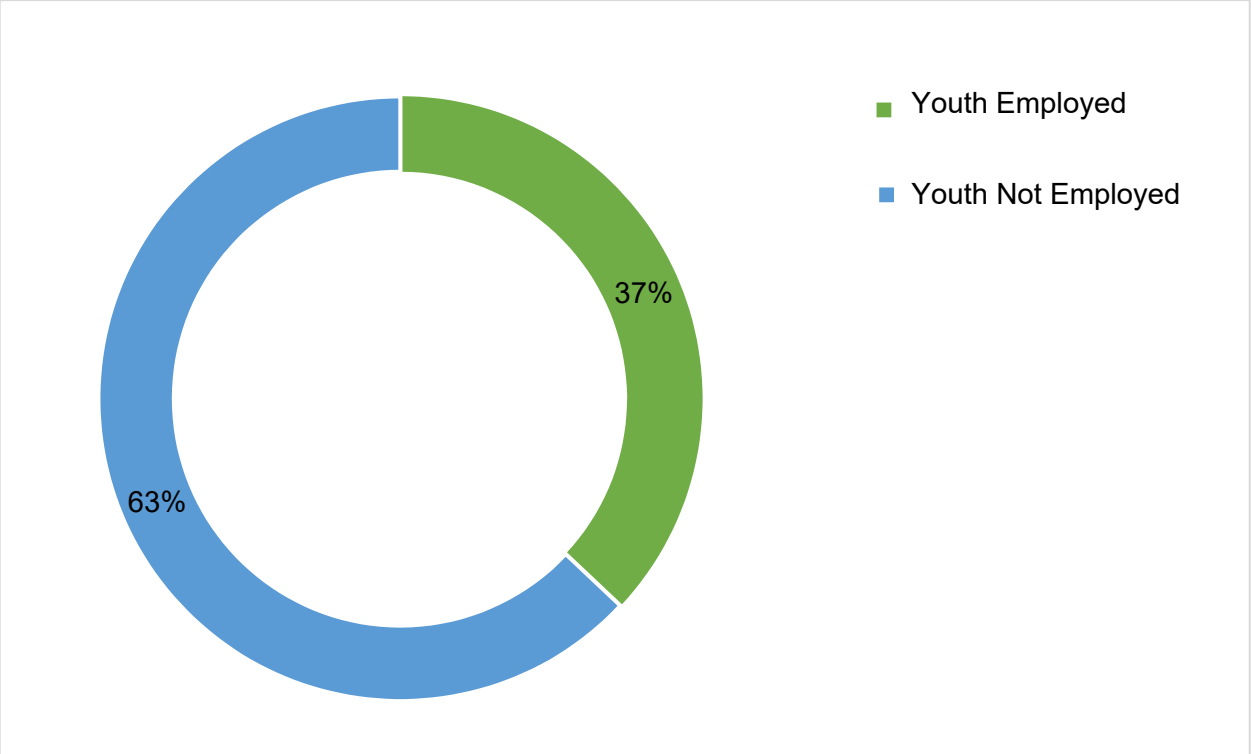


Figure 2: Percent distribution of Employment of Disabled TVET youth graduates by proportion (N=146)

The results show that a majority at 63% were not in employment while only 37% of youth who were either blind or deaf interviewed in this study were employed for pay. Those who were not employed for pay were either engaged in family or own business, others were not engaged in any productive economic activity. This result concurs with earlier findings by Mugo et al. (2010) on their investigation of the youth with disabilities, not in education, training, or employment. The stu dy reported that significant youths with disabilities are not accounted for either in education, training, or employment. The study then concluded that youth with disabilities are falling through the cracks of transition from school to the workplace. While Mugo et al. (2010) focused on youth with mental disabilities, our current study focusing on youth who are deaf of blind arrives at similar conclusions where a significant percent is not accounted for in gainful livelihood opportunities after completing training. Table 12 below provides for detailed analysis of TVET graduates youth who are either blind or deaf in and out of employment by selected demographic information.

Table 12: Percent distribution of respondents' employment status according to selected background characteristics (N=146)

Demographic	Not employed	Employed	P-value
Gender			0.198
Male	66.7%	33.3%	
Female	58.5%	41.5%	
Age (years)			0.016*
Below 20	60.0%	40.0%	
20 – 24	74.0%	26.0%	
25 – 29	56.6%	43.4%	
30 – 34	33.3%	66.7%	
Type of disability			0.006*
Blind	74.6%	25.4%	
Deaf	53.2%	46.8%	
Course Level			0.003*
Grade Test	100%	0%	
Certificate	62%	38%	
Diploma	33%	67%	

**Means significant at p<0.05*

As presented in Table 12, more females were in employment at 41.5% as compared to their males' counterparts at 33.3%. However, these differences are not statistically significant as indicated by the Pearson's p-value of *0.198* meaning the rate of employment does not vary significantly between male and female TVET graduates who are either blind or deaf. The findings of this study do not concur with earlier evidence regarding employment rates of men compared to their female counterparts in many parts of the world.

Considering difficulties experienced by those who are disabled in accessing employment particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, it can be concluded that female youth with disabilities are likely to face elevated difficulties in accessing employment opportunities. This is due to what can be described as triple marginalization; first as youth, second as women and third as persons with d isability. Whilst in this study it appears that there were slightly more women than men in employment, results revealed that in most instances that whenever women get employment, they typically do so in low-paying positions with venerable working conditions. The study by

Matandare (2018) argues that women in developing countries continue to make up a sizable portion of women who are employed around the globe, make less money, and experience prolonged joblessness more frequently than men. This is a result of woman's socioeconomic difficulties brought on by sexism and their dual responsibilities as both workers and domestic helpers.

Results show that youth aged between 30 and 34 years of age form the largest proportion of those in formal employment at 66.7%, while the youth aged between 20 and 24 years form the largest proportion of youth out of formal employment at 74%. These results imply a general increase in the proportion of youth in employment with advancement in age. These differences are statistically significant ($p=0.016$) meaning the proportion of young TVET graduates in employment is significantly lower compared to their counterparts who are much older. Since the average age of youth was 24 years ($M=24.49, SD=3.38$) and the average age of youth in employment was 26 years ($M=25.7, SD=3.7$) while that of unemployed youth was 24 years ($M=23.8, SD=3.00$), the results may suggest that after graduation, most of the youth who were either blind or deaf take a long time before securing formal employment.

The results reveal that with respect to the type of disability, there are more youth who are deaf in employment at 46.8% compared to those who are blind at 25.4%. These differences in employment rates with type of disability is statistically significant ($p=0.006$) meaning that the proportion of youth in employment who are deaf is significantly higher compared to those who are blind. The result in Table 13 shows that there were more deaf graduates in employment than their blind counterparts. While there may be variations in employment rates across different demographic characteristics, this study did not establish sufficient evidence to suggest biased employment with respect to sex, age, or academic levels.

Typically, the levels of training represented in this study include grade test (or craft level), certificate and diploma level. Usually, diploma is regarded as a more rigorous level of training followed by certificate while grade test is the lowest skill-based level of training at TVET in Kenya. The study revealed that a negligible proportion (0%) of grade test graduates are in employment, 38% of those with certificate are employed while 67% of those with diploma are

employed. These differences in association between course level and employment rate are statistically significant as shown by Pearson's p-value ($p=0.003<0.05$) meaning that those with diploma were more likely to be in employment compared to those with lower-level courses such a s certificates and grade tests. The study findings showed that there is a positive association between employment rates of TVET graduates and their course level. This finding concurs with an early study conducted in the Netherlands by Wolbers (2000) which established that staff members with lower education levels are more likely to lose their jobs than individuals with higher education levels.

The findings regarding the role of individual characteristics in the employment of youth who are either blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya align with existing literature on the intersection of demographic factors and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The study's overall employment rate of 37% among the youth with disabilities mirrors the persistent employment gap faced by this demographic group (Shier et al., 2018). The sex disparity observed, with more females (41.5%) in employment compared to males (33.3%), is consistent with broader research indicating that women with disabilities may have relatively better employment prospects due to their higher educational attainment and increased participation in vocational training programs (Mitton & Webster, 2019). Additionally, the finding that older youth (aged 30-34) have a higher representation in formal employment resonates with the idea that accumulated experience and skills over time may enhance employability (Rumrill et al., 2019). Conversely, the higher proportion of younger youth (aged 20-24) being out of formal employment underscores the challenges faced by recent graduates in transitioning to the labour market (Test et al., 2019). These findings emphasize the need for tailored interventions that consider sex-specific factors, age-related employment barriers, and the unique circumstances of youth with disabilities to improve their access to and retention in formal employment.

The investigation's results on the role of individual characteristics in the employment of youth who are either blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya can be analyzed through the lens of Capability Theory of Human Development, Resource-Based View theory, and Self-Determination Theory. Capability Theory underscores the importance of building individuals' capabilities, and the employment rate of 37% among youth with disabilities reflects the need to enhance their opportunities

and functioning. Resource-Based View theory emphasizes the value of individual skills and competencies, being valued by the employer. Self-Determination Theory's principles of autonomy and motivation align with the finding that a sense of self-determination plays a pivotal role in shaping employment outcomes. Together, these theories highlight the multifaceted nature of individual characteristics and the employer attitude and their influence on employment, underscoring the significance of fostering capabilities, skills, and self-determination among youth to improve their availability for official job.

Remuneration Interval of Graduate Youth

Graduates in employment for pay were asked to state at what intervals they received their payments. Findings are presented in Figure 3.

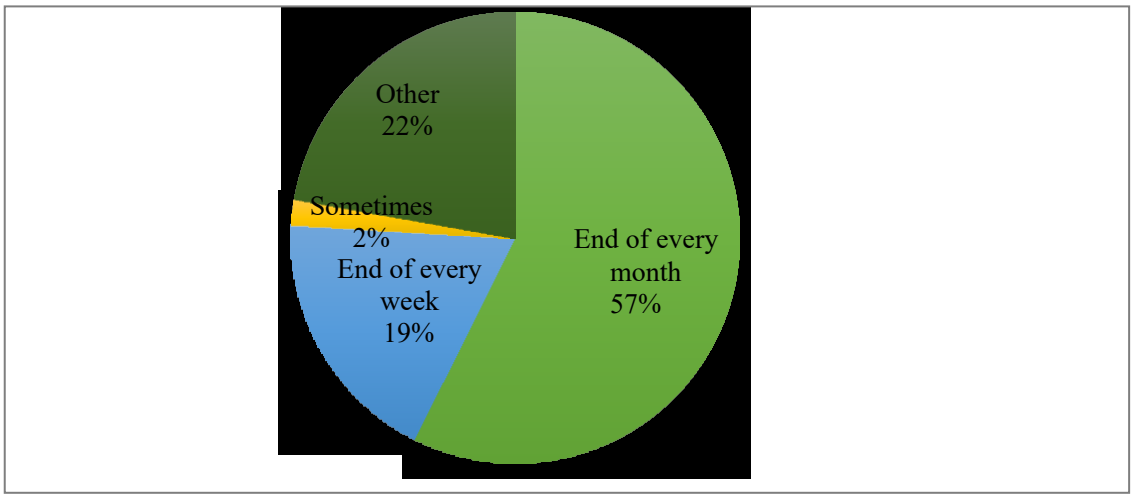


Figure 3: Summary of remuneration interval for youth with disabilities

Figure 3 shows that more than half (57%) are paid monthly, 19% are paid weekly and 2% receive payments only sometimes intervals implying that it is not predictable. The other forms of remuneration mentioned by 22% of the youth who were interviewed were commissions based on work delivered, self-employed, daily wages and contracts. In the study context of this study, contract payment meant that one is given a task and only paid after it is completed regardless of the time, they would have taken to complete the same. Further, some indicated that they were on attachment, yet it was not very clear whether the attachment was contractual or salaried. Some of these attachments and internships were for an unstipulated duration of time and hence no

renumeration was provided to the youth.

Most of the graduate youth (37%) who are either blind or deaf earned between Ksh. 10,001 and Ksh. 15,000, which is above the government's minimum wage of Ksh 6,900. Bisecting gross income by sex, the study shows that there is no statistically significant difference in gross income between male and female respondents. However, 7.4% of the graduate youth indicated to be earning less than the minimum government prescribed wage as shown in Figure 4.

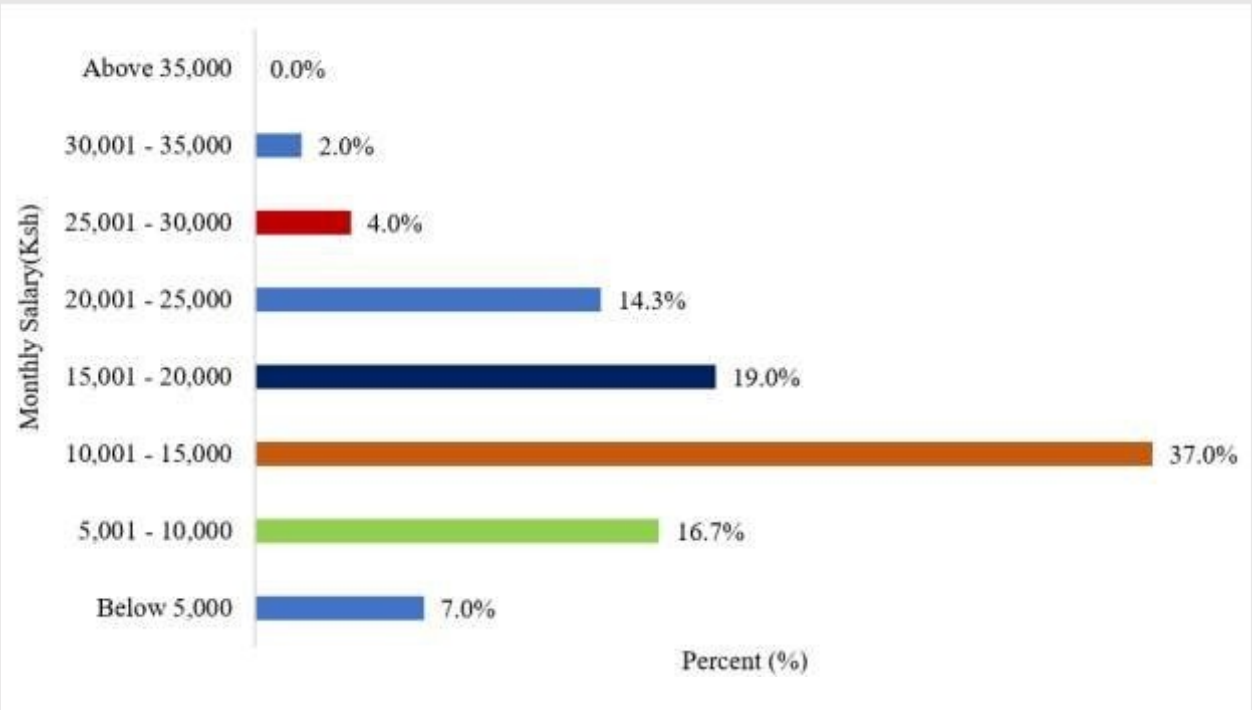


Figure 4: Distribution of Monthly Salary Amounts for Graduate Youth with Disabilities.

Further analysis shows that wage distribution for graduate youth who are either blind or deaf is negatively skewed. This means that most youths interviewed earned less than the average earning bracket. The graduates earned Ksh. 10,000 and above provided they had completed training at diploma level, most of these youth had retained service within the first employment (83.3%) as presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Employment dynamics

Employment Aspect	Response	Percent	Number

Is this your first job			
	Yes	83.3%	45
	No	16.7%	9
Has your salary changed since first employment			
	Yes	61.1%	33
	No	38.9%	21

As presented in Table 13, 83.3% of youth were still in their first job while 16.7% had changed from their first job. This is a significantly large proportion of the youth, and one may ask whether this t rend is attributable to job satisfaction or is because of innate fear of quitting and not getting another job, as unemployment is widespread in Kenya. This could be interpreted as either job satisfaction, having a responsive work environment to their needs. It could also be considered a job competency gained over time due to doing the same work over and over for a long duration. Results show that 61.1% of graduate youth who are blind or deaf indicated that their salary had changed, while 38.9% of the respondents indicated that their salary remained the same since their first employment date. The graduates indicated that the increases ranged between Ksh. 500 and K sh . 6000, on further probing; most of the graduates who indicated salary increase quoted satisfactory services that they offered to customers, exceeding set targets and evident work, concentration on tasks as key considerations that employers valued and rewarded. A respondent who is deaf said:

> "I served the customers and they the customers were very happy with my service, the employer then gave me a pay increase, I repair so many cars in a day, due to my good skills. Over time, we have gained more customers from the good work. As a result, my employer increased my salary. I concentrated on my job and offered better services to customers hence prompting employer to increase my salary." (GD134, 28 Years old, Male)

4.6 Logistic Regression Model Analysis for Employment of Youth who are Blind or deaf

The findings presented in previous sections of this chapter are based on descriptive and bivariate analysis and hence, they do not account for possible interaction among variables. It is highly probable, for instance, that self-determination and self-efficacy could be correlated. Similarly, it might be the case the technical skills and self-determination could be somewhat related. Given this context, it is deemed important to examine individual and marginal contributions of each of these factor's employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four national

SNTVETs in Kenya.

To achieve this, a logistic regression analysis was carried out with employment as the dependent v ariable and predictor or independent variable being technical skills, soft skills, self-efficacy, and se lf-determination while controlling for sex, age, and type of disability. Results are presented in Table 14. All the variables used in the model are categorical, hence, the odds ratio was used to interpret the results by comparing each variable outcome with a common reference category (in bracket). For instance, under sex, the employment of female youth graduate is 1.42 times more as compared to their male counterparts is with a corresponding Pearson's p-value (*p=0.055*). In this case, male is the reference category against which we interpret the results.

Table 14: Logistic regression of selected predictors of employment

	Predictor Variable	Response	Beta	Std. Err	Odds Ratio	P-Value
Individual Characteristics	Sex	*(Male)*				
		Female	0.34	0.18	1.42	0.055
	Age (years)	*(Below 20)*				
		20 - 24	0.14	0.68	0.21	0.836
		25 - 29	0.64	0.67	0.95	0.342
		30 - 34	1.10	0.75	1.86	0.014
	Type of disability	*(Blind)*				
		Deaf	0.95	0.26	2.39	0.031
Psychosocial factors	Technical Skills	*(Very low)*				
		Low	0.58	0.89	0.13	0.327
		Average	0.92	0.05	1.01	0.102
		High	1.53	0.37	1.22	0.083
		Very High	1.26	0.27	2.83	0.005
	Soft Skills	(*Very low)*				
		Low	1.65	0.52	0.83	0.161
		Average	1.88	0.86	1.17	0.062
		High	0.92	0.34	2.11	0.041
		Very High	1.42	0.46	3.55	0.034
	Self-efficacy	*(Very low)*				
		Low	1.33	0.50	0.09	0.144
		Average	0.75	0.73	1.89	0.021
		High	0.59	0.63	1.10	0.025
		Very High	1.69	0.60	2.06	0.010

Self Determination	(*Low)*				
	Moderate	0.35	0.22	0.92	0.069
	High	0.30	0.16	1.92	0.014

References categories are in brackets

Results presented in Table 14 show that female graduates are 1.42 times more likely to be employed compared with their male counterparts, but these differences are not statistically significant (*p=0.055*). Thus, when the effects of all the predictors (age, type of disability, technical skills, soft skills, self-efficacy, and self-determination) are considered, it can be concluded that sex of the TVET graduate is not a strong determinant of employment. This model supports the descriptive analysis where it was previously found that 41.5% of females were employed which was slightly higher than males at 33%. A simple cross tabulation of sex and other variables established that female graduates tend to have higher soft skills and self-efficacy in comparison to their male counterparts.

The study's findings revealing that female graduates are 1.42 times more likely to be employed compared to males, albeit without statistical significance, underscore a nuanced aspect of sex dynamics in the employment of individuals with disabilities. This aligns with previous research that has highlighted varying gender-based employment outcomes for people with disabilities but also emphasizes the complexity of these relationships (Bowe et al., 2018). While the findings suggest a potential advantage for female graduates, the lack of statistical significance indicates that sex alone may not be a decisive factor in determining employment status. Instead, it underscores the importance of considering a comprehensive set of predictors, including age, type of disability, technical and soft skills, self-efficacy, and self-determination, to gain a holistic understanding of employment dynamics for individuals with disabilities. These results reinforce the need for tailored interventions that address the multifaceted barriers and opportunities that individuals with disabilities, regardless of sexr, face in accessing and maintaining employment.

Regarding the age of TVET graduates, the study does not show clear distinction of direct association of employment as a function of different age groups. For example, none of the p- values for age groups from below 20 up to 29 shows any statistically significant differences in employment. However, results show that youth aged between 30 and 34 tend to be more

employable compared to younger ones below 20 years as indicated by the p-values (*p=0.014*). It s hould be noted in this case age is an independent attribute and not a factor influencing employment. This notion of age in employment dynamics according to a meta-analysis by Ng & Feldman (2010), has been examined in over 800 studies in the last decade and established strongly that age-performance relationships as well as the influence of age on job attitude, with scanty significant of age on employment prospects.

Results show that graduates who are deaf are 2.39 times more employable compared to their blind counterparts with similar skill sets and qualifications. The p-value (*p=0.031*) confirms that this variation is of statistical significance and hence one can conclude that given the same conditions, a deaf graduate is double likely to be employable compared to a graduate who is blind. This evidence confirms the descriptive analysis where it was found that only 25% of respondents who were blind were employed, which is significantly lower compared to 46.8% of those that were deaf and employed. It is also worth to note that there were no significant differences in terms of skills or qualification between the youth who were deaf and the ones who were blind. It can therefore be concluded that disability category as an individual characteristic influences employment of TVET graduate youth.

The study found that graduates with very high technical skills are 2.83 times more employable compared to those whose technical skills were low. The p-value (*p=0.005*) shows that this variation is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. In the same way, graduates whose technical skills are high are 1.22 times more employable compared to their counterparts with very low technical skills. Whilst this variation is not very huge, but the p-value shows that the variations are significant at 90% confidence level (*p=0.083*). However, there are no statistically significant variations regarding employment of graduates whose technical skills are average, low, and very low as shown by the corresponding p-values greater than 0.05. This result underscores the importance of higher technical skill in TVET training and the need to support continuous upgrading for the youth with disability to higher qualifications to place themselves competitively in the job market.

The study's findings indicating that deaf graduates are significantly more employable than their blind counterparts with similar qualifications and skill sets align with previous research highlighting disparities in employment outcomes based on the type of disability (McDonnell et al., 2019). The statistically significant difference underscores the distinct challenges faced by individuals who are blind in accessing employment opportunities, which may be attributed to various factors such as stereotypes, lack of accessibility accommodations, and misconceptions about the capabilities of blind individuals in the workplace (Shier et al., 2018). These findings emphasize the importance of tailored strategies and support mechanisms to address the unique needs and barriers faced by individuals with different types of disabilities. It also underscores the need for employers and policymakers to be cognizant of these disparities and work towards creating more inclusive and equitable employment opportunities for individuals who are blind.

An equally important finding relates to soft skills as a critical factor that influence employment. It was established that those with very high soft skills were 3.55 time employable compared to their counterparts with very low soft skills while holding all other factors constant. The p-value (*p=0.034*) shows that the variation employment between those with very low and very high soft skills is statistically significant. Similarly, those whose soft skills are high are 2.11 times employable compared to those whose soft skills are very low, a variation that statistically significant at 95% confidence level (*p=0.041*). There is no statistically significant difference in employment of graduates with low and very low soft skills (p=0.161) and only 90% confidence level significance difference between those with average soft skills and very low soft skills. These results underscore the importance of soft skill in influencing employment. It is worth to note that while very high soft skills more than triple employment prospects, any additional level of soft skills also plays a critical role.

The study's findings underscoring the significance of soft skills in influencing employment outcomes align with a growing body of research emphasizing the crucial role of these skills in the labour market (Collet et al., 2020). The results highlight that individuals with very high soft skills are significantly more employable than those with very low soft skills, even when other factors are held constant. This finding resonates with the notion that soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, are increasingly valued by employers and are often considered

essential for success in today's job market (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2021). The statistically significant variations further underscore the importance of integrating soft skills development into vocational training programs and employment support services, as individuals with strong soft skills are better equipped to navigate the demands of the workplace and secure meaningful employment opportunities. These findings emphasize the need for a holistic approach to employability that encompasses not only technical skills but also the cultivation of soft skills to enhance the job prospects of individuals, particularly those with disabilities. References:

The study found that graduates with very high self-efficacy are 2.06 times employable compared to those with very low self-efficacy. The p-value (*p=0.01*) shows that there is a statistically significant variation in employment between those with very high and very low self-efficacy at 95% confidence level. Similarly, the study found that graduates with high self-determination (self- presentation, self-advocacy, self-expression) are 1.92 times (almost double) employable compared to those whose self-determination was low.

The study's findings regarding the influence of self-efficacy and self-determination on employability align with empirical research. Additionally, the nearly doubled employability among graduates with high self-determination, encompassing self-presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expression, resonates with the principles of self-determination theory, highlighting the importance of autonomy and motivation in driving employment outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These findings emphasize the critical role of self-belief, goal-setting, and self-advocacy in the employability of individuals, underscoring the need for interventions and support programs that nurture these psychological attributes to enhance employment prospects.

The third study objective, which aimed to determine the role of individual characteristics in the employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya was achieved. The study successfully examined the influence of individual characteristics such as age, sex, and disability type on employment, providing valuable insights into how these factors impact the employment status of youth with disabilities.

4.7 Social Network and Employment

The fourth goal of the investigation was to evaluate the role of social networking for youth who are

either blind or deaf in accessing employment opportunities. TVET graduate youth's social networks evaluated included the nature and network of friends, family, social media usage and association and socializing in the community. Table 15 presents descriptive summary statistics of different categories of TVET graduates.

Table 15: Summary statistics of different categories of friends of TVET graduate youth

	Mean	Std. Err	Std. Dev	95 % CI	
How many close friends do you have?	4.48	0.27	3.21	3	6
How many of your friends are with disabilities?	3.10	0.31	3.79	2	5
How many of your friends are in employment?	1.27	0.11	1.32	1	2
How many of your friends did you go to the same school with?	1.32	0.15	1.75	1	2
How many of your friends live in your neighbourhoods?	0.84	0.08	0.91	0	1
How many of these friends helped you access employment opportunities (for the employed group)?	0.42	0.06	0.71	0	1
How many of these friends are helping you access employment opportunities (for the unemployed group)?	0.53	0.07	0.84	0	1

The results show that on average, 4.48 (100%) close friends (approximately 5 friends) out of which 3.10 (equivalent to 69%) are with disabilities, 1.27 (equivalent to 28%) are in formal employment, 1.32 (equivalent to 30%) are those they went to the same school with and 0.84 (equivalent to 19%) are those who live in the same neighbourhood. The graduate youth in formal employment reported an average of 9% of their close friends who helped them get employment opportunities, while graduate youth who are not in employment reported an average of 12% of their friends helping them access employment.

The findings pertaining to the role of social networking in the employment access of youth who are either blind or deaf align with the extensive body of literature highlighting the importance of social networks in job search and career development (Granovetter, 2019). The results illustrate that these youth maintain an average of approximately five close friends, a majority of whom also have disabilities, reflecting the concept of homophily in social networks, where individuals tend to associate with those who share similar characteristics (McPherson et al., 2021). The presence of

friends who are in formal employment and those who attended the same school or live in the same neighborhood further reinforces the notion that social networks can serve as conduits for employment-related information and opportunities (Lin, 2019). The difference in the percentage of friends helping those in employment (9%) versus those not in employment (12%) underscores the varying levels of social support that individuals with disabilities receive, which can significantly impact their job search and success (Kaplan & Nelson, 2021). These findings emphasize the need to recognize and leverage the potential of social networks in enhancing the employment prospects of youth with disabilities, while also considering the nuanced dynamics of how friends can assist in accessing job opportunities.

The results presented in Table 15 show that only 1 in 10 friends to a youth with a disability may be actively involved in helping them get employment. Further, the results indicate that most of the fri endship networks are concentrated among peers with disabilities; 3.10 (equivalent to 69%) of the reported close friends were made up of those with disabilities, followed at a distance by a network of former schoolmates. In which case the school mates are likely to be with disabilities too as in many instances the disability categories of children who are blind or deaf are more likely to attend special schools that are disability desegregated. Appreciation of the social network is shown by the following observation by one of the youths who said.

> "My friends really assisted me during my search for a job and even while settling down. They helped with me write my application letters and CV and helped to deliver them to the respective employers. I am also very grateful for the many referrals they gave to potential employers. These referrals helped me secure a job." Respondent GD102.

Research shows a close correlation between social media usage and enhanced chances of securing a job on a global scale. Social media sites, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are incredibly beneficial to job seekers. LinkedIn, specifically, is the most used social media site due to its appropriation for job seeking, followed in popularity by Facebook and Twitter. Job seekers, often between the ages of 18 and 24 years use social media sites to learn more about their prospective employees and set up in-person or telephone interviews (Ellis & Kent, 2016).

Nonetheless, most of the social media tools remain inaccessible to people with disabilities, and more especially the blind. This inaccessibility boils down to a form of digital disability whereby ac

tive job seekers miss out on opportunities due to their inability to use social media websites, most of which have not been optimized for people with disability especially the deaf who need accompanying captioning for voice messages; and voicing for the blind where messages have been relayed through written words. This limited use of social media for persons with disability may als o evolve into a limited social circle whereby they cannot effectively reach out to friends and family for job opportunities, especially in a world where communication has become extensively digitalized (Ellis & Kent, 2016). The general inaccessibility to smartphones and internet services has also vastly constrained the use of social media sites for job-seeking purposes, especially in Kenya where the internet penetration rates stand at 40% and only 54% of the total population have smartphones, according to the Communications Authority of Kenya (Communications Authority of Kenya, 2021). However, effectual outcomes from using social media to seek for jobs on a global scale are often predicated on other non-contextual factors such as education status, self-efficacy, and self-determination of the candidates.

Table 16: Percent of TVET graduate youth usage of different types of social networking sites

	User	Not a user
Email	21%	79%
Facebook	48%	52%
Google	13%	87%
Instagram	5%	95%
LinkedIn	1%	99%
Twitter	1%	99%
WhatsApp	75%	25%

Results presented in Table 16; WhatsApp is the social media with the highest users at 75% followed by Facebook at 48%. The least used social media among the surveyed youth who are deaf, or blind were Instagram at 13%, LinkedIn and Twitter at 1% each. It was found that only 21% of the study participants use email and 13% use google. This result shows that the uptake of social media among the study group varies greatly from as low as 1% and high as 75%.

To examine the association between use of social media for the youth graduates of SNTEVTs who are either blind or deaf and employment, chi-square test was used. Table 17 shows that there is no

association between use of particular social media platform and individual employment status (email *p=0.196;* Google *p=0.601;* Instagram *p=0.623;* LinkedIn p=*0.370;* Twitter *p=0.370*). However, the results show a statistically significant association between usage of Facebook (*p=0.004*), WhatsApp (*p=0.001*), and employment status. These results in their current state are lik ely to be misleading since the utilization of a particular social media platform may be more meaningful than the other platform.

Table 17: Association between social-media usage and employment status of TVET graduates who are blind or deaf (N=146)

		Not employed	Employed	P-value
Email	Not a user	81.5%	74.1%	0.196
	User	18.5%	25.9%	
Facebook	Not a user	60.9%	37.0%	0.004
	User	39.1%	63.0%	
Google	Not a user	87.0%	87.0%	0.601
	User	13.0%	13.0%	
Instagram	Not a user	94.6%	94.4%	0.623
	User	5.4%	5.6%	
LinkedIn	Not a user	100.0%	98.1%	0.370
	User	0.0%	1.9%	
Twitter	Not a user	100.0%	98.1%	0.370
	User	0.0%	1.9%	
WhatsApp	Not a user	34.8%	9.3%	0.001
	User	65.2%	90.7%	

The study's findings regarding the association between the use of social networking sites and the employment status of youth graduates from SNTEVTs who are either blind or deaf provide valuable insights into the role of specific social networking sites in the job search process. The absence of a significant association between the use of platforms like email, Google, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter with employment status is consistent with some prior research that suggests a limited impact of these platforms on job search outcomes for individuals with disabilities (Kaye & Schempp, 2019). However, the statistically significant associations observed with Facebook and WhatsApp usage underscore the growing importance of more interactive and widely accessible social networking sites in facilitating job-related networking, information sharing, and job-seeking activities (Dutta-Bergman, 2020). These findings emphasize the need for targeted strategies that harness the potential of specific social networking sites, such as Facebook and WhatsApp, to

enhance the employment prospects of individuals with disabilities while acknowledging the evolving landscape of digital communication in job search processes.

Table 18 shows the average number of social networking sites used by TVET graduate youth in for mal employment and those who are not in formal employment. On average, those in formal employment use an average of 2.019 (approximately 3) social networking sites, while those not in employment use much fewer social networking sites. The disability-poverty chain may be one plausible interpretation because unemployed youth usage of fewer social media as data to access s uch media is quite expensive. To this extent, it may be difficult to argue whether uptake of social media by TVET graduate youth is a driver of employment or access to employment increases the uptake of social media. It was also not clear as to whether the youth using media platforms used the platforms before employment, or they became active users after employment.

Table 18: Average number of social networking sites used by TVET graduate youth.

	Mean	SE	95% C. I	
			Lower	Upper
Not employed	1.413	0.128	1.163	1.663
Employed	2.019	0.162	1.701	2.336

Table 19 presents the association between social network and sex. The concept of social network as used in this study describes an individual's social capital by examining the number of friends in different categories. Some of the categories considered include close friends, friends with disabilities, friends without disabilities, friends in the same residence, friends outside one residence, friends in employment and friends one schooled with among other considerations. Additionally, family structure and individual exposure and/or use of different social media was considered in establishing one's social network. From inclusion perspective, having friends with t hose with disabilities and those without disabilities is encouraged as it provides one with enhanced exposure and network. This is in contrast with having friends who are all with disability as this is seen to limit individuality and networking. Table 19 presents summary results of the cross-tabulation between sex and social network of TVET graduate youth who were blind or deaf.

Table 19: Association between one's sex and social network.

Strength of Social network	Female	Male	P-value
Stronger Social Network	53%	47%	0.001
Average Social Network	7%	93%	
Weaker Social Network	44%	56%	

Results show that out of all graduates with stronger social network, 53% were female and 47% were male. On the other hand, the results show that out of all graduates with weaker social network, 44% were female and 56% were male. These differences between one's sex and social network are statistically significant (*p=0.001*). It can be deduced from the results that on average, male TVET graduates have weaker social networks compared to female graduates. Given the role played by social networks in accessing employment in the modern highly networked society and global village, then female graduates stand a much higher likelihood of accessing these employment opportunities.

> Respondent GD23, mentioned: "I mostly use social media to stay in touch with my friends and family, mostly Facebook and WhatsApp. I have also been using social media to find job opportunities and get further insight on these jobs through family and friends and I also forward opportunities that I get to my friends.

The findings highlighting the association between gender, social networks, and their statistical significance align with existing literature on the gendered nature of social networks and their impact on employment outcomes. The data reveal that graduates with stronger social networks are slightly more likely to be female (53%) than male (47%), whereas those with weaker social networks are more likely to be male (56%) than female (44%). In tandem with findings by Ibarra (2022), this sex disparity in social networks' strength underscores the well-documented sex differences in networking behaviour, where women have often been found to have smaller and less influential networks compared to their male counterparts. The statistical significance (p=0.001) emphasizes the importance of recognizing these sex-based differences in the context of employment and social networks, as they can influence access to job opportunities and career advancement. Therefore, these findings underscore the need for targeted interventions and support mechanisms to ensure that women with disabilities have equitable access to robust social networks, which can play a pivotal role in improving their employment prospects.

The extent of family support for persons with disability in the job-seeking process was not empirically analysed in this study. Nonetheless, most respondents in the interviews generally expressed that they had great relationships with their family members in their lives, with no signs of neglect and/or any physical, financial, or emotional abuse. Table 20 presents correlation analysis of friendship dynamics.

Table 20: Correlation among different forms of friendship networks

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Close friends		1				
2.Friends with disabilities	0.785	1				
3.Friends in employment	0.563	0.481	1			
4.Friends schooled with	0.548	0.607	0.200	1		
5.Friends in the neighbourhood	0.044	-0.083	0.040	-0.013	1	
6.Friends helping (employed group)	0.501	0.418	0.484	0.540	-0.062	1
7.Friends helping (unemployed group)	0.496	0.399	0.444	0.489	0.017	0.788

Results presented in Table 20 shows a positive correlation between close friends and friends with disabilities (r = 0.785), friends in employment (r = 0.563), friends schooled with (r = 0.548), friends in the neighbourhood (r = 0.044), friends helping (employed group) (r = 0.501) and friends helping (unemployed group) (r = 0.496). These results show that there is a general positive association among different aspects of friendships with a stronger correlation between close friends and friends with disabilities. This suggests that most of the friendship ties among the study participants was a ssociated with disability. This may imply that most youth who are blind or deaf have a bigger circle of friendships among their counterparts with disabilities and it explains the referral where it was found that one employer was likely to have more than one employee with the same disability type. It also brings to the fore a likelihood of self-isolation that means that information circulation is within a very small circle.

The findings revealing a positive correlation among various aspects of friendships among youth who are blind or deaf offer insights that align with the broader literature on the importance of social networks for individuals with disabilities. The notably strong correlation (r = 0.785) between

close friends and friends with disabilities underscores the significance of having a support system that includes peers who share similar experiences and challenges, as this can provide a sense of belonging and understanding (Levitt & Riggio, 2019). The positive associations with friends in employment ($r = 0.563$) and friends who help (both employed and unemployed groups) ($r = 0.501$ and $r = 0.496$, respectively) highlight the role of social networks in accessing employment opportunities and support, which has been well-documented in disability literature (Krupa et al., 2019).

The study's findings regarding the relationship between social networks and the employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya align with multiple theoretical perspectives. From the lens of Capability Theory of Human Development, the presence of friends with disabilities, those in formal employment, and those with shared educational backgrounds within the social networks underscores the importance of building an individual's capabilities and expanding their opportunities for employment (Sen, 1999). Resource-Based View theory is reflected in the positive correlations observed among different aspects of friendships, emphasizing the value of social networks as a resource that can enhance employability (Barney, 1991). Self-Determination Theory's principles of autonomy and motivation are evident in the finding that close friends play a role in helping graduates access employment opportunities, emphasizing the role of self-determination in shaping one's social network and leveraging it for employment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These findings collectively emphasize the interplay of individual capabilities, social resources, and motivation in shaping employment outcomes for youth with disabilities, highlighting the need for comprehensive interventions that harness the potential of social networks to enhance employability and foster greater inclusion.

The findings highlighted the positive association between social networks and employment, shedding light on the role of social connections in facilitating access to job opportunities for youth with disabilities.

4.9 Employers' Attitude and Employment of TVET Graduates who are Blind or Deaf

The fifth goal of the investigation was to evaluate the employers' attitudes' impact on employment

for youth who are blind or deaf in accessing employment opportunities. The construct of disability likely influences the transition of youth with disability from training to the labour market. Employers may harbour different attitudes towards employing those who are disabled (Cuddy et a l., 2008; Draper et al., 2011; McDonnall & Crudden, 2018; Pandya, 2021). While many employers are open to hiring persons with a disability solely based on skill and academic qualification, others may be sceptical of their competencies and abilities. Another cause of scepticism may arise from societal states of mind whereby employers assume that contracting a person customers who expect workers to have a "typical appearance" are likely to be disturbed by staff members with physical limitations. Nonetheless, many employers strive to be more inclusive in their recruitment processes to include those who are disabled in their organizations. From the organizations included in the study, seven organizations hired deaf people only, while 15 hired the visually impaired. None hired a mixture of blind and deaf staff. The reason of not having both categories of disability was not pursued.

Through in-depth interviews, the researcher investigating the nature of organizations, job advertisements used to attract these graduates, recruitment methods, knowledge of laws on employing those who are disabled, company policies, length of employment, terms of engagement, barriers to employment of PWDs, and the primary motivation to employing those who are disabled. Table 21 shows the descriptive statistics of different categories of employers.

Table 21: Percent distribution of employers by selected background characteristics (N=146)

Variable	Percent	Number
Type of Entity		
Public	5.5	1
Private	94.5	21
Number of Employees		
10 or less	3.4	15
10 – 50	50.0	5
41 – 100	36.3	1
Above 101	10.3	1
Knowledge of Employment Laws		
Yes	40.9	9
No	59.1	13
Recruitment Methods Used		

Job Application Forms	0	0
Face-to-face Interviews	100	22
Occupational Tests	0	0
Curriculum Vitae (CVs)	5.5	1
Terms of Engagement with PWDs		
Permanent	23	5
Temporary	41	9
Contractual	36	8

The study evaluated 22 employers from different industries. Of these employers, 21 (94.5%) were private organizations, while one was a public organization (5.5%). The study also sought to establish the job advertisements modes that the employers put out to establish their effectiveness i n reaching out to those who are disabled. To this end, the employers were asked to respond with th eir most utilized job advertisement method. Employers choose their most used job advertisement channels from the press, job centres, recruitment agencies, internet, or social media tools, or through word of mouth. 21 of the 22 (95.5%) employers used word of mouth to reach out to prospective employees. Only four employers reached out to potential employees using other means aside from word of mouth. All four utilized social media or internet tools to reach out to prospective employees.

The findings revealing that a substantial majority of employers (95.5%) primarily rely on word of mouth for recruiting prospective employees with disabilities, especially the deaf and blind, are in line with the prevailing literature (Hernandez et al., 2019) highlighting the role of informal networks and personal connections in the hiring process for individuals with disabilities. Word of mouth recruitment can often result in a limited and homogenous pool of candidates, potentially perpetuating employment disparities. The fact that only a small minority (4 out of 22) of employers utilize alternative methods such as social media and internet tools to reach out to prospective employees reflects a critical gap in leveraging modern, inclusive recruitment strategies. The literature emphasizes the importance of diversifying recruitment channels, including online platforms, to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of the hiring process for individuals with disabilities (Hernandez et al., 2019). These findings underscore the need for employer education

and awareness campaigns to promote more inclusive and equitable hiring practices, which could contribute to improved employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The recruitment methods that the study investigated included telephone interviews, use of CVs, job application forms, occupational tests, and face-to-face interviews. The results from the study revealed that all 22 organizations preferred face-to-face interviews as their primary recruitment method while hiring people with disabilities, especially those that are blind or deaf. Only 3 organizations used CVs in the recruitment process alongside the face-to-face interviews.

The findings indicating that all 22 organizations predominantly favour face-to-face interviews as their primary recruitment method for hiring individuals with disabilities, especially the blind or deaf, reflect a common preference for traditional assessment techniques in the employment process (Fowler et al., 2020). The reliance on face-to-face interviews may be influenced by a desire to assess not only technical skills but also interpersonal qualities and cultural fit, which can be challenging to gauge through other means (Hausknecht et al., 2021). However, the limited use of CVs alongside face-to-face interviews by only 3 organizations suggests a potential missed opportunity to leverage a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to candidate evaluation. Lit erature highlights the importance of adapting recruitment methods to accommodate the diverse needs and abilities of individuals with disabilities, including the use of accessible application materials and alternative assessment methods (Bowe et al., 2018).

The study sought to establish if the employers had a good grasp of the laws and policies on the employment of those who are disabled. The government of Kenya has established legal frameworks that guides organizations countrywide in the recruitment and hiring process of those who are disabled. In a nutshell, the laws mitigate against discrimination in the recruitment process, provides for tax incentives to hiring entities, and provides guidelines for adjustment of the working environment for persons with different types of disabilities.

The study revealed that 13 organizations from the 22 interviewed (59.1%) had no knowledge of the laws that govern the employment of those who are disabled. The other 9 (40.9%) organizations expressed some knowledge of these laws, with 4 of the employers interviewed citing non-discrimination in remuneration as the only law they know of, 5 quoting laws on adjustment and

accommodations in the workspace, and 2 citing inclusivity as a law alongside the laws as mentioned earlier. The study also revealed that only 2 (9.1%) of the organizations studied had established internal policies on employment and engagement of those who are disabled. One organization specifically mentioned offering their employees with disabilities flexible working hours.

The study's findings indicating that a significant proportion of employers (59.1%) had no knowledge of the laws governing the employment of those who are disabled, with only 40.9% displaying varying degrees of awareness, underscore the critical need for enhanced education and dissemination of disability-related legislation among employers (Shier et al., 2018). The limited knowledge of these laws among employers can have substantial implications for the employment experiences of individuals with disabilities, as awareness of legal provisions can influence hiring practices and workplace accommodations (Boon, 2021). These findings highlight a crucial gap in employer understanding of disability-related legislation, emphasizing the need for targeted outreach and training initiatives to ensure that employers are well-informed and equipped to create inclusive and supportive work environments for individuals with disabilities.

An investigation on the length of employment for those who are disabled in these organizations revealed that 17 of 22 had hired those who are disabled, especially deaf and blind, for five or fewer years. On the other hand, most of the employees hired (45.5%) were offered employment contracts through personal contact with the employers, while 31.8% were offered their initial contract through referral. The rest were offered contracts after application, through other professionals (such as a sign language interpreter), and through a family member who sought employment opportunities on behalf of the person with a disability.

The study's findings indicating that the majority of organizations had hired those who are disabled, particularly the deaf and blind, for relatively short periods of five years or less resonate with literature highlighting potential challenges in retaining employees with disabilities (McDonnell et al., 2019). The relatively short tenures could be indicative of various factors, including the need for improved workplace accommodations, mentorship, and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities (Krupa et al., 2019). Additionally, the significant percentage (45.5%) of

employees who secured their initial contracts through personal contact with employers highlights the importance of informal networks and relationships in the employment process for individuals with disabilities, which has been noted in prior research (Hernandez et al., 2019). Meanwhile, the substantial proportion (31.8%) offered contracts through referrals underscores the role of social connections in facilitating job placement, emphasizing the potential benefits of expanding referral networks to increase employment opportunities for this demographic. These findings underscore the complexity of employment dynamics for those who are disabled and suggest avenues for enhancing their job retention and access to opportunities.

Most of the employees were initially hired on a casual basis (36.4%). Other terms of engagement that were agreed upon initially were on a temporary basis (31.8%), a permanent basis (9.1%), internships (13.6%), attachments (4.5%), or on a contractual basis (4.5%). These terms of engagement have since become either temporary (41%), permanent (23%), or contractual (36%). The most significant barriers to employing those who are disabled from this study, as expressed by employers included communication barriers caused by the disability, fear of discrimination from colleagues or customers, and poor work standards compared to other employees without disability. Nonetheless, changes in employer attitudes were observed during the employment period of the those who are disabled. Most of the reasons for employing those who are disabled as given by employers varied from prior interaction with the person with disability and just wishing to help. Earlier engagement of the persons family builds the employer confidence in the youth capacity to inclusion purposes. Specifically, prior interactions in social settings, such as churches and other social gatherings, accounted for 55% of the reasons for employment, while 27% hired them for inclusivity purposes and to feel that they are seen as a non-discriminating person. Notably, only 10% of the organizations employed those who are disabled directly for their skills set.

Nonetheless, most employers (82% of the interviewed) changed their attitude towards those who are disabled after working with them. They reported that they displayed their competence in the workplace. Moreover, some organizations expressed a change in different paradigms of the workplace. For instance, some employers (9% of the interviewed) saw improved customer relations after employing those who are disabled. However, two employers expressed some doubts about the workplace improvements brought about by those who are disabled, noting that they

noticed some hesitation in customers approaching services and the high costs of making the workplace conducive for the person with a disability. Some of the employers were quite unsure of the readiness of their workplace and dynamics of customers as relates services being offered by a person with disability. There was scepticism around customer attitude and how business was likely to be affected. This employer then used an engagement strategy of temporary engagement to test the reactions. Most of them reported pleasant results that have made them retain the youth in their employ. One employer is reported to have said:

> "I met her in church and hired her on a casual basis. I was afraid she would have difficulty settling in because customers may doubt her ability. After some time and with some training, she has been able to adapt very well. Many churchgoers have become frequent customers due to her good work." Respondent Rc.

Overall, the study revealed that employing those who are disabled brought about more positive changes in the workplace than negative. Noteworthy, the attitudes changed primarily due to the competence that the youth with disability displayed in discharging their duties as effectively as their counterparts without any disability. The most significant motivations for employing people w ith disabilities as established in the study, especially for the deaf and blind, included a belief in social responsibility, concern about customer interactions with those who are disabled, effective disability awareness campaigns, and enhanced community image. Other motivations included pressure to employ other those who are disabled, staff's ability to work with people with disabilities. There were salient fears of discomfort of others over an observable disability, or lack of social integration in the workplace. In this study we asked employers to rank the motivations mentioned above in order of their importance that they considered while hiring those who are disabled in their organizations. The results are discussed in this section.

Companies still seem to ignore the potential of people with disabilities despite the various benefits that may accrue to them, such as improved customer relations, better company image, workplace inclusion, and enhanced productivity and innovation. Nonetheless, some organizations have developed a positive attitude towards the employment of people with disabilities often because they believe that they have a social responsibility to employ them. Available literature shows that the most common reasons for this social responsibility are the organizations' commitment to non-discrimination, their belief in equality, and human rights issues.

Results from the study show that most employers believe social responsibility is a significant motivation in the employment of people with disabilities. Of the 22 employers interviewed, 18 (81.8%) believed that social responsibility was a very important factor in their decision to employ those who are disabled, while the remaining 4 (18.2%) believe it is an important factor.

> "I hired her because I know that even those who are disabled have families. They are just trying to fend for their families, just like the rest of us. We are happy to have her. Even though we initially had problems with communication, we have gone past them, and through her good work, we have more clients now. You never know, maybe tomorrow, you will be the one in her shoes seeking employment." said Respondent Rs, who has one deaf employee.

Another motivation for hiring those who are disabled is a concern about the negative reviews by cu stomers. Studies across the globe show that consumers often develop a significantly better attitude towards organizations that employ people with disabilities than those that do not. The public perceptions of hiring people with disabilities are that organizations that achieve this social responsibility often assist people with disabilities lead happier and more productive lives. At the sa me time, it portrays to the customers that the organization is open to hiring all workers without any discrimination. Therefore, customers often become loyal to such organizations due to higher satisfaction levels (Siperstein, Romano, Mohler & Parker, 2005). Results from this study show that employers recognize that their customers may have such perceptions, thus, the motivation for employing people with disabilities. 10 of the 22 employers (45.5%) interviewed during this study rank this motivation as 'very important', while 50% claim it was an 'important' motivation towards hiring people with disabilities. Respondent Ra, who has hired a blind employee said,

> "After contact with a family member I hired him on a temporary basis, but I went on to make the position permanent after seeing their good work. I was afraid of negative reviews by customers, but he was able to enhance customer service and he worked well with other employees. He has been with us for 5 years now."

Alongside non-governmental organizations such as religious organizations and international bodies, the government of Kenya has launched and run multiple disability awareness campaigns ac ross the country. Results from the study are in alignment with the messages from these campaigns. 12 of the 22 (54.5%) employers interviewed cited their motivation to employ people with disability

because of effective disability awareness campaigns was ‘very important’. In comparison, the other 10 (45.5%) cited the campaigns were ‘important’ for their motivation.

Community image is another motivation for employing those who are disabled. Every business seeks to have a positive outlook from the community it serves, and studies have shown that hiring those who are disabled enhance this image (Kaye et al., 2011). Results from the study show that employers perceive their image to the community as ‘important’ (54.5% of employers) and ‘very important’ (41.0%). Therefore, many employers are committed to enhancing their image to the community, and hiring those who are disabled, in this case, the blind or deaf, has helped them achieve this image. An enhanced community image results in better profitability due to a higher and loyal customer base who, as discussed earlier, develop a positive attitude towards businesses that employ persons with disability.

Staff’s ability to work with people with disabilities was also a significant motivation for employers. This study showed that 50% of the employers considered their staff’s ability to work with people with disabilities as ‘very important’, while 36.4% considered it ‘important’. Most of the employers interviewed expressed that the improvements made in the workspace were key to improving the w orking relationship between employees with disabilities and those without. The employers cited sig nificant improvements such as ensuring ramps are installed in the workplace, replacing staircases, teaching sign language to other employees during free time, and getting the necessary equipment for employees with disabilities to discharge their tasks. These improvements have made it significantly easier for other employees to interact with those who are disabled to improve the workflow and accommodate each other’s ideas.

> “I gave him a more permanent position after seeing the great work he was doing in our shoe-making business. He was very good. I was afraid customers would lack faith in his work, but after we gave him a comfortable working area and all the necessary equipment, we were able to retain many customers after they saw his good work.” Respondent Rd.

Another motivation investigated in this study is the discomfort of others over observable disability.

The study revealed that 68.2% of the employers found this motivation to be 'important' for employing those who are disabled. Meanwhile, 13.6% expressed that this motivation was of 'very low importance' while 9.1% denoted it as a motivation of 'very low importance'. The discomfort of others over observable disability is a crucial barrier for people with disabilities from entering th e workforce. The study shows, employers still shy off from engaging persons with disability as they have the attitude that the disability is likely to cause discomfort to their customers and results in less business, but this belief seem to have been wrong from the perspectives collected in this stud y. One employer is reported to say this about their experience with a youth who is deaf:

> "When we hired Mary (not her real name) from a referral, we had problems with customers who were unsure of her ability. However, after a while, she was able to prove customers w rong. Through her diligent work, we were able to get more customers, especially younger customers, whom she formed quite a rapport with. All she needed was support in the initial stages and the chance to establish herself in her work." Respondent Rf.

This submission aligns to the earlier submission by the graduate youths, especially where many of them indicated to have been offered longer term engagement, increase in pay, all this was due to good work, focus on task, customer feedback and increased clientele and confirmed competences and skills.

Employers have expressed the lack of social integration in the workplace as a motivation for employing those who are disabled. This study concludes that most of the employers (40%) found this motivation as 'important'. In comparison, 18.2% expressed this motivation as either of 'very low importance' or held a 'neutral' stance. Available literature has revealed that employing those who are disabled results in a beneficial outcome for organizations. These benefits stem from diversifying workplaces to include those who are disabled, leading to a more inclusive work climate (Allen & Cohen, 2010). This enhancement in integration could also result from employee being trained on working better with colleagues with disabilities and being more sensitive to different people's needs. Some of the employers indicated that they engaged the youth with disabilities as a way of changing the workplace and making it more inclusive. The employer is quoted to say:

> "I hired two employees with hearing disabilities to promote social integration at our workplace. I was sceptical of their abilities at first, but they proved me wrong. We also had

> some communication problems. However, to change that, most of us have now learnt some sign language to improve our work relationships. By giving them this chance, we have had a high client turnout over time due to their great work." Respondent Rq.

The study's findings regarding the impact of employers' attitudes on the employment of youth who are blind or deaf align with the broader discourse on inclusive employment practices and corporate social responsibility. The overwhelming belief among the majority of employers (81.8%) that social responsibility plays a significant role in their decision to employ those who are disabled reflects the influence of societal values and expectations on organizational behavior (Koch & McGrath, 2020). This finding resonates with the idea that many organizations view the inclusion of individuals with disabilities as a means to fulfil their social responsibility goals and contribute to a more inclusive society (Hernandez et al., 2018). Additionally, the concern about negative customer reviews underscores the impact of public perception on businesses, highlighting the importance of creating accessible and inclusive workplaces to maintain a positive brand image (Mishra & Singh, 2022). The recognition of staff's ability to work with people with disabilities as a significant motivation for employers aligns with the idea that fostering an inclusive work culture and providing disability awareness training can enhance the willingness of organizations to hire individuals with disabilities (Rogers et al., 2018). These findings underscore the multifaceted motivations that shape employer attitudes toward the employment of individuals with disabilities and emphasize the need for advocacy, awareness, and training initiatives to promote inclusive hiring practices.

From the lens of Capability Theory of Human Development, the recognition of social responsibility as a significant motivation for employers reflects the role of organizations in enhancing the capabilities and well-being of individuals with disabilities (Sen, 1999). It signifies a commitment to providing equal opportunities and fostering the development of human potential among marginalized groups. Resource-Based View theory is evident in the acknowledgment that staff's ability to work with people with disabilities is a motivation for employers. This perspective highlights the value of human resources and expertise within an organization as a source of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The emphasis on social responsibility and a supportive workplace culture resonates with Self-Determination Theory, underlining the importance of autonomy and relatedness in fostering motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These

findings collectively underscore the role of organizations in shaping the employment landscape for individuals with disabilities and emphasize the need for businesses to recognize their social responsibility, leverage human resources effectively, and create inclusive environments to promote equitable employment opportunities.

The fourth study objective, which aimed to explore the impact of employers' attitudes on the employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya, was achieved. The study effectively presents the role of employer attitudes in shaping employment outcomes for these youth, contributing to our understanding of the factors that influence their access to employment opportunities.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study findings, conclusions, recommendations. The purpose of this study was to examine the nexus between psychosocial, social networks and operational factors and; employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four National SNTVETs in Kenya.

This investigation was chosen because, irrespective of the nation's general level of employment, the jobless rate of people with disabilities appears to be significantly much lower compared to the rate of people without disabilities. This is despite elaborate legal and policy provisions in support of employment of those who are with disability.

The motivation for this study, emanated from a lot of literature that looked at employment of PWDs from a policy provisions over the years. The research ideated on a nexus of the personal factors as well as operational factors and sought to establish whether there was such a possibility. Specifically, the objectives of the study were: examine the relationship between self-competencies and establish the extent to which the self-determination of a youth who is blind or deaf influences their employment; determine the role of individual characteristics in employment of youth who are blind or deaf and determine the relationship between social networks and employment of youth who are blind or deaf and evaluate the impact of employers' attitude in employment of youth who are blind or deaf.

The findings presented in this study are based on data gathered from graduates of the four National Special Needs Technical institute. Four (4) administrative staff ,146 graduates who are either blind or deaf and 22 employers of these youth. The employers were automatically picked based on any employed graduate that was reached during data collection. The reliability of the findings, especially while measuring specific constructs such as self-efficacy, self-advocacy, soft skill, and employer attitudes was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. Data collection tools included questionnaires and interview guides. Data analysis was conducted according to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 standards. Data analysis contained descriptive and inferential statistics and detailed content analysis.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Self-Competency and Employment

Self-competency as used in this study describes personal acquired attributes including different sets of technical skills and soft skills, which when put together are referred to as self-efficacy. The study findings showed that all these attributes play a critical role in employment of a youth who is either blind or deaf. For instance, holding age, gender and disability category constant, those with higher technical skills were twice more employable compared to their counterparts with lower technical skills. Additionally, those with high soft skills were more than triple employable compared to those whose soft skills were poor. This result was consistent across ages, sex and disability categories.

5.2.2 Self-Determination and Employment

Self-determination as used in this study describes key personal attributes namely self-presentation, self-advocacy, and self-expression. Results from the study established that under similar conditions, youth with high self-determination were almost double more employable compared to their counterparts whose self-determination was poor. Further, results revealed that 55% of those with good self-expression were employed making self-expression the most crucial attribute of self-determination. This was followed closely self-presentation as 43% of those with good self-presentation were employable. Last came self-advocacy which despite being the last in the ranking of self-determination, 40% of those with good self-advocacy skill were employable.

5.2.3 Individual Characteristics and Employment

In this study, three main individual characteristics considered were sex, age, and type of disability. It was assumed that these individual characteristics moderate the influence of psychosocial, social network and operational factors as far as employment of TVET graduate youth with disabilities was concerned. The study results revealed that female graduates tend to be more employable than their male counterparts under similar conditions such as similar disabilities

and similar age brackets. A plausible reason for this was that there were more female participants with higher self-efficacy in comparison to the male.The study results showed that older graduates aged above 30 years appeared to be employable compared to younger TVET graduates. A closer examination of the data revealed that age does not necessarily influence employment but rather, it was noted that most graduates with diplomas were older while younger ones had qualifications at craft certificates and grade test level courses. Findings of the study also indicated that under similar circumstances, the deaf are more employable compared to their blind counterparts. This was observed regardless of any differences or similarities in age, sex, and skill set.

5.2.4 Social Network and Employment

In this study, the scope of social network included the structure of friendships, family and use of s ocial media for job search and networking. The study findings showed a positive relationship between social network and employment of youth. Regarding friendship structure, the findings showed that youth who were employable did not necessarily have diverse friendship structure. The two notable characteristics of youth who were less employable was that first, most of their friends were former school mates, particularly from primary school level with less friends in higher levels of their education. Secondly, those who were less employable tended to have friends only from within their locality. Regarding family, the study established that employable youth had a lot of acceptance and support from within the family compared to the less employable. Regarding social media, it was found that whilst over 80% of youth use social media, that is Facebook and WhatsApp it was not very clear the purpose with which they use media influences their employment.

5.2.4 Employer Attitude and Employment

The study findings showed that 95% of employers who participated in this study were from private establishments and only 5% from the public sector. These findings therefore may reflect more of private employers and less of public employers. First, the study findings showed that in most cases, youth were engaged on temporary/causal terms. At least 3 in 4 employers reported that they employed those with disability only through referral and personal contact rather than open

recruitment like it would typically be the case with other employees. It was found that 50% of employers were satisfied with the work done by their employees with disabilities. However, for most terms of engagement remained unchanged since first employment. In addition, 75% of employers reported that their initial motivation to employ a person with disability was for legal compliance and/or corporate image and the human feel-good element rather than a believer in the value addition of the PWD to the workplace.

There exists a nexus between psychosocial, social networks and operational factors and employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya. The study has demonstrated that personal characteristics do affect in getting one employed. From pursuing higher levels of competences to harnessing soft skills that enables one not only to co-exist but to do a self -presentation to a prospective employer. Personal skills were double echoed when the employer showed preference for face to face interview for the YWDs. This could only mean that self -presentation and soft skills were keenly followed as determinants for best fit to join the w orkforce.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Self-Competency and Employment

Considering the results related to the first objective, which examined the relationship between self-competencies and the employment of youth who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya, it can be concluded that self-competencies play a crucial role in shaping employment outcomes for these individuals. The study's results demonstrated that a significant portion of the surveyed youth possessed self-competencies, including an understanding of their job needs, knowledge of their strengths, and competencies relevant to their desired jobs. This suggests that building and nurturing self-competencies should be an integral part of Technical and vocational training for youth with disabilities, as these competencies empower them in their job-seeking endeavors and enhance their employability.

5.3.2 Self-Determination and Employment

Regarding the second objective, which aimed to establish the extent to which self-determination influences the employment of youth who are blind or deaf, the findings confirm that self-determination is a critical and significant factor in influencing employment. The study revealed that a majority of the surveyed youth exhibited self-determination through their advocacy and efforts to make others appreciate their abilities. This underscores the significance of self-determination as a motivating force in the job search process. Thus, interventions and support systems that enhance self-determination among youth with disabilities can contribute to improve their employement.

5.3.3 Individual Characteristics and Employment

In relation to the third objective, which sought to determine the role of individual characteristics in the employment of youth who are blind or deaf, the study found that age and sex are important factors that influence employment status. The higher proportion of employed youth were females and those aged 30 to 34 years. This suggests that sex and age dynamics play a role in their employment opportunities.

5.3.4 Social Network and Employment

Regarding the fourth objective, which examined the role of social networking in accessing employment opportunities, the study's findings emphasize the significance of social networks, especially friendships and shared educational backgrounds, in facilitating employment for youth who are either blind or deaf. Additionally, the impact of specific social networking sites like Facebook and WhatsApp on employment highlights the evolving role of digital networking in the job search process. This suggests providing digital literacy skills can enhance employment prospects for this group. In conclusion, the study's findings collectively emphasize the multi-faceted nature of factors influencing the employment of youth who are either blind or deaf

5.3.5 Employer Attitude and Employment

The findings related to the fifth objective, which aimed to evaluate the impact of employers' attitudes on the employment of youth who are blind or deaf, highlight the positive influence of factors such as social responsibility and staff's ability to work with people with disabilities on hiring decisions. These results underscore the importance of fostering a culture of social responsibility within organizations and providing training to staff to create inclusive and accommodating work environments. Moreover, the study underscores the need for awareness campaigns and policy initiatives that encourage employers to consider individuals with disabilities as valuable assets to their workforce, rather than viewing them solely through the lens of social responsibility.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings,self-competencies and self-determination significantly influence the employment of youth who are blind or deaf, it is recommended that technical and vocational education programs incorporate comprehensive training modules aimed at enhancing these competencies. These modules should focus on soft -skills , goal-setting, self-advocacy, and self-expression. Additionally, mentorship programs that provide guidance and role models can empower these youth to develop and assert their self-competencies effectively. Moreover, disability organizations and support networks should promote self-determination by offering workshops and resources that empower youth to advocate for their abilities in the workplace.

Recognizing the influence of individual characteristics such as age and sex on employment outcomes, it is crucial to develop tailored employment strategies. Specific programs and initiatives should target male youth and different age groups with specialized Technical and vocational training and job placement support. These strategies should consider the unique challenges faced by each demographic and provide the necessary resources and mentorship to enhance their employability.

Organised internship to introduce and retain employer confidence in youth who are blind or deaf. There could be college-orchestrated training of the industry on disability mainstreaming. These programs should focus on raising awareness about the capabilities of individuals who are blind or

deaf and dispelling stereotypes. Moreover, they should provide guidance on creating accessible workplaces and accommodating the specific needs of employees with disabilities. Encouraging employers to view hiring individuals with disabilities as a business advantage rather than solely a social responsibility can foster a more inclusive labor market.

Recognizing the role of social networks and specific social networking sites in employment, it is recommended that youth with disabilities receive training in digital and social networking skills. Educational institutions and disability support organizations can offer workshops and courses on effective online networking, job search strategies, and digital self-presentation. By equipping these youth with the skills to navigate digital platforms, they can better leverage online resources for job opportunities.

The Kenyan government has formulated and implemented various policies to improve the employment rate for persons with disability, especially those that are either blind or deaf. These policies have been geared towards improving employment, providing support for job creation, and strengthening policy development and securing livelihoods for PWDs. Nonetheless, this study invokes various policy recommendations to further enhance the employment of persons with disability, especially those who are either blind or deaf and have taken initiative to acquire not just education, but also skills and training; hence making themselves job ready:

i. The importance of skills has been prominent in this study. There is need for the TVET curriculum to address the development of self-competences. Apart from the entry level artisan courses, encourage a transition path to higher level skills especially diploma training. On the same note see to it that reasonable training time is dedicated to development of soft skills and self- presentation skills that seemed to be highly rated by the employers.

ii. There is need for the addition life skills to the TVET curriculum, with such emphasis that the subject could have role play sessions. They could incorporate the old but viable idea of social networks through pen pals from around the world. This will be a good and safe way to expand networks and build confidence among the trainees in readiness for the world of work.

iii. SNTVETs could collaborate and pursue zero-rating of internet access for their graduates for a period of one year after exit from college to support the graduates use social media plat form for job search and to keep college friendships for purpose of work referral. Employers

herein indicated they use social media such as WhatsApp as well as word of mouth.

Overall the personal readiness of the youth who is either blind or deaf has come out as paramount in this study. The researcher hence recommends that families and the youth would invest in personal development courses and pre-work short courses that focus on these specific skills on competences and self -determination. This is likely to be a worthwhile undertaking as per data of this study.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The goal of this investigation was to examine the nexus between psychosocial factors ,social networks and employer attitude and employment of youth graduates who are blind or deaf from the four national SNTVETs in Kenya. Therefore, a more comprehensive work would be instrumental in determining whether the results of this study remain consistent with an expanded sample size. Also establish why over 80% of the youth choose to stick to their initial employment without considering a change of employer and whether it is related to self-competencies

Moreover, through a detailed empirical analysis, the study deduces the lack of soft skills as a significant stumbling block to the employment of persons with disability, especially among youth who are either blind or deaf. Further studies need to be conducted to pinpoint the exact soft skills that the candidates miss out on and further develop avenues to enhance them.

Considering the population of PWDs in Kenya is less than 10%; it would make good work to investigate employment of all PWDs by disability type and self-competences. This would elaborate more on the nexus and the employers' attitude towards engaging PWDs in the workplace.

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APPENDICES

Introduction to Consent

Dear participant,

My name is Wangui Lydia Chege, and I am a PhD candidate at St. Paul's University Limuru , in Kenya. I am conducting research on the nexus of psychosocial, social networks and operational factors on employment for graduates who are totally blind or deaf from SN technical training institutions in Kenya. I will highly appreciate your participation in this study to help me get data for use in my academic work. All the information you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only be used for the purpose of this study. I will not require to write down your name.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for TVET Graduates with Disability

SECTION A: Demographic Characteristics

A	Demographic Characteristic	Responses	Codes
	Observe and record gender of the respondent	Male Female	1 2
	What is your year of birth?		
	Which type of institution did you train from?	TTI VTC	
	What type of disability do you have?	Blind Deaf	1 2
	What is your level of school education? (prompt about their schooling did he/she complete a level e.g. primary or they dropped off)	Some primary Completed primary Some secondary Completed secondary	
	If 'some primary' indicate the class you reached If 'some secondary' indicate the form you reached		
	Which year did you graduate?		
	Are you employed for pay?	Yes No	1 2
	If yes, At What interval do you receive your salary?	End of every month End of every week Sometimes	1 2 3

What is your gross salary bracket in Kenya Shillings? Below 5000 5001-10,000 10,001-15,000 15,001–20,000 20,001–25,000 25,001–30,000 30,001–35,000 35,001–40,000 40,001–45,000 Above 45,000	Other (specify)…….	4
How long did you take before you got your first job? (months)		
How long have you been in employment (months)		
Is this your first job since graduation?	Yes No	
Has your salary changed since your employment date?	Yes No	
If yes, by how much has your salary increased?		
If unemployed, have you ever had a job in the past and lost it/left it?	Lost it Left it No	
If so, why did you leave?		
Which is your home county?		
Which county are you working in?		
Do you have a tax exemption certificate (KRA)	Yes No	1 2

SECTION B: SELF-COMPETENCE FOR EMPLOYMENT

Adapted from Imperial Collage General Self-Efficacy (GSF[1])

In this section, the researcher assess skills,training and soft skill for graduates respondents with disabilities. Select only one option provided for each of the statements listed in the table.

10. Which course did you train in?.....
11. At what level was your course? Craft certificate []
    Grade Test 3 []
    Grade Test 2 []
    Grade Test 1 []
    Certificate []
    Diploma []

Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree – no experience in the skill area
2 = Disagree – little experience in the skill area

[1] https://www.imperial.ac.uk/education-research/evaluation/what-can-i-evaluate/self-efficacy/tools-for-assessing- self-efficacy/general-self-efficacy-scale/

3 = Not sure – some experience in the skill area
4 = Agree - good experience in the skill area
5 = Strongly Agree - extensive experience in the skill area

12. *Technical skills*

	Competence	1	2	3	4	5
a	I am able to demonstrate technical expertise in my area of training					
b	I am able to show exemplary skills in what I am trained in					
c	I am able to apply specialized and detailed technical expertise					
d	I am able to demonstrate immediate understanding of new ideas in my area of training					
e	I am able to demonstrate high standards for quality of work					
f	I complete tasks on time					

13. *Soft skills competencies*

a	I am able to express my opinions clearly					
b	I may fail to communicate fluently					
c	I don't like to be given a lot of instructions					
d	I get along well with others					
e	I come to work in time					
f	I am sometimes absent from work					
g	I am able to maintain high ethical standards					

14. Are you using the skills of your course in your current employment?
15. Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain
……..……
…….

Using the statements listed below, please rate yourself

		Never	Sometimes	Always
a	I make follow-ups for CVs and job applications that I have sent to employers			

b	I know how to write CV and application letter seeking for a Job			
c	I am able to customise my CV to every job that I apply for			
d	I seek support when writing a job application			

SECTION C: SELF-DETERMINATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

In this section, we assess self-determination for graduates with disabilities

Self-presentation

16. Using the statements listed below, rate yourself based on the scale provided

		Never	**Sometimes**	**Always**
a	I know what I need for a job			
b	I know what I'm good at			
c	I have competencies for the job I want			
d	I set goals to get what I want			
e	I am guided on what job to look			
f	I always feel like I choose the things I do			
g	I choose to do what I have to do			
h	I only do work out of interest/ I only do work that interests me			
i	I only argue for ideas which I already believe			

25. Self-advocacy

		Never	**Sometimes**	**Always**
a	I like speaking for myself			
	I usually share needed information about my disability during job application			
b	I like to let people know that I am competent in my area of training			
c	I show people my ability			
d	I make others appreciate my abilities despite my disability			
e	I can independently request for reasonable adjustments at place of work			
f	I usually share needed information about my disability during interviews			
g	I know and ask for my rights and privileges			

26.Self-expression

		Never	Sometimes	Always
	I ask for reasonable accommodation during job application			
	I send job applications/CV even when not requested			
	I can speak in public without fear			
	I am able to express my needs in social setting			

	I can ask for an attendant or a stranger for something			
	I can express my displeasure on a situation			
	I can apologize when I realize am on the wrong			

	Question	**Responses**	**Codes**
27	Since graduation, approximately how many CVs have you written and sent seeking for employment?		
28	How many interviews have you attended since your graduation from college?	None 1 - 5 6 - 10 Above 10	1 2 3 4
29	Could you be willing to spend some money and extra time for skills improvement?	Yes No Not Sure	1 2 3

SECTION D: SOCIAL NETWORKS

	Friends		
30	How many close friends do you have?		
31	How many of your friends are with disabilities?		1 2
32	How many of your friends are in employment?		
33	How many of your friends did you go to the same school with?		1 2
34	How many of your friends live in your neighborhoods?		
35	How many of these friends helped you access employment opportunities?		
36	How many of these friends are helping you access employment opportunities?		
37	How have your friends helped you access employment opportunities?	Delivering my application Facilitating my job applications Have employed me Referring me to potential employers Sending me job adverts Through mentorship Writing CV/application letter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Family		

38	Who do you live with?	Alone Own family Nuclear family (*farther and/or mother*) Sibling (*brother, sister*) Grandparents Other relative Former teacher Former classmate Friend Foster home Other (specify)……	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
39	Is any of your family members in formal employment?	Yes No	1 2
40	If yes in the question above, how many of your family members are employed?		
41	How have/did they help you access employment? Select as appropriate	Delivering my application Facilitating my job applications Have employed me Referring me to potential employers Sending me job adverts Through mentorship Writing CV/application letter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
42	How many jobs have you been referred to in the last 12 months?		
	Social Media Tools		
43	Are you properly informed about job possibilities in your region or area of study?	Not informed at all Limited information Fairly Informed Well informed I can't really tell	1 2 3 4 5
44	What job seeking resources and technologies do you		

	use? *(List)*		

45	Which of the following social media tools do you use? Select as appropriate	Email Facebooks Google Instagram LinkedIn Twitter WhatsApp	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46	What do you use social networking sites for?	Catching up with friends Entertainment Networking Job search	1 2 3 4
47	If you use social for job search, how do you use it?	Accessing job advert Get insight on job applications Submit job applications Doing online jobs	1 2 3 4
	Organizations		
48	List any organized/support group of people you belong to?		
49a	Has any of these organizations assisted you to access employment information about opportunities?	Yes No	1 2
49b	If yes, kindly list the organization(s) and how they have assisted you to access employment opportunities		

50. In your own words, what would you say affects employment of persons with disability after training

……
……
……
……
……

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule for Administrative Officers in TVET

	SECTION A: PROFILE	**Responses**	**Code**
	What is your age?		
	Record the respondent's gender	Male Female	1 2
	Year of employment at the Institute		
	In what year did you start serving in this office?		
	How many youths that are blind or deaf have graduated from the Institute since 2015	Numbers	
	List the most common courses that are preferred by the Trainees that are blind Trainees that are deaf	List in order of priority	
	What levels of training are undertaken by youth with disability in this institution (rate the levels given)	Artisan Grade test Certificate Diploma	
B	**SECTION B**		
	What are the common services that relate to work that trainees seek from your office?		
	What units are taught to improve on graduates' social skills, communication and interpersonal skills. (Please list them)		
	Do the students in your Institute undertake attachment?		
.	If yes, describe any notable challenges that students /institute experience with placements attachment?		
.	What employers' concerns are brought to your attention from the field on graduates with disabilities		
.	Are there any concerns that you as the trainers have about access to employment for your graduates??		

Appendix 3: Interview Schedule for Employer

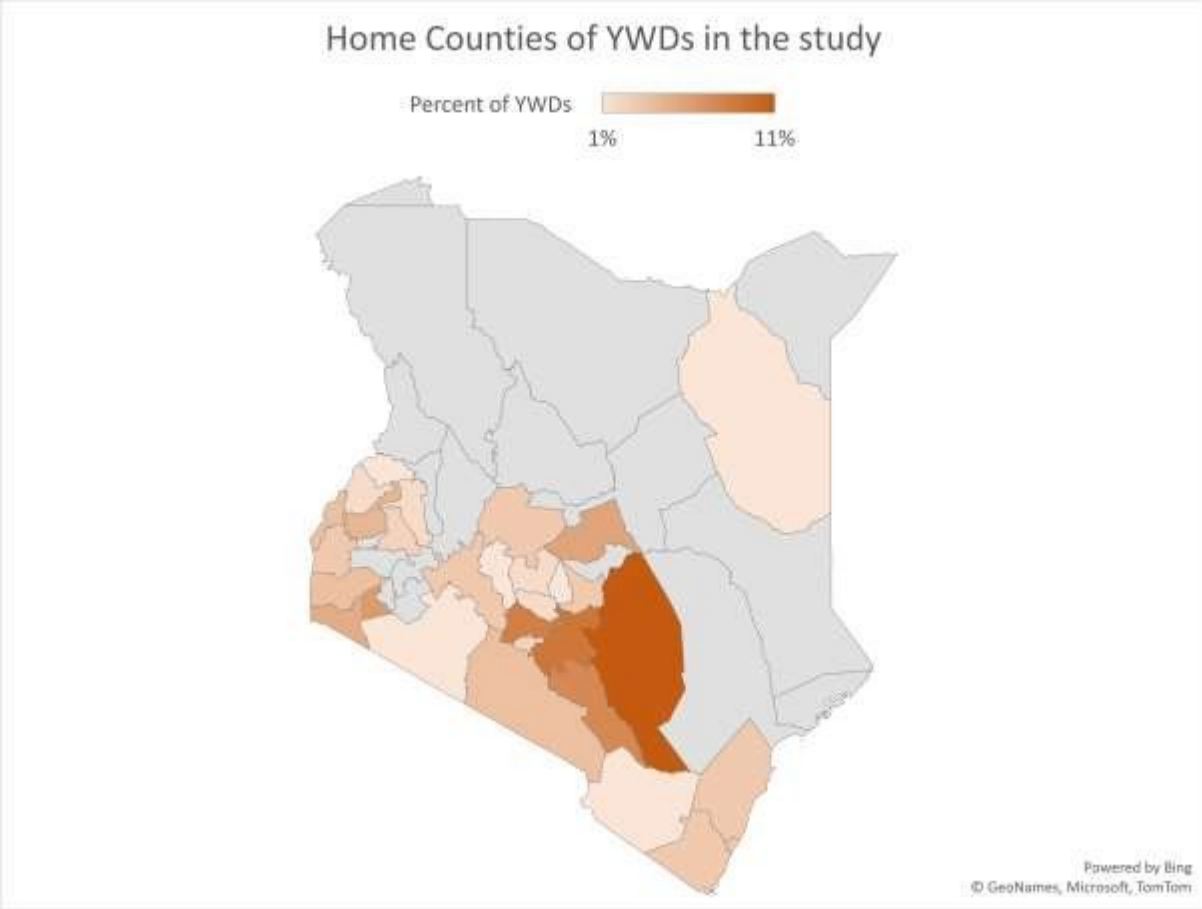
A	SECTION A: ORGANIZATION PROFILE	Response	Code
	Is this a private or public entity?		
	How many employees are in this company/organization		
	How are job vacancies advertised in this company/organization?	Press Job Centre Recruitment agency Internet/social media tools Word of mouth	
	Which recruitment methods do you use?	Job application forms CVs Occupational tests Telephone interviews Face-to-face interviews	
5	How many among your employee have disability?		
	How many of those with disabilities are deaf?		
	How many of those with disabilities are blind?		
	Are you aware of laws concerning the employment of those who are disabled?	Yes No	1 2
	If yes, which ones?		
.	Doe this company/organization have a policy concerning employment of those who are disabled?		
.	When did (specific name of graduate) get employed in your company/organization?		
.	Which disability does (specific name of graduate) have?		
.	How did you get in touch with him/her for employment opportunity you offered him/her?	Referral Application Personal Contact Other, specify ……	1 2 3 4
.	What was the initial terms of engagement with the employee?	Attachee Intern Causal Temporary employment Contract Permanent employment	
.	What are the current terms of engagement with him/her?		
.	Why did you have to employ this particular person/s with disability?		

.	What is your experience of working with a person with disability?		
.	How has working a person with disability affected your attitude in future considering employing a person with disability?		
.	In your opinion, what is the greatest barrier to employing a person with disability?		
.	In your opinion, what factors increases your motivation to employ a person with disability?		
.	What challenges have you experienced working with a person/s with disability?		
.	What advantages that the company have experienced in employing a person/s with disability?		
.	In your opinion, what should organizations do to have more PWDs in their employ?		
.	Does your work place have a workplace policy on disability mainstreaming?		
.	If yes, explain its importance		
.	What are some of the adjustments the company has made to facilitate a working environment for PWDs in the organization?		
.	Length of service in the current office		

28. Using the scale of between 1-5 to rate the following statements regarding the **motivation to employ a person with disability**, where 1= Very Low Importance, 2 = Low Importance, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important and 5 = Very Important.

	1	2	3	4	5
Belief in social responsibility					
Concern about negative responses by customers					
Effective disability awareness campaigns					
Enhanced community image					
Pressure to employ other disadvantaged people					
Ability of staff to work with person with a disability					
Discomfort of others over observable disability					
Lack of social integration in the workplace					

Appendix 4: Home Counties of Graduate youth respondents in the study



Appendix 5: Reliability Tests for Key Constructs

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Reliability Test for Technical Skills (0.965)				
I am able to demonstrate technical expertise in my area of training	18.5	23.1	0.90	0.96
I am able to show exemplary skills in what I am trained in	18.6	24.0	0.91	0.96
I am able to apply specialized and detailed technical expertise	18.8	24.3	0.86	0.96
I am able to demonstrate immediate understanding of new ideas in my area of training	18.8	24.7	0.90	0.96
I am able to demonstrate high standards for quality of work	18.6	24.8	0.90	0.96
I complete tasks on time	18.5	24.4	0.86	0.96
Reliability Test for Soft Skills (0.885)				
I am able to express my opinions clearly	21.2	25.0	0.81	0.85
I may fail to communicate fluently	21.7	26.0	0.59	0.88
I don't like to be given a lot of instructions	22.0	28.9	0.27	0.92
I get along well with others	21.1	24.7	0.83	0.85
I come to work on time	21.1	24.3	0.84	0.85
I am sometimes absent from work	21.5	25.9	0.74	0.86
I am able to maintain high ethical standards	21.1	24.5	0.79	0.85
Reliability Test for Self-Presentation (0.840)				
I know what I need for a job	20.2	8.5	0.42	0.84
I know what I'm good at	20.2	8.1	0.52	0.83
I have competencies for the job I want	20.3	7.7	0.60	0.82
I set goals to get what I want	20.5	7.4	0.63	0.82
I am guided on what job to look	20.8	8.1	0.33	0.85
I always feel like I choose the things I do	20.6	7.3	0.65	0.81
I choose to do what I have to do	20.5	7.5	0.63	0.82
I only do work out of interest/ I only				

do work that interests me	20.6	7.3	0.60	0.82

I only argue for ideas which I already believe	20.5	7.4	0.64	0.81
Reliability Test for Self-advocacy (0.737)				
I like speaking for myself	16.6	4.5	0.65	0.67
I usually share needed information about my disability during job application	16.6	4.5	0.65	0.67
I like to let people know that I am competent in my area of training	17.9	8.2	-0.85	0.89
I show people my ability	16.7	4.2	0.74	0.65
I make others appreciate my abilities despite my disability	16.6	4.3	0.69	0.66
I can independently request for reasonable adjustments at place of work	16.8	4.1	0.69	0.65
I usually share needed information about my disability during interviews	16.7	4.3	0.67	0.66
I know and ask for my rights and privileges	16.8	4.5	0.58	0.68
Reliability Test for Self-Expression (0.866)				
I ask for reasonable accommodation during job application	14.5	6.8	0.70	0.84
I send job applications/CV even when not requested	14.8	6.5	0.61	0.86
I can speak in public without fear	14.5	6.7	0.75	0.83
Am able to express my needs in social setting	14.4	6.9	0.73	0.84
I can ask for an attendant or a stranger for something	14.7	7.0	0.45	0.88
I can express my displeasure on a situation	14.5	7.0	0.73	0.84
I can apologize when I realize am on the wrong	14.3	7.3	0.63	0.85

Appendix 6: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Sample Size Determination

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Appendix 7: Research Permit & University documents

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

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5th May 2020
Wangui Lydia Chege,
Student number: PDSLMR304216,
St. Paul's University,
Private Bag – 00217 Limuru,
Kenya.

Dear Lydia,

RE: ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Your application for admission to candidacy for the Doctorate submitted through your Faculty has been received.

We note with joy that you have fulfilled all the requirements for the candidacy. Candidacy is a period that you are deemed ready to undertake independent and original research resulting in a Thesis.

This is an exciting milestone on the journey towards a Doctoral degree, and we would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication that you have already put towards your degree.

Congratulations on your admission to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy!

We wish God's blessing as you work on the completion of your Thesis.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Sammy Githuku
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies

BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY 05 MAY 2020 KENYA TEL: 020 - 2020505 / 2020510 P.O. PRIVATE BAG - 00217, LIMURU

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Dr. Suleiman M. Kairu- The Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Dr. Petronila Otuya- The Head of Department, Faculty of Social Sciences
Dr. Daniel Muasya- Program coordinator, Faculty of Social Sciences studies

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Date of Issue: **15/May/2020**

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Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

4th May 2020

National Commission for Science and Technology,
P.O. BOX 30623-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR WANGUI LYDIA CHEGE- PDS/LMR/3042/16 TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter confirms the above named person is a student of the Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies at St. Paul's University.

The second year consists of a major research work leading to a Thesis. The student's selected topic is '*The nexus of psychological, social network and operational factors in employability of graduates who are deaf or blind from technical training institutes in Kenya.*'

Kindly grant this student the required permit.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Sammy Githuku
Director, Postgraduate Studies

BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY
04 MAY 2020
KENYA
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